



**SOUTHERN WINDSOR COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

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Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

The next regular meeting of the Southern Windsor County Transportation Advisory Committee (SWCTAC) is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 30, 2019** at **6 p.m.** at Martin Memorial Hall (Physical address: 5259 US Route 5, Ascutney, VT).

AGENDA

1. **Welcome and introductions**
2. **Changes to the agenda**
3. **Acceptance of September 25, 2019 minutes** (draft enclosed) (action needed)
4. **VT Public Transit Policy Plan** (enclosure) – Jackie Cassino, VTrans
5. **Okemo Valley Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee Efforts** – Carol Lighthall, OVCC
 - a. Options to Expand Ludlow Business Shuttle
 - b. Ridesharing Options (Uber/Lyft)
 - c. Green Mountain Flyer
6. **Other Business**
7. **Future agenda items & next meeting date**
 - a. Next meeting: 12/4?
 - b. Potential Future Topics
8. **Adjourn**

To request accommodations for accessibility or for any language (non-English) interpretation assistance, American Sign Language interpreters, assistive listening devices, handouts in alternative formats, or information on the meeting, please contact: Chris Titus at ctitus@swcrpc.org or Jason Rasmussen at jrasmussen@swcrpc.org or by telephone at 802-674-9201.

**SOUTHERN WINDSOR COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Draft Meeting Minutes of September 25, 2019

A meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was held at the RSVP Offices in Ascutney, VT at 6pm.

Attendance

TAC members present: Kristi Morris (Chair), Springfield; Wayne Wheelock, Baltimore; John Saydek, Cavendish; Arne Jonynas, Chester; Sharon Bixby, Ludlow; Barbara Bye, member-at-large, Springfield; Eric Bye, member-at-large, Springfield.

Others present: Jason Rasmussen and Otis Munroe, SWCRPC.

Kristi Morris opened the meeting at 6:02 pm

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kristi Morris welcomed Otis Munroe to the TAC meeting, and introductions were made.

2. Changes to the Agenda

No changes to the agenda were made.

3. Approval of Minutes

Wayne Wheelock made a motion to approve the minutes of August 28, 2019. Second by Sharon Bixby. Motion approved.

4. Transportation Resilience

Otis Munroe provided an overview of the project. VTrans' developed a [web-based application](#) – the Vermont Transportation Resilience Planning Tool (TRPT) – that identifies bridges, culverts, and road embankments that are vulnerable to damage from floods and identifies potential mitigation measures. The tool presently includes three watersheds, but VTrans would ultimately like to have full statewide coverage. At this time, four watersheds are being added. We are working on adding the Williams River Watershed. We are in the middle of an effort to talk with towns and VTrans district staff to identify road segments that have experienced past damages. The TAC reviewed and discussed a draft map of past damages. A suggestion was made to have additional input from ANR staff. Staff will report back at a later stage of the project.

5. Draft Active Transportation Plan

Jason Rasmussen presented the draft Active Transportation Plan, which had a few updates following the last meeting. More time to review the draft was appreciated. A number of questions and comments were made, which will be addressed in a revised draft. The revised draft will be circulated to the TAC members. Additional outreach will also be made this fall to other stakeholder groups.

6. Updates and Announcements

- a. Jason Rasmussen noted that the next round of the Transportation Alternatives Program has been announced. There is \$2.2 million available statewide, about half is targeted for water quality-related projects. The other half is for bicycle/pedestrian improvements and other eligible projects.
- b. Jason Rasmussen mentioned that the Okemo Valley Chamber of Commerce has a conflict with our regular meeting schedule, and asked about a different meeting date in October. October 29 or 30 might work. Jason will check to see when the Chamber is available.

7. Other Business

- a. Sharon Bixby asked about the Colchester diverging diamond project that has been in the news recently. A news clip was viewed at <https://www.wcax.com/content/news/VTrans-officials-say-a-diverging-diamond-could-ease-congestion-near-I-89-Exit-16-508367991.html>.

8. Future agenda items & next meeting date

- a. Next meeting: TBD
- b. Agenda Topics: Okemo Valley Chamber of Commerce

9. Adjourn

- a. John Saydek made a motion to adjourn. Second by Arne Jonynas. Motion approved.
- b. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan (PTPP)

WHY PTPP?

The Vermont **Public Transit Policy Plan** will quantify Vermont’s transit needs, as well as recommend programmatic and policy initiatives to strengthen the statewide transit system. This plan will lay out a 10-year vision for improved transit service in Vermont and develop policies and strategies to guide the improvement of Vermont’s transit network.

The development of a PTPP every five years is required by Statute (Title 24, VSA, §5089). The first PTPP was published in 2000 and the most recent version was published in 2012. This Plan will be an update to the 2012 PTPP and will serve as a guide for the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and its partners in making decisions on implementing and funding transit projects that facilitate mobility, minimize duplication of services, leverage limited funds, maximize ridership, and improve coordination of services. In addition, the PTPP will meet the objectives of the 2014 Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan, including developing an annual workplan for the Elderly and Disabled (E&D) Transportation Program.

WHAT’S IN THE PLAN?

The plan will: provide a summary of state and federal regulations, policy framework, and planning requirements unique to transit; provide a current profile of the system; identify current needs; establish recommendations; create a performance framework that will guide future investment decisions and Agency practices; and develop an implementation plan, inclusive of an E&D Program Workplan, that will identify both short and long term strategies and action items to fulfill proposed recommendations.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Public Transit Policy Plan is an 18-month process that began in June 2018 and encompasses five phases of work. Transit policy planning for a state is a complicated undertaking- and the planning process must be flexible. While each phase has a different purpose, there are times during which multiple phases may be underway at once.



Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan (PTPP)

CRITICAL THEMES & CHALLENGES

- **Aging population**, including detail on demographic trends in Vermont, travel needs of older adults, and potential strategies for addressing those needs
- **Economic trends and opportunities**, including the divide between urban and rural areas in Vermont, and the critical issue of access to jobs as traditional economic models change
- **Technology and information**, including the revolution in transit information, improvement in operations management, and the rise of on-demand mobility and ride scheduling
- **Public awareness**, including the impacts of geography, age and income on Vermonters' awareness of public transit service, the perceptions of public transit, and ways to increase awareness
- **Land use development and housing location**, including rural development patterns, State land use regulation, and strategies for coordinating land use and transportation decisions

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

ADDRESSING AGING VERMONT

Establish Working Committee with the Agency of Human Services

The PTPP recommends the establishment of a working committee focused on the issue of mobility for older Vermonters. The working committee would be led jointly by VTrans and DAHL and include representatives from other state and regional organizations with a stake in issues of aging.

More Comprehensive Planning for E&D

The PTPP recommends that VTrans host a statewide E&D meeting and develop a work plan that would be carried out by all of the E&D regions. The goal would be to replicate in all regions of Vermont the data collection process that has been undertaken in Chittenden County and to share best practices having to do with coordination, low-cost trips and volunteer management.

Establish Personal Mobility Accounts

A Personal Mobility Account (PMA) would allow individuals to make use of demand response transit services for whatever trip purposes they desired. For this program to function, all Vermont transit providers would need to allow for a "client-pay" billing procedure, as private funds would supplement those available from the E&D program.

EXPANSION OF TRANSIT ACCESS

Spur Growth of Volunteer Driver Programs

- Create a check box on Vermont vehicle registration forms to sign up as a volunteer driver
- Streamline the background check process
- Establish non-monetary incentives for volunteer drivers
- Increase marketing budget and collaborate with partner organizations
- Share best practices

Expand Access to Healthcare

Work with hospitals and health centers to expand Rides to Wellness program statewide, incorporating funding from the healthcare sector to make the program sustainable, once it is established that there is a positive return on investment.

Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan (PTPP)

Expand Access to Employment

- Increase awareness of ridesharing options through Go Vermont
- Engage employers in helping to fund job access transportation
- Create the “late bus” for shift workers
- Create partnerships with TNCs where available

Expand Local Connections

Explore feasibility of expanding local connections such as bike share, scooters, microtransit and other types of feeder service.

Expand Access to Available Seats in Transit Vehicles

Transit providers should implement a policy that if a non-eligible rider has origin and destination locations within a short distance, say a tenth of mile, of where eligible riders on a van/volunteer trip are already scheduled to go, that non-eligible rider should be allowed to ride in the vehicle.

Expand Funding Pool Overall

Seek to increase funding from federal, state, local, private and institutional partner sources.

OUTREACH AND RAISING AWARENESS

Continue Investment in Go Vermont

- Increase marketing and promote links from others
- Create interactive map of bus routes
- Explore new program models and staffing structures for Go Vermont

Document Stories of the Value of Public Transit

VTrans should produce a series of short videos in each of the regions of Vermont with current users of public transit explaining how it makes a difference in their lives. These videos could be incorporated into the Go Vermont website and shown at Town Meetings when local funding proposals are being discussed.

Encourage All Transit Providers to Establish an “Ambassadors” Program

VTrans recommends an “Ambassadors” program be an ongoing initiative for all transit providers. An Ambassador, who could be an agency staff member or a volunteer, would explain how to ride and then be available to ride one-on-one with anyone who feels the need for a companion for the first ride or two.

Continue and Expand Partnerships and Activities to Raise Awareness

VTrans should continue and expand efforts to develop reciprocal relationships with partner organizations so that all parties become more informed about existing and future services offered.

Create Informational Brochure: “How Transit Works in Vermont”

A brochure, that would be available in print form and online, could explain the basics of public transit, including the types of services available, the roles of VTrans and the public and private transit operators, as well as partnerships with human service agencies and other non-profits.

Vermont Public Transit Policy Plan (PTPP)

Engage with Public Media to Spur Discussion and Raise Awareness

VTrans should discuss with VPR additional on-air discussions of public-transit-related topics following the successful appearance in July 2019 on Vermont Public Radio's call-in show, Vermont Edition.

Using Technology to Move to Next Generation of Ride Scheduling

VTrans should pursue a paradigm shift in demand response transportation by expanding the rider interface of the microtransit model to cover all modes of public transit and to handle all funding programs.

LONG-TERM LAND USE PLANNING AND INVESTMENTS

Work with State, Regional and Local Entities toward Transit-Supportive Land Use

VTrans and others should maintain focus on two objectives in the Long Range Transportation Plan:

- Maintain and strengthen the vitality of Vermont's villages and downtowns.
- Make transportation investments that promote active transportation and reduce social isolation.

Invest in Workforce Development to Maintain Transit Provider Staffing

VTrans should work with colleges and universities, such as Vermont Technical College, to establish programs to train drivers and mechanics. The Vermont legislature should also consider changes to the law so that people who acquire commercial driver's license (CDL) credentials while serving in the military can easily qualify for a passenger transportation endorsement with an appropriate level of training.

Support Electrification of the Transit Fleet

VTrans, working with the transit providers, has begun the procurement of electric transit vehicles. Experience with these initial vehicles on the hilly terrain and in winter conditions will guide future procurements, with the goal of substantially reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transit vehicles.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

All relevant information can be found on the project webpage

<http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP>

Draft reports are up for review. The complete PTPP will be open for public comment November-December 2019.

Have additional questions? Contact Project Manager Jackie Cassino (contact info below).

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