



Chittenden County E&D Advisory Committee Wednesday, September 22nd 10:00am Meeting Minutes

Participants: Ross MacDonald (VTrans), Marshall Distel (CCRPC), Kathryn Titus (Cathedral Square), Leah Soderquist (United Way), Jordan Posner (GMT), Erica Marks (Age Well)

1. Introductions

Marshall Distel welcomed partners to the quarterly meeting. Brief introductions were then made. Prior to moving on to updates, there was a brief discussion about the E&D program functions within the context of Cathedral Square's properties.

2. GMT Updates

Jordan Posner shared updates for GMT. Only one month of E&D billing was available to analyze for this meeting. Jordan explained that ridership has increased to about 70% of pre-COVID levels. GMT continues to move forward with the microtransit project in Montpelier. VTrans is looking to expand this pilot to other sites in the future, potentially next in St. Albans. A great deal of success has been learned from the existing pilot, as well as lessons learned on how to do this better in other regions.

Jordan also shared an idea coming from northern Chittenden County. Individuals are having challenges accessing care from UVM Medical Center due to lengthy scheduling delays and capacity issues. Because of this, some E&D users have sought care in Franklin County at Northwestern Medical Center. For individuals who live in Milton, Underhill, Jericho and some parts of Colchester, those locations are closer to Northwestern Medical Center than UVM Medical Center. GMT is proposing to expand SSTA's E&D trip parameters to include those locations in northern Chittenden County so that individuals can promptly access medical care that is closer to their homes. GMT will work with SSTA on these discussions.

Leah Soderquist highlighted the importance of looking at the statewide practices for E&D transit providers. SSTA is one of the only organizations that doesn't currently travel outside of county lines. Chittenden County is different for a lot of reasons, but it may be helpful to look outside of our region to evaluate how others are able to provide out-of-county trips.

Ross MacDonald expressed support for these discussions to continue to find solutions for unmet needs and make the best use of E&D funding.

3. SSTA Updates

Marshall shared updates from SSTA. Similar to what Jordan described in the GMT updates, Adam Lawrence described how SSTA ridership has steadily increased, and the E&D volume is now close to 70% of pre-COVID volumes. Although, due to the delta variant surge, SSTA has started to use its COVID questionnaire again in an effort to enhance rider safety.

Marshall also stated that he hopes to begin discussions with SSTA about a plan for volunteer drivers later this fall. Erica Marks mentioned that she had met briefly with SSTA to discuss volunteer driver strategies.



4. CCRPC Updates

Marshall shared some updates from the CCRPC. The E&D, ADA & Medicaid Call Center Feasibility Study for SSTA and GMT should begin later this fall. Marshall has also started to explore topics for the 2022 E&D Transportation Summit, which will be hosted in Chittenden County. Ross mentioned an idea to discuss the transition of E&D committees to mobility committees.

5. Other E&D Partner Items

Within the context of the drop in volunteer drivers, Leah asked the group if public transit providers have been experiencing similar workforce issues. Jordan replied that GMT has been experiencing a number of challenging staffing issues. Ross acknowledged that this is a statewide problem. He explained that there have been some route cancelations and delays due to a lack of drivers. VTrans is working with the Department of Labor and Agency of Human Services to explore opportunities to best address this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30am.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 22nd