# Appendix C: Public Outreach, Selectboards, and Steering Committee Communications

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# Final Report on Public Engagement
# Williston Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)
# May 2013

## CONTENTS



60 Blodgett Street, Burlington, Vermont 05401
802.865.1794 • diane@thirdsectorassociates.com • www.thirdsectorassociates.com

## 1) Summary of Public Engagement Activities

The Public Engagement Plan for the Williston Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) was designed in the spirit of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's (CCRPC) Public Participation Plan. The plan is predicated on an effective public involvement and public outreach campaign that involves transportation stakeholders and the broader public early in the process, checks in with them frequently, and then supports an outreach effort to present the final plan. The intent of the public involvement effort is to further foster a spirit of inclusiveness and ownership of WENTS.

Public engagement was integrated into all aspects of the work plan. Tasks included: Steering Committee meetings, information management, public meetings, and Selectboard visits.

The Steering Committee consisted of seventeen members representing a broad range of community participants (see list of committee members). The group met seven times between March 12, 2012 and January 23, 2013. Meeting notes are attached to this document.

Information management included a website with background information, Steering Committee meeting notes, public meeting documents (agendas, presentations, meeting notes, link to videotapes), and a final report.

There were two public meetings held on June 19, 2012 and February 5, 2013 (hosted by the Williston Planning Commission). All meetings were videotaped by Channel 17 and made available via television and online on-demand. The first meeting, held on June 19, 2012 featured vision, goals, objectives, and issues of the corridor. It was attended by ten members of the public, four members of the Planning Commission, and five members of the Steering Committee. Meeting outreach was done through targeted emails, Front Porch Forum, and advertisements in the *Williston Observer* and *Essex Reporter*. Meeting materials were posted on the study website.

The second public meeting was held on February 5, 2013 to present and evaluate network strategies. Twelve members of the public, five Planning Commissioners, and two Steering Committee members attended.

Additional public engagement was accomplished through visits to the Selectboards in Williston and Essex (with Essex Junction Trustees invited to attend). Presentations were made to Selectboards on May 7, 2012 (Williston), May 21, 2012 (Essex), June 18, 2012 (joint Williston and Essex Boards) and January 9, 2013 (Joint Williston and Essex Boards). A final presentation of the project's findings and recommendations was delivered to the Circ Alternatives Task Force on January 31, 2013.

## 2) Steering Committee & Staffing

## Williston Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)

**Steering Committee**
Tim Baechle, IBM Burlington
Amy Bell, VTrans
Ken Belliveau, Town of Williston
Meredith Birkett, Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA)
Bruce Hoar, Town of Williston
Chris Jolly, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation
David Libby, IBM Burlington
Dennis Lutz, Town of Essex
Rick McGuire, Town of Williston
Jeff Nick, JL Davis Realty
Bruce Nyquist, VTrans
Robin Pierce, Village of Essex Junction
Ken Robie, VTrans
Kate McCarthy, Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC)
Jason VanDriesche, Local Motion
Brian Wright, Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD)

**Study Project Manager**
Eleni Churchill, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)

**Study Staff**
Jason Charest, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)
Bryan Davis, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)
Dave Roberts, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)

**Study Consultant Team**
Bob Chamberlin, Senior Director, RSG
Mark Smith, RSG
Diane Meyerhoff, Principal, Third Sector Associates

**3) Steering Committee Meeting Notes**

- March 12, 2012
- April 20, 2012
- July 30, 2012
- September 25, 2012
- October 25, 2012
- December 13, 2012
- January 23, 2013

*Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study*
*Steering Committee Meeting #1*
*CCRPC Offices – 110 West Canal Street, Winooski*
*Monday March 12, 2012, 1-3 pm*

**Attendees:**

Eleni Churchill, Jason Charest, Christine Forde (CCRPC); Meredith Birkett (CCTA); Sandy Levine (CLF); Dennis Lutz (Essex); Robin Pierce (Essex Jct.); Dave Libby, Tim Baechle (IBM); Jeff Nick (JL Davis Realty); Jason Van Driesche (Local Motion); Bob Chamberlin, Mark Smith (RSG); Kate McCarthy (VNRC); Ken Robie, Bruce Nyquist, Amy Bell (VTrans); Ken Belliveau, Bruce Hoar (Williston).

**Meeting Summary:**

Eleni Churchill (CCRPC) welcomed the members of the Steering Committee and explained that the major focus of this Steering Committee meeting was to review and discuss the draft Scope of work (SOW) sent to the Committee the previous week.
Bob Chamberlin (RSG) went through a presentation of the draft SOW (Phases I to V). A summary of comments and questions by Steering Committee members is presented below:

**Study Area & General Comments**
Williston – Add Old Stage and intersections at either end (secondary), this route is often used to bypass N. Williston Rd / US2 intersection.
Essex – Add VT289/VT15 intersections (secondary)
Add Kennedy/Kimball/Marshall route (secondary corridors) as these are primary biking routes, particularly Kennedy's new facilities, with potential for much increase in use.
It was noted that secondary routes will only be assessed for volume changes and only very general improvement needs.
Williston / Essex – Table 4 needs better descriptive of road segments – many of the routes should be noted as mixed use. Clarify if this is a land use classification or functional classification. Bob will work directly with the Town staff to clarify this.
Essex Jct. – Show village boundaries, note inclusion in meetings, participation, etc.

**Phase I**
Under Phase I, clarify that the two major planning concepts under review using existing Circ EIS analyses (Circ A and new Bridge) will not be evaluated together. This phase will determine if Circ A **or** the new Bridge concept will move forward for further evaluation. The Steering Committee will review evaluation results but elected officials from Williston, Essex and Essex Jct. will make the final determination on these concepts.
Williston is concerned about the effects of the two major planning concepts on the local roadway network, intersections, and bike/pedestrian functions along corridors.

**Phase II**
We should distinguish between roadways that their primary function is to serve through traffic vs. local circulation traffic. The difficulty is that many roadways in the study area have dual functionality (serve both through and local traffic).
There was extensive discussion on various performance measures that could be used for strategy comparisons. It was pointed out that measures mentioned in the draft SOW are examples of measures that could be used in study. Performance measures will be developed in subsequent

phases of the study and the Steering Committee will be involved in their development. Comments regarding performance measures included:

- Consider using the same metrics for all modes of transportation (vehicles, bicycles, etc.) such as change in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).
- Can economic impacts of various improvement options be assessed? This is difficult—we do not have a good methodology. Review municipal plans and growth center application(s) for possible economic performance metrics.
- Can we use industrial land area/acreage combined with travel time to the interstate as a performance metric for comparison? For instance IBM has open industrial land the development of which could sway metrics considerably.
- How can we measure the effect of transportation improvement options on land use development?

**Phase III**

Improvement strategies will result in 3 "improvement packages" for comparison.
Can we summarize alternative packages using a benefit/cost metric?
Is there a metric for consumer preference? Note that particular constituencies may have varying preferences. It was suggested to use an upcoming CCRPC survey on travel time and mode choice.
Must ensure timing of two projects is compatible.

**Prepared by:** M. Smith, RSG (3/15/12)

END MEETING NOTES

CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404
802.846.4490
www.ccrpcvt.org

# Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study
# Steering Committee Meeting #2

**DATE:** Friday, April 20, 2012
**TIME:** 1:00 – 3:00 PM
**PLACE:** CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Winooski
**PRESENT:**

Tim Baechle, IBM Burlington
Amy Bell, VTrans
Ken Belliveau, Town of Williston
Meredith Birkett, CCTA
Michele Boomhower, CCPRC
Bob Chamberlin, RSG
Jason Charest, CCRPC
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Bruce Hoar, Town of Williston
Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation
David Libby, IBM Burlington
Dennis Lutz, Town of Essex
Kate McCarthy, VNRC
Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates
Jeff Nick, JL Davis Realty
Bruce Nyquist, VTrans
Robin Pierce, Village of Essex Junction
Dave Roberts, CCRPC
Ken Robie, VTrans
Mark Smith, RSG
Jason VanDriesche, Local Motion

## 1) Welcome

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

## 2) Review Study Goals and Scope of Work

Bob Chamberlin of RSG provided a summary presentation of the Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study DRAFT - Phase 1 Report that was distributed earlier in the week.

Bob reviewed the study goal: To develop a multi-modal transportation improvement plan for the primary corridors in the study area to address mobility, connectivity and safety issues. The study will include a comprehensive and coordinated list of highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and land use recommendations that satisfy the overall vision and goals of the study corridors.

Bob summarized the upcoming phases of work:

- **Phase I: Evaluation of two major network strategies (current phase)**
- Phase II: Analysis of existing and future issues; transportation network goals
- Phase III: Develop and evaluate strategies
- Phase IV: Network implementation plan
- Phase V: Network management plan

## 3) Purpose of Today's Meeting

The purpose of this meeting is to obtain the Steering Committee's input on the evaluation of the two Major Network Strategies (MNS) for the study area. The evaluation relies on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) analysis. Steering Committee input and comments will be summarized and distributed to the Williston and Essex Selectboards and incorporated into the Final Phase 1 Report.

At issue is whether either Major Network Strategy advances to Phases 2-5 of the Study. The options are to advance Major Network Strategy (MNS) #1 OR #2; or to advance neither strategy. The plan is for this presentation to be made to the Williston Selectboard on May 7th and the Essex Selectboard on May 21st. It is likely the Selectboards will vote at the following regularly scheduled meeting. Both Selectboards must vote affirmatively for MNS2 for it to be advanced. The Boards will have time to discuss the strategies amongst themselves prior to the vote. Amy Bell of VTrans asked if it was appropriate for a regionally significant project to be voted on at the local level. It was explained that the Boards are voting whether or not to advance these strategies for further planning; not whether or not anything is actually built. ***Draft language on the "vote" will be offered to the Selectboards during the presentations.***

Ken Belliveau of the Town of Williston asked what would happen if the Boards cannot agree on which strategy to move forward. Michele Boomhower of the CCRPC explained that Williston's vote has primacy because both projects are in Williston.

Dennis Lutz of the Town of Essex is concerned that the Village of Essex Junction hasn't been contacted. Eleni responded that she met with Dave Crawford (Town Manager) and he recommended inviting the Village Trustees to the Essex Selectboard meeting and we have done so. ***Dennis asked that Eleni invite all the Boards to each other's meetings and Eleni agreed.***

## 4) Review of Phase 1 Results

Major Network Strategy 1 (MNS1): I-89 Connector to Mtn. View Road
Major Network Strategy 2 (MNS2): Redmond Road Connector

Bob reviewed the four evaluation criteria:

- Environmental Impact (18 elements)
- Traffic Impact at 5-7 Indicator Intersections
- Estimated Construction Cost
- Community Acceptance (as determined by Selectboards)

The two major network strategies were evaluated for projected 2025 conditions and compared to the "no build" scenario. In order to simplify the results, Bob used a visual depiction of "Better, Neutral, or Worse" as compared to the "do nothing" scenario.

Michele asked if there was consideration of taking the bridge crossing down to North Williston Road. Bob responded that this was not considered in the evaluation but it was discussed at an earlier meeting.

Amy asked about the feasibility of impacting land owned by the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) in light of a previous eminent domain action. Mark Smith of RSG explained that this strategy would skirt around the landfill and cross the transfer station. ***Michele asked that this be mentioned in the constraints analysis at the Selectboard meetings.***

Tim Baechle of IBM questioned the roadway cross sections, especially the MNS1 changing from four lanes to two. He feels the environmental impacts could be lessened by maintaining a constant two lanes. Bob responded that this Phase I evaluation is limited to previously completed studies.

Sandy Levine of the Conservation Law Foundation disagreed that the environmental impacts would change significantly with fewer roadway lanes. There was discussion of 2 versus 4 lanes and the accommodation of bicycle/pedestrian/transit access. ***It was decided that the Phase 1 Report and Selectboard presentation should: 1) Note the issue of 2 versus 4 lanes in MNS1; and 2) Remove the roadway cross sections from the summary sheets and add cost estimate ranges.***

Ken Belliveau of Williston sees one major decision as "build the bridge/don't build the bridge." Another is the roadway and how it functions – design speed, noise level, type of traffic, access for bikes, etc. How will the road interface with Route 2A and Mountain View? The Selectboard will take all these into account before voting.

Michele described this decision point as moving us about 10-15 percent of the way through this study. We could pause here and spend a lot of money on in-depth studies of the strategies and not address the larger network issues of the CIRC not being built. How do we avoid get mired in details that decision-makers might want and not reach our primary objective? We don't have the resources to dedicate to answer all these questions, rather, that will happen in the next set of scoping studies. Dennis suggested we ask for input based on the corridor-level analysis already completed. We're looking for a direction at this point. Kate McCarthy of the Vermont Natural Resources Council suggested that we look at how the attributes relate to the goals and objectives.

Jeff Nick of JL Davis Realty asked that if one strategy is chosen to move forward, are we guaranteed it will not be brought to court. Michele responded that we can't know that now, but we are trying to engage all interested parties. We want to vet all the potential issues now and try to avoid or mitigate them. New issues may arise when we put a number of these strategies on the table together.

Meredith Birkett of CCTA asked if she should attend the Selectboard meetings to talk about CCTA's needs to operate transit in this area. Michele suggested that she wait until there is more detailed information available.

There was discussion of the visuals for the environmental impact of the two strategies. All agreed that this was a great deal of information for a lay person to absorb. Kate suggested representative photos of each of the environmental criteria. There was some confusion over whether or not this information is a restatement of the DEIS conclusions or a new alignment for MNS2. Mark explained that the bridge is in the same location, but the approach on Redmond Road is slightly different. The data was adjusted for that new alignment. ***Michele suggested that Bob provide the draft Selectboard presentation to the Steering Committee for review and comment prior to the meetings. Bob agreed to do so as well as provide a summary of today's comments.***

Dave Libby of IBM asked if air quality has been considered. Bob replied that the analysis isn't available for all the alternatives – only the final one chosen in the DEIS.

There was discussion about the wetlands impacts of MNS2. Bob used the GIS analysis from the DEIS and superimposed the Redmond Road Connector. He looked at how the new alignment interacted with the wetlands map. Mark explained that the wetland issues were not as expansive because of the existing alignment. Sandy continues to have concerns about wetland and habitat impacts. This analysis is based on previous faulty analysis. It's an issue to be flagged because she doesn't believe it's accurately represented. Dennis suggested a new map to make the analysis clearer.

Bob presented the traffic impacts for the "indicator" intersections that were previously agreed upon. He showed the volume/capacity (v/c) ratios currently and for both strategies. He explained that a low number is good; if an intersection is at "1", it's at capacity. Ken Belliveau questioned the dramatic v/c changes at Exit 12 and the variations over the intersections along VT2A—the results are not intuitive. Mark explained that Marshall Avenue and Route 2A are so over capacity now that that amount of change is small. The v/c results show a global representation of congestion at an intersection, but not all approaches will experience the same level of congestion. Bob noted that the modeling is from the DEIS, the no build year is 2025, and the Crescent Connector

is not included. ***Following discussion it was agreed that the Selectboard presentations will exclude the v/c ratios, but instead use a visual depiction so as not to confuse the issue when more concrete numbers are available. Tim suggested that yellow not indicate neutral.***

Dennis noted that for MNS2 to be valuable to Essex, traffic needs to be reduced on Route 15. If the strategy doesn't provide a significant level of service (LOS) increase at VT15 intersections with Routes 128 and 289, the support will not be there. ***Michele suggested that we add those intersections to the study***.

Bob reviewed results from the MNS evaluation and summary sheets. **The following changes were suggested:**

- ***The "v/c ratio" slide needs to have the dashed Circ A/B alignment removed.***
- ***Change the costs to a range rather than a specific number.***
- ***Remove the two "new" intersections from MNS1 for better comparison with MNS2.***
- ***For Selectboard presentations, put both MSN lollipops together on the same handout or display for better comparison.***

Ken Belliveau asked about the effect of the strategies on the intersections of Williston Road/N. Williston Road and N. Williston Road/Mountain View Drive. Mark responded that congestion is a little better for Mountain View in MNS1 and a little worse for MNS2. ***It was decided to add the N. Williston intersections to the study.*** Ken Belliveau asked how an at-grade crossing on Williston Road would impact the Village. For MNS1, there is concern about additional congestion on Mountain View Road. He suggested Bob be prepared for these questions from the Williston Selectboard. ***Bob offered to create a plan view design of traffic volumes to show the changes.***

Ken Belliveau explained that we're looking at a box that encompasses VT 2A. The reality is that we have a network with another competing north-south route—N. Williston Road. This is a big question for Williston. The US 2/North Williston Road intersection has already been the subject of heated discussions concerning how to address PM peak congestion. There is similar concern about the N. Williston Rd./ Mountain View Rd. intersection. These two intersections should be addressed in Phase 1.

Dennis asked about the direct economic impacts of MNS1 on IBM and of MNS2 on businesses in the town center. Tim offered to write a response from IBM's point of view and also solicit comments from the Chamber/GBIC in advance of the May 7th Selectboard meeting. Ken Belliveau would like to understand CSWD's position on MNS2. He agreed that the ***CCRPC should talk to CSWD prior to the Selectboard meeting***. Meredith offered to prepare a statement regarding CCTA's needs for transit under the two strategies.

## 5) Information on Technical Approach to Modeling for Existing & Future Conditions

Bob's team will develop an area wide microsimulation model for the Phase 2 analysis.

## 6) Schedule Review - Phase II (May-July 2012)

**Key Tasks/Milestones**

- Analysis of Existing and Future Conditions
- Transportation Model Development
- Development of Study Performance Measures
- Public Meeting #1 (June)
- Project Memorandum #1
    - Recommended Performance Measures
    - Analysis of Existing Transportation Conditions
- Project Memorandum #2 - Transportation Network Goals
- Steering Committee Meeting #3 (July)

**7) Upcoming Meetings**

May 7, Williston Selectboard, 7:00PM
May 21, Essex Selectboard, 7:30PM

A revised PowerPoint presentation will be sent to the Steering Committee for review and comment prior to the Selectboard meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10PM

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110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404
802.846.4490
www.ccrpcvt.org

# Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study
# Steering Committee Meeting #3

**DATE:** Monday, July 30, 2012
**TIME:** 1:00 – 3:00 PM
**PLACE:** CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Winooski
**PRESENT:**

Tim Baechle, IBM Burlington
Amy Bell, VTrans
Bob Chamberlin, RSG
Jason Charest, CCRPC
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Bruce Hoar, Town of Williston
Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation
Dennis Lutz, Town of Essex
Kate McCarthy, VNRC
Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates
Jeff Nick, JL Davis Realty
Bruce Nyquist, VTrans
Robin Pierce, Village of Essex Junction (1:35)
Ken Robie, VTrans
Mark Smith, RSG
Jason VanDriesche, Local Motion

## 1) Welcome

Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC welcomed everyone.

## 2) Project Status

Bob Chamberlin of RSG updated the status of the Study. Phase 1, the evaluation of two Major Network Strategies (MNS), is complete. Both Selectboards voted to carry Major Network Strategy 2 to subsequent phases of study; MNS2 will be considered and evaluated among other strategies, but does not guarantee it will be a preferred strategy. We are currently in Phase 2, the "Analysis of Existing and Future Issues and Development of Transportation Network Goals." Tasks include: 1) analysis of existing conditions and development of performance measures; 2) establish goals and objectives; and 3) determine future year performance. Phase 3 will develop and evaluate strategies; Phase 4 will develop an Implementation Plan for transportation corridors; and, finally, Phase 5 will develop a Transportation Management Plan.

## 3) Phase 2 Memorandum #1 on Existing Land Use & Transportation Conditions

Bob would like comments on Memorandum #1 (distributed last week) by **August 10th** (via email). The memo includes the following sections: land use, access management, safety, and alternative modes. There is no data on vehicular traffic because Bob's team is calibrating the transportation model.

Eleni explained that prior to the next Steering Committee meeting in late September, the regional transportation model will be calibrated and the traffic data will be distributed. The September meeting will also feature a review of goals and objectives and a discussion of future conditions and the draft strategy packages.

Dennis Lutz of Essex is concerned that the land use terminology used in the memo does not coincide with the Town's terminology. The VTrans access management strategy categories do not necessarily reflect the Town's Road Management Plan. Essex uses different traffic thresholds than the state, which is illustrated on page 20 of the memo. For instance, the state does not categorize N. Williston Road; the Town designated it a Class 2 road. Bob and Eleni will investigate the discrepancy. Dennis would also like the maps to be larger. Dennis requested that the intersection of Essex Way and Route 15 be included in the Study. Bob will do so.

Kate McCarthy of VNRC asked how the transportation model will evaluate multimodal opportunities. Bob replied that transportation planning for multimodal elements doesn't necessarily use sophisticated models; he has begun to look at multimodal elements. Travel demand drives the transportation model; to the extent that improvements in alternative modes or land use density can be translated into travel demand, it will be captured in the model.

Kate asked about the limitations of the transportation model. Bob replied that vehicle movement is captured in the model; however, the model does not address other modes particularly well, like the ease of a pedestrian to cross the street. The input assumptions, like future land use, could also be a limitation. Most of the information available from local planners reflects short-term development.

Jason VanDriesche of Local Motion asked about the correlation of people to vehicles in the model and whether or not the model can test different carpooling scenarios. Bob responded that there are different trip types that correspond to different auto occupancy. For instance, home-to-work trips assume 1 person per vehicle. This information is derived from surveys of Chittenden County residents. To test Transportation Demand Management (TDM) efforts, we would need to make assumptions about different types of trips and vehicle occupancy.

Sandy Levine of CLF asked if Bob could summarize the assumptions in the model. Bob answered in the affirmative. The transportation network itself is being calibrated to existing conditions, like lane widths and signal timing. Sandy asked about the inclusion of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) improvements in the model. Eleni responded that the improvements that are highly probable will be included, like the Crescent Connector and improvements at Exit 16. Exit 12B will not be included. All TIP projects, except the Circ Highway, will be included. **Eleni will provide a list of improvements included in the model to the Steering Committee.** The Committee will review and accept the list before the modeling moves forward.

There was discussion about the rate of growth, especially outside of the study area, and how it affects model output. Due to the limitations of this study, the plan is to use the growth rate in the existing model. **Eleni will determine the rate and inform the Committee.**

Jeff asked if Bob has square footage estimates for development at Taft Corners. Bob answered in the affirmative. Jeff described his new development and the Town's requirement that businesses participate in CCTA's Smart Business Program and provide bicycle racks and showers in order to reduce parking requirements.

**4. Performance Measures**

Bob explained that performance measures help to compare one set of improvements to another and against the existing conditions. The current transportation model provides a baseline to judge future conditions. Bob suggested the following performance measures:

- Auto Mobility & Safety
    - Average vehicle speed; corridor travel time; intersection delay; average vehicle queues; change in crash modification factors
- Multimodal Level of Service
    - Bicycle (facilities, connectivity, conflicts)
    - Transit (accessibility, service/headway, connectivity)
    - Pedestrian (facilities, connectivity)
- System-wide Measures (VMT, Green House Gas Emissions, Cumulative Intersection Stop Delay)

Bob provided a sample performance measure application for bicycle facilities and connectivity. Mark Smith of RSG explained the sample data. Kate asked if a 2-foot shoulder was adequate; Mark responded that it's actually "greater than 2 feet," or three feet, which meets the standard.

Jason asked if different standards can be applied to different road classes. Mark answered in the affirmative. Jeff asked if the calculation of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions takes into account improvements in electric and hybrid vehicles over time. Bob responded that this is not accounted for in the model; however the EPA model is very detailed. Basically, stop-and-go traffic creates high emissions, if one can reduce stop-and-go, emissions are decreased. Dennis asked if turning movements would be included in the model; Bob responded in the affirmative.

**5. Process for Establishing Goals & Objectives**

Bob explained that the next deliverable, a memo in early September, will propose draft goals and objectives. In order to do that, Bob suggested that we begin with the Municipal Land Use Visions/Goals and then define transportation goals/objectives for each primary corridor to support the land use visions. Bob provided an example using Vermont 2A:

- Efficient north-south vehicle mobility to/from Exit 12
- Promotion of Growth Center goals through multimodal investments
- Facilitate goods movement
- Address known vehicle and pedestrian/bike safety deficiencies

Amy Bell of VTrans suggested that the character of Route 2A changes significantly over its length. There was discussion of segmenting Route 2A for study purposes.

There was discussion of how literally to interpret "efficient vehicle mobility." One could cut off access to all businesses and achieve this goal. Bob recognizes that the corridor is trying to achieve many things and goals are not always consistent in their ability to serve all users. It may be that "Smart" corridor management and electronic monitoring of traffic may be successful in this corridor.

Bruce Nyquist of VTrans described their research into a Smart Signals project in Essex Junction at the interchange of Vermont 2A/289/Susie Wilson Road. "Adaptive signal control" has potential to continuously optimize the corridor in real time. Bob suggested WENTS might be a good candidate for a future Smart Signals demonstration.

There was discussion about conflicts among goals and how best to address them. Sandy suggested using a cost/benefit analysis. Jason suggested that the goals might be clearer if we separate the "what" rather than "how." The "north-south" goal presumes the mode, perhaps instead say "efficient north-south movement through mobility and access." Eleni suggested that modes should be part of the goals and the objectives are more detailed (the "how"). Kate suggested that Bob define "goal" and "objective" for clarity purposes.

**6. Next Steps**

**Phase 2 Draft Final Report (mid-Sept)**

— Study Area and Primary Corridor Goals & Objectives
— Calibrated Traffic Model
— Existing and Future Conditions Evaluated Subject to Performance Measures

**Steering Committee Meeting #4 (late Sept)**

— Review Phase 2 Draft Final Report
— Discuss Strategy Packages

**Development of Alternative Strategy Packages (Oct)**

— Selectboard Meeting #2

**Screening and Evaluation of Strategy Packages (Nov)**

— Steering Committee Meeting #5
— Public Meeting #2

**Development of Network Implementation Plan (Dec)**

Sandy asked about the definition of a "strategy package." Bob responded that it's a group of alternatives; the corridor is big, so there will be a series of strategies. Dennis suggested that there should be a strategy to address the small improvements that are obvious – a base level group of core improvements. Bob agreed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50PM.

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110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404
802.846.4490
www.ccrpcvt.org

# Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study
# Steering Committee Meeting #4

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 25, 2012
**TIME:** 1:00 – 3:00 PM
**PLACE:** CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Winooski
**PRESENT:**

Tim Baechle, IBM Burlington
Amy Bell, VTrans
Ken Belliveau, Town of Williston
Michele Boomhower, CCRPC
Bob Chamberlin, RSG
Jason Charest, CCRPC
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Bruce Hoar, Town of Williston
Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation
Dennis Lutz, Town of Essex
Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates
Jeff Nick, JL Davis Realty (1:20)
Robin Pierce, Village of Essex Junction
Sai Sarepalli, CCRPC
Brian Shupe, VT Natural Resources Council
Mark Smith, RSG
Jason VanDriesche, Local Motion
Brian Wright, Chittenden Solid Waste District

## 1) Welcome

Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC welcomed Brian Wright of the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) to the Steering Committee and introductions were made.

## 2) Presentation of Existing Conditions for Traffic

Bob Chamberlin of RSG described RSG's microsimulation traffic model that will be used to analyze existing and future conditions. It is primarily designed for assessing vehicular traffic. RSG will use other tools to develop multimodal strategies.

The microsimulation model is calibrated to existing traffic conditions and is ready to assess future conditions in 2035. The future transportation network used in the models (regional and microsimulation) will include projects from the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Michele Boomhower of the CCRPC noted that her organization is updating the MTP/Regional Plan now and projects will be ranked using the ECOS Sustainability Index. Projects that score high, and mesh with existing funding streams, will be included in the MTP/Regional Plan. These projects will also be included in the modeling for 2035.

There was discussion of how to determine future traffic volumes, given recent shifts to alternative modes and the expected increase in density. Bob responded that the auto occupancy as it is now will be assumed into the future; however, the increase in density will be reflected in the land use component of the Regional Model which is the "parent" of the microsimulation model. Increases in public transit service will also be included.

Dennis Lutz of Essex asked that the modeling information presented to the public be clear about the importance of improvements and the extent to which they will improve overall travel in the corridor.

There was discussion of the comfort level of the committee with the model. In response, both Amy Bell of VTrans and Michele discussed the sophistication of the model – nationally, it is considered state-of-the-art.

Ken Belliveau of Williston asked that Zephyr Road be added to the short-term project list. It's a connection to Finney Crossing in Williston.

**3) Discussion of Network-Wide Goals and Objectives**

Bob reviewed the draft goals and objectives from Project Memorandum #2.

Sandy Levine of CLF felt the goals were too narrowly-defined to automobile travel rather than overall mobility and lack integration between land use and transportation. She worked with Local Motion and VNRC to incorporate other modes as well as Complete Streets legislation. Jason VanDriesche of Local Motion incorporated multimodalism into each goal, rather than it be a separate goal.

Jeff Nick spoke from the business community's perspective. Consistently, he hears that the problem is traffic congestion, especially at peak hours for employee commutes. When there is congestion, people take shortcuts through neighborhoods. Most folks are not interested in traveling to work by other modes and that's not going to change. The focus should be minimizing congestion.

The group briefly discussed "travel reliability." [Note: From FHWA: "A formal definition for travel time reliability is: the consistency or dependability in travel times, **as measured from day-to-day and/or across different times of the day."** http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/tt_reliability/TTR_Report.htm]. **Bob explained that increasing travel reliability might include incident management to consistently clear disabled vehicles from a roadway.**

There was general agreement that the goals should be organized as "regional" and "local," as suggested by the revised goals and objectives document prepared by CLF, VNRC and Local Motion.

It was decided that committee members should review both Goals and Objectives versions and send their comments to Eleni by **Wednesday, October 3rd**. She will incorporate the comments in a new Goals and Objectives version for the committee's consideration at the next meeting.

**4. Presentation of Preliminary Strategy Packages**

Bob presented five strategy packages that will be evaluated qualitatively to narrow the packages to three. Following that, a quantitative review will be done on the remaining three packages to then select a preferred alternative (likely a hybrid of the strategies presented).

A set of "Core Improvements" will be recommended for all strategy packages. These improvements include:

*Core Improvements*: Implement "Smart Corridor" (adaptive signal control); Close gaps in bicycle/pedestrian network; Eliminate shoulder discontinuities; and Incentivize use of alternatives (Transportation Demand Management–TDM).

*Strategy Package 1: Redmond Road Connector*
This package was selected by the Williston and Essex Selectboards. It builds a new bridge across the Winooski River to Redmond Road. Dennis asked if Essex Way would be included in this project; RSG responded that the intersection has been included in the study area.

*Strategy Package 2: Comprehensive Intersection Geometric Improvements*
This package addresses High Crash Locations (HCLs) to increase safety and intersection spot improvements to improve capacity and mobility. This strategy package might include turning lanes and roundabouts.

Jason asked that walk/bike improvements be added at the intersections and that intersections be evaluated for walk/bike even though they may not be HCLs. Ken asked that gaps in the walk/bike system be identified both for safety and to encourage alternative modes. The group discussed the difficulties associated with slip lanes for walkers/bikers and Jason noted new technology, like flashing beacons, can be very helpful for crossing while allowing use of the travel lane by vehicles when there is no one waiting to cross.

*Strategy Package 3: New Highway System Connections*
Part 1: Grid Streets in Williston Growth Center
Part 2: Innovation Drive - between Route 2 and Mountain View Drive
Part 3: Upgrade River Cove Road (between 2A and Lime Kiln Road) and Connect Fay Lane
Part 4: Add Parallel Connections north and south to Vermont 2A

Jason asked that walk/bike connections be evaluated where automobile connections aren't feasible or desirable.

*Strategy Package 4: Western Corridor Reconstruction*
Add capacity to 2A between Interstate 89 and Essex Junction

*Strategy Package 5: East Corridor Reconstruction*
North Williston Road/Sandhill Road reconstruction

The group discussed how best to evaluate the strategy packages, given the limited amount of time (due to the CIRC Alternatives Task Force schedule) and funding. It was decided that Bob will send the strategy packages (maps and more detailed description of strategies) to the committee. Members will mark the maps and send comments as to whether or not a particular strategy is feasible, to help narrow down the packages for quantitative analysis. The qualitative work will follow later.

Michele will recommend that some of the "Core Improvements" that could be advanced in the short time become FY 14 Capital improvements, to help Williston and Essex move projects forward in the CIRC Alternatives process.

**5. Next Steps**

Since the original plan has changed, Eleni and Bob will discuss how best to move forward and present a plan at the October meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20PM.

**The next meeting is October 25, 2012, 9-11AM, CCRPC**

CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404
802.846.4490
www.ccrpcvt.org

# Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study
# Steering Committee Meeting #5

**DATE:** Thursday, October 25, 2012
**TIME:** 9:00 – 11:00 AM
**PLACE:** CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Winooski
**PRESENT:**

Amy Bell, VTrans
Ken Belliveau, Town of Williston (9:35)
Michele Boomhower, CCRPC
Bob Chamberlin, RSG
Jason Charest, CCRPC
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Dawn Francis, GBIC/LCCC
Bruce Hoar, Town of Williston
Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation
David Libby, IBM
Dennis Lutz, Town of Essex
Kate McCarthy, VT Natural Resources Council
Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates
Jeff Nick, JL Davis Realty (1:20)
Robin Pierce, Village of Essex Junction
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 reviewed the agenda.

## 2) Status of the WENTS Project

Bob Chamberlin of RSG reviewed the project status, explaining that we are now approaching Phase 3, the development and evaluation of strategies. Finalizing the goals and objectives will complete Phase 2. Phases 4 and 5 will develop the implementation and transportation management plans for the corridor.

## 3) Review and Finalize Network-wide Goals & Objectives

Eleni received a lot of comments to the draft Goals & Objectives and provided a redraft to the committee (see attached). She would like to finalize the document today.

Dawn Francis of GBIC/LCCC asked that "facilitating economic development" be added to the "Regional Mobility" goal. Jeff Nick, representing the business community, agreed. Sandy Levine of CLF noted that economic development is included under the "Economic Vitality" goal. Jason Van Driesche of Local Motion suggested the goal be written as follows (red underlined type added): "REGIONAL MOBILITY. Create a safe, clean and efficient transportation network that minimizes congestion, improves safety, enhances intermodal connections and expands travel options to and from employment and commercial destinations and within selected corridors."

Jeff Nick feels that the predominant transportation mode, single occupancy vehicles (SOV, is not addressed in the Goals & Objectives. He feels that improving road capacity and reducing congestion is the most crucial aspect of this study. Jason V. agreed that a substantial portion of travel will be in single occupancy vehicles for the near future. However, fairly small mode changes during peak hours can significantly reduce congestion. Others felt that SOV were overemphasized in the document. Michele Boomhower of the CCRPC suggested that the premise of the existing transportation system is travel by car and truck. The study acknowledges that most people will continue to travel by car but that we must include other modes too.

Dawn is concerned that the "Sustainability" goal, Objective "e" doesn't acknowledge that small roadway links can help to reducing congestion. She wants assurances that the overarching goal of the study doesn't preclude new links. Jason V. also welcomes new linkages for bicyclists; key connections can disperse traffic, moderate speed, and increase traffic flow.

Michele noted that CCRPC and VTrans policy is to prioritize maintenance of the existing transportation system before making new investments. Jeff is concerned about the language in the study documents being used in a later permitting process to limit road improvements. David Libby of IBM feels that we've been trying too hard to accommodate conflicting modes; when major arteries are shrunk down to accommodate bike lanes, greater congestion results.

Michele suggested adding a preamble to the Goals & Objectives that states the problem as existing and future congestion and the need to address key areas like mobility, access, etc. Solutions may include additional links in the system. Jeff was supportive of this addition. Jason suggested saying "timely, safe access" rather than congestion (an inherent vehicle bias). Dennis Lutz of Essex is concerned about the definitions of mobility and access in transportation lingo while at the same time watering down the statement too much.

Robin Pierce of Essex Junction believes that the roads may be efficient, but that the way people use them is inefficient. He suggested that an educational component be added to the study.

The Sustainability Goal, Objective (e) was rewritten to state (red underlined type added): **Existing roadway system.** Maximize sustainability of the existing transportation network and invest in critical connections and linkages where necessary to improve mobility before investing in major new state or local roads.

Kate noted that the language used to talk about the road system is "car" language. She asked the group to be conscious of this when crafting the preamble and challenged the group to see this as an opportunity, especially for those who are willing to try alternative modes. Jason V. suggested that a common theme is that we don't want solutions that benefit one part of the system at the detriment of another.

Sandy asked about the language that the CIRC is "on hold" rather than "cancelled." Ken Robie of VTrans explained that the CIRC remains a federal project, therefore "on hold." The group agreed to the language: "The Williston Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) was initiated to address multimodal needs within the Circ study area that resulted when it was decided that the Circ Highway, as originally conceived, would not be built."

Eleni agreed to write the draft preamble and update the Goals & Objectives.

**4) Discussion of Revised Strategy Packages**

Bob thanked committee members for their comments. He began by discussing the "Core Improvements" that will be undertaken regardless of which strategy package is ultimately chosen.

**Core Improvements in the Route 2/Route 2A/Route 15 Corridor**

a) *Smart Corridor Signal Operations*
b) *Transit*
   - Add a mid-day trip on the Williston Route weekdays (Burlington-to-Williston)
   - Implement a weekday peak hour Jeffersonville-Burlington commuter route (VT15 and 289)
c) *Land Use/Travel Demand Management*
   -Trip Reduction Ordinances
   -Investigate VT 2A Transportation Management Association (TMA)
d) *Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements*
   -Bicycle/pedestrian connections from adjacent neighborhoods to existing CCTA routes
e) *Williston Grid Streets*
   — Subject to Williston Street design guidelines (which are inclusive of the "complete streets" ideas)

The group offered small adjustments to the map and Bob showed a typical cross-section of a "complete" street. Jason V. noted the current recommendation for bike path width is 5 feet; 4 feet is the minimum. Bob showed a map of existing and possible pedestrian facilities, with the latter needing review through a scoping study. The Industrial Avenue scoping study is nearing completion and the study's recommendations will be included in WENTS.

Bob reviewed the strategy packages in order.

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 1 (SP1): Bridge over the Winooski River**

This strategy constructs a bridge across the Winooski River with ancillary improvements. Michele noted that the group agreed, early in the process, to analyze the bridge strategy. Bob summarized the comments received for this strategy:

- Elements of SP1 (intersection, grid streets and Exit 12 improvements) should be included in any package that is ultimately developed—Town of Williston and IBM
- "LOW PRIORITY. It is our assessment that this strategy package is not needed as a stand-alone item. The bridge should be incorporated into SP3 (grid streets) and the improvements to Route 2A should be incorporated into SP4 (VT2A upgrades)." Local Motion
- "CCTA does not envision any of our existing transit services utilizing the Redmond Road Connector…"
- "Fix it first: Strategies that utilize the existing infrastructure and existing alignments…are going to be the most cost effective. SP1, with the new bride, is inconsistent with this goal." VNRC/CLF

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 2 (SP2): Intersection Improvements**

Comments from Steering Committee on Strategy Package 2:

- "(many elements of SP2) are also part of SP1. Other intersections should be modeled to see what improvements…should be included." Town of Williston
- "LOW PRIORITY. We have deep reservations about this package, as the benefits it provides accrue almost exclusively to car traffic to the detriment of all other modes." Local Motion
- "…CCTA supports targeted improvements that will make increased densities along the existing transit corridors possible in the future."
- "Many of these intersections are key to improving traffic in the corridor and should be addressed in any strategy package that is advanced." IBM
- Combine elements of SP2 (the VT2A intersection improvements) with SP4 to create a Hybrid Package. CSWD
- Town of Essex: No roundabout for the Towers Road intersection—this area is historic and falls under a special design control district and also there is insufficient room to accommodate a roundabout at this location. Address issues at the Mountain View/ North Williston Road intersection.

Jason V. noted that this strategy would transform 2A into a very different type of road that emphasizes moving cars quickly to the detriment of those living and working in the corridor. Dave Libby (IBM) would not want to make this a high speed roadway if Innovation Avenue is built.

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 3 (SP3): Grid Street Network**

Williston is already undertaking the grid street design for Zephyr Road and at streets at Taft Corners. "Innovation Avenue," between US2 and Mountain View Road is in the CIRC right-of-way. IBM sees this as a major commuter corridor. Bob recommends an arterial with no adjacent development. Jason V. suggested that a separated bike path would make more sense than an on-road bike lane. Connections to the two existing neighborhoods were discussed. In general, the group was concerned that connecting to those neighborhoods could put the project in jeopardy, and likely wouldn't provide a significant traffic benefit. A scoping study for Innovation Avenue would have to be undertaken and that's the opportunity to study the corridor in-depth. Sandy and Kate McCarthy of VNRC don't want to build the CIRC piecemeal; this project might do that.

Michele asked that we review the grid streets to decide which ones to carry forward. The group decided the following:

- Remove Fay Lane
- Include River Cove Road and improvements associated with James Brown Drive signalization
- Shirley Road is private, which is a potential negative for neighborhoods in that area. This grid street option should not be evaluated (Ken Belliveau)
- Include Innovation Drive
- Include Taft Corners grid streets as depicted in the presentation
- Remove 2A east side connections

Comments from Steering Committee on Strategy Package 3:

- Town of Williston: Grid Streets #1, 2 & 3 create parallel routes to VT 2A which has potential to take traffic off the arterial with the undesirable consequence of putting traffic through residential neighborhoods. Also, some of these connections are private roads complicating the funding.
- "HIGH PRIORITY. We strongly support this package in its entirety." Local Motion
- "CCTA feels that SP3 offers many benefits." Add pedestrian connections from local roads to existing transit corridors (Industrial Avenue from US2 to VT2A; Harvest Lane from US2 to Marshall).
- "Innovation Ave and improvements to the configuration at Exit 12 would be key elements to improving access to the interstate." IBM
- "I do not see value in a Fay lane connection to Redmond Road or to the Williston Woods connector to Fay lane…these are sleepy rural and residential roads, and the property that they give access to is fraught with wetlands (see Circ EIS)." CSWD

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 4 (SP4):** Vermont 2A Main Line Improvements

Comments from Steering Committee on Strategy Package 4:

- Town of Williston supports most elements of SP4. Some elements have already advanced under the CIRC Alternatives Phase 1 Implementation.
- "MEDIUM PRIORITY. We support improvements to Route 2A that improve safety and promote steady, predictable flow of traffic, so long as improvements do not result in a cross-section that exceeds three lanes…outside of Taft Corners." Local Motion
- "CCTA supports targeted roadway and intersection improvements that will allow for increased development to the extent that current conditions might hamper it…."
- IBM supports improvements to VT2A at Industrial/Mountain View, US2, and Marshall Avenue.
- CSWD supports combining SP4 with elements of SP2 to make a hybrid package.
- VTrans: SP4 is very similar to an alternative studied under the Circ EIS.

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 5 (SP5):** North Williston Road Improvements

Comments from Steering Committee on Strategy Package 5:

- Williston: The Town is not interested in making North Williston Road an arterial (improve the alignment only).
- Acknowledge congestion at multiple intersections along North Williston Road: US2, Mountain View, VT 117.

Bob summarized the common themes and perspectives as: relatively broad support for new interchange configuration for Exit 12 and capacity improvements at VT2A/Mountain View/Industrial Avenue. Comments from Steering Committee:

- CCTA-potential positive impact on land use density in service area (pedestrian access is very important to CCTA at this intersection)
- IBM-"…improving this interchange clearly meets the goals of the study and should be a primary focus area….(Improving the VT2A/Mountain View) intersection should be addressed in any strategy package…"
- CSWD-combine with other elements of SP2 (spot improvements) and SP4 (VT2A)
- Local Motion-Medium Priority(?)-consider a roundabout at VT2A/Mountain View

Bob recommended the following strategies for modeling:

- Future "No Build" with Core Improvements
- Hybrid Strategy Package 1: Combination of Strategy Package 1 and Elements of Strategy Package 2
- Hybrid Strategy Package 2: Combination of Strategy Package 3 (Grid Streets) with Elements of Strategy Package 2
- Strategy Package 4: VT 2A Upgrades

From here, the RSG team will further define the strategy packages and model them. They will provide details about how the packages perform at the November meeting.

Dawn thinks it would be wise for CCTA to consider a future transit hub in Williston. Meredith Birkett of CCTA responded that CCTA does not currently have transfers in Williston, nor do they expect to in the future. Michele asked that CCTA take the lead if they are interested in considering a transit hub in the study corridor. Ken Belliveau of Williston sees opportunities for a park and ride lot by working with Vermont Tech.

There was discussion about whether or not the modeling can demonstrate which strategies are working best and are likely to be cost effective. In general, Bob felt that he could parse this information from the data and report the minimum improvements needed to reduce congestion. RSG will be modeling the hybrid strategies and it's likely there will be a new hybrid at the end of the analysis. Dave asked if we'd have an analysis of environmental, historic, etc. issues that we've seen in past studies. Eleni responded that information would be available during a scoping study, but not at this level of analysis.

**5. Next Steps**

**Quantitative Evaluation of Three Hybrid Strategy Packages**

— Model Process: Model each package as specified, then iterate after observing system performance (i.e., address specific bottlenecks or remove capacity as possible)
— Steering Committee Meeting (Nov 28)

**Development of Network Implementation Plan**

— Development of the preferred strategy package which will include a comprehensive list of multimodal recommendations that support the Goals and Objectives
— Steering Committee Meeting (January 2013)
— Two Selectboard Presentations (January 2013)
— Public Meeting #2 at Williston Planning Commission (February 5, 2013)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20AM.

**The next meeting is November 28, 2012, 1-3PM, CCRPC**

## PROJECT MEMORANDUM #2: FINAL DRAFT NETWORK-WIDE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Williston Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) was initiated to address multimodal needs within the Circ study area that resulted when the Circ Highway was put on-hold. This memorandum proposes network-wide goals and objectives for the WENTS study area. The proposed goals and objectives draw on prior studies, on analyses of Existing Conditions and on discussions to-date with the Steering Committee.

For the purposes of this study, the following framework is used:

**Goals**: General statements of long-range desired outcomes for the study area.

**Objectives**: Specific statements that identify approaches to support the goals.

Statements of goals and objectives are meant to guide the selection and prioritization of improvement strategies for the Study.

***Network-Wide Goals and Objectives***

**REGIONAL MOBILITY. Create a safe, clean and efficient transportation network that minimizes congestion, improves safety, enhances intermodal connections and expands travel options to, from, and within selected corridors.** VT 2A, VT 15, VT 117 and US 2 are significant regional mobility corridors that facilitate the movement of people and freight between the employment, civic and commercial centers of Chittenden County and areas outside the study area.

Key objectives are:

a) **Efficiency.** Reduce traffic congestion and improve travel times along key mobility corridors within the study area.
b) **Safety.** Improve safety of all modes; address High Crash Locations within the study area; and enhance emergency response capabilities.
c) **Connectivity.** Expand travel options and improve intermodal connectivity along mobility corridors. Improve road, bicycle and pedestrian connections from the local transportation network to the existing mobility corridors.
d) **Regional bicycle travel.** Plan and construct a regional system of connected bicycle facilities to provide safe and convenient regional bicycle travel.
e) **Public transit.** Enhance public transit service to make it competitive with vehicle travel; Implement transit service in accordance with CCTA's Transit Development Plan.
f) **Transportation Demand Management (TDM).** Support an effective TDM program to promote reductions in single-occupant vehicle travel.

**LOCAL ACCESS. Create a comprehensive multimodal transportation system in Village areas and Growth Centers that emphasizes safe and convenient access to local businesses, services and neighborhoods.** The study area contains Williston's Village and Growth Center, the Village of Essex Junction, and the Town/Historic Center of Essex Town for which these goals apply.

Key objectives include:

a) **Connectivity.** Improve local transportation system connectivity to provide viable and safe mode alternatives for local trips.

b) **Local walk-bike facilities.** Develop safe and convenient neighborhood-scale bicycle and pedestrian networks to serve existing and future growth.

c) **Local roads.** Promote low-speed local traffic circulation and multimodal access to businesses, neighborhoods and services.

d) **Neighborhoods.** Limit negative impacts to neighborhoods from regional vehicle traffic.

e) **Transit.** Improve transit service to village areas and growth centers consistent with CCTA's Transit Development Plan; maximize neighborhood access to transit stops and Park-and-Ride areas.

**ECONOMIC VITALITY. Support economic development in Chittenden County by enhancing travel reliability for freight, providing safe and efficient multimodal access to employment centers and retail facilities in the Study Area.** The study area contains several large retail developments in Taft Corners and in Essex Town as well as the Champlain Valley Technology and Innovation Park (CVTIP) which includes the IBM campus among others.

Key objectives include:

a) **Efficiency.** Improve travel reliability for freight within mobility corridors; decrease employee commuting time to and from employment centers in the study area.

b) **Access.** Provide safe and efficient multimodal access to major businesses and industrial parks in the area.

c) **Connectivity.** Provide safe and attractive non-motorized connections between commercial/employment centers and residential areas.

d) **Transportation Demand Management (TDM).** Develop TDM programs in partnership with major employers in the study area to reduce single-occupant vehicle travel.

**SUSTAINABILITY. Emphasize policies and investments that build a sustainable transportation system.** These objectives apply to all proposed investments across the study area as a whole.

Key objectives include:

a) **Transportation choices.** Invest in transportation choices to reduce single-occupant automobile travel.

b) **Land use compatibility.** Promote transportation policies and facilities that support municipal and regional land use plans and are appropriate to the context of future development plans.

c) **Development patterns.** Provide transportation facilities that support land use development patterns capable of efficiently using non-automobile transportation.

d) **Environmental impact.** Minimize the environmental impact of transportation investments, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions and VMT.

e) **Existing roadway system.** Maximize sustainability of the existing transportation network before investing in new state or local roads.

Revised October 19, 2012

CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404
802.846.4490
www.ccrpcvt.org

# Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study
# Steering Committee Meeting #6

**DATE:** Thursday, December 13, 2012
**TIME:** 1:00-3:00 PM
**PLACE:** CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal Street, Winooski
**PRESENT:**

Tim Baechle, IBM (1:15)
Amy Bell, VTrans
Ken Belliveau, Town of Williston
Meredith Birkett, CCTA
Michele Boomhower, CCRPC
Bob Chamberlin, RSG
Jason Charest, CCRPC
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC
Christine Forde, CCRPC
Dawn Francis, GBIC/LCCC
Bruce Hoar, Town of Williston
Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation
David Libby, IBM
Dennis Lutz, Town of Essex
Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates
Jeff Nick, JL Davis Realty
Bruce Nyquist, VTrans
Robin Pierce, Village of Essex Junction
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. The agenda is to review the modeling results for the various corridor-wide scenarios.

## 2) Network-wide Goals & Objectives

Sandy Levine of CLF is concerned about the most recent version of the Goals & Objectives. As far as CLF is concerned, Sandy respectfully dissents from the part of the statement that says "A primary focus of WENTS is to address vehicle congestion…"

Jeff Nick of the business community shared his concerns that the Goals and Objectives do not go far enough to address congestion issues in the WENTS area. Jeff will provide the study team with written comments on these issues.

## 3) Project Status Update

Bob Chamberlin of RSG reviewed the project status, explaining that we are now in Phase 3, the development and evaluation of strategies. Phases 4 and 5 will develop the implementation and transportation management plans for the corridor.

## 4) Review of the Modeling Process

Bob explained the modeling process includes the CCRPC Regional Travel Demand Model and the newly-created WENTS Study Area Microsimulation Model.

## 5) Review of Performance Measures

Bob explained that the multimodal performance measures are the same across all strategy packages. The measures that address both system-wide and vehicle mobility performance are:

**System-Wide**

- Cumulative Intersection Stop Delay (intersection congestion) for Primary & Secondary Intersections
- Vehicle Hours Traveled (indicator of congestion)
- Total Vehicle GHG Emissions (CCRPC policy to look at emissions)

**Vehicle Mobility Performance Measures**

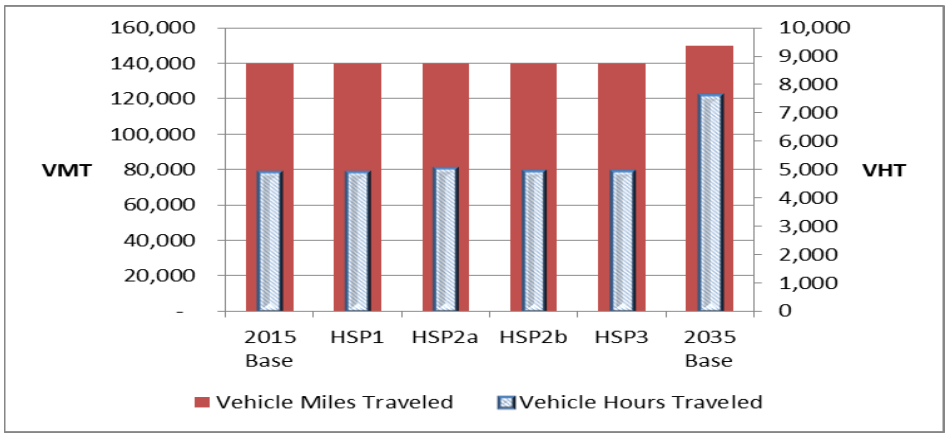
- Corridor Travel Times
- Intersection Metrics (Primary & Secondary Intersections): Including Delay & LOS; V/C Ratios; Queues

Bob explained that at this stage of the strategy analyses, the comparison among strategies packages is more important than the actual numbers. He also reminded the group that when a network improvement is made, it often brings more traffic to the area and thereby could create problems further downstream. This phenomenon will be seen in some of the analyses.

## 5) Summary of Area-wide Modeling Results

Bob gave an overview of each strategy package that will be discussed during today's meeting. These packages include: 2015 base case; three 2015 hybrid strategy packages (HSP) as discussed and agreed to during the October 25th Steering Committee meeting; and 2035 base case. He also discussed summary results for Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) for each strategy package:

**VMT/VHT for Each WENTS Scenario**



VMT is the same across all strategy packages, because the same travel demand is included in the model and the origins and destinations haven't changed. There is a jump in 2035 of about 10 percent, also predicted in the regional model. VHT, a system-wide indicator of congestion, doesn't vary significantly for each scenario. However, in 2035, there is a huge increase in VHT, due to high congestion levels. The congestion is driven by projected additional households and jobs for 2035. Ken Belliveau of Williston questioned the 3,500 new households. [Follow up Note: The estimates are correct. They include the entire WENTS study area, not merely the Williston Growth Center.]
Bob showed a map of the study area and emphasized that we are looking at relatively small overall network improvements as compared to building the Circ Highway. These area-wide measures of congestion, not unexpectedly, don't show significant improvements in the corridor. Bob suggested that modeling results indicate that there are four improvements that are crucial to alleviate congestion. These are:

- Major Capacity Improvements on Route 2A at Exit 12
- Major Capacity Improvements at Mountain View/Route 2A/Industrial Ave intersection and Route 2A corridor
- Smart Corridor Applications/Traffic Operations Center
- Roundabout at N. Williston Road/Route 2

There was discussion about whether or not to include the N. Williston Road roundabout in future presentations. Ken B. felt it was reasonable to give the information to the Selectboard.

**6) Definition of Each Strategy Package**

Bob described each strategy package in detail and provided modeling results for each one. *For simplicity of these notes, each scenario is defined with the committee's comments and some comparative modeling results are given under item 7. For more detail results please download the PowerPoint presentation posted at: http://www.ccrpcvt.org/transportation/corridors/williston-essex-network-transportation-study/wents-steering-committee/.*

***A. 2015 BASE CASE – CORE IMPROVEMENTS***

This strategy package is defined by the following improvements:

- Smart Corridor Applications/Traffic Operations Center
- Williston Grid Streets
- Essex Town Center Connections
- Addressing discontinuities and deficiencies to sidewalks, paths, and shoulders
- Transit Improvements: Add a mid-day trip on the Williston Route weekdays; weekday peak hour Jeffersonville-Burlington commuter route
- CIRC Alternatives Phase 1 implementation projects: Crescent Connector in Essex Junction; VT2A/James Brown Drive Signal (w/ VT2A left-turn lanes); VT117/ Sand Hill Rd. traffic signal
- CIRC Alternatives Phase 2 implementation projects:VT15/Sand Hill Road Intersection improvements, Essex; VT15 Improvements (Post Office Square to 5-Corners), Essex Junction; VT15 Multiuse Path, Winooski, Colchester, Essex, and Essex Junction

***B. HYBRID STRATEGY PACKAGE 1***

This package is defined by the following improvements: Redmond Road Connector and new bridge over the Winooski; connect Allen Martin Parkway to VT289; capacity improvements at Industrial

Ave/Mountain View/VT 2A intersection; and signalization of Redmond Road/Mountain View intersection.

***C. HYBRID STRATEGY PACKAGE 2a: INTERSECTION AND CORRIDOR CAPACITY IMPROVEMENTS***

This package is defined by the following improvements:

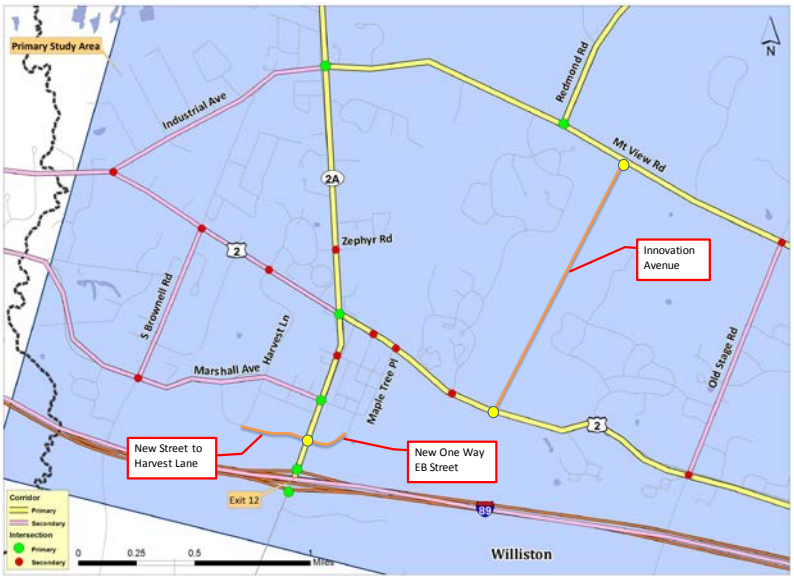
- Towers Rd / VT 128/ VT 15
- N. Williston Road/US 2/Oak Hill Road (roundabout suggested by RSG)
- N. Williston Road/VT117
- Industrial / Mountain View / VT2A
- VT2A/Marshall Avenue
- New northbound left-turn lane at Exit 12 (reconstruction of interchange)

Dawn Francis of GBIC/LCCC feels that upgrading all these intersections in all of these strategies destroys the experience for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists – and all because we are not building the Circ Highway.

***D. HYBRID STRATEGY PACKAGE 2b: NEW STREETS***

This package is defined by the following improvements:

- Add a new 2-way street connecting VT 2A to Harvest Lane (near the Fairfield Inn) - this improvement has a significant impact
- Add a new one-way eastbound street connecting VT 2A with the Maple Tree Place (behind Staples/Dick's)
- Add Innovation Avenue connecting US 2 and Mountain View (utilizing the Circ ROW)




Dawn suggested that Innovation Avenue could be the new "hazardous materials route" for trucks. Michele doubted that the Town of Williston would be inclined to do so. Michele suggested that FHWA will not spend $12-15 million on Innovation Avenue to serve 100 cars per hour especially considering the wetlands issues. Jeff noted that there will be growth at the IBM campus that will increase the number of vehicles using Innovation Avenue. Eleni responded that this will be accounted for in the 2035 modeling that will be completed soon.

***E. HYBRID STRATEGY PACKAGE 3***

This package includes rebuilding the VT2A Corridor from Exit 12 to the Winooski River Bridge, including the following capacity improvements:

- At VT 2A/Marshall Avenue/Maple Tree Place, add northbound through lane to Taft Corners (US2) and a second westbound through lane
- At Industrial Ave./Mountain View/VT2A, add second northbound through lane, eastbound second left-turn lane, and westbound left-turn lane
- At Exit 12, add a northbound left lane at northbound ramps
- From VT 2A/Industrial Avenue/Mountain View to the bridge, add left-turn lanes at all intersections
- Add the following new streets: connect Harvest Lane near Home Depot to VT 2A at the state police barracks; connect VT2A through state police barracks to the roundabout in Maple Tree Place

Amy Bell of VTrans asked for a clarification of the 2A improvements. Bob explained it includes a full reconstruction of Exit 12. Jeff asked if there are small tweaks that can be made to Exit 12 to improve it in the near-term. Michele explained that this study is a more high-level analysis; a scoping study will be much more detailed and include short-term fixes.

Dennis Lutz of Essex suggested the committee consider a "hybrid of hybrids" for a "new" strategy package. He's concerned that we can fix individual intersections to improve capacity, but we're not going to improve overall congestion in the area. If we are going to spend this much money and not improve congestion, are we back to the Circ being the best investment? Dawn agreed that we are significantly changing the character of the intersections, especially for pedestrians. Bob responded that Dennis is correct; we've been charged to design solutions that approach the Circ's congestion impacts. Ken Robie of VTrans explained that this process will not do the same thing as the Circ; rather, he suggested we look for incremental system improvements.

Jeff suggested that if we do not improve congestion, people will move further out of the growth centers. Dawn suggested that moving forward with the bridge option doesn't make sense. Michele explained that we committed to the towns, early in the process, to analyze the bridge.

Eleni suggested that we focus on the "hybrid of the hybrids" for further analysis. The group agreed that RSG and CCRPC staff should develop this new strategy package and complete the 2035 modeling. The HSP1 (Redmond Road Connector and new bridge) will also be modeled for 2035.

Michele suggested that RSG should also model Innovation Avenue for 2035 to ascertain how IBM growth impacts congestion. Dawn suggested Innovation Avenue should connect to the Interstate; Michele explained that the Selectboards did not agree to do that. Ken R. explained that the Circ EIS outlined the issues with the segment to the Interstate. This segment will not be built.

**7) Summary of Modeling Results**

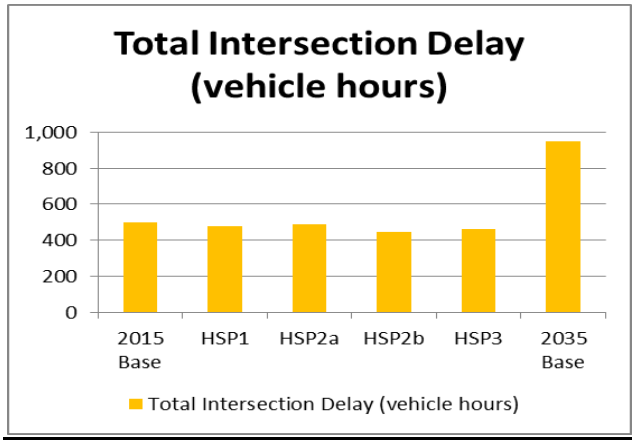
***A. Summary of Costs***

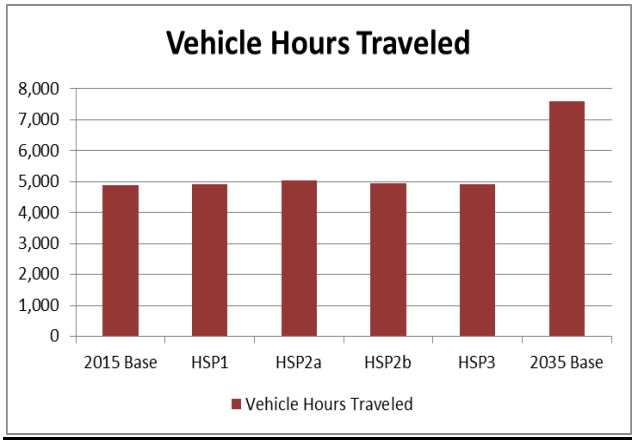
Hybrid Strategy Package 1: $49-73 million

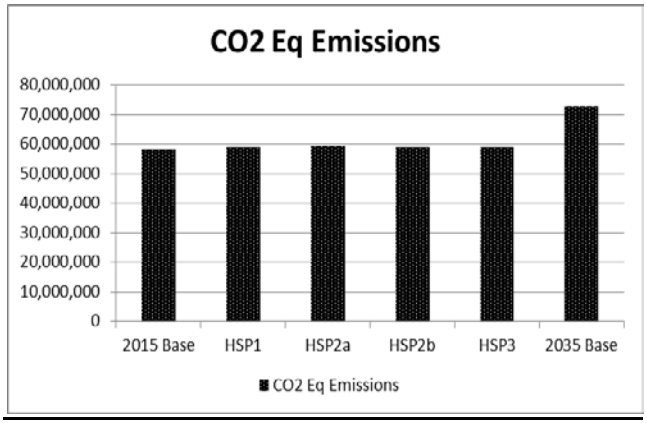
Hybrid Strategy Package 2a: $24-39 million
Hybrid Strategy Package 2a & 2b: $49-63 million
Hybrid Strategy Package 3: $32-43 million
Core Improvements: $15-20 million (does not include grid streets cost)

Sandy asked how to evaluate the core improvements. Bob explained that they account for a 5 percent reduction in internal growth center trips; these improvements are not enough to meet our congestion goals. Jason asked if there was a metric for cost/benefit analysis across all the strategies.

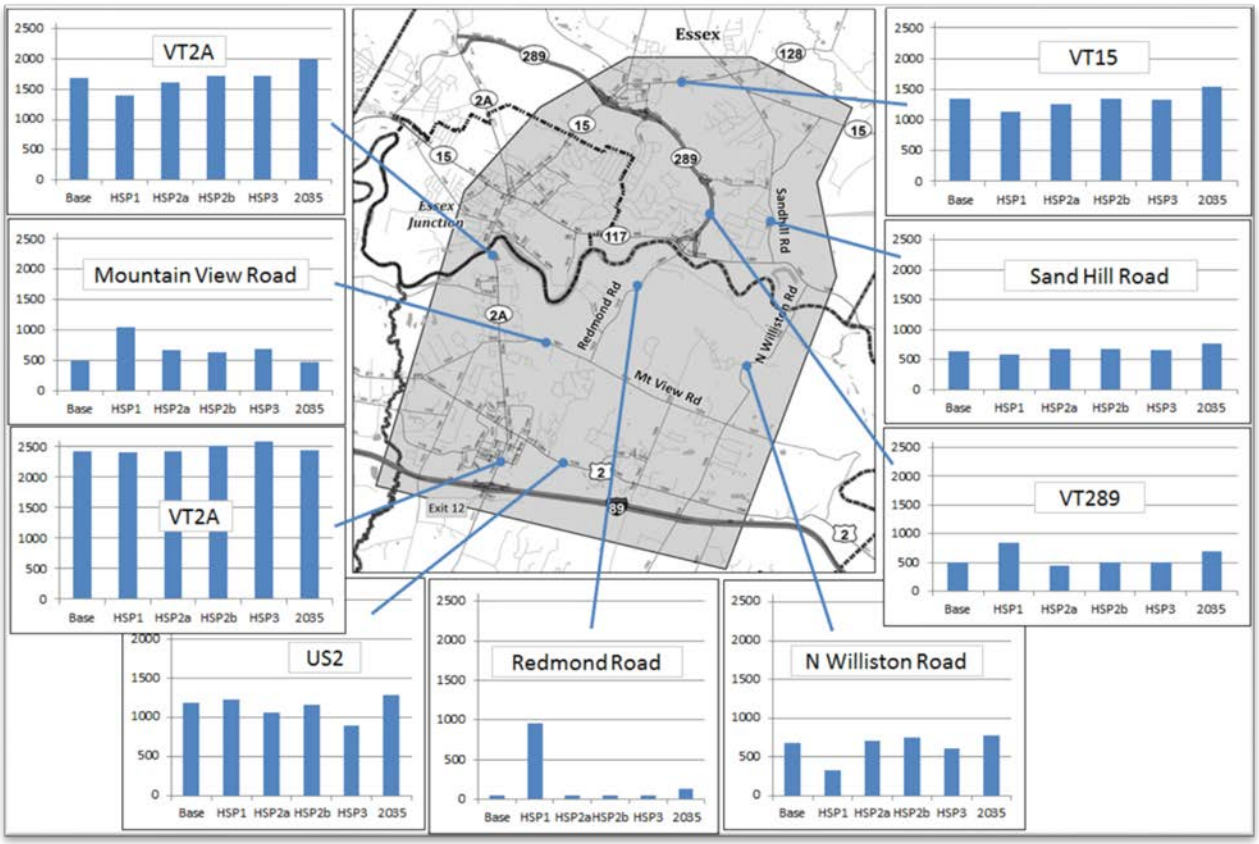
***B. Summary of Performance Measures***



**Traffic Flows for 2035 Base Case**




## 8) Next Steps

- Based on capacity results to date, RSG and CCRPC staff will develop a New Hybrid Strategy Package for 2035 evaluation
- 2035 Evaluation for HSP1 (Redmond Road Connector and new bridge) and the New Hybrid Package
  - Iteration of 2035 modeling runs to provide more definition
  - Development of Performance Measures
  - Right-of-Way Impacts
  - Natural Resources Impacts and Permitting
  - Refinement of Cost Estimates and Timeline
- **Future Meetings**
  - Informational Presentation to Williston and Essex Selectboards scheduled for January 9, 2013 at 7:00PM
  - Public Meeting #2 scheduled for February 5, 2013 at 7:30PM
- **Development of Network Implementation Plan**
  - Development of the preferred strategy package which will include a comprehensive list of multimodal recommendations that support the Goals & Objectives

The committee will not meet prior to the January 9th Selectboard presentation. Bob and Eleni will send information out for committee review prior to the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM.

CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404
802.846.4490
www.ccrpcvt.org

**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.

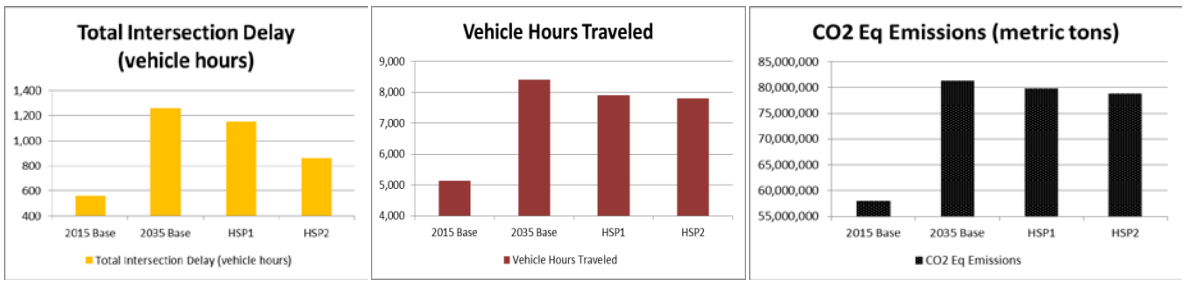
There was discussion about improvements to the VT 2A/Mountain View/Industrial Ave intersection and how they differ between Strategy Packages. For HSP1, the improvements facilitate the movement of vehicles to access the new bridge. Under HSP2, the improvements are more significant due to the need to address 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 that the final study report present data or a metric that identifies the immediate impact of the improvements under HSP2 if all of the recommendations are implemented. The report shows the existing level of the problem at each of the selected intersections or road segments and what those intersections/segments will look like in 2035. Essentially, many of the problem areas start out bad, perhaps an LOS F and end up 20 years later at LOS D. Dennis suspects that the LOS may go up immediately to LOS C and then eventually drop off to D. He would like to see the identification of the short-term improvement in order to balance it against the price tag.

***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.

## 4) Public Meetings – Media Advisory, Agenda, Meeting Notes, and Evaluations

- Public Meeting #1 (Local Concerns) June 19, 2012
- Public Meeting #2 (Alternatives Analysis) February 5, 2013

## Outreach Plans for WENTS Public Meetings

- Information posted on project website (hosted by CCRPC)
- Email announcement to Steering Committee members and CIRC Task Force
- Email announcement to those who attended 12/2011 CIRC Presentation
- Email announcement to those who expressed interest in study
- Paid Advertisement in the Williston Observer and Essex Reporter
- Media Advisory emailed, including Walk & Roll News
- Posting on Front Porch Forum by CCRPC
- Posting to BFP, Seven Days, Essex Reporter, and Williston Observer Calendars
- Email announcement to Chittenden County Legislators
- Email announcement to municipalities with request to post to Front Porch Forum

**MEDIA ADVISORY – June 1, 2012**

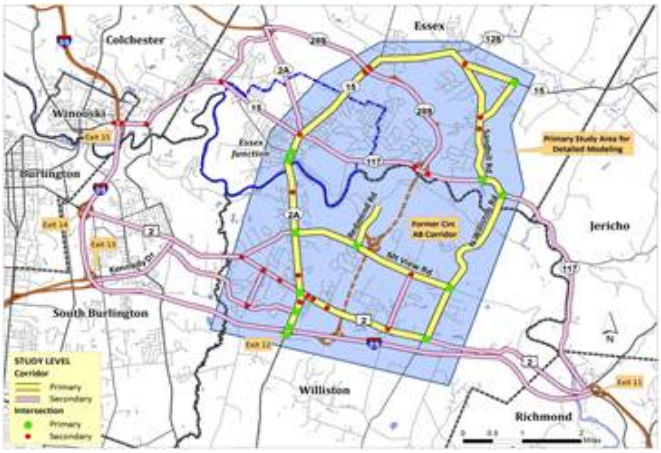
**Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study Public Meeting**
**Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) Public Meeting #1**
**Tuesday, June 19th, 7:30 – 9:00 PM**
**Williston Town Hall, 7900 Williston Road**

**Come tell us what YOU think!**

**Tell us about the issues and share your ideas of how to improve travel in Williston, Essex, and Essex Junction**

Governor Shumlin's announcement that the Circumferential Highway (Circ) - as originally conceived - would not be built leaves major portions of Williston, Essex and Essex Junction without an integrated, coordinated plan for addressing congestion and safety. For this reason, the CCRPC in conjunction with the towns, VTrans and other stakeholders has initiated the Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS).

The goal of WENTS is to develop a multimodal transportation improvement plan for major roadways in the study area (see map) to address mobility, connectivity, and safety. The Plan will include a comprehensive and coordinated list of highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and land use recommendations.



**Study area for Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)**

The first public meeting, on **Tuesday, June 19th from 7:30 – 9:00 PM at Williston Town Hall,** will outline the goals and objectives of the study, describe existing transportation and land use conditions, and welcome public input on issues and opportunities in the study area.

The Study is sponsored by the Town of Williston, Town of Essex, Village of Essex Junction, and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC).

The meeting is free and open to the public. Reasonable arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least 72 hours in advance. Contact Diane at 865.1794 or diane@thirdsectorassociates.com.

http://www.ccrpcvt.org/corridors/williston-essex-network-transportation-study/

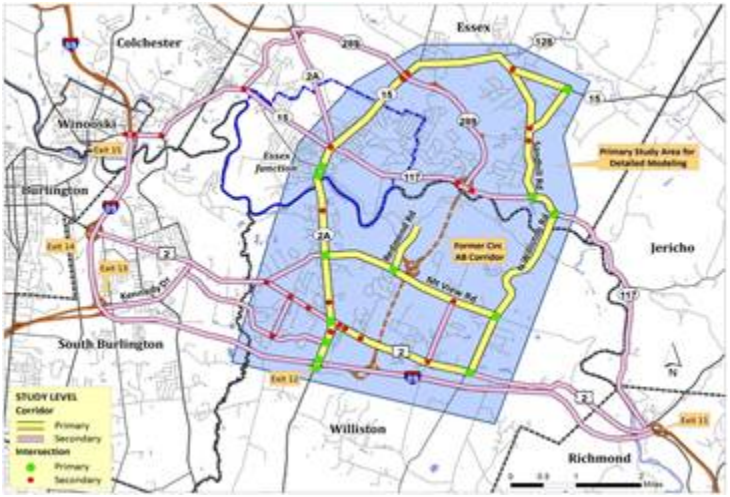
**###**

**Public Meeting Handout**
**Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) Public Meeting #1**
**Tuesday, June 19, 2012, 7:30-9:00 PM, Williston Town Hall**

## Background

Governor Shumlin's announcement that the Circumferential Highway (Circ) - as originally conceived - would not be built leaves major portions of Williston, Essex and Essex Junction without an integrated, coordinated plan for addressing congestion and safety. For this reason, the CCRPC in conjunction with the towns, VTrans and other stakeholders has initiated the Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS).

The goal of WENTS is to develop a multimodal transportation improvement plan for major roadways in the study area (see map) to address mobility, connectivity, and safety. The Plan will include a comprehensive and coordinated list of highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and land use recommendations.



**Study area for Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)**

## Study Sponsors

Town of Williston, Town of Essex, Village of Essex Junction, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC)

## Study Contact Information

**CCRPC Project Manager**
Eleni Churchill, 660-4071 x11, echurchill@ccrpcvt.org

**Consultant Team Project Manager**
Bob Chamberlin, Resource Systems Group, (802) 295-4999, robert.chamberlin@rsginc.com

## Study Website

http://www.ccrpcvt.org/corridors/williston-essex-network-transportation-study/

June 18, 2012

**Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)**
**Comment/Concern/Question Form**

Please use this form to make comments, express concerns, or ask questions about the Facility. We welcome feedback on any of our public meetings and handouts. Thanks for your time and interest.

Date_____

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*Optional*: Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

**Please submit this sheet at the meeting, or mail to:**
Eleni Churchill, Senior Transportation Planning Engineer
CCRPC, 110 West Canal Street, Suite 202, Winooski, VT 05404

Email to: echurchill@ccrpcvt.org

*Please note: Information you provide is considered public according to Vermont law and is therefore available for public inspection.*

**Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)**
**Public Meeting #1 *(Hosted by the Williston Planning Commission)***
**http://www.ccrpcvt.org/corridors/williston-essex-network-transportation-study/**

**DATE:** Tuesday, June 19th, 2012
**TIME:** 7:30 – 9:00 PM
**PLACE:** Williston Town Hall, 7900 Williston Road
**PRESENT:** Please see page 6

## 1) Welcome & Introductions

The meeting of the Williston Planning Commission was called to order at 7:30PM by the Chair, Jake Mathon. Ken Belliveau, Williston Planning Director, explained that the Planning Commission is hosting the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) tonight. CCRPC and its consultant, Resource Systems Group, will be presenting information and taking public input about the Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS). This effort is part of the CIRC Alternatives Task Force in which the Town has been a participant.

## 2) History of the Study

Michele Boomhower of the CCRPC thanked the Planning Commission for hosting tonight's meeting. She introduced members of the WENTS Steering Committee and the CIRC Alternatives Task Force in attendance, as well as CCRPC staff and consultants. She encouraged participants to check the Task Force's website at: http://www.circtaskforce.org/

Michele explained that WENTS is the result of Governor Shumlin's announcement that the Circumferential Highway (CIRC) - as originally conceived - would not be built. The Governor asked CCRPC to convene a Task Force of CIRC-area towns, VTrans, and other stakeholders to develop an integrated, coordinated plan for addressing congestion and safety in the corridor. The Task Force began meeting last summer to create evaluation criteria and prioritize both planning and implementation projects in the CIRC planning area. The resulting implementation projects have been programmed and were included in the State's Capital Plan. These include: Transportation Demand Management projects, Exit 16 improvements, Crescent Connector, and the Essex 2A/289 interchange. The resulting planning projects are underway, including WENTS. The outcomes of WENTS will help identify projects that will move into detailed scoping and finally to the Capital Program. This fall, the Task Force will look at FY 14 projects for consideration by the Legislature in January. The outcomes of WENTS will likely be under consideration the following year for the FY 15 Capital Program.

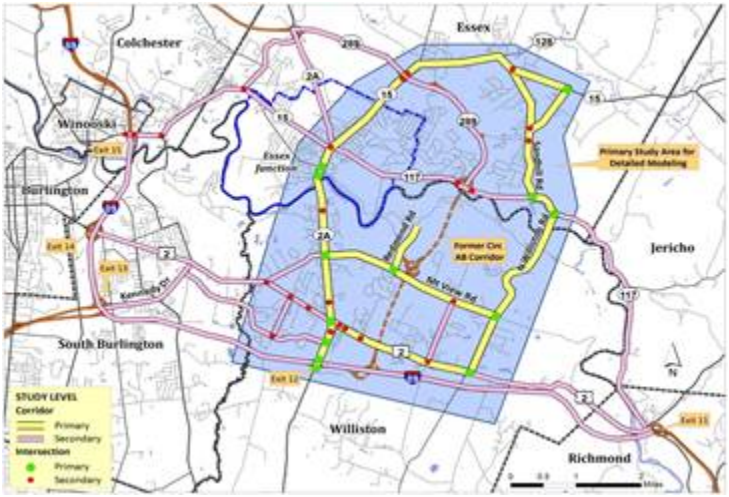
## 2) Presentation of Future Corridor Conditions, Vision & Goals, Issues & Potential Strategies

Bob Chamberlin of RSG made a presentation about the project. He discussed the purpose of the meeting, study need and purpose, study area, scope of work, and existing land use. His presentation focused on land use and existing transportation conditions. He is interested in people's concerns in the study area and ideas to improve travel and safety.

### *A. Study Need & Purpose*

The Study will be an integrated transportation planning process to address multimodal mobility and safety issues within the former CIRC EIS area. The result will be a comprehensive and coordinated list of highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian, and land use recommendations that satisfy an overall vision for the area. The study will incorporate the Complete Streets bill (Act 34) that mandates transportation projects consider the needs of all users. The study will follow the State's "Corridor Management" planning process (http://www.aot.state.vt.us/planning/vtcorridor.htm).

### *B. Study Area*




### *C. Scope of Work*

In Phase 1, which is complete, two major network strategies were evaluated. Phases 2-5 will follow the typical Corridor Management Plan process. CCRPC and the consultant team will work with the Study's Steering Committee to develop a series of recommended strategies. Some of these strategies will move forward to more detailed analysis in the scoping process.

The WENTS Steering Committee took a slight departure from the normal Corridor Management Plan process by undertaking Phase 1. The CIRC Task Force asked that two strategies be studied at the beginning of WENTS - essentially the CIRC A alignment (Major Network Strategy #1) and a strategy similar to the CIRC B alignment to include a bridge across the Winooski River, accessed by Redmond Road to Mountain View Road (Major Network Strategy #2). These strategies were analyzed (using existing CIRC Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) data) for travel implications, environmental impacts, and cost. The legislative bodies in Williston and Essex voted to move Major Network Strategy #2 forward. This strategy will be studied along with other strategies that are developed; it will not necessarily be a recommendation of the final study.

### *D. Future Land Use*

Bob and the CCRPC staff met with the three municipal planners to determine projects in permitting or expected to be in permitting in the near future. Williston is planning grid streets and related developments in Taft Corners, a proposed VTrans Park & Ride near Exit 12, the Finney Crossing residential development, and plans for 70 percent of future residential growth to be located in the growth center area. Essex is working on development associated with the Interstate 289 ramp areas,

Susie Wilson Road, Essex Center/Lang Farms, and the residential development at the terminus of Winooski River. Essex Junction is looking at possible IBM expansion to add 800-1,000 new employees.

***E. Roadway Systems, Traffic Volumes, Safety, & Access Management***

Bob described the functional class of various roads, traffic volumes, and how they function in the study area. He showed maps comparing traffic volumes throughout the corridor and discussed the Level of Service (LOS) currently and what is expected in the future. He explained that in the last few years, traffic volumes have stayed flat or decreased, likely due to economic factors and high gasoline prices. The study area has five intersections that are High Crash Locations (HCLs) as well as road segments that are HCLs. He suggested that there are opportunities for the municipalities to improve access management as land use proposals are reviewed by planning commissions.

***F. Transit***

CCTA has a number of routes that serve the area now and there will be some changes to transit frequency in the short term.

***G. Bicycle Facilities***

Bob showed a map of existing and proposed bicycle facilities.

**3) Comments & Questions**

Ken Belliveau (Williston Planning Director): Is there traffic count data for the section of Mountain View Road adjacent to N. Williston Road? If not, can we get data? Mark Smith: There is no data because it's a local road. Michele Boomhower: We can collect data if it's needed. Ken: We know that intersection is a problem. The Planning Commission is concerned about the queuing of traffic at the PM peak hour.

Meghan Cope (Planning Commission): Can you define a primary and secondary intersection? Bob: We developed these definitions for WENTS. A primary intersection is one that has been identified as most problematic and will be more intensely analyzed. A secondary intersection won't be analyzed as closely. For instance, Five Corners has been studied intensely already; we will not repeat that work.

Meghan Cope: Can your transportation model account for transit scheduling changes? Bob: Yes. If investments in alternative modes result in reduced vehicle demand, it will be accounted for in the model.

Charlie Dykes: What is the timeframe of your change in traffic volumes in last 20 years? Bob: 1994. Charlie: It doesn't feel like traffic is going down. I really wonder about the data. Bob: In the last few years, traffic volumes nationwide have stayed flat or decreased, likely due to economic factors and high gasoline prices.

Jake Mathon (Planning Commission): In the evenings, Mountain View Road has queues, which brings out the necessity of looking at PM peak as well as overall traffic levels. Bob: Our plan is to calibrate the traffic model to PM peak traffic. The rationale is that if we can improve travel at the PM peak hour, we are likely improving traffic at other times of day too.

Meghan Cope: The Planning Commission has been concerned about pass through traffic. We are very aware that Route 2 and N. Williston Road are a piece of a much longer commute. Can you account for that in these analyses? Bob: There are clear commuting patterns through the study area. We are accounting for this in the transportation model which is part of the regional model. We have data about regional as well as local traffic. What is challenging is the full mix of traffic – local as well as out of the area to businesses like IBM. That makes it challenging to satisfy all the travelers. Creating density in the town center gives people the option to take short trips without cars.

Shannon Hiltner (Planning Commission): Do we have estimated numbers for strategies 1 and 2 combined? Bob: The numbers are from the CIRC EIS and that information would be in the EIS. We didn't look at those together. Frankly, neither strategy is very effective on its own because it doesn't solve the traffic problems and there are environmental issues.
Michael Alvanos (Planning Commission): If we move forward with strategies 1 and 2, would it help increase our density? Does the CIRC provide Williston the ability to grow the way it wants to grow? Bob: This study will not look at CIRC A and B together. We looked at them separately and the municipalities decided to consider CIRC B as one strategy. Michele: The CIRC will not be built as originally conceived. A new I-89 interchange and road connecting to Mountain View will not be considered in this study or in any future analysis.

Iris Banks: Your bike map shows a major bike path. What is it? Bob: It is the designated Cross Vermont Trail. Some segments exist and some are planned. We will look at bike improvements as part of this study. Essex and Williston both have bike Master Plans that will be incorporated in the final recommendations. We are looking at biking as a serious mode. There is a bright future for bike transportation and we know that the networks aren't complete. Ken Belliveau: I've never seen the proposed bike facility from Mountain View north across river into Essex. Bob: I thought it was in your Bike Plan. We'll follow up.

Peter Duval: I've seen the STIP over many years and I'm amazed that people continue to think of the CIRC highway as a viable roadway. It's been for decades now way beyond the ability of the State to afford. I'm wondering how we can change the thinking that leads to the conclusion that the CIRC would solve all the problems. I see an assumption that PM peak congestion is bad. I'd like to know why that assumption is inserted into these discussions. Congestion is good – it's a mark of bigger, it's an indicator that a facility is being used well. The idea that we need to plan for LOS is so deterministic. Can you do an alternative analysis using an alternative methodology that arrives at a different way of thinking about transportation? Bob: I think the land use solution is the best long range solution to congestion. Congestion is bad in other ways – because High Crash Locations are found in very congested areas. Some of what we need to do is address the most hazardous conditions and some will require reducing congestion – those are too serious to ignore.

John FitzGerald: The CIRC highway was supposed to provide a fast movement around the area that you are trying to develop upward. One of the bottlenecks that causes that, is that planning commissions for each little town … I was on the Essex Junction planning commission and other boards … wherever two roads cross there is an increase in traffic. We know that all our traffic is between Exits 16 and 13. We've rebuilt Exit 14 at least three times. We can add a lane between any of them to address peak hour traffic more quickly. We need to do that as a county. We have to think about the county and about what's happening in Hinesburg, Essex, Burlington. On all the committees Burlington has a

weighted vote. Once we get this as a community as a county and treat it like a county then we could build it like a county. Housing could be at the interchanges so the buses could pick people up. There's a lot happening and a lot more going to happen. We have to start thinking like a county. South Brownell Road is not on your map. As soon as we mention South Brownell, someone will buy up the property and develop there. We would have a chance to get away from Route 116 and 2A if we looked at 116 where it connects with South Brownell and where it comes into the new Technology Park in South Burlington. Build density in those areas.

Iris Banks: Densitizing? What would that look like and does it change the nature of a place by making it more urban? Imagine a place where you could work and live and not use your car. What are the ramifications of that change? Response: Ken Belliveau talked about Williston's plans for the growth center and higher density there.

Michael Alvanos: Do you think that AB will eventually help the town's larger growth plan? Bob: It's highly debated. During the CIRC process there were strong opinions on all sides. There tends to be development proximate to the interchanges and that causes congestion issues. However, there is value to improving access to IBM who is a huge economic benefit to the state. It would be great if we can find a way to improve mobility to major employers and also to facilitate good land use planning and good transportation improvements. Michael Alvanos: We want to grow the way we want to grow and also support regional development. Bob: We are exploring a Smart Corridor Development with IBM on Route 2A. It involves adding detectors to roadways to optimize flows during peak periods.

Meghan Cope: Can time be considered more creatively in the analysis? We always talk about PM peak. What are some things that could be done to stagger work hours and provide incentives for off-hour trips? There must be other solutions to use our existing infrastructure more efficiently. Bob: That's Travel Demand Management (TDM) programming, which is underway in the County. IBM is on our steering committee and their shifts are already off peak.

Luke Baynes (Williston Observer): Now that you know what areas you will study, what kind of things will you be doing in Phase 2 to get this data to another level of specificity? Bob: Major Network Strategy 2 is just one of three possible packages of projects to achieve our goals. There will be a process to evaluate and compare strategies as we move forward.

Guy Morin: People who cross the Winooski River will end up where? Bob: At Route 2A and Mountain View Road. That will be a congestion point.

Charlie Dykes: We could do better with the design of intersections. The more you can flow them without stopping and idling would be great. Bob: It's hard to innovate in traffic. We design to the lowest common denominator for safety. The Double Crossover Diamond in Colchester is innovative and it takes guts to move that forward. A "counterflow" intersection, used in South America, is an innovation that would be difficult to implement here.

Jeff Nick: I speak from the business community's standpoint. Congestion is very frustrating for major employers and we hear they are unable to find suitable land accessible to the Interstate. We could do a lot of little things to improve traffic flows and I think taking some bold steps is in order here. We study things to death. Make bold, quick moves.

Peter Duval: Thinking about the future. The State has recognized the climate crisis. I haven't heard anything mentioned about that or about the long term vehicle miles traveled. We should see a drop off in traffic with real time rideshare. What's your plan for that? Bob: Greenhouse gas emission will be included in our traffic model. Trends include gas prices going up and that affects travel. There are new technologies, too. Electric vehicles will become more prevalent which might reduce the cost of travel. We will look at both the short term (not much traffic growth) and long term (some traffic growth) and evaluate the strategies.

John FitzGerald: The CIRC highway is a compromise. I told Marty Myers years ago that if you build the bridges someone will find a way to connect them. If the planning commissions and the RPC exert their power we'll have less speeches from government that the CIRC is dead.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15PM.

**Participants**

| Last | First | Affiliation | Town |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alvanos | Mike | Williston Planning Commission | Williston |
| Banks | Iris | | Essex Junction |
| Baynes | Luke | Williston Observer | Williston |
| Bourgeois | Tim | | Williston |
| Cope | Meghan | Williston Planning Commission | Williston |
| Duval | Peter | | Underhill |
| Dykes | Charlie | | Williston |
| FitzGerald | John | | Essex |
| Hiltner | Shannon | Williston Planning Commission | Williston |
| Mathon | Jake | Williston Planning Commission | Williston |
| Michoud | Jay | | Williston |
| Morin | Guy | | Essex Junction |
| Skiff | Ruth | | Williston |
| Waite-Simpson | Linda | | Essex Junction |

**Williston Planning Department Staff Present:** Ken Belliveau, Matt Boulanger
**CCRPC Staff Present:** Michele Boomhower, Eleni Churchill
**WENTS Steering Committee/CIRC Task Force Members Present:** Meredith Birkett (CCTA), Sandra Levine (CLF), Kate McCarthy (VNRC), Jeff Nick (Business Community), Jason VanDriesche (Local Motion)
**Consultants:** Bob Chamberlin and Mark Smith, Resource Systems Group (RSG), Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates

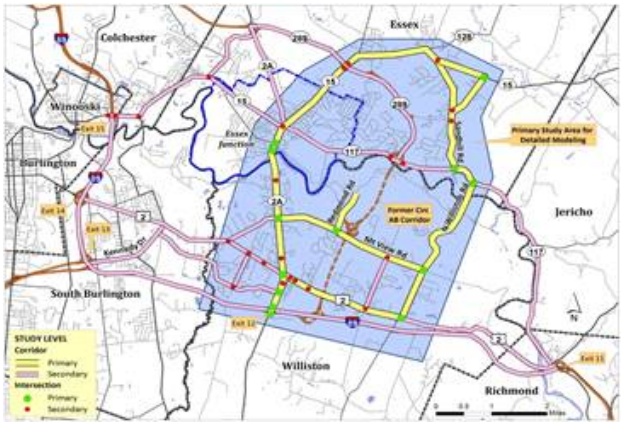
**MEDIA ADVISORY – January 15, 2013**

**WHAT:** **Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) Public Meeting #2**
**WHERE:** **Williston Town Hall, 7900 Williston Road**
**WHO:** **Town of Williston, Town of Essex, Village of Essex Junction, CCRPC**
***Hosted by the Williston Planning Commission***
**WHEN:** **Tuesday, February 5, 2013, 7:30 – 9:00 PM**

**Come Hear About the Study Results and Next Steps to Improve Travel For All Modes in Williston, Essex, and Essex Junction**

Governor Shumlin's announcement that the Circumferential Highway (Circ) - as originally conceived - would not be built leaves major portions of Williston, Essex and Essex Junction without an integrated, coordinated plan for addressing congestion and safety. For this reason, the CCRPC in conjunction with the towns, VTrans and other stakeholders initiated the Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS).

The goal of WENTS was to develop a multimodal transportation improvement plan for major roadways in the study area (see map) to address mobility, connectivity, and safety. The final Plan will include a comprehensive and coordinated list of highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and land use recommendations.




**Study area for Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)**

The second and final public meeting, on **Tuesday, February 5, 2013 from 7:30 – 9:00 PM at Williston Town Hall**, will include a presentation of the findings of the study and preliminary recommendations on how to move forward. Refreshments will be served.

The Study is sponsored by the Town of Williston, Town of Essex, Village of Essex Junction, and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC).

All are welcome and encouraged to attend. In accordance with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the CCRPC will ensure public meeting sites are accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for free interpretive or translation services, assistive devices, or other accommodations should be made to Andrea Grayson, CCRPC Title VI Coordinator, at 802-846-4490 ext. 21 (711 for Telecommunications Relay Services), or agrayson@ccrpcvt.org, at least 72 hours in advance.

For additional information, contact Diane at 865.1794 or diane@thirdsectorassociates.com.

http://www.ccrpcvt.org/corridors/williston-essex-network-transportation-study/

###

**Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)**
**Public Meeting #2 *(Hosted by the Williston Planning Commission)***
http://www.ccrpcvt.org/corridors/williston-essex-network-transportation-study/

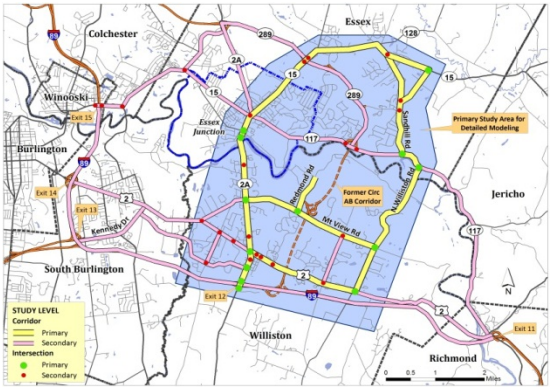
**DATE:** Tuesday, February 5, 2013
**TIME:** 7:30 – 9:00 PM
**PLACE:** Williston Town Hall, 7900 Williston Road
**PRESENT:** Please see page 5

## 1) Welcome & Introductions

The meeting of the Williston Planning Commission was called to order at 7:30PM by the Chair, Jake Mathon. Jake introduced Michele Boomhower of the CCRPC who explained that her organization oversaw the development of the Williston-Essex Transportation Study (WENTS). Michele explained that WENTS is the result of Governor Shumlin's announcement that the Circumferential Highway (CIRC) - as originally conceived - would not be built. CCRPC was charged to study the area's transportation issues without the benefit of the CIRC Highway. The study looked at a large geographic area and created "strategy packages" to provide congestion relief. The process has been guided by a Steering Committee which includes municipal representatives, VTrans, resource and economic development organizations, and "modal" partners (CCTA, Local Motion). The Steering Committee made a recommendation to the CIRC Alternatives Task Force to advance a package of recommendations for detailed study. Michele introduced Bob Chamberlin of RSG to present the study results.

## 2) WENTS Presentation

Bob Chamberlin outlined the study area:




### *A. Study Need and Goals*

Bob explained that the study's goals were to create an integrated transportation plan to address multimodal mobility and safety issues within the former CIRC area, and to produce a comprehensive and coordinated list of highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and land use recommendations that satisfy an overall vision for the area. The study was also mindful of the Complete Streets bill (requiring the consideration of all users). The study followed a "Corridor Management" planning process.

### *B. The Study Process*

In Phase 1, which is complete, two major network strategies were evaluated. In Phases 2-5, the consultant team worked with the Steering Committee to develop a series of recommended strategies. The study is in the last phase of developing a Transportation Management Plan.

WENTS took a slight departure from the normal Corridor Management Plan process in Phase 1. The CIRC Alternatives Task Force asked that two strategies be studied at the beginning of WENTS - essentially the Circ A alignment (Major Network Strategy #1) and a strategy similar to the Circ B alignment to include a bridge across the Winooski River (Major Network Strategy #2). These strategies were analyzed (using existing Circ Environmental Impact Statement data) for travel implications, environmental impacts, and cost. The legislative bodies of Williston and Essex voted to move Major Network Strategy #2 forward. This strategy was studied along with other strategies that were developed.

### *C. Initial Strategies Considered*

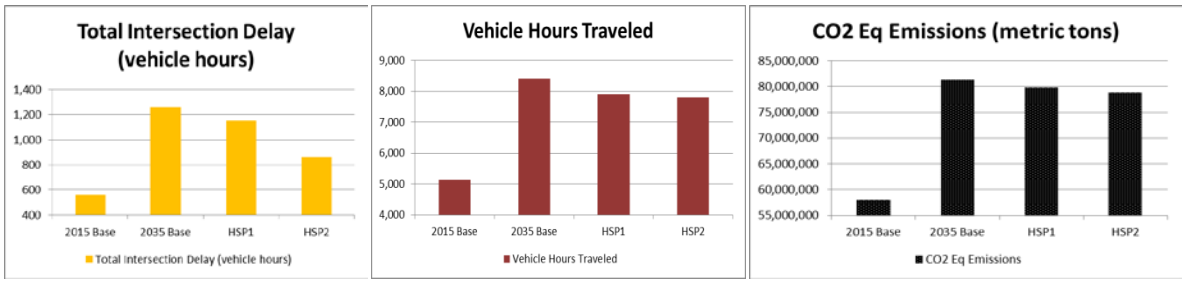
The "Core Improvements," those that will be incorporated into the final strategy package, with an estimated cost of approximately $15-17 million, include:

- Williston Grid Streets
- 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 services including a weekday, mid-day trip on the Williston Route and a weekday, peak hour Jeffersonville-Burlington commuter route.

The other strategies included: Major Network Strategy 2 (new bridge); Spot Intersection Improvements in the study area; New local street connections; Vermont 2A mainline capacity expansion; and North Williston Road capacity expansion.

### *D. Final Strategy Packages for the WENTS Area*

Two "hybrid" strategy packages (HSP1 & HSP2) were developed by combining strategies from previously evaluated packages. The "hybrid" packages were evaluated for 2035 future planning year and compared to the 2015 and 2035 Base Scenarios. The following charts show the relative performance of each strategy package:



Bob described the network-wide measures of performance, environmental and resource impacts, and costs of each strategy package.

**Preliminary Cost of Strategy Packages**

| | |
|---|---|
| WENTS Core Improvements | $17 million |
| Hybrid Strategy Package 1 (HSP1) | $47-66 million |
| Hybrid Strategy Package 2 (HSP2) | $30-49 million |

***E. Strategy Package and Scoping Study Recommendations (endorsed by the Steering Committee and CIRC Alternatives Task Force)***

The WENTS Steering Committee endorsed Hybrid Strategy Package 2 (HSP2) because it was more effective at addressing congestion in the overall study area, less costly and more environmentally sound. HSP2 includes a reconfigured Exit 12, new local streets, and capacity improvements (intersections and VT 2A corridor). The Steering Committee also endorsed a new Congestion Policy that redefines the allowable congestion and mitigation measures for Areas Targeted for Growth as identified in the Regional Plan. The CIRC Alternatives Task Force, at their January 31, 2013 meeting approved the following series of scoping studies that support HSP2:

- Exit 12/New Local Streets
- Vermont 2A/Mountain View/Industrial Ave. and Vermont 2A mainline north to James Brown Dr.
- Vermont 117/North Williston Road Intersection and flooding issues
- US 2 – Taft Corners to Williston Village Multimodal Improvements
- Bike and Pedestrian Scoping Studies: Industrial Avenue to Blair Park (including a crossing of Allen Brook), Vermont 15 (Old Stage Road to Essex Way), and Mountain View Road from Old Stage Road to Vermont 2A.

***F. Next Steps***

The next steps include development of the Network Implementation Plan (February 2013), additional investigations into permitting, refinement of costs estimates and timeline, definition of scoping study elements, and a draft and final report (February/March 2013).

***G. Q&A***

Mike Alvanos (Planning Commission): When you looked at the strategy packages, is there something that weighs on them more than anything else? Bob: The biggest lever for congestion is intersection delay. Mike: Is there anything the Planning Commission can do in the next twenty years to address traffic congestion? Bob: The best thing you could do is to concentrate land use in the growth center, even beyond the 70 percent goal you have set. The more households/people you put in your growth center, where there is more walking, biking and transit opportunities, the better it is for transportation.

Ken Belliveau, Williston Town Planner: The study did not model alternative land use scenarios; rather it was assumed that we would continue to encourage intensive growth in the growth centers. It is appropriate for the Planning Commission to take up the question of increasing the growth target.

Jake Mathon (Planning Commission): How do we deal with traffic from Hinesburg, Jericho, and beyond? It's this commuter traffic that impacts us. Bob: The traffic comes from everywhere, including internally. IBM growth was also assumed in our analyses and this is considered internally-generated

traffic. Michele Boomhower: Some impacts are unavoidable; there are only so many routes. If we make routes more attractive for travelers, they will use them. Additionally, we need to provide new tools for commuters, such as the commuter bus service to Jeffersonville and programs to encourage carpooling and other travel modes. We recognize that N. Williston Road will experience ongoing impacts due to its connectivity. Bob noted that capacity analyses of N. Williston Road indicated that road segments have adequate capacity but intersections have some significant capacity problems.

Kevin Batson (Planning Commission): The Bridge on N. Williston Road is very low and therefore floods. Can we deal with that? Bob: The scoping study will look at the intersections and the bridge to see what mitigation could be done.

John Fitzgerald: I'm been watching this Circ highway ever since Mr. Pinkham was the engineer. The Governor comes in and closes it down in one day and everyone rolls over and plays dead. I don't understand that. Then they brought up the engineers and said that there are wetlands that can't be taken care of. I would like to walk all of the Circ Highway. Vermont Gas gets to put pipes down the Circ Highway. The State owns the land. I'd like to see it marked and used for a trail or bikeway. We need to remember that this is a Circ Highway around Burlington. I don't want you to forget that everyone can use this. My bike is in the garage the batteries are plugged in and I'll use it in the spring. If I need to be out after 4PM trying to get home for the last two months and not get run off the road. The flashing lights scare me to death when they are right on the side of the road and it's terrible. If we did what we really wanted to do in the beginning it would be done. I hope that you will plan to underground utilities.

Eleanor Hood: One of the slides showed Industrial Avenue to James Brown Drive and what about improvements between James Brown and Five Corners? Bob: Vermont 2A and James Brown Drive are slated for a new signal and VT 2A turning lanes in 2015 (Ken Belliveau has detailed drawings at his office). Further improvements to VT 2A will be considered in a scoping study that will examine a series of alternatives. It's too early to know what the preferred alignment will be. If you would like to be on the mailing list for this study, please let Diane Meyerhoff know and you'll be added to the list.

Jim McCullough: The James Brown Drive signal was conceived when the Town Garage was located there. Since the garage is moving, is it still necessary? Ken explained that relocating the garage will open the site for other development that will likely generate similar levels of (truck) traffic and therefore require the signal.

Jim McCullough: Is there discussion about wider shoulders and traffic calming on N. Williston Road? Bob: We've looked at places to widen shoulders; bike accommodations must also be considered. Traffic calming has not been considered because it is not consistent with the road's function. Michele: The Williston representatives to the CIRC Alternatives Task Force made it clear to VTrans Secretary Searles that they are interested in ongoing coordination in regards to N. Williston Road and Mountain View to better understand the impacts of commuter traffic and congestion. Jim is concerned that the North Williston hamlet is being destroyed by traffic.

Jake Mathon: What is the suggested improvement for Williston Road/Oak Hill/ North Williston Road? Bob: We recommend a roundabout, although we understand that the town does not embrace that solution.

Kevin Batson: I'm not an advocate of changing River Cover Road, but was it considered? Michele: It was considered as a network linkage, but it's not a viable option due to environmental constraints.

Q: Are the strategy packages mutually exclusive? Michele: There is a funding constraint; we have to choose only one.

Roderick Hood: If the remaining Circ Highway segments costs $75 million, and the recommended improvements cost $45-67 million, I think the Governor should be convinced that that the Circ should be built. Michele: There were environmental permitting issues that likely would have precluded building the last segments of the Circ. It was decided that we needed to do something to move forward.

Michele asked that everyone sign in to receive information on the scoping studies. Questions should be forwarded to Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC staff who is the project manager for WENTS.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40PM.

**Participants**

| Last | First | Affiliation | Town |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alvanos | Mike | Williston Planning Commission | Williston |
| Batson | Kevin | Williston Planning Commission | |
| Botula | Janet | CATMA | |
| Bryant | Rich | Stantec | |
| Choate | Stephanie | | Richmond |
| Cope | Meghan | Williston Planning Commission | Williston |
| Edwards | Greg | Stantec | |
| FitzGerald | John | | Essex |
| Goulette | Doug | | Williston |
| Hiltner | Shannon | Williston Planning Commission | Williston |
| Hood | Eleanora | | Williston |
| Hood | Roderic | | Williston |
| Joslin | Tom | | Jericho |
| Mathon | Jake | Williston Planning Commission | Williston |
| McCullough | Jim | Legislator | Williston |
| Morin | Guy | | Essex Junction |
| Smith | Edgar | | Williston |

**Williston Planning Department Staff Present:** Ken Belliveau, Matt Boulanger
**CCRPC Staff Present:** Michele Boomhower, Eleni Churchill
**WENTS Steering Committee Members Present:** Meredith Birkett (CCTA); Ken Robie (VTrans)
**Consultants:** Bob Chamberlin, Resource Systems Group (RSG); Diane Meyerhoff, Third Sector Associates

**5) Selectboard Visits**

- Town of Williston, May 7, 2012
- Town of Essex, May 21, 2012
- Town of Williston, June 18, 2012
- Town of Essex, June 18, 2012
- Joint Towns of Williston, Essex, and Essex Junction, January 9, 2013

## 6) Public and Steering Committee Comments

**From:** Kai Mikkel Forlie
**Sent:** Monday, June 25, 2012 2:48 AM
**Subject:** First WENTS Public Meeting: My Thoughts

Dear All,

Thank you all for your hard work to date on the WENTS issue and on the CIRC Alternatives Task Force. In lieu of my being unable to attend past WENTS/Task Force meetings, I am writing to express my impressions following my viewing of the first WENTS public meeting online.

Allow me to say at the outset that having now viewed several meetings related to the WENTS issue, it remains obvious to me that the process is tragically flawed. This is due in large part to the blatant focus on automobiles and powered transport. The overriding preference for these modes is manifest.

Therefore, might I suggest the following short video to lend some realism and context to our situation? It's titled "How the Dutch Got Their Cycle Lanes." This six minute film shows what is possible when the will exists to set aside autocentric planning in favor of those that give priority to the bicycle (and to pedestrians).

http://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=US&feature=player_embedded&v=XuBdf9jYj7o [hyperlink removed]

I encourage everyone involved in CIRC Alternatives Task Force to take a moment to watch the film. I also encourage everyone to continue conducting their own research into the proven alternatives to powered transport that exist in the rest of the world (like those in the Netherlands). The internet makes doing so very quick and easy.

Having viewed various meetings related to the WENTS issue, I must convey that I have little hope at this time for the future of our local transportation system. My hesitation has to do with the elephant in the room; the fact that we've passed peak oil, that climate change is upon us and that peak energy is right around the corner. There is zero public acknowledgment of these overriding factors by the consultants, decision-makers and power-brokers involved in the WENTS process. In the face of incontrovertible evidence otherwise, we continue to plan as though the private automobile will be with us forever. The inevitability of our low-energy future ensures that the use of private automobiles (electrically powered or otherwise) will be drastically curtailed; large scale proliferation of the kind we are currently familiar is simply not possible when one removes cheap sources of carbon-based energy from the equation. The laws of supply and demand dictate ever rising fossil-fuel-based energy costs. To be clear, we have already used up half of the available oil; all this in about a hundred years and mostly by the hand of a much smaller population than currently burdens the Earth. This was conventional oil, the easy-to-access stuff that fueled our rapid expansion following the Second World War. Let me reemphasize this fact, according to the "International Energy Agency" peak oil (as it pertains to conventional forms) occurred in 2006.

Therefore, we must plan for the reality of our future (as it could be said the Dutch did when they saw the writing on the wall). This means we must jettison the flawed logic that demands more roads and infrastructure to support private automobiles. More dedicated cycle lanes, on the other hand, mean more cyclists; build it and they will come. This proven dynamic applies equally to mass transit and to programs that incentivise walking and cycling. Just think of the possibilities!

I urge everyone involved in the CIRC Alternatives Task Force to continue questioning the methodology of this process and the authority of the consultants involved. I argue this because based upon the remarks I've witnessed – those made by the vast majority of those involved in the WENTS process - I haven't seen much yet that leads me to believe that anything other than the same old "solutions" will ultimately make the cut. A token bike/ped advocate here or

environmental activist there won't change this dynamic. In fact, it's quite clear to me that blind faith in the process as currently laid out will very likely lead all of us down the wrong road.

Mostly, I urge able-bodied task force members to really explore what it means to live without a car. This basic understanding is core to the ability to design a transportation system that will sustain us and nurture us. After all, this is our future.

Respectfully,
Kai
Kai Mikkel Førlie, Burlington

**From:** Kai Mikkel Forlie
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 19, 2012 6:53 AM
**To:** Eleni Churchill
**Subject:** WENTS Comments

Ms. Churchill,

I will be unable to attend the 1st WENTS public meeting. Please accept my following comments in lieu of my attendance and see that they are disseminated to the members of the Task Force.

I have reviewed the "Draft - Phase 1 Report" of the Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study and watched several of the most recent CIRC Alternatives Task Force meetings online. Yet no where amongst these primary documents is there any acknowledgement by the Task Force members that the transportation problems we face are not the result of a lack of new roads and bridges. Where is the admission that they result from poor public policy and lack of basic pedestrian infrastructure, the absence of which incentivize able-bodied people to utilize personal automobiles instead of relying on their own two feet? If the decision makers don't know what's wrong how will they ever be in a position offer appropriate plans to fix it? The majority of our planners and decision makers continue to beat their heads against a wall that has been shown time and time again as not being effective, useful or even remotely sustainable. Why do we continue to plan as though our love affair with the privately-owned automobile will go on forever? We never needed the Circumferential Highway. What we do need is to get people out of their cars.

Ask anyone who's ever lived in a large metropolitan area in this country and they will tell you that the WENTS-area's traffic "problems" are rather inconsequential by comparison. I point this out to lend some relativity to this discussion. Relatively speaking, we in northern Vermont bathe in the luxury of not having so much a transportation "problem" as a great opportunity to institute the kinds of changes now that will have far reaching impacts on our ability to move around in the midst of our looming low-energy future. Luckily, the WENTS-area as it currently stands is not characterized by wall-to-wall skyscrapers, ugly industrial and commercial parks nor is it covered in concrete and pavement for as far as the eye can see. At least "not yet." This provides us with a unique ability to apply innovative and proven techniques to mitigate congestion. But as we stand on the brink of this precipice, some among would prefer we teeter over the edge and apply outdated practices and principles that do little to reduce congestion or effectively meet the defined objective of the WENTS study, namely, "…to determine a set of multimodal transportation improvements, and land use policies that will improve safety and mobility in the study area…."

The time has come to throw-out our autocentric playbook and instead implement a more sustainable and community centered approach. <u>The knee-jerk response of "new roads and new bridges" in reaction to congestion is deeply flawed</u>. Able-bodied people drive their cars because there is little visible incentive to do otherwise. If given the option, most people will take what they view as the easiest path. If society doesn't place limits on people's ability to drive, then even if we build roads until we are blue in the face, we will only find more cars then we had planned on plying their way on the additional lanes. Moreover, I really feel that our planners and decision makers must come to terms with the fact

that “an abundant supply of cheap fossil fuels” is an outdated notion. Resources like these are by definition a finite supply. In other words, we won’t have them forever.

In fact, just over a year and a half ago the International Energy Agency declared that peak oil, at least as it pertains to conventional crude oil production, occurred in 2006. “Peak oil is…,” to borrow the Wikipedia definition, “…the point in time when the maximum rate of global petroleum extraction is reached, after which the rate of production enters terminal decline.” Amazingly, this stunning news has done nothing to curtail our excesses. In fact, global oil consumption has now reached an estimated 88.1 million barrels a day, the daily equivalent of over 3 billion gallons. Events like 2010’s Deepwater Horizon/Gulf Oil Spill and controversial extraction methods like tar sands refining, mountain top removal and hydraulic fracturing are but a few high profile examples of what happens when a certain desperation ethic enters into the mining of fossil fuels. What is it going to take for things to change?

*“We’re at a crucial point in history. We cannot have fast cars, computers the size of credit cards, and modern conveniences, while simultaneously having clean air, abundant rainforests, fresh drinking water, and a stable climate. This generation can have one or the other, but not both. Humanity must make a choice. Both have an opportunity cost. Gadgetry or nature? Pick the wrong one and the next generation may have neither.” Mark Boyle, The Moneyless Man*

Given the dire state we find ourselves in, I have little patience for new roads or the people who support them, particularly road projects whose primary purpose is to facilitate people to hop in their cars to engage in the type of short trips that result in much of the congestion that planners and voters alike view as “the problem.” Looking in from the outside, it appears that the Task Force’s process almost ensures that the car comes first and everything else follows. This approach will fail in the long term. Instead, we need to elevate human powered transport and effective & clean mass transit to the level currently occupied by the private automobile while we denigrate it to the waste bin of history.

Professional qualifications aside, the following questions have not apparently been asked of the Task Force members (in relation to able-bodied members):

- How many task force members have given up their private automobiles?
- How many Task Force members regularly commute to work by bicycle?
- How many Task Force members regularly walk to work?
- How many Task Force members rely solely on mass transit to get to work?
- How many Task Force members regularly use any of these low-impact means to get to and from meetings, to and from shops and stores, to and from schools and churches?
- How many Task Force members use one of these forms of transportation to get to the CIRC meetings?
- How many Task Force members have any intention of ever honestly taking advantage of any of the above?

Assuming the worst, how can we expect people who don’t have any personal experience in transportation alternatives to plan our region’s transportation alternatives? I would argue that we cannot. The composition of the Task Force is heavily weighted in favor of the status quo. A token environmentalist here or alternative transportation advocate there isn’t enough to sway the obvious intentions of this group. I urge the Task Force to far more heavily weight the opinions of the environmentalists & alternative transportation advocates or add additional members who are qualified to think outside of the autocentric box and thus able to offer real and meaningful alternatives to the way we currently move goods and people around in this region. As Boston’s Mayor Menino recently admitted, “…the car is no longer king.’’

In conjunction with this, I also urge the Task Force members to think long and hard about what truly is in the best long-term interests of their communities. Ultimately, I urge the group to oppose new roads and bridges and instead favor a revolution in our local transportation system.

Respectfully,
Kai

Kai Mikkel Førlie, Burlington

IBM
Essex Jct., VT 05452

May 7, 2012

Michele Boomhower
MPO Director
Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404

Michele,
As requested at the recent Steering Committee meetings for the Williston-Essex Transportation Network Study, IBM is pleased to provide feedback on the alternatives being considered.

IBM continues to believe that the best solution to provide for future transportation and economic needs in the region would be the full build out of the Circ Highway segments A and B. However, we continue to support the efforts to look for effective alternatives to the circ that will provide similar benefits.

Given that the next step for this study is to select one of the two network strategies for further evaluation, IBM has evaluated the benefits from Network Strategies 1 and 2 believes the best option from an economic perspective is Strategy 1.

Benefits to both IBM and the community are anticipated from implementation of Network Strategy 1;

- Improved interstate access
  - IBM is one of the largest exporters in Vermont and must move a significant amount of product in a timely manner through the transportation network.
  - Approximately 75 trucks move through the site daily, moving products, supplies and equipment. They require interstate access for destinations in Canada, the Northeast and other areas of the U.S.
  - Network Strategy 1 will improve access to I-89 for these vehicles, remove congestion from route 2A in Williston and improve the utilization of Exit 12.

- Enhanced opportunities for growth at the Champlain Valley Technology and Innovation Park (CVTIP)
  - Previous permit applications for growth at the IBM location faced restrictions because of traffic limitations in the "circ corridor". The Circ Highway was identified in those permit applications as the best way to relieve congestion and accommodate the future growth plans.
  - Network Strategy 1 shows improvements to many of those intersections that were considered hurdles for growth at the CVTIP location.
  - The technology park is one of the larger industrial-zoned areas in Chittenden County. Network Strategy 1 would allow for more efficient growth in the future.

- Improved commuting benefits
  - A more direct path to the interstate improves commuting options for employees at the CVTIP.
  - IBM has employees that travel from all over the state and I89 is a choice many of them use.
  - The study shows that Strategy 1 improves congestion problems on the 2A corridor and many surrounding intersections

- Improved emergency access to and from the Champlain Valley Technology and Innovation Park

- Opportunities for much needed park-and-rides
  - Network Strategy 1 provides opportunity for park-and-rides to be built with easy access to the interstate.
  - Available circ land near Mountain View Road could be used for this purpose and provide easy access for commuters using I-89.

Essex Junction, Vermont 05452
(802) 769-4961

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this study. IBM looks forward to the next steps and to the benefits that will result from the eventual implementation of these improvements.

If you have any questions regarding this, please contact either me at 769-4153 or Dave Libby at 769-4961.

Tim Baechle

Tim Baechle
Manager of Energy, Environmental and Chemical Programs
IBM Microelectronics Division; Vermont Campus
1000 River Road
Essex Junction, VT 05451
Tbaechle@us.ibm.com

*Getting you where you need to go!*

Date: May 1, 2012
From: Meredith Birkett, CCTA Director of Planning & Marketing
To: Essex and Williston Select Boards
Re: Circ Alternative Major Strategies – Potential Transit Impacts

As the Essex and Williston Select Boards consider whether to advance either of the two proposed Circ Alternative major network strategies, CCTA would like the Select Boards to be aware of how the strategies could potentially impact transit. The potential transit impacts have been split into two main categories; Current Transit Services and Future Transit Services. While it is of course difficult to predict with exact precision what transit services might be needed in the future, the analysis of the impact on future transit services is based on service strategies included in CCTA's 2010 Transit Development Plan (TDP), which can be reviewed at http://www.cctaride.org/resources/documents.html. Additionally, CCTA feels it is important for the Select Boards to consider the broader impact of building new roads on the efficiency and effectiveness of transit service. This information is included in the Transit Effectiveness section at the end of this document.

**Major Network Strategy 1**: **I-89 connector to Mountain View Road**
Current Transit Services – CCTA does not envision any of our existing transit services utilizing the new I-89 interchange or the new connector road to Mountain View Road. The Montpelier Link Express is the only existing CCTA route that travels on I-89 between exits 11 and 12. The Montpelier Link Express is CCTA's most successful commuter service due in large part to its limited stops, directness, and relative time-competitiveness with car trips. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that current trips on the Montpelier Link would make stops at the new interchange or along the new connector road. CCTA's Williston-Village route travels on US 2 between Taft Corners and North Williston Road, but it is important that this route continue to serve the village and Town Hall area. Therefore, it also unlikely that the current Williston Village route would make use of the new connector road.

Future Transit Services – The CCTA TDP identifies one new route along the I-89 corridor between exits 11 and 12; a Waterbury Link Express route connecting Burlington to Waterbury. The current Montpelier Link Express serves the Waterbury Park & Ride, but the route does not and is not intended to serve those traveling from Chittenden County to work in Waterbury. Given Waterbury's past and planned role as a major employment center, CCTA has identified the need for a separate route to serve the Waterbury employment market. CCTA believes that the elements that have made the Montpelier Link Express successful would also need to be embodied by the Waterbury Link, namely limited stops, directness, and time-competitiveness with the car. CCTA would likely only consider making a stop at the new interchange on the Waterbury Link if there were a park & ride directly at the interchange. Additionally, if there were a park & ride at Exit 12 also, CCTA would only consider serving one of the park & ride lots, as serving both would slow down the route too much. It is anticipated that the Waterbury Link would travel from Burlington to Waterbury via I-89 and would not travel on US 2 or the new connector road.

**Major Network Strategy 2: Redmond Road Connector with New Bridge**
Current Transit Service – CCTA does not envision any of our existing transit services utilizing the Redmond Road Connector or the new bridge across the Winooski. The current public transportation connection between Essex and Williston is along Route 2A and is provided by our Williston-Essex (#1E) route. Given the development along Route 2A and at the route ends in the village of Essex Junction and Taft Corners in Williston, it is clearly the most appropriate corridor for transit service connecting the two communities.
Future Transit Service – Beyond service upgrades to the existing Williston-Essex (#1E) route, including a longer span of service, increased frequency, and Sunday service, CCTA's TDP does not include additional connections between Williston and Essex that would use the Redmond Road Connector or the new bridge.

*Getting you where you need to go!*

Date: January 8, 2012

To: WENTS Steering Committee

From: Meredith Birkett, CCTA Director of Planning & Marketing

Re: Support for Ongoing TDM Efforts

Throughout the Circ Alternatives process to-date, CCTA has been pleased with the consideration given to improving the quality of and access to alternative modes and the development of transportation demand management (TDM) practices in the Circ Study area. Through the first and second round of Circ Alternatives implementation projects, TDM elements have represented approximately 10% of the funding requested. CCTA looks forward to the new services, amenities, and infrastructure the Circ Alternative funding will make possible and to the related benefits to the transportation network. ***Recent findings and discussions through the WENTS Steering Committee process suggest ongoing investment in TDM is vital to improving the transportation network in the study area.*** The limited improvement offered by traditional road capacity and re-design projects indicates that TDM efforts are needed to help alleviate the stress on the transportation system, particularly at peak travel times.

As the region's public transportation provider, CCTA participates in many transportation demand management (TDM) efforts in partnership with other organizations. Most notably, CCTA is a part of a team of organizations working on a region-wide TDM initiative known as Go! Chittenden County. Over the past two years, Go! Chittenden County has developed a strong partnership among several organizations and is beginning targeted outreach to the business community to promote and develop transportation options. ***It is CCTA's perspective that TDM efforts such as this should be formally incorporated into the strategy packages being developed by the WENTS Steering Committee.*** The inclusion of TDM elements will help ensure a creative and multi-faceted approach to solving our transportation challenges is developed.

As previously mentioned, the Route 2A corridor is the best corridor in the area for transit service given its development patterns and connections to dense village and retail centers.

**Transit Effectiveness**

Decisions about road capacity and development patterns can have dramatic impacts on the viability of transit service. Chapter 5 of CCTA's TDP includes a thorough discussion of strategies to improve the efficiency and productivity of transit service. The following excerpt covers the broad concept:

"Public transportation works best when origins and destinations are focused in linear corridors and city and town centers rather than being spread out in suburban-style subdivisions and office parks. And the regional economy and transportation system as a whole works best when public transportation service is effectively delivered to provide affordable and attractive alternatives to private automobile travel. Shaping the future Burlington metropolitan area in such a way as to promote efficient public transportation service will result in a more vibrant economy, less traffic, and a healthier environment."

While CCTA's current and future service plans do not include services using the infrastructure included in either Strategy 1 or Strategy 2, decisions about these strategies could impact the effectiveness of transit service in the study area and the region. If development occurs along either a new I-89-Mountain View Road connector or along the Redmond Road Connector, it has the potential to decrease future densities along existing corridors, including Route 2A in particular. If development is dispersed along new roadways, the efficiency of the existing service along Route 2A could be diminished as demand for public transportation service is split among multiple corridors. Additionally, if demand for public transportation service grows along one of the potential new road segments, the cost of providing transit service in Williston and/or Essex will increase. Without additional funding, CCTA would be unable to meet the new public transportation demand. It should also be noted that if one of the two major network strategies moves forward for additional consideration, CCTA will weigh in regarding specific road design elements as the speed and design of a roadway has a significant effect on CCTA's ability to serve it.

Date: October 17, 2012
From: Meredith Birkett, CCTA Director of Planning & Marketing
To: Eleni Churchill, CCRPC and Bob Chamberlain, RSG
Re: WENTS Strategy Packages – CCTA Comments

CCTA would like to offer the following comments on the WENTS Strategy Packages included in RSG's memo dated October 8, 2012.

Core Improvements

CCTA is in agreement with the transit core improvements listed on page 3 of the RSG memo. We would suggest, however, adding detail to the second and third items, and adding a fifth and sixth element to the transit list. (Suggested new text shown in italics.)

2. Increase headways when achievable in accordance with CCTA's Transit Development Plan.
   "a) *Add a mid-day trip on the Williston Village route on weekdays, which will travel between Burlington and Williston village via US2."*

3. Expand service when achievable in accordance with CCTA's Transit Development Plan.
   *"a) Implement a weekday peak hour Jeffersonville-Burlington Commuter route, which will travel along Route 15 and 289 through the WENTS Study area."*

5. "*Enhance bicycle and pedestrian connections from the non-arterial street network to the existing transit corridors (US2, VT2A, VT15, and VT117)."* Providing safe access to our existing routes is vital to the success of transit in the study area. CCTA views this element as distinct from the current 1(a) element, which suggests connecting bus stops to sidewalks. Because CCTA does not envision any major geographic expansion of our services in the study area in the short term (5-10 years), the need for connections to our existing routes is a key factor that should be part of any strategy.

6. "*Increase density and target development along the existing transit corridors (US2, VT2A, VT15, and VT117)."* The ongoing and future success of transit in the study area is directly related to land use and development decisions. The more trip generators along a transit route, the better its chance of success, growth, and continuation. In support of this focused development, CCTA encourages targeted roadway improvements that will allow for increased density and development along the transit corridors. Conversely, CCTA will be concerned with roadway improvements or expansions that would further disperse development beyond the reach of existing transit services.

Strategy Package #1

As stated in CCTA's memo to the Essex and Williston Select Boards dated May 1, 2012, "CCTA does not envision any of our existing transit services utilizing the Redmond Road Connector or

the new bridge across the Winooski. The current public transportation connection between Essex and Williston is along Route 2A and is provided by our Williston-Essex (#1E) route. Given the development along Route 2A and at the route ends in the village of Essex Junction and Taft Corners in Williston, it is clearly the most appropriate corridor for transit service connecting the two communities. Therefore, the main element of Strategy Package #1 is not a high priority for CCTA.

Regarding the complementary elements in Strategy Package #1, CCTA believes the completion of the VT2A grid streets (southern) has the potential to improve access to our routes and to support development in the Taft Corners area versus areas where there are no transit options. Any build-out of the grid street should include significant pedestrian amenities to ensure access to the existing transit corridors.

Strategy Package #2

As mentioned in the Core Improvements section, CCTA supports targeted improvements that will make increased densities along the existing transit corridors possible in the future. Based on CCTA's current route structure, elements 4, 5, 6, and 7 of Strategy Package #2 appear to have a potential positive impact on future development along existing transit routes. Additionally, CCTA has identified the need for a specific safety and mobility improvement at US2 and Southridge Road. CCTA has received requests from residents of the neighborhoods along Southridge Road and Metcalf Drive for access to the Williston Village route, but the absence of a safe stopping location along this section of US2 is a major impediment. Additionally, if a safe stopping area and potential pedestrian crossing were created, residents of the Timothy Way neighborhood could also access the Williston Village route. Therefore, CCTA requests the addition of a tenth element:

10. New bus pull-offs/stops along US 2 (north and south side) at Southridge Road.

Strategy Package #3

CCTA feels Strategy Package #3 offers many benefits. Providing more connections among local roads will improve the performance and safety of the arterials and major intersections. The elements of Strategy Package #3 of particular interest to CCTA are 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13. In addition to the elements listed, CCTA also feels the following should be added:

14. Pedestrian connections from local roads to existing transit corridors, including but not limited to:
    a. Along Industrial Ave. from US2 to VT2A
    b. Along Harvest Lane from US2 to Marshall Ave.

Strategy Package #4

As stated in CCTA's May 1, 2012 memo, VT2A is the alignment of CCTA's current and expected future transit service between Williston and Essex. CCTA does not envision developing parallel north-south routes between the two communities in the short term. Increased density and development along VT2A will increase ridership on existing the Williston-Essex (#1E) route.

Therefore, CCTA supports targeted roadway and intersection improvements that will allow future increased development to the extent that current conditions might hamper it and encourage development along parallel corridors not served by transit.

Strategy Package #5

Of the four elements in Strategy Package #5, numbers three and four have the potential to impact existing transit service. However, without additional detail, it is difficult to know what the impact might be. Generally speaking, however, CCTA cautions that increased roadway capacity has the potential to encourage development. Development in areas outside the existing transit network has the potential limit the effectiveness of transit service and simultaneously creates pressure to expand transit to lower density areas where transit will be less productive and cost-effective while increasing operating costs.

Essex Jct., VT 05452

October 17, 2012

Eleni Churchill
110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404

Eleni,
Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the WENTS strategy packages outlined in the October 10th memo. Listed below are IBM's comments on the benefits of the elements contained in each strategy package.

These items would meet the goals and objectives of the WENTS study.

**Strategy Package #1: Bridge over Winooski (major network strategy 2)**

- Element 2; Redmond Rd/Mt View Rd intersection: This improvement is a key element to meet expected traffic increases on Redmond road. It would also help with safety through the intersection and would avoid increased delays in this area
- Elements 3, 4, 5: Improvements to Industrial Ave and VT2A: This intersection is a key element in the corridor today, and traffic would increase through this area with package 1. Improvements to this intersection should be addressed in any strategy package because it is currently failing at peak hours and is a critical link in the 2A Corridor.
- Element 7: New interchange configuration at Exit 12: This package (major network strategy 2) was selected over an option that would improve access to-and-from the interstate. The package must address the access issues from Rte 2A to I-89. Currently, the Exit 12 area is heavily congested and a major source of traffic issues in the corridor; improving this interchange clearly meets the goals of the study and should be a primary focus area.

**Strategy Package #2: Comprehensive Intersection Improvements**
Many of these intersections are key to improving traffic in the corridor and should be addressed in any strategy package that is advanced.

- Elements 4, 5: Improvements to Industrial Ave and VT2A: This intersection is a key element in the corridor today and traffic would increase through this area with package 1. Improvements to this intersection should be addressed in any strategy package because it is currently failing at peak hours and is a critical link in the 2A Corridor.
- Element 8: New interchange configuration at Exit 12: This package (major network strategy 2) was selected over an option that would improve access to-and-from the interstate. The package must address the access issues from Rte 2A to I-89. Currently, the Exit 12 area is heavily congested and a major source of traffic issues in the corridor; improving this interchange clearly meets the goals of the study and should be a primary focus area.

**Strategy Package #3: Network Grid Connections**

- Element 6: Innovation Ave: This roadway and improvements to the configuration at exit 12 would be key elements to improving access to the interstate. These two items clearly meet the goals and objectives outlined in the WENT study and those in the Circ alternative task force.

  In a May letter that looked at Major Network Strategy 1 and 2, IBM outlined the benefits of improved interstate access to the WENT study area. Since Major Network Strategy 1 is not advancing forward, Innovation Drive and exit 12 improvements are key to improving interstate access. Improved interstate access to this area provides many benefits that match the goals of the WENT study, including improved emergency access to this area, reducing congestion on the 2A corridor, improved commuting options during peak travel times, allowing for smart growth of industrial activities in an area currently zoned and opportunities for much needed park-and-rides.

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Other benefits of this option are that the right of way exists, the roadway has been studied previously, and the required footprint needed in this corridor would likely be less than originally planned under the Circ Highway.

- Element 5: Fay Lane upgrade: Improvements to Fay lane and the possibility of connecting this roadway to North Williston Road should be studied further to understand benefits and drawbacks. As has been pointed out previously, limited access over the Winooski River is one of the root causes of congestion in the Circ corridor. This idea provides another option by connecting Redmond Road with North Williston Road, and merits further investigation by the study group.

**Strategy Package # 4: Western Corridor Upgrade (2A)**

- Elements 4, 5 and 6: Improvements to Industrial Ave and VT2A: This intersection is a key element in the corridor today and traffic would increase through this area with package 1. Improvements to this intersection should be addressed in any strategy package because it is currently failing at peak hours and is a critical link in the 2A Corridor.

- Element 3 and 7: Improvements to Marshall Ave and Rte 2 area: Improvements in this area meet the goals and objectives of the WENTS study by further improving access to the interstate in a congested corridor.

**Strategy Package # 4: Eastern Corridor Upgrade (North Williston Road)**

IBM has no additional comments on the elements of this corridor

Thanks again for the opportunity to provide input, if you have any questions regarding this, please contact either me at 769-4153 or Dave Libby at 769-4961.

Tim Baechle
Manager of Energy, Environmental and Chemical Programs
IBM Microelectronics Division; Vermont Campus
1000 River Road
Essex Junction, VT 05451
Tbaechle@us.ibm.com

## Eleni Churchill

**From:** Kate McCarthy <kmccarthy@vnrc.org>
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 17, 2012 4:56 PM
**To:** Eleni Churchill; Robert Chamberlin
**Cc:** Sandy Levine; Brian Shupe
**Subject:** Comments from CLF and VNRC on the strategy packages

Dear Eleni and Bob,

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the strategy packages. We understand that they are a work in progress. It will be easier to evaluate the strategy packages once the Goals and Objectives are finalized, and once we as a group have a greater understanding of how the elements of these strategy packages work on the ground. In the meantime, below is our general feedback.

***Fix it first:*** Strategies that utilize existing infrastructure and existing alignments, per item 4e (Sustainability: Investment in Existing Facilities) of the draft Goals and objectives, are going to be the most cost effective, the least environmentally disruptive, and the least likely to generate sprawling development (and thus, more traffic). Strategy Package #1, with the new bridge, is inconsistent with this goal and offers limited benefits in other areas. We are very concerned that for all of the expense and the new construction, this project will benefit the area very little.

***Land use as a key element of the transportation system:*** We've talked in our meetings about how the success of a transportation system depends on the interactions between transportation and land use. If we are going to improve the whole system in a comprehensive way (so that we can avoid continuation of the CIRC conversation for the next 50 years), then realistically, the strategy package elements should address both the transportation *and* land use changes needed.

To accomplish this, we suggest that strategy packages recognize this interconnection by including, as "elements," some of the local land use strategies needed for each package to succeed. This would guide municipal efforts to make land use choices that help the transportation system be more sustainable over time (per 4d in the draft Goals and Objectives ("Sustainability: land use plan compatibility").

The conventions of land use planning and transportation planning can make it challenging to bridge the two, but it's necessary for creating the long-term outcomes we want to see in this area. Providing land use guidance is a way to start bridging this gap. Considering also the impact of various strategies on the "5 D's" – density, diversity of uses, destination accessibility, distance (especially from transit), and design – can help make the link more strongly while promoting compact development patterns.

***Thinking beyond the WENTS study area***: On a related note, it's worth pointing out that land uses within the study area connect to land uses in surrounding areas (residential to employment centers, for example). As much as possible, the evaluation of these strategy packages should consider these interactions, as well as the interactions within the study area.

***Impacts of individual improvements:*** As part of evaluating the strategy packages, we also would like to evaluate the relative contribution of each element within the package – others in the group seem interested in this as well. This will help us all better evaluate the combination of elements and, just as importantly, the most cost-effective improvements.

Thank you again for the chance to comment. We look forward to further discussion at next week's meeting!

Best wishes,
Kate McCarthy
Vermont Natural Resources Council, on behalf of VNRC and Sandy Levine, Conservation Law Foundation

--

Help protect Vermont's environment and join VNRC!
Follow VNRC on Facebook and Twitter!

Kate McCarthy
Sustainable Communities Program Director
Vermont Natural Resources Council
9 Bailey Avenue
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone: (802) 223-2328 ext. 114
Fax: (802) 223-0287
Follow me on twitter: @katevnrc
Web: vnrc.org

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| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | Jason Van Driesche |
| **To:** | Eleni Churchill |
| **Cc:** | Robert Chamberlin; Chapin Spencer; Charlene Wallace |
| **Subject:** | Local Motion comments on WENTS strategy packages |
| **Date:** | Wednesday, October 17, 2012 1:35:28 PM |
| **Attachments:** | Williston-Essex Network Study -- Local Motion mark-up of draft strategy packages.pdf |

Hello Eleni,

Attached please find a marked-up document with Local Motion's detailed comments on the draft WENTS strategy packages. I used my very best handwriting, but that's still not saying much. Let me know if there's anything you can't read.

**In summary, Local Motion supports advancement of a set of strategy packages that, taken together, focus on building out the street network and diversifying transportation options.** Our assessment is that the long-term transportation needs of the study area will be much better served by creating a diverse and well-connected network of streets, paths, and sidewalks than by a major expansion of the capacity of arterial roads; and that any major expansion to arterials is in fact incompatible with the overall vision of this study.

In addition to the detailed comments in the attached marked-up memo, we offer the following guidance regarding specific strategy packages:

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 1: LOW PRIORITY.** It is our assessment that this strategy package is not needed as a stand-alone item. The bridge should be incorporated into strategy package 3, and the improvements to Route 2A should be incorporated into strategy package 4. If the bridge is built, enhanced bicycle facilities will need to be included along the entire corridor.

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 2: LOW PRIORITY.** We have deep reservations about this package, as the benefits it provides accrue almost exclusively to car traffic to the detriment of all other modes (as well as to the detriment of everyone's quality of life). High-speed, high-volume, multi-lane arterials propel a vicious cycle in which increased traffic danger and decreased livability discourage people from walking, biking, and taking the bus, which results in more traffic that quickly uses up the new capacity on the arterial street. We advocate for removing this strategy package from consideration, with the exception of elements that appear in and are supportive of other strategy packages.

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 3: HIGH PRIORITY.** We strongly support this package in its entirety and request that it function as the core element of the simulation. We anticipate that a diversified street network will substantially improve access to destinations and reduce vehicle queues while maintaining and enhancing safety and access for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit and improving livability for all residents of the study area. We request the addition of one key element to this package: a multiuse path through/along the IBM Williston property that connects Redmond Road with 2A to create a "River Route" path/route running all the way from North Williston Road to Lime Kiln Road (see marked-up attachment for details). Overall, we would like to see a quantification of how much benefit this package in particular would provide

across all modes, as we believe it is the most balanced and beneficial option.

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 4: MEDIUM PRIORITY.** We support improvements to Route 2A that improve safety and promote steady, predictable flow of traffic, so long as improvements do not result in a cross-section that exceeds three lanes plus shoulders outside of the Tafts Corners area. We do not support the addition of multiple turn lanes to the 2A/Industrial intersection, and urge that a roundabout be considered instead. We support expansion to five lanes from Marshall to US2, provided that the cross-section remains three lanes from Helena northward as noted above.

**STRATEGY PACKAGE 5: MEDIUM PRIORITY.** We support improvements to the "eastern corridor" within the following parameters: a two-lane cross-section with bike lanes throughout; roundabouts at major intersections (Routes 2, 117, and 15); one left-turn lane at minor intersections; narrow lane widths and other geometric constraints to constrain vehicle speed; and targeted pedestrian improvements in neighborhood areas.

**Overall, we envision a transportation network that enhances transportation access for all modes while enhancing livability for area residents.** Such a system would have the following characteristics:

- Two lane roads with occasional left-turn lanes predominate outside of Tafts Corners to as to preserve the region's rural heritage and character
- The street grid is diversified and well-connected so as to provide people with a wide range of route choices while preserving livability along major routes
- Streets and roads are designed and built such that the 85th percentile speed does not exceed 30 mph in built-up areas and 40 mph in rural areas
- Route 2A is redesigned as a consistent three-lane cross-section from just north of Tafts Corners to the river so as to promote smooth traffic flow and improve safety
- Major roads in the Tafts Corners area do not exceed four to five lanes, and nowhere other than Tafts Corners are roads more than three lanes wide
- All streets and roads are designed to be safe and inviting for bicyclists and pedestrians, with separated paths and sidewalks along major routes, bike lanes/wide shoulders on secondary routes, well-protected street crossings, and low speeds throughout
- A comprehensive network of off-street multiuse paths connects neighborhoods with schools, shopping/commercial areas, and other key destinations
- Major intersections are converted to one-lane modern roundabouts, with the possible exception of small-radius two-lane roundabouts at 2A/Marshall and 2A/2

**The key goal as we see it must be to increase overall system capacity <u>without</u> substantially increasing the capacity of arterial roads by building out the network and diversifying transportation options.** We are confident that the microsimulation model will demonstrate that building out the network and diversifying transportation options will in fact do more to increase system capacity for all modes than any other approach. We look forward to working with the committee to narrow down the options and create a package of proposed improvements that provide the full range of benefits that we all want as the result of

our work.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important project.

Best,
Jason

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Jason Van Driesche
Director of Advocacy and Education
Local Motion
1 Steele St., Burlington, VT  05401
802-861-2700 ext. 109
jason@localmotion.org
www.localmotion.org

*Local Motion is a non-profit organization promoting active transportation and recreation for healthy and sustainable Vermont communities.*

To: Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) Steering Committee

From: Sandra Levine, Conservation Law Foundation; Kate McCarthy, Vermont Natural Resources Council; Paul Bruhn, Preservation Trust of Vermont

Date: January 4, 2013

Re: Comments on WENTS Strategy Packages and Maximizing Value of Transportation Investments

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As additional work and outreach will be occurring before the WENTS Steering Committee meets again, we are providing some initial comments on the evaluation of the network strategies and some suggestions regarding future work and evaluations.

**1) Phase 1 Projects and Core Improvements provide meaningful network benefits.**

- The WENTS analysis so far is helpful to begin conversations among diverse interests to increase understanding about what options exist to address safety, mobility, congestion, and multi-modal access within this area.
- The effectiveness of the various "strategy packages," recently evaluated by RSG using a microsimulation model, builds on the effectiveness of the Phase 1 improvements already underway. These include the Crescent Connector, which will provide more improvements at Five Corners than the Circ Highway would have.
- The modeling also builds on a set of core improvements that are included for all the strategies and which would significantly improve the network's function.
- The Phase 1 Projects and the Core Improvements combined – effectively, the baseline of improvements that will be put in place – will provide about half of the overall improvements that the Circ Highway[1] would have achieved at a fraction of the cost.

**2) The strategy packages provide marginal additional traffic improvements.**

- The analysis from the modeling so far shows somewhat limited additional benefits will be provided from the various new "hybrid strategies."
- Each of the new hybrid strategies come at a fairly high dollar cost (a range of between $24M - $73M) and overall low performance. At best they provide an additional 10% improvement.
- Many of these may be good taxpayer investments. However, the limited benefits revealed by the analysis so far suggest there are very real opportunities for more focused, cost-effective solutions.

[1] While we acknowledge that direct comparison between the earlier Circ EIS analysis and the current WENTS analysis is not fully compatible due to differences in underlying assumptions, modeling methodology, etc, we do believe that it is possible to draw broadly conceptual comparisons between the two analyses. For example, by comparing the two analyses it is possible to compare the levels of improvement deemed adequate to justify the Circ implementation with those found to be obtainable under the WENTS regime.

3) **Solutions to optimize the transportation network's function should focus on the main problem: peak travel times.** [2]
   - The analysis so far (not to mention the experience of numerous drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians) shows the peak periods are the most troublesome for safe travel, mobility, and access. Solutions that would help the system work most efficiently when we need it most – at the peak commute times – would provide the greatest benefit.
   - In transportation planning, it is generally the case that most congestion results from roughly the last 15% of traffic.
   - Because of this, solutions focused on that 15% of traffic, during the times when the system performs the worst (e.g., peak commute times), provide the most significant additional benefit.

4) **The amount of demand on the system, combined with the limited additional benefit of the strategy packages suggest that additional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) would provide significant additional benefits.**
   - The analysis so far has held TDM and underlying trip generation essentially constant (i.e., not varied intentionally as a component of any alternative).
   - Congestion at peak commute travel times is the most responsive to TDM, at least in part because this time tends to have a higher proportion of the home to/from work trips that are most susceptible to many TDM approaches.
   - Examples and the success of TDM from CATMA and from the Upper Valley suggest there are good opportunities for additional TDM in this area to provide more cost-effective benefits than additional roadway improvements.
   - The MPO 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan proposes such an approach: "The methodology assumes that a regional TDM program is successful at reducing home to/from work single-occupant vehicle (SOV) trips by 10 percent to the major employment centers identified on Figure 5-4. It is important to emphasize that the 10 percent reduction is assumed only for home to/from work trips associated with the target TDM areas." (MTP pp 40-41)[3]
   - The MPO TDM study plus some national data suggest even higher captures (~50% higher) might be possible.

5) **Conclusions and Recommendations**
   - Because the strategy packages bring us limited benefits for the amount of money invested, it will be helpful to combine these with approaches that make the system work better, particularly at peak travel times.
   - Strategy packages that optimize system performance and include strategies, consistent with the MTP, to reduce travel demand should be part of the WENTS analysis. The WENTS analysis should include the effect of successfully achieving a TDM trip reduction consistent with the MPO target or some other reasonable level.
   - Provide an analysis of performance of Phase 1 and the Core Improvements, apart from the Hybrid Strategies.

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[2] "peak travel times" are generally considered to be the morning and evening "peak hour". This is typically taken to be roughly 7 – 9 AM, and 4 – 6 PM.

[3] http://www.ccrpc.us/MTP/2025/MTP_final_apr2005.pdf

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LOCAL MOTION
Trails and Bikeways

1 Steele Street #103
Burlington, VT 05401
(p) 802.652.2453
(f) 802.861.2700
info@localmotion.org
www.localmotion.org

TO: Members of the Williston and Essex Selectboards
and the Essex Junction Village Trustees
Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS)
Steering Committee members
Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission staff

FROM: Chapin Spencer, Local Motion

RE: Offer of assistance with Transportation Demand Management (TDM) as strategy for addressing transportation issues in WENTS study area

DATE: January 9, 2013

As a member of the project steering committee, Local Motion has been involved in Williston-Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) project and has followed its findings with great interest.

**Now that the WENTS project team has begun to share the results of its modeling work, we would like to highlight what we see as a key opportunity for meeting the transportation challenges of the WENTS study area in a cost-effective manner – and offer our assistance.** We appreciate being a part of this process, and hope that our comments will be helpful to your towns as you identify priority investments in the area's transportation system.

One important insight that emerged from the initial modeling through 2015 was the fact that a relatively small reduction in peak hour traffic could result in major improvement in traffic flow throughout the system.

**While improving performance will of course rely in part on targeted upgrades to problem locations, we seethe biggest gains coming from measures that reduce the number of vehicles on the road during peak periods**.

As you likely know, VTrans and the CCRPC have already begun investing in such strategies as part of the "Go! Chittenden" regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) initiative. Modeled on successful initiatives in communities elsewhere in the region and the nation that have reduced single-occupant commutes by double digit margins, this initiative is working on a variety of fronts to give people more options for getting to work. When carpooling, transit, walking and biking, and telecommuting are all on the table, a surprising number of people find that diversifying their commute makes sense and adds to their quality of life.

**Given the promise – and the cost-effectiveness – of this approach, we encourage the Williston and Essex Selectboards and the Essex Junction Trustees to view TDM as a core element of the region's transportation strategy.** For a fraction of the cost of a major construction project, we could fund a robust multi-year TDM initiative that would eliminate the need for many costly highway improvements. At the same time, such an initiative would preserve and restore quality of life in communities that are presently being overrun by traffic.

**Local Motion is ready and eager to serve as a partner in the development of a multi-faceted strategy to meet the transportation needs of the Essex-Williston area in ways that enhance the region's quality of life.** Walking and biking will not by any means address all of the region's transportation needs, but they are an integral component of the overall transportation system. Transit works better if people can walk or bike safely to a bus stop. Carpooling is more efficient if riders don't have to be delivered to their doors, but can walk the last few blocks. Good facilities for walking and biking make all transportation options work better.

**The communities in this region are already leaders in development of infrastructure for walking and biking.** From the network of multiuse paths in Williston to Essex Junction's commitment to being a walking village to Essex Town's excellent trail maps and resources, many elements of a walking and biking network are already in place. With targeted support and encouragement, the people who live and work in these communities can make much greater use of these facilities for their daily transportation needs.

Thank you for involving us in this process. We stand ready to assist with implementation in any way we can. Please let us know how we can be of service.

Sincerely,

Chapin Spencer
Executive Director

IBM
Essex Jct., VT 05452

January 22, 2012

Eleni Churchill
Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404

Eleni,

Thank you for your leadership of the Williston Essex Network Transportation Study (WENTS) to help look for transportation alternatives to the Circ highway in this corridor.

The WENTS activity will produce 2 transportation improvement models for consideration by the Circ Task Force, HSP1 (installation of a bridge near Redmond Rd) and HSP2 (improvements to Exit 12, Rte 2A and other intersections). While each of these proposals will result in improvements to traffic flow and congestion in the area, neither option appears to be able to address all the issues that Circ segments A and B would address if they were to be built.

IBM's **goals** for options related to this study are 1) transportation safety and emergency access 2) improved access to the interstate for goods, commerce and commuters and 3) growth opportunities at the Champlain Valley Technology and Innovation Park (CVTIP). Modeling results for an 'Innovation Ave' option that does not have direct access to the interstate appears to not have desired improvements on traffic flow in the 2035 time frame. It is important that this road option be left open as a future consideration and a possible option for providing improved access to the interstate in the WENTS corridor.

Both options HSP1 and HSP2 will provide benefits to traffic in the region, but they are limited in their full capability compared to Circ A and B. Any option that is selected should also include a plan to consider updates to the permitting process for new standards related to acceptable levels of congestion in the WENTS area. The Act 250 process can identify a level of 'unreasonable congestion' when considering developments. The levels of congestion modeled in the WENTS study should be considered reasonable under that process to allow future economic growth in this corridor.

Thanks again for the opportunity to provide input into this study to provide important relief to traffic congestion in the Circ corridor.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 769-4153.

Tim Baechle
IBM Microelectronics Division
TBaechle@us.IBM.com

cc: Michele Boomhower

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CHITTENDEN COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce**

January 30, 2012

Eleni Churchill
Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
110 West Canal Street, Suite 202
Winooski, VT 05404

Dear Ms. Churchill:

We thank you for your hard work and leadership on the Williston-Essex Transportation Study (WENTS) planning initiative. Finding viable alternatives to the Circumferential Highway is a daunting task, and is critical to the future of this economic and geographic region.

Looking forward to 2035, GBIC & LCRCC see significant need for infrastructure and transportation improvements throughout this WENTS corridor. Our hope has always been that both Circ A and Circ B would be completed so that future growth opportunities and current demand could be met.

Both HSP1 and HSP2 offer roadway improvements and positive impacts on traffic flows throughout the WENTS study area. However, at this point we think that neither option appears to solve all the needs of the WENTS area that Circ A and B would address; a fact that has been well established by the modeling. Both options have pros and cons, but neither adequately solves the primary goals of improved access to the interstate, improving safety, and optimizing necessary growth opportunities in the area. Modeling results for Innovation Ave without access to the interstate does not appear to drive desired results in the 2035 time frame, but it is critically important that transportation solutions include future consideration for this road to connect to the interstate.

Given the limited options, we would support improvements to RTE 2A and Exit 12. However, these improvements must consider truck traffic as part of their base. Any option that is put forward by the committee should have allowances to consider updates to the permitting process for new standards related to acceptable levels of congestion in the WENTS area.

We look forward to the WENTS committee and the CIRC Alternatives task force recommending the alternative(s) that will provide the best available traffic improvements to accommodate future economic growth in the area.

Thanks again for your work and for the opportunity for GBIC & LCRCC to offer comments.

Best regards,

Frank Cioffi
President, GBIC

Tom Torti
President, LCRCC

cc: Charlie Baker
cc: Michele Boomhower

**60 Main Street, Suite 100 • Burlington, VT 05401**
**GBIC: (802) 862-5726 • (802) 860-1899 fax • info@gbicvt.org • www.gbicvt.org**
**LCRCC: (802) 863-3489 • (802) 863-1538 fax • vermont@vermont.org • www.vermont.org**