CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

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Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study
Steering Committee Meeting #7

DATE: Wednesday, January 23, 2013
TIME: 9:00 – 11:00 AM
PLACE: CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Winooski
PRESENT:

Tim Baechle, IBM
Amy Bell, VTrans
Ken Belliveau, Town of Williston
Meredith Birkett, CCTA
Michele Boomhower, CCRPC
Curt Carter, GBIC/LCCC (9:23)
Bob Chamberlin, RSG
Jason Charest, CCRPC
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Christine Forde, CCRPC
Bruce Hoar, Town of Williston
Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation
David Libby, IBM
Dennis Lutz, Town of Essex
Matt Mahoney, GBIC/LCCC
Kate McCarthy, VNRC
Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates
Jeff Nick, JL Davis Realty (9:33)
Ken Robie, VTrans
Sai Sarepalli, CCRPC
Mark Smith, RSG
Jason VanDriesche, Local Motion
Brian Wright, Chittenden Solid Waste District

1) Welcome

Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

2) Summary of 2035 Strategy Package Results: Network-wide, Capacity Performance, Environmental Impacts, and Estimated Costs

Bob Chamberlin of RSG began by reviewing the "Core Improvements," those that are include in all scenario evaluations. The Core Improvements, with an estimated cost of $15 million, include:

- Smart Corridor Applications/Traffic Operations Center
- Williston Grid Streets (to be privately developed; cost not included in estimate above)
- Essex Town Center Connections
- CIRC Alternatives Phase 1 Implementation Projects in WENTS area: Crescent Connector in Essex Junction; VT2A/James Brown Drive improvements in Williston; and Transportation Demand/System Management programs.
- CIRC Alternatives Phase 2 Implementation Projects: VT15/Sand Hill Road intersection improvements; US2/Trader Lane signal, VT15 Improvements (Post Office Square to Five Corners); VT15 Multiuse Path; and Transportation Demand/System Management programs.
- Addressing discontinuities and deficiencies to sidewalks, paths, and shoulders, and adding Transit Improvements: Add a mid-day trip on the Williston Route weekdays; weekday peak hour Jeffersonville-Burlington commuter route

Michele Boomhower noted that the core improvements may include items that are not eligible for federal funding. This should be noted for the CIRC Alternatives Task Force review.

HYBRID STRATEGY PACKAGE 1: New Bridge and Related Improvements

This package is defined by the following improvements: Redmond Road Connector and new bridge over the Winooski; a series of capacity and safety improvements; Allen Martin Parkway connection to VT289; and optimization/coordination of various signals. The estimated cost is $47-66 million.

There was discussion of impacts to Skunk Hollow Road in Jericho. It was decided that the impacts would be determined by a future scoping study.

HYBRID STRATEGY PACKAGE 2: Reconfigured Exit 12 and Related Improvements

This package is defined by the new grid streets and capacity improvements.

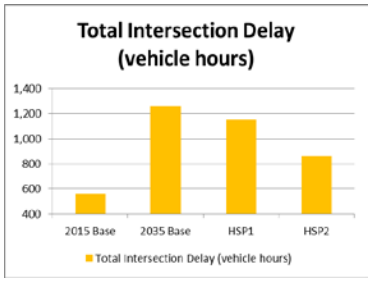
There was discussion about improvements to the VT 2A/Mountain View/Industrial Ave intersection and how they differ between Strategy Packages. For HSP1, the improvements facilitate the movement of vehicles to access the new bridge. Under HSP2, the improvements are more significant due to the need to address multiple turning movements. There was discussion about Allen Martin Parkway/VT289 and its inclusion in HSP1 and not HSP2. Eleni explained that the benefits were not as significant under HSP2. Dennis Lutz of Essex asked that we not forget this linkage for future study.

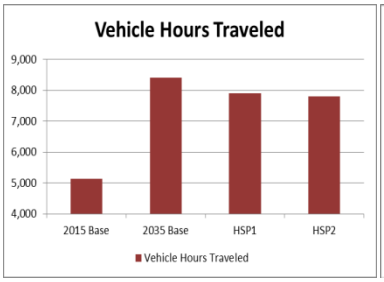
There was discussion about improvements to Exit 12; Bob suggested that there are opportunities to significantly improve the interchange. Both HSP1 and HSP2 have an additional lane on VT 2A under the bridge which will require the reconstruction of the interchange. There was discussion on shorter term improvements such as adding an exclusive southbound lane on VT2A to access the I-89 northbound on-ramp; however, this solution does not address the major congestion issues and the pedestrian/bicycle access remains problematic. It was suggested that a scoping study would more closely examine this option, among others. Ken Belliveau of Williston asked if the new grid street network would be eligible for federal funding. Bob responded that it could potentially be eligible; FHWA would need to be consulted.

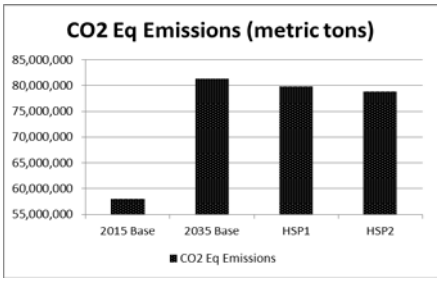
Michele asked to add a box to the HSP2 graphic denoting that there are also VT2A mainline improvements extending north from the VT2A/Mountain View intersection to James Brown Drive.

A. Network-Wide Performance Measures

Bob reported total intersection delay, vehicle miles traveled, and carbon dioxide emissions for the base cases and each hybrid strategy package. He noted that Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) increase by 7-10 percent between 2015 and 2035, while Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) increases by 70 percent.







Dennis asked how much of the land use impact is external versus internal to the study area. Bob will research this. Sandy Levine of CLF asked Bob to separate the results for the Core Improvements versus no improvements. Bob agreed to provide this information later. Bob noted that the Core Improvements include a considerable amount of bicycle/pedestrian improvements, which were included in the modeling. However, due to the extensive land use changes over the 20 year period, the impact of bike/ped investments is overwhelmed by growth in vehicle traffic. The same is true of the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) efforts, which result in a 0.7 percent reduction in overall vehicle trips.

Kate McCarthy of VNRC asked if the study's goals and objectives regarding land use were considered and if the final report will include land use policy recommendations. Bob responded that some land use recommendations will be included in the final report. Eleni pointed out that the land use allocation and assumptions used in this study are in accordance with the ECOS Plan and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and those will not be addressed. Michele noted that the land use recommendations could be more specific as part of the scoping studies. She asked if committee members have land use suggestions of a more global nature that they be forwarded to Eleni.

Kate also asked if the Study's goals and objectives were incorporated into the summary results. Bob responded that the goals and objectives have driven the entire process and have been integrated into the project team's recommendations.

B. Intersection Performance

Bob showed a chart that included system performance in the study area and level of service (LOS) 2035 results. Michele asked about the Level of Service (LOS) for key roadway segments like Vermont 2A, N. Williston Road, and Mountain View Road, especially in light of the concerns of the Williston Selectboard. Eleni is concerned that LOS for two-lane highways isn't comparable to LOS for intersections. Bob reiterated that most of the congestion in the study area, today and projected for 2035, is intersection-based. Nevertheless it was agreed that RSG will prepare a rural arterial LOS for North Williston Road to inform the Williston Selectboard.

Dennis Lutz of Essex asked about the immediate versus long-term congestion improvement in terms of current investment of funds, making specific reference to the anticipated improvements at VT15/Sand Hill Road. RSG's analysis shows the 2015 congestion at LOS "C" with further deterioration over 20 years.

C. Environmental (Resource Impacts), Traffic, Costs

Bob described the summary results for HSP1 and HSP2 (see attachment).

D. Cost Estimates

Michele asked that the CIRC Alternatives Projects be clarified to explain that the cost figure includes projects both inside and outside of the study area.

Phase 1 CIRC Alternatives Projects	$11.5 million
Phase 2 CIRC Alternatives Projects	$13.9 million
WENTS Core Improvements	$15.6 million

Hybrid Strategy Package 1 (HSP1)	$47-66 million
Hybrid Strategy Package 2 (HSP2)	$30-48 million

3) Project Team's Recommendations for Future Scoping Studies

- Endorse HSP2 as the preferred strategy package for the WENTS area
- Scoping Recommendations for the CIRC Alternatives Task Force consideration (1/31/13)
  - Exit 12/Grid Streets (HSP2)
  - VT2A/Mountain View/Industrial Ave & VT2A mainline north to James Brown Drive (HSP2)
  - US 2 - Taft Corners to Williston Village Multimodal Improvements (Core Improvements)
  - VT 117/North Williston Road, Winooski River Bridge (HSP2)
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Scoping Studies (Core Improvements)
  - Mountain View Road, Old Stage to VT2A
  - VT2A, Industrial Avenue to Blair Park / VT2A across Allen Brook
  - VT15, Old Stage Road to Essex Way

The cost of the bike/pedestrian scoping studies is approximately $25-40,000 each. These studies will probably not begin before fall of 2013 or winter of 2014 due to CCRPC staff capacity issues. Amy Bell of VTrans pointed out that even though scoping studies might start at the same time, they each have their own duration depending on the amount of effort required. All of the scoping studies will look at the area in much more detail, identify numerous alternatives, and refine the cost estimates.

Tim Baechle of IBM asked to include Redmond Road in the Mountain View Road bike/pedestrian study. There was discussion on whether there is an existing study for Redmond Road.

Tim asked about a congestion policy that allows for more growth in designated areas. There was discussion on this concept that will revise the current LOS policy and it was agreed to be included as a recommendation in the Plan.

Ken Robie of VTrans asked if there is sufficient comparable data from WENTS to compare to Circ EIS data regarding traffic congestion. The Circ EIS land use assumptions are different from the WENTS data; the WENTS data are more up-to-date.

It was noted that the inclusion of Innovation Avenue didn't improve traffic congestion; therefore it is not included in the Project Team's recommendations.

The Committee was asked to comment on the Project Team's recommendations. Michele welcomes additional feedback in writing, by **January 30th**, that will be forwarded to the CIRC Alternatives Task Force. The Task Force will receive a project memo and Steering Committee feedback; they will vote on January 31st which scoping projects to move forward.

Steering Committee member statements on preferred strategy package and scoping study recommendations:

Ken Belliveau, Williston: The Williston Selectboard has not weighed in relative to HSP1 or HSP2. The bridge strategy elicited heated discussion at their January 9th meeting. Ken is not able to support a package without the Selectboard's decision. He feels that the improvements included in HSP2 are consistent with the Town Plan and the things the town wants to accomplish. The Selectboard will meet on Monday, with the bridge the main discussion point.

Ken Robie, VTrans: From VTrans' standpoint, unless someone finds a fundamental error in the analysis, HSP2 is more cost effective and provides better performance. He supports both the Core Improvements and scoping studies.

Jeff Nick, Business Community: Although it doesn't capture everything, and leaves a lot of congestion on the table, he supports HSP2.

Tim Baechle, IBM: HSP2 has better performance, but it has to provide an acceptable level of performance that doesn't prohibit growth.

Brian Wright, CSWD: HSP2 provides an acceptable level of congestion while not prohibiting growth in the corridor. Brian agrees with the Project Team's recommendations.

Curt Carter, GBIC/LCCC: Curt feels we need to move ahead and make improvements, although he's disappointed that the recommendations don't go as far as he wanted.

Jason VanDriesche, Local Motion: This is a balanced package that addresses a wide range of concerns. It responds to key traffic issues from an active transportation/recreation point of view. There are some very good pieces here. Local Motion supports HSP2.

Kate McCarthy, VNRC: VNRC supports HSP2. There needs to be a discussion of land use and other policy recommendations in the final report. HSP2 minimizes the environmental impacts and the scoping studies will provide more detail. VNRC will remain attentive to land use impacts that could stem from improvement to Exit 12.

Sandy Levine, CLF: CLF supports moving forward with HSP2.

Meredith Birkett, CCTA: HSP2 provides the best investment in the existing transportation network as well as the existing transit system. Studying Taft Corners to Village is very important to CCTA.

Update: Eleni talked with *Dennis Lutz of Essex,* who had to leave the meeting early due to another conflict and he indicated his support for HSP2.

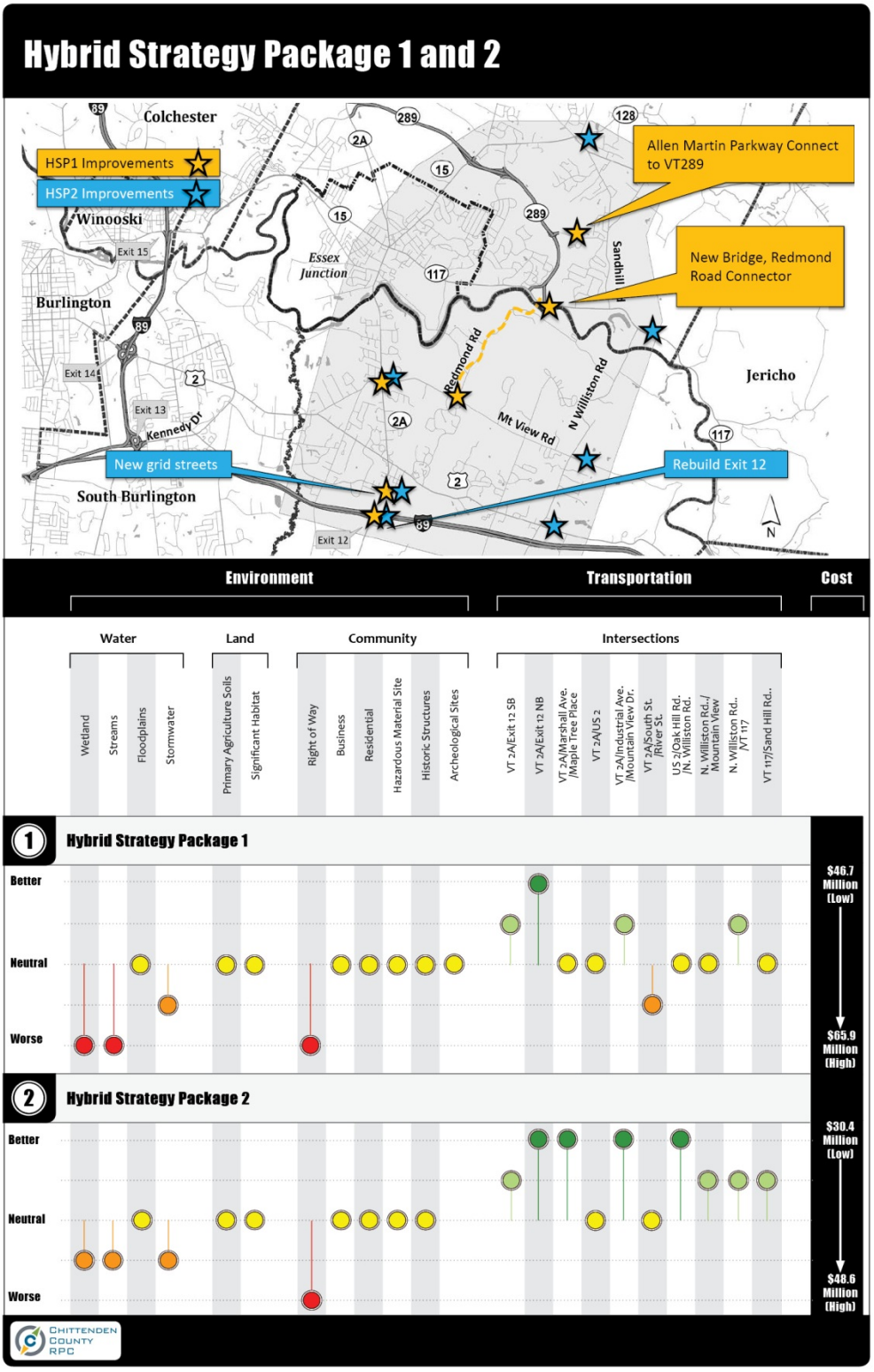
Michele noted that a metric to understand the traffic flow implications for N. Williston Road is an important element to the Town of Williston's decision-making process. CCRPC will summarize today's meeting notes and prepare a memo to the CIRC Alternatives Task Force with the Project Team and Committee's recommendations, noting Williston's concerns. This will also be made available to the Williston Selectboard.

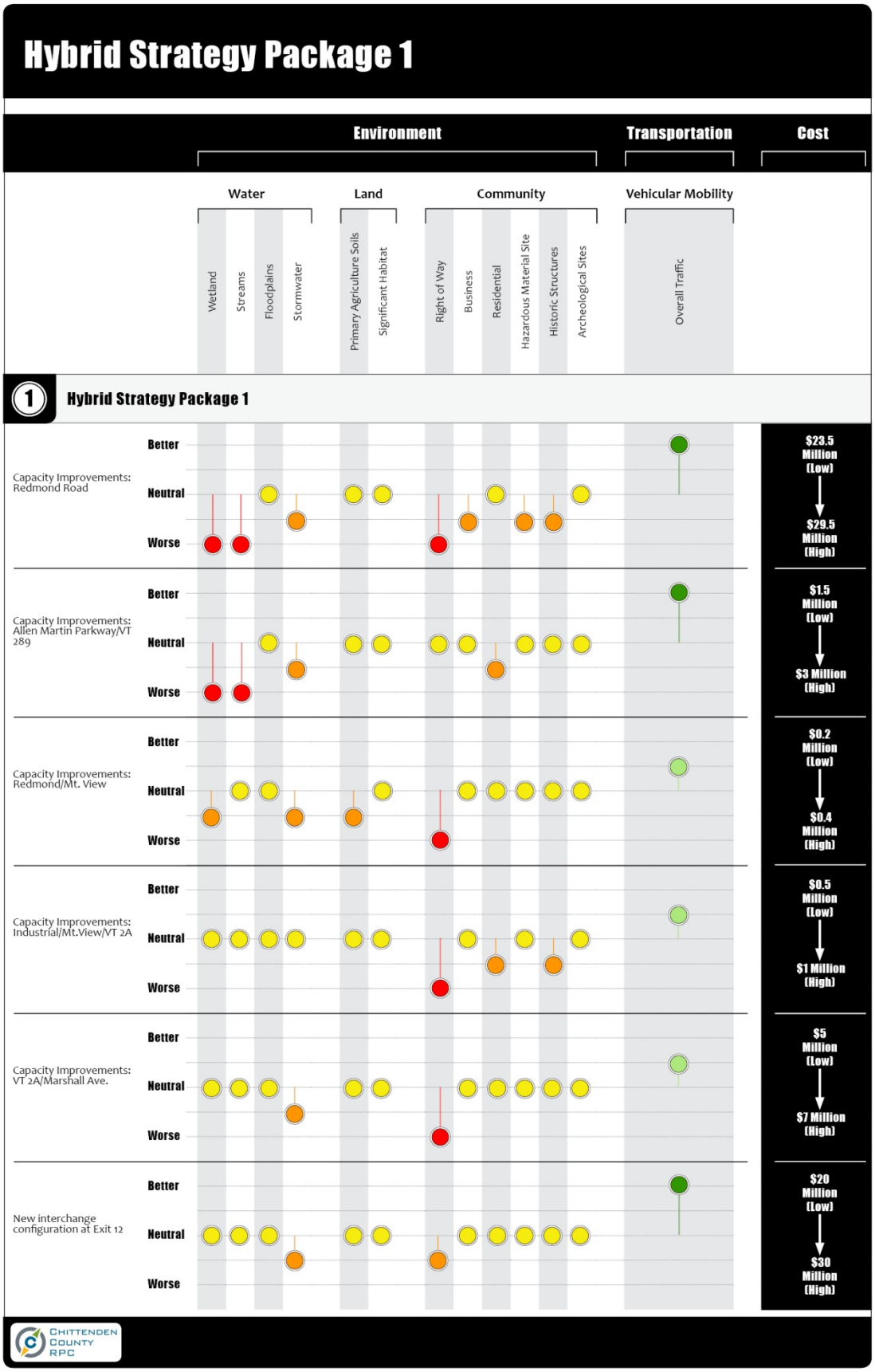
4) Next Steps

- **Public Meeting #2 will be held on February 5, 2013, at 7:30PM, at Williston Town Hall**. It is hosted by the Williston Planning Commission. Diane Meyerhoff of Third Sector Associates asked that Steering Committee members help promote the meeting; she'll send information to the Committee. Postings on Front Porch Forums are welcome; the municipalities should notice their Selectboard members and Planning Commissioners.
- Development of Network Implementation Plan (February 2013) - Additional Investigations:
  - Permit Requirements
  - Refinement of Cost Estimates and Timeline
  - Definition of Scoping Study Elements
- Draft Final Report and Final Report (February/March 2013)

The Steering Committee should expect one more meeting to wrap up.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 AM.




Hybrid Strategy Package 1
Environment
Transportation
Cost
Water
Land
Community
Vehicular Mobility
Wetland
Streams
Floodplains
Stormwater
Primary Agriculture Soils
Significant Habitat
Right of Way
Business
Residential
Hazardous Material Site
Historic Structures
Archeological Sites
Overall Traffic
1
Hybrid Strategy Package 1
Capacity Improvements: Redmond Road
Better
Neutral
Worse
$23.5 Million (Low)
$29.5 Million (High)
Capacity Improvements: Allen Martin Parkway/VT 289
$1.5 Million (Low)
$3 Million (High)
Capacity Improvements: Redmond/Mt. View
$0.2 Million (Low)
$0.4 Million (High)
Capacity Improvements: Industrial/Mt.View/VT 2A
$0.5 Million (Low)
$1 Million (High)
Capacity Improvements: VT 2A/Marshall Ave.
$5 Million (Low)
$7 Million (High)
New interchange configuration at Exit 12
$20 Million (Low)
$30 Million (High)
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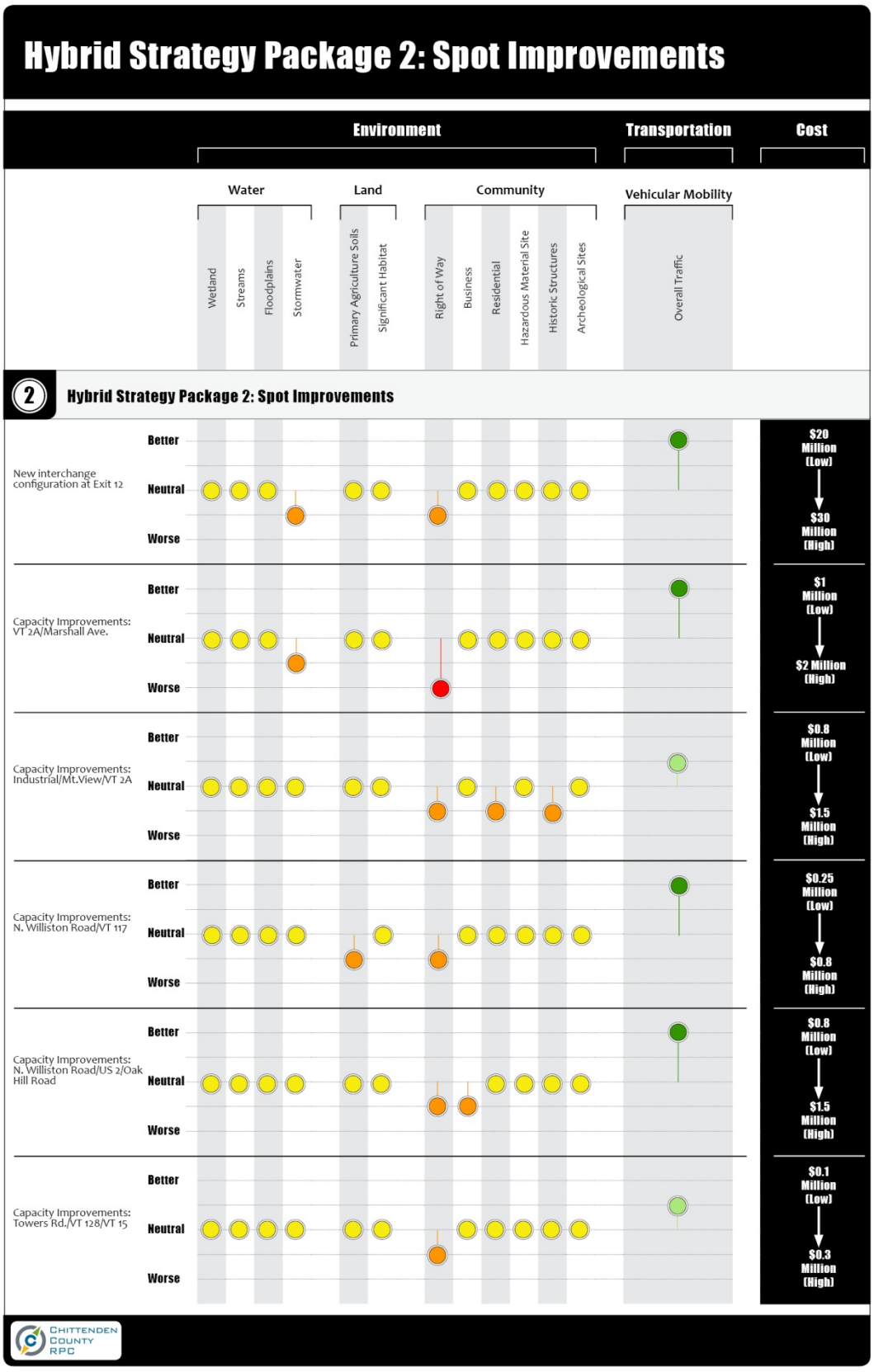
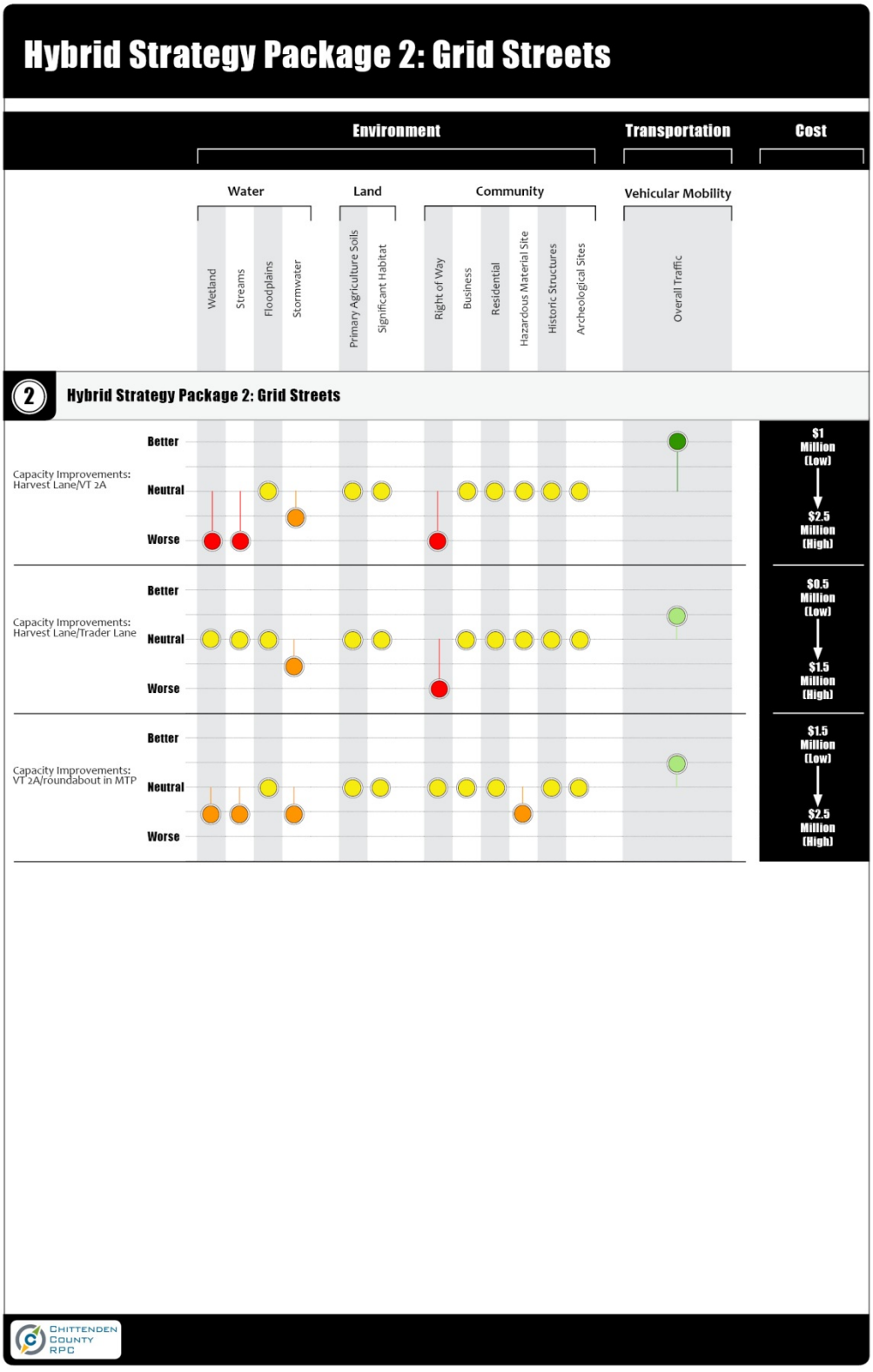

Hybrid Strategy Package 2: Spot Improvements
Environment
Transportation
Cost
Water
Land
Community
Vehicular Mobility
Wetland
Streams
Floodplains
Stormwater
Primary Agriculture Soils
Significant Habitat
Right of Way
Business
Residential
Hazardous Material Site
Historic Structures
Archeological Sites
Overall Traffic
2
Hybrid Strategy Package 2: Spot Improvements
New interchange configuration at Exit 12
Capacity Improvements: VT 2A/Marshall Ave.
Capacity Improvements: Industrial/Mt.View/VT 2A
Capacity Improvements: N. Williston Road/VT 117
Capacity Improvements: N. Williston Road/US 2/Oak Hill Road
Capacity Improvements: Towers Rd./VT 128/VT 15
Better
Neutral
Worse
$20 Million (Low)
$30 Million (High)
$1 Million (Low)
$2 Million (High)
$0.8 Million (Low)
$1.5 Million (High)
$0.25 Million (Low)
$0.8 Million (High)
$0.8 Million (Low)
$1.5 Million (High)
$0.1 Million (Low)
$0.3 Million (High)
Chittenden County RPC


Hybrid Strategy Package 2: Grid Streets
Environment
Transportation
Cost
Water
Land
Community
Vehicular Mobility
Wetland
Streams
Floodplains
Stormwater
Primary Agriculture Soils
Significant Habitat
Right of Way
Business
Residential
Hazardous Material Site
Historic Structures
Archeological Sites
Overall Traffic
2
Hybrid Strategy Package 2: Grid Streets
Capacity Improvements: Harvest Lane/VT 2A
Better
Neutral
Worse
$1 Million (Low)
$2.5 Million (High)
Capacity Improvements: Harvest Lane/Trader Lane
Better
Neutral
Worse
$0.5 Million (Low)
$1.5 Million (High)
Capacity Improvements: VT 2A/roundabout in MTP
Better
Neutral
Worse
$1.5 Million (Low)
$2.5 Million (High)
Chittenden County RPC