CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, May 7, 2024
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
PLACE: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Members Present
Aaron Martin, Essex
Bob Henneberger, Seniors
Bruce Hoar, Williston
Chris Yuen, Essex Junction
Chris Damiani, GMT
Conner Smith, GMT
Deirdre Holmes, Charlotte
Joe Segale, Huntington
Josh Arneson, Richmond
Jonathon Weber, Local Motion
Lisa Schaeffler, Milton
Matthew Langham, VTrans
Phillip Peterson, Burlington
Sam Andersen, GBIC
Sandy Thibault, CATMA
Matthew Arancio, VTrans

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

Guests
Jim Sullivan, UVM TRC
Holly Francis, Champlain College
Kris Stepenuck, UVM

1. Sam Andersen called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

2. Consent Agenda
Christine Forde, CCRPC, briefly explained the items outlined in the memo.

DEIRDRE HOLMES MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, SECONDED BY JONATHON WEBER. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Approval of April 2, 2024 Minutes
JOE SEGALE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 2, 2024, SECONDED BY LISA SCHAEFFLER. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Public Comments
No comments from the public.

5. TAC Environmental Community seat
Bryan Davis said that the TAC Environmental Community seat is vacant and we are inviting people to share their interest in joining the TAC. Our bylaws don't specify a process for recruiting interested people so we took some extra time to reach out to different people and organizations. We have a couple of people on our agenda today to express their interest, and whenever the TAC is prepared can make a recommendation to the CCRPC Board, whose Chair makes appointments per the bylaws. Two interested guests will be joining later in the meeting.

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. View the UPWP webpage here.

LISA SCHAEFFLER MADE A MOTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FY 2025 UPWP TO THE CCRPC BOARD, SECONDED BY PHILLIP PETERSON. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. Speed Countermeasures Toolbox

Sai Sarepalli, CCRPC, gave a brief introduction to this project and invited Jim Sullivan, UVM Transportation Research Center, to present the VTrans Speed Countermeasures Toolbox project. The Toolbox provides resources and guidance to communities to help them select and implement speeding countermeasures that will be both effective and appropriate for their needs. The intent of the countermeasures is not to reduce the posted speed limit or support enforcement efforts but rather showcase methods that can help with better compliance of the current posted speed limit, especially in areas where speed limits are frequently exceeded. Profile sheets provide specific information about each of the 15 countermeasures. The Toolbox is specifically designed for cities/towns and offered as a pdf rather than as an interactive resource to enable better printing options. Note that there are active links within the document to access additional information.

This was also a research project so the toolkit includes four field tests and four case studies to provide additional information and considerations. The end of the document includes all of the resources used to create the toolkit. View the Speed Countermeasures Toolbox and more information at https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/research/projects/21-1.

There was discussion about setting speed limits lower than the 85th percentile and potential effects on reducing speeds, but this is not approved as a speed control method due to mixed test results and ongoing experimentation that could impact funding. There was also discussion about countermeasures not approved for use, including removing roadway centerlines. There is federal guidance about centerlines. It's important to find the balance roadway user safety with reducing speeds.

8. TAC Environmental Community seat – candidates

The TAC Environmental Community seat is vacant and we are inviting people to share their interest in joining the TAC. Bryan Davis welcomed Holly Francis from Champlain College. Holly introduced herself and provided some background on her role as the College's Sustainability Coordinator. She would bring the perspective of being a recent college graduate during COVID and a newer professional in the workforce. She worked with Eliana Fox, formerly at Champlain College and now at CCRPC, who fostered Holly's interest in transportation. This was her first year being a winter bike commuter so also has the perspective of a year-round bike commuter. As part of her work at Champlain she is involved in their GHG inventory. She emphasized that accessibility, affordability, and connections are important to this work in addition to the specific environmental and transportation issues. She expressed interest in running for City Council in the future so is interested in making more connections and taking on community roles outside of Champlain. Sam asked how winter biking was this year, Holly replied it went well and was empowering.

Bryan then welcomed Kris Stepenuck from UVM. Kris introduced herself and her position as an Extension Associate Professor, Rubenstein School and Associate Director and Extension Program Leader, Lake Champlain Sea Grant. As an extension professor, she is a liaison between the university campus and the community. The Sea Grant's focus areas include environmental literacy, workforce development, healthy coastal ecosystems, resilient communities and economies, and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. She oversees staff working on green stormwater infrastructure, flooding, and workforce education. Her focus is on water quality which includes outreach on road salt education and efforts to reduce salt usage in Lake Champlain's tributaries. She did similar work in the Adirondacks in New York. She is helping communities consider shared brine systems as a way to reduce salt use and impacts to the lake. Kris is also a year-round/ winter bike commuter so would bring that perspective to the TAC and CCRPC's work.

When asked about how she brings theory into practice, Kris highlighted her team's efforts related to workforce development and relationships with municipal staff. She noted her work is not advocacy based but rather education based.

When asked her thoughts about transportation in our region evolving as the region itself changes, Kris shared ideas about rail, electric vehicles, and investments in in other modes or opportunities rather than roadways. She also reflected on housing development that enables access to food by walking or biking, creating mixed use areas, transit fares, and the perspectives of an aging population.

She has been working with a group called Health Disparities and Cultural Competence (HDCC) to consider the needs of certain populations to access food and other necessities.

9. 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.

10. CCRPC Board Meeting Report

In April the Board heard a presentation of the VTrans Carbon Reduction Strategy and GHG Performance Target and voted to accept the GHG target, warned a public hearing for the draft FY25 UPWP for May 15, 2024, heard an equity program update, and heard other miscellaneous Director and legislative updates.

11. Chair/Members' Items

- **VTrans Bicycle and Pedestrian Program** is seeking grant applications for infrastructure projects that improve access and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians. The 2024 grant cycle has additional funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) which serves to fund projects designed to reduce transportation emissions. **These additional funds will significantly increase the total amount available for this grant cycle.** Applications must be received by June 14. A pre-application information and training webinar is planned for May 15. Visit https://vtrans.vermont.gov/highway/local-projects/bike-ped or contact Peter Pochop at 802-477-3123 or Peter.Pochop@vermont.gov.
- **Vermont Community Tree Planting Program** accepting applications for proposals to plant trees that will enhance urban tree canopy, improve water quality, boost public health, and increase equitable access to the many benefits of trees. Grant awards between $5,000 min and $75,000 max, no match required. First round application deadline is May 17 with a second round to be announced later this year. Full details, including grant amounts, timelines, and application guidance, as well as a recorded webinar, are available on the program website.
- 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.

Sam noted the 2024 Regional Project Prioritization (RPP) List has been released and projects can be viewed here: http://gbic.usmblogs.com/files/2024/01/2024-RPP-List.pdf. This list expresses the highest priority projects for each region that will support job growth and economic development. The top ten projects on the Chittenden County RPP List will be included in a consolidated statewide list submitted to the Vermont Agency of Commerce, who will share it with other state and federal funders who may consider the list when making funding decisions. See also https://gbicvt.org/resources/.

Sandy noted that CATMA's third annual Transportation Summit will be October 15. There are sponsorships available and the call for papers is currently open. Burlington Mayor Emma Mulvaney-Stanek is confirmed as the Summit keynote. Visit https://catmavt.org/transportation-summit/ for more information.

Sai said that there is an RFP out to create a regional safety action plan for Chittenden County which will be a resource for cities and towns who want to apply to the federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program. View the RFP here: https://www.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Regional_SafetyPlan_RFP_Final-002.pdf.

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 4, 2024.

SANDY THIBAULT MOVED TO ADJOURN, SECONDED BY BOB HENNEBERGER. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 10:08 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Bryan Davis