



## **Chittenden County E&D Advisory Committee Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> 10:00am-11:00am Meeting Minutes**

**Participants:** Adam Lawrence (SSTA), Dan Currier (VTrans), Marshall Distel (CCRPC), Cari Kelly (United Way), Chris Damiani (GMT), Nick Foss (GMT), Erica Marks (Age Well)

### **1. Introductions**

Marshall Distel welcomed partners to the quarterly meeting.

### **2. 2023 E&D Summit Summary**

Marshall provided the E&D partners with a brief overview of the virtual E&D Summit held on 6/9. The 2.5-hour event started off with a statewide program overview. E&D ridership around the state has rebounded to about 90% of pre-COVID levels. The average E&D trip cost is now around \$37, which is about 50% more cost per trip than it was compared to 2019. Of the \$47 million statewide transit budget, \$5.12 million has been dedicated to the E&D program for the coming year.

Within the context of the increasing program cost, there has been a statewide unveiling of a Community Driver Program, which is essentially a rebranding of the volunteer driver program to put more of an emphasis on community aspects and the mileage reimbursement. There's been a substantial level of advertising for this rebranding, beginning in January of this year.

The Summit also featured presentations on transportation equity, and driver training to better care for folks with dementia and other cognitive illnesses. There was also a presentation on alternative transportation partnerships. Through Capstone Community Action, there's a program that will be starting up in the Central Vermont region that has a goal of utilizing a fleet of electric vehicles and an on-demand transit platform to facilitate E&D and other transportation trips.

There was also a discussion about the FY24 E&D program and the transition to Mobility Committees to highlight other transportation elements that can fall under our program umbrella, like the Recovery & Job access programs. Over the coming year, Local Motion will be invited to participate in the Chittenden County E&D Committee.

There will also be another statewide E&D survey to solicit input on our program directly from the users over the coming year. The survey will be standardized across the state and will be distributed by regional planning commissions. One other requirement for E&D committees will be the development of an annual work plan. Marshall will work to revise the current work plan and will send along to partners for a review.

The E&D Program will also be undergoing a name change to the O&D Program, for Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities.

### **3. SSTA Updates**

Adam noted that SSTA will temporarily be down six drivers for the rest of the week due to illness and various HR matters. As a result of this, non-critical care trips may be denied through the rest of the week. Service should be back to normal by the week of 6/19.



#### **4. GMT Updates**

Chris mentioned that GMT will be holding a public meeting to receive public comment on the resumption of fare collection scheduled to begin in January 2024. The meeting will be held on June 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM within the Community Room of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington (152 Pearl Street, Burlington, VT 05401). If you are unable to attend this meeting, please offer public comment by emailing Jamie Smith at [jamie@ridegmt.com](mailto:jamie@ridegmt.com) or by calling 802-540-2468 by June 16, 2023.

#### **5. Other E&D Partner Items**

There was a brief discussion about the City of Essex Junction joining the E&D Program given that the City will no longer be funding the Essex Senior Bus as of January 1, 2024. While the eligible service area for Essex Junction would be very small, it was recommended that the City join the program and set aside a small amount of funding (between \$500 - \$1,000) to accommodate any potential trips in the coming year. While the E&D program is only eligible beyond  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the fixed-route transit service route, there is always a possibility that routes may change in the future, which could potentially open up more neighborhoods in Essex Junction to E&D program eligibility. Moreover, if a resident with an ADA defined disability lives within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of a bus route, they would still be covered by ADA transit service (also operated by SSTA). For more information, see here: <https://ridegmt.com/ada-paratransit/>

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 27th**