CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, April 2, 2024
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
PLACE: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members Present
Bryan Osborne, Colchester
Aaron Martin, Essex
Adam Wechsler, People with Disability
Bob Henneberger, Seniors
Bruce Hoar, Williston
Chris Yuen, Essex Junction
Conner Smith, GMT
Dierdre Holmes, Charlotte
Jacqui DeMent, FHWA
Joe Segale, Huntington
Jon Rauscher, Winooski
Josh Arneson, Richmond
Jonathon Weber, Local Motion
Lisa Schaeffler, Milton
Matthew Langham, VTrans
Phillip Peterson, Burlington
Sam Andersen, GBIC

Staff
Eleni Churchill, Transportation Program Manager
Christine Forde, Senior Transportation Planner
Chris Dubin, Senior Transportation Planner
Eliana Fox, Transportation Planner
Jason Charest, Senior Transportation Planning Engineer
Sai Sarepalli, Senior Transportation Planning Engineer
Bryan Davis, Senior Transportation Planner
Marshall Distel, Senior Transportation Planner
Chris Dubin, Senior Transportation Planner

Guests
Andrea Wright, VTrans
Jonathan Slason, RSG

1. Bryan Osborne called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

2. Consent Agenda
Christine Forde, CCRPC, explained there is a fiscal constraint with the TIP, and these amendments will align available project funding with the construction season without affecting project schedules since we continually make TIP adjustments. She explained the Winooski Circulator amendment is for final settlement of a legal issue related to when a contractor discovered contaminated soils during safety improvement project some years ago.

SAM ANDERSEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, SECONDED BY JOE SEGALE. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Approval of March 6, 2024 Minutes
CHRIS YUEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 6, 2024, SECONDED BY JONATHON WEBER. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Public Comments
No comments from the public.

5. Carbon Reduction Strategy and GHG Transportation Performance Target
Jason Charest, CCRPC, introduced Andrea Wright, VTrans, who provided an overview of the State's recently developed Carbon Reduction Strategy required under the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Carbon Reduction Program and described how that work formed the basis for the development of the required statewide greenhouse gas (GHG) Reduction Target.

Through the IIJA, states received federal funds to address carbon emissions. Andrea explained that Vermont also has carbon reduction requirements through the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA), so

the State decided to develop a Carbon Reduction Strategy that would meet both state and federal requirements.

Andrea described the technical analysis including a baseline forecast of the state's transportation emissions through 2050, an assessment of the GHG impacts of VTrans's current capital program related to project construction, mode shift, and efficient traffic operations, an assessment of the gap between projected baseline emission levels required under the GWSA, and development and evaluation of potential strategies to close the gap between projected and required emission levels in 2030 and 2050, including evaluation of potential benefits, costs, and co-benefits.

VTrans solicited input from the public and stakeholders to identify potential strategies to close the gap which included mode shift, traffic and roadway strategies, land use and telework, clean car/truck incentives, and congestion management. She noted stakeholders were really interested in walk/bike projects.

VTrans then developed parameters to be used in modeling potential impacts and potential costs of implementing the strategies. Note the CRS includes more detail in the proposed use of CRP funds. Generally, the funding recommendations for the $34 million are divided into three buckets:

- Bicycle and pedestrian projects, including Complete Streets, shared-use paths, bike lanes, and sidewalks, prioritized within designated smart growth locations (town and village centers)
- Transit and micromobility services and incentives (e.g., microtransit, shuttles, e-bike incentives)
- Fleet conversion, including conversion of transit buses and/or AOT heavy equipment to electric and/or other zero emission technology, and supporting infrastructure

The modeling did not include induced demand since the analysis was based on projects in the capital program, which didn't include capacity expansion projects. Andrea suggested a closer look at the modeling parameters would show the factors that went into the analysis and whether induced demand might be captured in different operational strategies.

The strategies whose effects could be quantified were modeled and the 2030 gap could be closed by about 18 percent with an estimated cost of just over $400 million. This table included in the TAC packet memo shows expected percent carbon reductions for each bucket:

Project Type	Target %	Approximate Funds Available FY22-26	MT GHG Reduced (2030)
Bicycle and pedestrian projects, including Complete Streets, shared-use paths, bike lanes, and sidewalks, prioritized within designated smart growth locations (town and village centers)	33%	$9-10 million	130
Transit and micromobility services and incentives (e.g., microtransit, shuttles, e-bike incentives)	33%	$9-10 million	1,200
Fleet conversion, including conversion of transit buses and/or AOT heavy equipment to electric and/or other zero emission technology, and supporting infrastructure	33%	$9-10 million	530

No specific return on investment analysis was conducted for the strategies but the analysis looked at co-benefits such as health and economic development in addition to a reduction in GHG emissions.

Andrea explained the new GHG performance measure established by FHWA in December 2022. This measure, part of the overall transportation performance management system and specifically the System Performance measure, calculates the percent change in on-road, tailpipe carbon dioxide emissions on the national highway system relative to a reference year (2022). The rule applies to all state DOTs and MPOs,

who must set both two and four-year targets for each measure. The reporting period is every four years, aligning with the time period of other performance measures. Challenges to the rule were raised by several states, resulting in an extended deadline for initial target setting.

The GHG performance measure calculation involves the annual total tailpipe carbon dioxide emissions, a percentage change from the reference year, and specific sources of information including fuel sales data and emission factors. VTrans developed three potential targets and decided to use the baseline plus capital program of 4%.

There's no penalty if the target isn't met but the state would need to provide justification of why the target wasn't met and what actions will be taken to meet target, or they would need to change the target.

There was discussion about whether through traffic on the interstate was viewed as part of this project since we don't have much control over those impacts on emissions. The modeling didn't capture those specific impacts. Since this is the first time these plans are required, they are a starting point and will adapt over time.

The UVM Transportation Research Center (TRC) manages the state model and may be able to answer whether we can quantify the amount of pass-through traffic in the state. It was suggested this could be a caveat that the state doesn't have control over pass-through traffic, but it is challenging to quantify pass-through traffic because there are so many variables that go into the calculation. It's also likely to be a small percentage of total traffic.

More information at https://vtrans.vermont.gov/climate/carbon-reduction-strategy.

Jonathon in chat: From the agenda: Upon completion of the Carbon Reduction Strategy, VTrans established their initial GHG performance target of -4% for the 2022-2025 period. This was submitted to FHWA in February 2024.

Jacqui in chat: FYI more info on the GHG reporting legal challenge: US Judge Strikes Down Biden Highway Climate Rule for States (usnews.com). The only information I have from FHWA at this time regarding the ruling is "On March 27, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas vacated and remanded the Final Rule to DOT, in effect nullifying the rule Nationwide. Consistent with the Court's decision, **States and MPOs are not required to submit initial targets and reports at this time**. We will provide more information as we examine next steps."

BRUCE HOAR MADE A MOTION THAT THE TAC RECOMMEND THAT THE BOARD ACCEPT VTRANS'S GREENHOUSE GAS PERFORMANCE TARGET OF -4% FOR THE 2022-2025 PERIOD AND SUPPORT STAFF IN THEIR EFFORTS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE TARGET. MOTION SECONDED BY CHRIS YUEN. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. FY25 UPWP Update

Marshall Distel, CCRPC staff, provided an overview of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) process and an update on the status of the FY25 UPWP. Metropolitan Planning Organizations are required to prepare a UPWP as its annual work program. A UPWP Committee of diverse stakeholders helps guide the process and work plan development.

Marshall displayed a series of charts showing funding amounts and percentages of various categories (e.g., bike/ped, roadway, water quality, energy, etc.) and funding requests by municipalities, and noted the increase in federal funds allocated over time, from under $1.7 million in FY19 and FY20 to a proposed $2.66 million in FY25. He also highlighted fluctuations in the distribution of funds among project categories, with significant increases in funding for bike ped projects and water quality projects. The categories and charts don't capture all of the projects CCRPC works on for municipalities since some

don't fit neatly into these category types. Funding requests from both municipalities and partners increased for FY25. New mapping exercises are underway to better show all work throughout the County.

We will bring the draft FY25 UPWP to the TAC in May before being presented to the Board in May. View the UPWP webpage here.

7. Status of Projects and Subcommittee Reports

See bulleted list at the end of the agenda for current CCRPC projects. TAC members are encouraged to ask staff for more information on the status of any of these ongoing or recently completed projects.

8. CCRPC Board Meeting Report

In March the Board voted to approve the FY23 single audit, heard an update on the ECOS Plan and public engagement, heard an equity program update, and heard other miscellaneous Director and legislative updates.

9. Chair/Members' Items

- The **Northern Border Regional Commission** has announced availability of $50M in **2024 Catalyst Program** funding for infrastructure (awards up to 1M) and non-infrastructure (awards up to $500,000). Infrastructure broad categories of transportation, basic public infrastructure, telecommunications, and energy. https://www.nbrc.gov/content/Catalyst and program overview
- **USDOT Funding Resources/Opportunities:**
  - Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) provides $45M for planning, design and construction. Planning and Design grants must have planning and design costs of at least $100,000 to be eligible. Projects seeking Construction grants must have total costs of at least $15 million to be eligible. The deadline for applications is 11:59 p.m. (EST) Monday, June 17, 2024. The required match of 20% could be waived for eligible projects serving communities with a poverty rate of over 40 percent based on the majority of census tracts served by the eligible project. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/atiip/index.cfm
  - USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program, NOFO now available with multiple deadlines depending on grant request (April 4 for Planning and Demonstration Grants; May 16 for Implementation Grants, second round for Planning and Demonstration Grants; August 29, final round for Planning and Demonstration Grants). This round includes leftover funds from FY23 so this is good opportunity for new applicants. https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A
  - USDOT Discretionary Grants Dashboard (https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dashboard) provides an overview of discretionary grant opportunities The Dashboard also includes Federal grant programs outside of DOT that may be of particular interest to rural communities.
  - DOT Navigator https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator
  - Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) https://www.transportation.gov/rural
  - Reconnecting Communities – note that Burlington and South Burlington applied last round, awards not yet announced. This program is more competitive than SS4A. https://www.transportation.gov/grants/rcnprogram
- **2024 Tier 2 & Tier 3 River & Roads Training Dates**, to view more details visit https://dec.vermont.gov/event/vermont-rivers-roads-tier-2-and-tier-3-training.

Bryan Davis noted the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) item and asked cities/towns to be in touch if they are interested in pursuing bigger regional projects.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 7, 2024.

BRUCE HOAR MOVED TO ADJOURN, SECONDED BY BOB HENNEBERGER. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at10:07 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Bryan Davis