

## **FY2023 UPWP Committee - Meeting 1 (Virtual Meeting via Zoom)**

### **January 26, 2022**

#### **Members Present:**

Chris Shaw, Board, Committee Chair  
John Zicconi, Board  
Michael Bissonnette, Board  
Jaqueline Murphy, Board  
Amy Bell, VTrans  
Matthew Arancio, VTrans  
Chris Jolly, FHWA  
David Wheeler, CWAC  
Chelsea Mandigo, CWAC  
Robin Pierce, TAC  
Barbara Elliot, TAC  
Cath Yann LaRose, PAC

Amy Irvin Witham, CCRPC  
Christine Forde, CCRPC  
Regina Mahony, CCRPC  
Marshall Distel, CCRPC  
Bryan Davis, CCRPC

#### **Others:**

Annie Bourdon, CarShare VT  
Jonathon Weber, Local Motion  
Chris Damiani, GMT  
Jamie Smith, GMT  
Richard Watts, UVM  
Debra Sachs, Net Zero Vermont  
Phil Hammerslough, Net Zero Vermont  
Stuart Lindsay, Walk to Shop  
Peggy O'Neill-Vivanco, Vermont Clean Cities  
Sandy Thibault, CATMA

#### **Staff:**

Charlie Baker, CCRPC (attended briefly due to a prior commitment)  
Eleni Churchill, CCRPC (attended briefly due to a prior commitment)

### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

Marshall Distel opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. and introductions were made. Following the introductions, Charlie Baker highlighted that the CCRPC received close to \$1.75 million in new transportation project funding requests for FY23, which is a substantially higher level of funding compared to previous years. The CCRPC is expected to receive a greater level of federal funding as a result of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. CCRPC currently estimates that about \$1.9 million will be available for FY23 transportation-related project requests. However, this figure has yet to be finalized by Congress. Funds should be appropriated by February.

### **2. Orientation to the UPWP Process & Format (based on ECOS Plan)**

Marshall provided a brief overview of the UPWP process and detailed how the UPWP Committee will be assisting with the development of the FY23 CCRPC Work Program. MPOs are required to assemble an annual UPWP to outline how federal planning funds from FHWA and FTA will be allocated. Each year, beginning in November, the CCRPC solicits UPWP planning project requests from municipalities, partner organizations and the public. The primary role of the UPWP Committee will be to assist the CCRPC in reviewing the project requests to determine which projects should be funded as part of the FY23 UPWP.

### **3. GMT Transit Planning Tasks**

Chris Damiani and Jamie Smith outlined GMT's transit planning tasks that have been underway in FY22, which include: the Transit Strategic Plan, the MyRide by GMT Microtransit Pilot, AVL

technology Improvements (OnBoard App and service adjustments), a Rural Transit Study in Jericho, Underhill and Cambridge, the GMT Internship Program, and a College Marketing Plan.

Chris provided an overview of ridership updates. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, total urban ridership decreased 35% in FY21 compared to FY20 with a total of 1,218,729 rides. However, ridership in FY22 is bouncing back with boardings increasing 45% over FY21, year to date. Nevertheless, compared to FY20, ridership for FY22 is still down by 23%. A similar trend can be seen in rural ridership numbers.

Jamie then described the planned projects for FY23, which will include the following focal areas:

Service Planning – This includes planning for Route Analysis, Automatic Vehicle Location Technology, Transit Strategic Plan updates, Farebox and Ridership Data Management, Driver Scheduling and Transportation Working Groups.

Capital Projects Planning – This will include planning on Bus Stop Placement Guidelines, Vehicle Replacement & Infrastructure Planning, Automatic Passenger Counters.

National Transit Database – Planning staff will compile data for the four following categories: 1) Demand Response Directly Operated 2) Coach Bus Directly Operated 3) Bus Directly Operated 4) Demand Response Purchased Transit. Based on FTA regulations, GMT planning and finance staff will report on service data, financial data, operational data and administrative data.

Planning and marketing staff will continue supporting the GMT Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee. The focus for this fiscal year will be building awareness of the committee both internally, among staff, and externally with the public.

GMT will continue to work on identifying ways to improve public transportation access and service to rural communities through involvement in municipal and regional groups. In FY23, GMT will work to move forward with some microtransit feasibility studies and a Richmond transit analysis.

The GMT Board of Commissioners recently voted to approve the FY23 budget, which assumes that GMT will reinstate passenger fares. As a result of this, GMT plans to conduct significant outreach to alert passengers and spend time getting fare-collection systems ready to start operating again.

Following the overview presentation, there were several questions raised.

Sandy Thibault asked whether Grand Isle or South Hero were being considered for the microtransit feasibility studies. Jamie said that the next two studies are anticipated to take place in Barre and St. Albans.

Richard Watts expressed interest in hearing how GMT may be attempting to attract younger riders. Jamie said that GMT interns have spent significant time focusing on student marketing with CATMA and on university campuses.

John Zicconi asked that a definition of microtransit be shared with the group. Jamie responded

that microtransit can be defined as a tech-based service for transit that is more similar to Uber or Lyft rather than a fixed-route bus service.

Sandy asked a question about upgrading farebox technology if fares are reinstated. Jamie said that they have not had those discussions yet, due to many of the buses already being past their expected useable life.

#### **4. Presentations from Partner Organizations**

**Net Zero Vermont** – Net Zero Vermont, in partnership with Vermont Clean Cities at UVM’s Transportation Research Center was the first partner organization to present to the UPWP Committee. Their proposed project is titled, Engaging and Connecting Vermonters, Underserved & Diverse Populations to Existing Transit Options.

Their FY23 request involves planning to coordinate and expand the Walk to Shop initiative through enhanced outreach and marketing strategies designed to appreciably engage hundreds of Vermonters and diverse communities. They also have a goal to encourage Vermonters to reduce the use of their car to make short trips. The project is designed to encourage more walking and use of transit, while offering shoppers an affordable and accessible transportation tool (shopping trolleys) to make it easy to walk to shop for groceries and other goods.

They have a diverse group of project partners including the Association of Africans Living in Vermont’s (AALV), Winooski Equity Office, AARP-VT, Cathedral Square, GMT, Go! Vermont, Place Creative Company, Old Spokes Home and a number of others.

Overall, Walk to Shop is an initiative to encourage people to be active, live healthier, save money and reduce their carbon footprint while encouraging the growth of people-centered downtowns. FY23 UPWP funding will support planning, outreach, marketing and promotion, public engagement and partner events, and funding for stipends.

Following the presentation Chris Jolly asked a question about subsidizing the trolleys. Deb clarified that the organization would be asking for partial funding to purchase a container of trolleys to be drop shipped to Vermont. Chris followed up with a question on the procurement of the trolleys. Deb replied that the procurement process was based on quality and affordability. A partnership with the trolley manufacturer was established to procure the trolleys at an affordable rate.

**Local Motion** – Jonathon Weber provided an overview of Local Motion’s UPWP request, which is centered around building walk/bike capacity and culture in Chittenden County. The first focal area is Technical Assistance. Local Motion will support local walk/bike committees and municipalities with walk/bike expertise. This also includes coordinating infrastructure demonstration projects, responding to citizen requests, administering a community walk/bike survey, and project participation and engagement.

Johnathan also shared several examples of the assistance that Local Motion provided to municipalities within the past year. Information about the annual Bike Count Program was also shared.

Education and Outreach is the next focal area of the FY23 application. This includes workshop sessions, the continuation of the E-bike lending library and learning network events that are directed at decision makers.

Key changes for FY23 include an increase in resources for technical assistance work, which will allow Local Motion to provide a higher level of support for more communities. A significant portion of time will also be dedicated to assisting the CCRPC with the update of the ECOS Plan, MTP and ATP. Local Motion will also continue to build relationships and trust with marginalized communities through outreach, events and educational programming. A county-wide public survey will also be conducted to evaluate issues related to walking and biking.

**CarShare VT** – Annie Bourdon presented on CarShare VT’s FY23 funding request. The organization was founded in 2008 with a mission to provide a convenient, affordable, and reliable alternative to private vehicle ownership. It is the first nonprofit carsharing operator in northeastern U.S. and remains one of a handful of independent providers in North America. There are currently 970 members sharing 21 vehicles in Burlington. The fleet is comprised of 4 EVs, 5 PHEVs, 9 fuel-efficient ICE vehicles, and 2 pick-up trucks.

Annie outlined membership trends. CarShare VT continues to recover from Covid-related attrition. The fastest-growing membership group is those receiving financial assistance. In terms of vehicle usage, there is a fleetwide average of 6.8 hours/vehicle/day.

Annie described the impact of CarShare VT. In 2021, 76% of members reported shedding or opting not to purchase a vehicle. Membership in the MobilityShare program nearly tripled from early 2019 to 2021, demonstrating increased demand for safe and reliable transportation during pandemic. Every member reduced VMT by an average of 1,000 miles last year—this accounts for those members who increased VMT by gaining access to a vehicle.

Electric carsharing was introduced at four affordable housing sites in partnership with CHT, Cathedral Square, and BHA with support from VTrans, VLITE, the Lintilhac Foundation, and the CCRPC. The organization is currently working with Community Health Centers to conduct outreach to patients and employees with lower incomes to improve health access through affordable mobility.

For FY23, CarShare VT will revive the Be Car Conscious campaign to help vehicle owners accurately calculate and better understand ownership costs and provide financial comparison to other modes. They will also work to provide a calculation of environmental and social impacts of vehicle dependence, emphasizing inequities that stem from a car-dependent transportation system. They will engage with a diverse range of existing and new partners to develop and implement the campaign to reach as many people as possible, while also analyzing data from use of online calculator and share findings broadly through outreach campaign

**CATMA** – Sandy Thibault presented on behalf of CATMA. Sandy started out her presentation by highlighting the growth of CATMA as membership-based, transportation management association serving Chittenden County.

CATMA now has over 90 members in the Transportation Coordinator Network, provided TDM strategy planning and solutions to at least a dozen employers/developers this past year, launched

a Telework Toolkit, actively engaged in TDM policy development, and is currently recruiting several new dues-paying members.

Sandy provided an overview of CATMA's 2021 transportation impact, highlighting fuel savings, GHG emissions reduced, and VMT avoided. Sandy also shared an update on initiatives from FY22 including the advancement of the Regional Mobility Center as a service, telework toolkit outreach and support, business outreach and the ETC network, and data collection and analysis.

For FY23, CATMA will advance the Regional Mobility Center service that supports the changing commuting climate to include new mapping tools for commuters, a user-friendly digital platform and website, telework support and continued growth of our Network. The overall focus will be to design a service as a "go to" one stop shop for transportation information, trip planning, tools, resources and support for commuters, employers, developers, municipalities, and general public.

CATMA will work to create mapping tools for commuters in the region, utilizing data from CATMA's Transportation Surveys and regional/statewide databases. These tools will provide a visual of accessible transit options, destinations and assist with identifying gaps in our transportation system.

CATMA will also update and scale their website and digital platforms for increased outreach, engagement and education to members and the general public in an equitable, inclusive manner that also supports local, regional and state climate goals.

Lastly, CATMA will continue to build upon their network of transportation coordinators through business outreach, communications, meetings/events, and networking.

Chris Jolly asked a question on data sharing and coordination between partner organizations. Sandy commented that CATMA takes the lead on bringing regional TDM partners together a couple of times annually to share data and coordinate on project updates. Sandy mentioned an opportunity to bring the data together to provide a more comprehensive support that can be shared out more broadly. Chris replied that his intention is not to ask folks to generate more reports just to generate more reports, but he wanted to make sure that CCRPC, FHWA and FTA are confident that the groups are working together, and the data are being shared. This question came up last year with regards to surveying.

Amy Bell reiterated that this topic seems to come up every year. She wondered if an annual partner summit to confer partner groups organized by CCRPC might be a solution. Jonathon Weber mentioned that the TAC might be a good forum to share these data. Sandy said that the TDM partners will be meeting again in February and that they have been talking about planning a transportation summit to discuss these data/coordination questions.

Richard Watts from UVM did not get an opportunity to present this evening due to presentations running longer than expected. He will be invited to present at the second UPWP Committee meeting.

## **5. Next Steps & Adjourn**

Following the partner organization presentations, Marshall provided a brief overview of the next steps. UPWP Committee members are expected to scan through the applications and project spreadsheet to identify questions or concerns related to the applications. CCRPC staff will review the applications with VTrans and FHWA to confirm program eligibility. The next meeting is scheduled for 2/23 at 5:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marshall Distel