1. Consent Agenda

N/A this month.

2. Approval of Minutes

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF March 2, 2016 PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Public Comments

There were none.

4. Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act

Costa Pappis of VTrans attended to present highlights from the recently enacted federal transportation authorization law. The bill covers 5 years and replaces MAP-21 authorizing highway, transit and rail programs. Costa made clear that authorization does not guarantee that programs will be funded at levels in the bill as annual appropriations bills set those levels and on average 90% of appropriations funding eventually ends up being obligated. He described the political process of the president, House and Senate all producing a version that gets distilled into a single bill that in this case also included over 100 amendments. The major highlights of the new law include:

- Leaving the core highway and transit programs in place with small increases in funding
- Renaming the Surface Transportation Program to Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
- Creating a new formula freight program
- Allowing National Highway funds to be used on non-National Highway system bridges
- Creating a new discretionary program for freight, buses and transit facilities, and
- Creating a new Rail title in the law

Costa showed a graph of the estimated apportionments coming to Vermont from FY15 through FY20 noting that the increases essentially track estimated inflation. He also showed how those funds were
allocated to the programs with the largest amounts slated to the National Highway Performance and Surface Transportation programs. The estimated shares for transit were also illustrated.

The new Freight Program will see VT getting $32.3 million targeted to a designated National Highway Freight Network yet to be identified but likely based on the National Highway System. Another freight discretionary program will target high cost highway, port and rail projects with $4.5 billion nationally available over 5 years. The new bus facilities program sets up a competitive grant system with $1.5 billion over 5 years. Costa noted that VTrans has been successful in the past when applying to similar programs. He also pointed out some new planning related items that impact the MPO:

- In consultation with the MPO, the state could designate urban corridors.
- The MTP and TIP must include intermodal facilities
- MPOs should consult with tourism and natural disaster agencies
- Consider new planning factors on system resiliency and reliability, and stormwater
- Plans need to identify local and intercity bus facilities and include strategies to reduce natural disaster vulnerability
- Include bus operators and vanpool providers as interested parties to planning activities.

5. Project Prioritization

Christine presented the latest version of this process that has been on-going for over 10 years. She first provided background information contrasting the VTrans Capital Program with CCRPC’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and noting the different program categories in the Capital Program. Each year the Vermont Legislature requires that projects in the State’s Transportation Capital Program be prioritized. The numerical grading system assigns a priority rating to all paving, roadway, safety and traffic operations, state bridge, interstate bridge, and town highway bridge projects. The rating system consists of two separate components:

1. An asset management-based factor which is objective and quantifiable with data provided by VTrans.
2. A priority rating system focusing on functional importance taking into consideration several factors and established by Regional Planning Commissions.

Christine provided the details that go into each of the components and then focused on the RPC responsibilities. The CCRPC uses the following scoring categories:

- Economic Vitality
- Safety and Security
- Accessibility, Mobility and Connectivity
- Environment, Energy and Quality of Life
- Preservation of Existing System
- Efficient System Management

Also taken into consideration is where the project falls in the TIP. Typically, projects that score well are those that:

- access designated growth areas, airport, tourism facilities
- improve safety in a location with a document safety problem
- are bicycle/pedestrian facilities making intermodal, regional connection or accessing designated growth areas
- Are reconstruction projects with critical need
- Improve corridors with significant congestion

Christine asked the TAC to approve two motions:

1. Approve the 2018 Regional Project Scores as offered by staff, with changes if any, and forward to CCRPC Commission, and
2. Approve the 2018 Town Highway Bridge Pre-Candidate Scores, with changes if any, and forward to CCRPC Commission.

The following points were made during discussion of this item:

- Some regional priorities do not score as highly on the State’s list such as Exit 17 and Susie Wilson Road. This could be due to the fact they are relatively new, only added in 2014.
- The 80-20 State vs. regional scoring is too imbalanced in favor of VTrans.
- Our process/criteria should be revisited in consultation with VTrans.
- Perhaps a TAC subcommittee can look at this and advise the TAC.

Following discussion DENNIS LUTZ MADE A MOTION TO COMBINE TOGETHER THE TWO MOTIONS RECOMMENDED BY STAFF AND RECOMMEND THE BOARD APPROVE THE PRIORITY SCORES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JUSTIN RABIDOUX AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. High Risk Rural Roads

Sai reported that VTrans has developed a Systemic Local Road Safety Program (SLRS) to help implement low cost safety improvements targeted at reducing major crashes on local rural and urban roads that have less than 5,000 vehicles per day. Sites for improvements are selected by the Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) based on crash risk factors. Improvement projects will be contracted by VTrans under regional umbrella construction projects. Sai mentioned that there are two inline tools to help municipalities identify candidates. CCRPC staff developed an online map that shows grades in 2% intervals to identify potential location candidates. See http://map.ccrpcvt.org/hrrr/ and VTrans developed a Public Crash Data Query Tool which includes an online map with crash data at http://apps.vtrans.vermont.gov/CrashPublicQueryTool/

CCRPC staff will review crash data, roadway geometry, analyze and prioritize locations for the municipalities to review by April 30th. Staff will submit the selected projects/locations along with the participation forms signed by the municipalities to VTrans by May 20, 2016. Sai will send TAC members instructions on getting feedback to CCRPC staff on potential projects in their towns.

7. Advanced Traffic Monitoring Consultant Selection

Sai updated the TAC on the consultant selection that had been done via email in order to get this project moving. The previously selected consultant withdrew after losing the proposed project lead staff necessitating a project rebid from the CCRPC. In the second round Gannet Fleming was selected and the project kick-off meeting took place on April 4th.

8. UPWP Update

Bryan Davis described the UPWP process timeline and the stage the process is currently at. He noted that the amounts requested for planning tasks exceeded the amount of funding available leading to tough decisions on what to move forward on and what to leave for another year. He acknowledged TAC member help on the UPWP committee from Justin and Barbara and reported that he would report in more detail next month and that the Board would hold a public hearing in May.

9. Wastewater

Emily Nosse-Leirer reported that DHCA has asked us to report on water and wastewater system needs. We have polled our communities on this but there are still some data gaps we are trying to fill and perhaps TAC members can help us gather that information. Emily referred members to the table attached to the meeting packet to see where we need the additional information and to verify which information we already have. Some comments generated from the discussion on this item included:
We should cross check this information with the CEDS list in the ECOS Plan
How do the needs expressed here line up with anticipated funding?
CEDS eligibility requirements cannot be met by some municipalities
Stormwater needs could dwarf these water and wastewater ones
Towns should have one town wide goal on phosphorous reduction rather than project by project

10. Road Erosion Inventory
Eleni distributed a handout of interim guidance on how to undertake municipal road erosion inventories. The CCRPC is proposing as a first priority that we focus this coming year on towns in the Winooski River basin since the DEC is preparing, or about to complete, a tactical basin plan in the same area.
Dennis Lutz cautioned that ANR data may not be accurate and that checking with municipal staff for local knowledge is important.

11. Status of Projects and Subcommittee Reports
Bryan Osborne directed TAC members to the project list on the back of the agenda page and asked if members had any questions.

12. CCRPC March Board Meeting Report
Peter mentioned the Board discussion in March included no transportation related items.

13. Chairman’s/Members’ Items
Dick Hosking reported that 4/15 is the deadline for Better Roads grant applications. He stressed that hydraulic reports are critical and have been lacking in the past. He also noted that there is a backlog of requests to perform hydraulic reports. Bryan Davis reported that CCRPC staff plan to apply to Better Back Roads for road erosion inventories for the seven towns in the Winooski River watershed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Keating