

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
2 TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
3 MINUTES
4

5 DATE: Wednesday, March 4, 2020
6 TIME: 9:00 a.m.
7 PLACE: CCRPC Offices, 110 West Canal St. Winooski, VT
8

9 **Members Present**

10 Nicole Losch, Burlington
11 Matthew Langham, VTrans
12 Amy Bell, VTrans
13 Ashley Bishop, VTrans District 5
14 Chris Jolly, FHWA
15 Dave Allerton, Milton
16 Ashley Jackson, Milton
17 Dean Bloch, Charlotte
18 Dennis Lutz, Essex
19 Josh Arneson, Richmond
20 Jon Rauscher, Winooski
21 Joss Besse, Bolton
22 Karen Yacos, Local Motion
23 Bob Henneberger, Seniors
24 Dean Pierce, Shelburne
25 Robin Pierce, Essex Junction
26 Sandy Thibault, CATMA
27 Lisa Schaeffler, Williston
28 Seth Bowden, GBIC
29

Staff

Charlie Baker, Executive Director
Bryan Davis, Senior Transportation Planner
Christine Forde, Senior Transportation Planner
Jason Charest, Senior Transportation Planning Engineer
Marshall Distel, Transportation Planner
Chris Dubin, Transportation Planner
Sai Sarepalli, Transportation Planning Engineer

Others

Taylor Sisson, VTrans
Kelsi Record, VTrans

30
31 Bryan Davis called the meeting to order at 9:02AM, calling for a round of introductions.
32

33 **1. Consent Agenda:** No consent agenda.
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35 **2. Approval of Minutes**

36 Bryan asked for any changes, which there were none. DENNIS LUTZ MADE A MOTION TO
37 APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2020, SECONDED BY BOB HENNEBERGER. THE
38 MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.
39

40 **3. Public Comments**

41 None.
42

43 **4. US7 Signal Upgrades, Shelburne-South Burlington**

44 Taylor Sisson and Kelsi Record, VTrans staff, presented information about signal upgrades on US 7 in
45 Shelburne and South Burlington. This project is a Federal AID grant award of 996,000 with 20% state
46 match awarded January 2019 to enhance 17 signal (16 state-owned) performance on Shelburne Road
47 corridor (Webster Rd to I-189). Two projects defined under the grant based on signal ages: 10 signals
48 about 15 years old from Webster to Holmes/IDX, and 6 much older signals from Fayette to I-189. One
49 signal at I-189 off ramp is municipal owned. Contract 1 has apparent low bidder (not yet awarded) and is
50 planned to start in June 2020 and end in October. Contract 2 to be bid in summer 2020 with construction
51 planned for 2021. Project benefits include: monitoring traffic and adjusting signal timing remotely;
52 technicians receiving automatic alerts in event of failure; Automated Traffic Signal Performance

1 Measures (ATSPMs); reduced left turn delay; improved signal coordination; and replaces dated
2 equipment.

3 Dean asked if any private info is captured by cameras? Taylor replied that nothing private is captured and
4 no data imagery (e.g., like red light running) is stored. Dean noted that the Charlotte signal replaced
5 recently improved traffic flow at the intersection.

6 Karen asked if the new technology can be used to capture license plates? Taylor replied that they are not
7 designed to capture that level of detail. Karen asked if the technology would be able to be used for
8 preferential crossing for bikes/peds? Taylor replied that the cameras are only really designed to monitor
9 traffic and not be able to take video. The new signals use radar to monitor advance stop bar and queue
10 lengths, etc. Karen asked if the technology can detect and differentiate between bikes and cars? Yes it can
11 detect bikes but is currently used to detect presence rather than say, capture bike counts. Pedestrian signal
12 infrastructure is separate from the technology that detects cars and bikes. VTrans staff will be able to
13 monitor flow of cars and bikes.

14 Dennis complimented VTrans on their VT 15 work and asked who the contractor is for this project.
15 Taylor replied that contract 1 hasn't been awarded yet but VTrans has received an apparent low bid.
16 There was a question that if the signals are being monitored, is there a system set up for a quicker way to
17 get signal issues to the right operations people? Taylor replied that yes, this system establishes remote
18 communications and would tie the 16 signals into that system so operations staff would get notified if
19 signal went to flash mode or went out or some other issue.

20 Dean Pierce asked about the benefits slide and noted he previously heard this project will improve level
21 of service for vehicles throughout corridor; is that a benefit, and has that been quantified? Taylor
22 responded that since VTrans isn't doing any lane configuration changes, the benefit is that signals will be
23 able to respond to traffic flow and essentially "fine tune" the system, but there hasn't been any quantified
24 time savings at this point. Flashing yellow arrows will reduce delay for left turns, which is currently wait
25 on red for protected only green. Shelburne intersection delays would need a more robust study.

26 Joss noted that it looks like two years of summer construction and asked about any mitigation efforts.
27 Taylor noted that VTrans is planning for all work to be done at night, and other work can occur off of the
28 roadway during daytime hours. Two-way traffic is planned during the entire construction period.

29 Chris Jolly pointed out that performance measures were noted and asked if there is baseline data to
30 measure improvements. Taylor said yes, the operations team is collecting a range of data but current
31 infrastructure limits ability to collect some baseline data.

32 Karen asked if there is anything in the prioritization that is not improving traffic flow, e.g., safety, transit
33 access, etc.? Response was that performance measures are mostly operational traffic flow like arrivals on
34 red, how often cars have to stop, queue length, etc. Karen expressed concern about the challenge for
35 pedestrians to cross US7 and questioned if the project was creating a corridor that would move cars
36 through faster.

37

38 **5. Chittenden County Projects in SFY2021 VTrans Transportation Capital Program**

39 Christine Forde, CCRPC staff, gave a presentation on Chittenden County projects listed in the SFY2021
40 VTrans Capital Program.

41 Dennis asked are funds available only in year shown for projects that are in the capital plan. Christine
42 noted that yes, the budget year is significant but the list gets reshuffled every year. Dennis asked if
43 projects can move up the list quicker if they are ready sooner? Yes but only if funds are available. Note
44 that we would need to amend the TIP and work with the JTOC (Joint Traffic Operations Committee) as
45 well.

46 There was a question about the timing of the Williston Park and Ride, which is to be constructed in 2021.

1 Christine noted that the Bolton project is for scoping and is in process, and there might be a recommended
2 short-term project that could move forward.

3 It was clarified that the Williston Exit 12 project is for one of the four phases rather than for the full
4 project.

5
6 **6. SFY2022 Project Prioritization and Town Highway Bridge Pre-Candidate Prioritization**

7 Christine Forde, CCRPC staff, gave a presentation on the SFY2022 Project Prioritization and Town
8 Highway Bridge Pre-Candidate Prioritization. RPCs asked by VTrans to score their project list, and the
9 results of CCRPC scoring included in the March meeting packet. The CCRPC also scores pre-candidate
10 town highway bridges for up to 10 projects.

11 Lisa asked about the number one ranked Roadway project at Industrial Ave and asked that we all make
12 sure that the Marshall Avenue/Muddy Brook project and this project are not happening at the same time,
13 which would have significant traffic impacts. She noted that Williston passed a bond vote yesterday so
14 the hope is that Marshall Ave/Muddy Brook will go to construction next year.

15 Dean Pierce asked why the Shelburne Bay Road bridge was the number one project but now is number 2?
16 Christine noted that these projects are ranked statewide and other bridges that deteriorated faster moved
17 up the list. Dean asked that, in terms of regional ranking and review of specific scores, if detour length is
18 the primary reason the Huntington bridge moved up? Response that yes, we believe that's correct. Robin
19 noted that it seems weird that detour length would trump safety and condition. Christine noted that being
20 located in a designated Village also has a scoring impact, but Huntington may not be ready for their
21 bridge to move forward. We will continue to work with VTrans on this process.

22 DENNIS LUTZ MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2022 REGIONAL PROJECT SCORES AND
23 TOWN HIGHWAY BRIDGE PRE-CANDIDATE REGIONAL PROJECT SCORES AND FORWARD
24 TO VTRANS, SECONDED BY DEAN PIERCE. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

25 Christine then gave an update on VPSP2, which is the new project prioritization methodology and
26 criteria, and will to a large extent replace the project prioritization process just described. Christine
27 reviewed a comparison of 2022 prioritization using VPSP2, which does not give points for projects that
28 are in the TIP and so the scoring/rank changes from the current project. The VPSP2 methodology favors
29 larger projects that "check more of the boxes," e.g., roadway + bike/ped + stormwater, etc.

30 Dennis noted that projects tend to group by scores but we have to choose specific projects, and questions
31 whether the top scoring project is really the number one project, or is it more of a judgement call. There is
32 no perfect methodology so the new system may not be better than the old system. Christine pointed out
33 that the new system tends to score bigger projects that check more boxes higher, and Dennis noted that's
34 part of the problem – if we do more of the smaller projects, that might have a bigger impact on other
35 issues as well. Discussion noted that this is still an imperfect system but it serves as a guideline, and the
36 Legislature requires VTrans to have a prioritization system. The new scoring system is still in
37 development and will mostly be used in the Modernization and Expansion category, not Asset
38 Management, etc., and will be used to add new projects to the system.

39 Dean noted the TAC's previous conversation about adding new criteria like economic development,
40 recreation opportunity, jobs creation, etc., and asked if those have been incorporated? Christine said yes
41 they have, but we don't have a new version of the methodology to share today.

42 Chris Jolly asked why the Exit 14 signal upgrade is listed in Traffic Operations and Safety and not in
43 Asset Management? Christine pointed out that that this is a bigger project than what is implied in the
44 project title.

1 Charlie asked if the TAC is interested in seeing a scoring comparison of the old vs new system to get
2 feedback since neither is perfect. We have a timeframe to test it out and discuss changing weights, etc.
3 Christine will share the new scoring sheet and notes that the project categories need to be better defined.
4 The VPSP2 Committee, on which Christine serves, meets next week to continue working on details.

5 Charlie encourages the TAC to look more closely at the criteria and we'll provide a next version for
6 review. Note that there's been discussion of allowing RPCs to have some flexible points to address
7 project issues not captured in scoring criteria.

8 **7. Municipal Roads General Permit Update**

9 Chris Dubin, CCRPC staff, presented an update on the MRGP and what items are due in the coming
10 months. He reminded the TAC that there are different forms for MS4 and non-MS4 communities, which
11 have likely changed slightly from last year and to make sure to use the most current one that can be found
12 on the DEC MRGP home page.. Chris Jolly asked which towns are MS4, and they are Burlington,
13 Colchester, Essex, Essex Junction, Milton, Shelburne, South Burlington, Williston, and Winooski.

14 15 **8. Status of Projects and Subcommittee Reports (Information Item):**

16 Bryan noted that the project list on the back of the agenda identifies current projects, and TAC members
17 can follow up with staff about these or other projects.
18

19 Chris Jolly asked about the congestion policy evaluation project, and Jason replied that the CCRPC
20 contracted with RSG and is working with VTrans to look at whether there are measures other than level
21 of service that could be used to measure congestion impacts, starting in Chittenden County. They are
22 currently in the information gathering stage. Chris asked how do we define a "proposed development?"
23 Jason noted anything that will go through Act 250 process and would come to the TAC.
24

25 **9. CCRPC Board Meeting Report**

26 In February the Board heard a presentation on US7 signal upgrades from VTrans staff and warned a
27 public hearing for a major TIP amendment, voted to approve Safety Performance Targets for the
28 Metropolitan Planning Area, discussed Proposed VTrans Capital Program Projects, and discussed an RFP
29 for Clean Water Service Provider.
30

31 **10. Chairman's/Members' Items:**

- 32 • Sai briefly discussed CCRPC's capability to evaluate signal timing plans for traffic signals
33 maintained by local municipalities and asked TAC members to reach out to the staff if they are
34 interested in seeking technical assistance to analyze current traffic signal timing plans in their
35 towns.
- 36 • Bryan asked TAC members to provide any topic suggestions for future meetings, noted that the
37 new VTrans Path and Sidewalk Cost Report is available
38 (https://vtrans.vermont.gov/sites/aot/files/highway/documents/ltf/VTrans%20Path%20and%20Sidewalk%20Cost_Report_2020.pdf), asked TAC members if they had a preference of holding more
39 conference calls when possible, and noted that VT Local Roads is planning their popular River
40 and Roads Tier 2 training (<https://localroads.vermont.gov/content/upcoming-workshops-0>).
41
- 42 • Charlie noted that staff could present the I-89 study in the coming months.
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44 ROBIN PIERCE MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN, SECOND BY, AMY BELL, APPROVED
45 UNANIMOUSLY.
46

47 The meeting adjourned at 10:41 AM.
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49 Respectfully submitted, Bryan Davis