

**Interstate 89 Exit 12 & VT 2A (Exit 12 Project) Scoping Study
Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Notes**

DATE: Thursday, July 11, 2013
TIME: 1:00 PM
PLACE: Williston Police Station, 7928 Williston Road

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Meredith Birkett, CCTA
Amy Bell, VTrans
Ken Belliveau, Town of Williston
Michele Boomhower, CCRPC
Chris Jolly, FHWA
Jeff Nick, JL Davis Realty
Josh Schultz, VTrans
Todd Shepard, Town of Williston
Karen Sidney-Plummer, RPAI US
Management LLC

Jason VanDriesche, Local Motion

OTHERS PRESENT:

Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Rick McGuire, Town of Williston
Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates
David Saladino, RSG
John Sangster, SAIC
Sai Sarepalli, CCRPC
Mark Smith, RSG

1) Welcome & Introductions

The meeting began at 1:05 PM with Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC welcoming everyone and introductions were made.

2) Project Timeline

David Saladino of RSG explained that the goal of today's meeting is to determine the Exit 12 transportation alternatives to further evaluate. Project timeline:

Task 1: Project Start-Up, Data Gathering (April-May, complete)

Task 2: Public Meeting #1, Draft Purpose & Need Statement (June, complete)

Task 3: Alternatives Development & Evaluation (July-September)

Task 4: Public Meeting #2, Review of Alternatives (Williston Planning Commission, October 1st)

Task 5: Public Meeting #3, Selection of Preferred Alternative(s) (Williston Selectboard, October)

Task 6: Draft & Final Scoping Report (December – January 2014)

3) Summary of the June 4, 2013 Local Concerns Meeting

The first public meeting, sponsored by the Williston Planning Commission, was held in June. In attendance were five planning commissioners and six members of the public. Comments and questions included: concern that new intersection/signal on VT 2A would cause traffic to stack into the interchange; widening the Exit 12 bridge; minimize construction-related traffic disruptions through use of night construction; consider VT 2A passing *over* I-89; structural integrity of the Exit 12 interstate bridges; and Park & Ride locations – south of interchange and closer to Taft Corners. Ken Belliveau of the Town of Williston added that a recurring theme at Exit 12 is the lack of pedestrian access through the interchange.

4) Review and Discuss Purpose & Need Statement (attached)

The statement was distributed prior to the meeting and committee members are asked to send their comments to **Eleni and Dave by July 19th** for revision. Amy Bell of VTrans asked that the study area be expanded south to the Old Solomon Slaughterhouse on Route 2. The enlarged project area would allow inclusion of expected development at the Ramsey and former Solomon parcels.

5) Develop and Refine Transportation Alternatives

David reviewed the existing transportation issues that were presented at the public meeting, including: congestion, safety, bike/pedestrian connectivity, and economic growth/placemaking. John Sangster of SAIC provided an overview of innovative interchange and intersection improvement options, including:

- Conventional/Traditional Expansion (e.g. widening an interchange, adding lanes at signalized intersections)
- Double Cross-Over Diamond (like the one proposed at Exit 16 in Colchester)
- Roundabouts (improves safety)
- Single Point Urban Interchange (has a large footprint and is very expensive)
- ThrU-Turn (shifts left turns away from major intersection)
- Continuous Flow intersection (displaced left-turns)
- Quadrant Intersections

David then introduced the three preliminary alternatives developed for the Exit 12 area and noted that each alternative includes the following fundamental components: bike/pedestrian connections through the interchange, east-west grid street connections between the interchange and Marshall Avenue, and a modified cross-section/boulevard along VT 2A. David summarized the preliminary alternatives:

Alternative	Interchange	Intersection with Proposed Connector Streets	VT 2A Corridor
Medium Term Solution – will be consider in combination with one of the longer term solutions below	Restrict northbound VT 2A left turns onto northbound on-ramp & left turns from the northbound off-ramp	New signal with U Turn	Boulevard Section
Conventional Expansion	Expand VT 2A cross-section to 6 lanes	New signal	Boulevard Section
Double Crossover Diamond	Double Crossover Diamond – requires reconstruction of the interchange	New Signal or Underpass	Boulevard Section

The “Medium Term Solution” allows an interim improvement until the bridges can be replaced; it would be the first phase of a long-term construction project. Todd Sheppard of the Williston Police is concerned about the safety of U Turns and wants to be sure there is adequate width to accommodate u-turns made by trucks. David noted that the design would accommodate appropriate geometrics to accommodate truck u-turns. Ken noted that the boulevard concept with a pedestrian refuge along VT 2A was recommended in a 2002 Corridor Study.

The “Conventional Expansion” alternative would involve expansion of the interchange and create six lanes on VT 2A under the Interstate along with shoulders and sidewalks. The Double Crossover Diamond alternative will require the rebuilding of the interchange and would replace the existing Diamond interchange at Exit 12 with a Double Crossover Diamond interchange, similar to the proposal at Exit 16 in Colchester.

There was discussion about the usefulness of adaptive signal control in this corridor, which will be considered as part of a separate project. David asked if sidewalks are required on both sides of 2A, and Ken answered in the affirmative.

Committee members should provide any additional feedback to Eleni and David by Friday, July 19th. After that, RSG will begin the evaluation of the alternatives for discussion at the next Advisory Committee meeting.

6) Next Steps

Michele explained that the CIRC Alternatives Task Force will meet in October/November to review the planning/scoping studies, including this one. On November 21, the Task Force will make its recommendation to the Legislature for a package of projects to be included in the FY 2014 Capital Program.

The Advisory Committee will meet in September with public meetings following in October. The early October public meeting will be in conjunction with the Williston Planning Commission and the late October public meeting will be in conjunction with the Williston Selectboard. Dates and times will be forthcoming.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.

Exit 12 Scoping Study – Purpose & Need Statement

The definition of Purpose and Need of a project is essential for establishing a basis for the development and screening of alternatives and assists with the identification and eventual selection of a preferred alternative.

Purpose

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide transportation system improvements that increases mobility for people and goods, enhances safety for all users, and accommodates economic growth in the project area. The project area is located in Williston, Vermont and includes the area generally bounded on the north by Conner Way/Wright Avenue, on the east by Maple Tree Place/Sycamore Street, on the south by Hurricane Lane, and on the west by Harvest Lane and includes the I-89 Exit 12 interchange.

Needs

- **Mobility:**
 - Vehicle: Traffic congestion at the VT 2A/Exit 12 ramp intersections and the VT 2A/Marshall Avenue intersection currently operate at Level of Service (LOS) D and E conditions (respectively) during the evening peak hour, with certain approaches operating at LOS F and certain movement volume to capacity ratios exceeding 0.90. Based on projected population and employment growth for the area (including the adjacent Williston Growth Center), traffic congestion is expected to worsen by 2035, with LOS F conditions at the ramps and Marshall Avenue intersections, volume/capacity ratios greater than 1.0.
 - Pedestrians: Despite the fairly robust sidewalk and multi-use path network north of the State Police Barracks, there is currently no formal sidewalk through the interchange area to connect pedestrians to the various uses located along Hurricane Lane (including hotels and offices).
 - Bicyclists: The existing I-89 overpass piers and adjacent Jersey barriers currently limit the available width of the VT 2A shoulders to approximately 1 foot through the interchange area. Given the presence of the vertical Jersey barrier and the volume of adjacent street traffic, this shoulder width is not sufficient for all but the most experienced bicyclists.

- **Safety**: Based on the most recent VTrans High Crash Location (HCL) report, there are two identified HCL segments within the project area. HCL number 37 is located along VT 2A at Marshall Avenue (milepoints 3.320-3.340) and had a total of 73 reported crashes in the period from 2006-2010. HCL# 123 is located along VT 2A adjacent to the I-89 southbound ramps (milepoints 2.880-2.960) and had a total of 19 reported crashes in the period from 2006-2010. Analysis of forecasted traffic demand shows extensive off-ramp queuing leading to standing queues spilling back into the mainline of I-89, creating significant safety concerns.

- **Economic Development**: The Town of Williston was granted Growth Center status for the Taft's Corners area in 2007 and has made a concerted effort to focus the majority of future residential and commercial development in this area. Further, the Williston Comprehensive Plan describes the intended Growth Center development to follow a, "design conscious, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development and redevelopment pattern. Reasonable accommodations for future traffic should be planned for accordingly that support the dense, mixed-use development plans for the Growth Center.