



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, October 22, 2019, 6:30 p.m.

Central VT Chamber of Commerce, Paine Turnpike North, Berlin, VT

(Coming off the interstate at exit 7, turn left at the first light.

Just before the next crossroads, the Chamber is on your left. It is the light yellow building.)

6:15 pm - Social & Pizza

*Action Item

Page **AGENDA**

6:30 Introductions

Adjustments to the Agenda

Public Comments

2 6:35 Presentation on Public Trans Policy Plan

4 7:20 Presentation on Public Transit Older Adults and People with Disabilities Survey

7 7:40 Approve September TAC Minutes (enclosed)*

7:45 Presentation on New Project Prioritization Process

8:10 TAC Member Concerns

Roundtable for any issues, questions, and town updates from TAC members.

8:25 Review November Meeting Date and Set Agenda for the Future TAC Meeting

8:30 Adjourn

Future TAC Meeting Agendas

Below is a preview of upcoming TAC meeting agendas for consideration by the TAC.

November meeting date 26th

- **Presentation on Transportation Resiliency Planning Tool work in the Stevens Branch Watershed**

VERMONT PUBLIC TRANSIT POLICY PLAN: PROJECT BRIEFING

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.

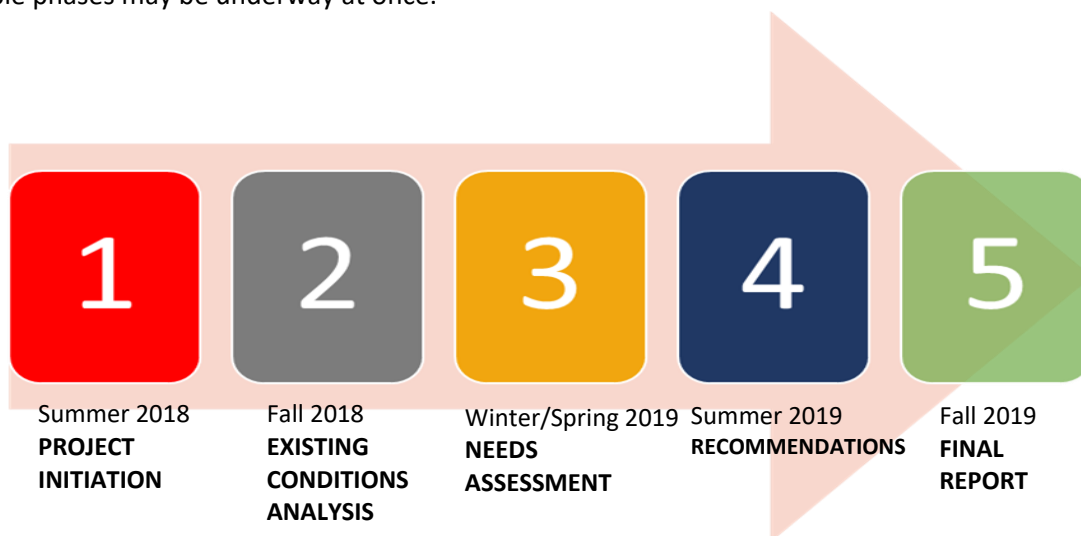
The development of a PTPP every five years is required by Statute (Title 24, VSA, §5089). The first PTPP was published in 2000 and the most recent version was published in 2012. This Plan will be an update to the 2012 PTPP and will serve as a guide for the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and 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.



PUBLIC/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

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

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).

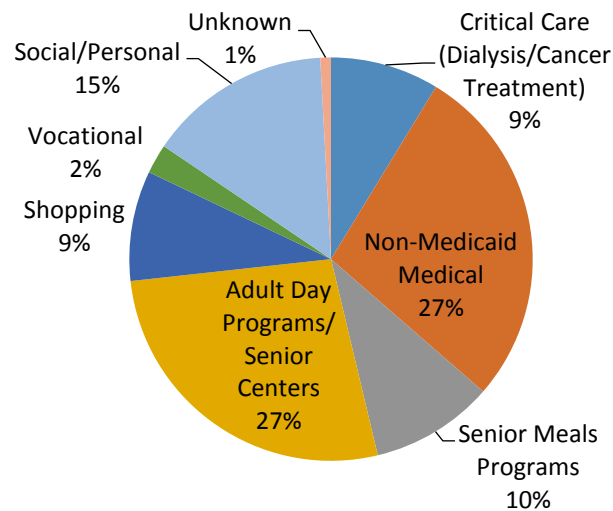
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Ridership Survey for the Elders & Persons with Disability Transportation Program

WHO: The Agency of Transportation (VTrans), working collaboratively with the United Way of Northwest Vermont, Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs), regional Elderly and Persons with Disability Transportation Committees (E&D Committee), and regional transit agencies will engage with community members utilizing the E&D transit program to hear their feedback on the service.

WHY: We recognize that transportation is a basic need for everyone in our community. Transportation services support our community members in maintaining their health and wellness and staying connected to the community through employment, meaningful volunteerism, and social engagements with family and friends.

SFY2018 E&D Trips by Type

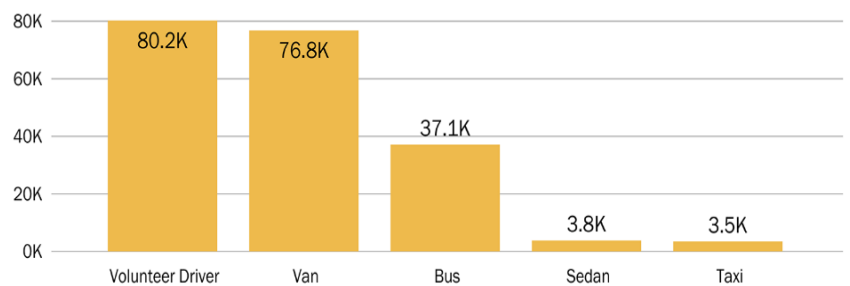


VTrans as well as local partners place a significant priority on funding the Elders and Persons with Disability Transportation Program to provide services beyond those paid for by Medicaid and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transit service. While these investments are significant, Vermont's aging population and rural landscape require innovative solutions to continue to meet the community demand for transportation services.

E&D Trips by Mode

Van and volunteer driver trips accounted for the majority of E&D trips in SFY 18. Bus and taxi trips accounted for 18% and 2% of E&D trips, respectively. Van trips decreased by 5% from SFY 17 to SFY 18, while bus trips increased by 3%, sedan trips increased by 2% and volunteer driver trips decreased by 1%.

Elders & Persons with Disabilities Ride Modes



Project Summary for October 2019 VPTA & TPI

GOAL: It is our goal to foster the inclusion of older adults and persons with disabilities in transportation planning and design through the E&D Ridership Survey. By listening to E&D riders about the quality of their experience, we believe that we can better meet the needs of our constituents and get more impact from our transportation investment.

HOW: VTrans will provide the survey tools and timeline and will support the Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) across the state at deploying the survey for their community.

October-December 2019: Introduction to the E&D Ridership Survey with RPCs & E&D Committees

January-February 2019: Administer E&D Ridership Survey & Collect Results

March-April 2020: Interpret Results & Draft Report

April-May 2020: Response to Feedback & Close the Loop with Riders

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

VTrans

A VTrans Public Transit staff will serve as Project Manager (PM). The PM shall:

- Oversee all third-party work.
- Manage contract development and United Way once hired, inclusive of all administrative components.
- Organize and attend all Project Team meetings.

The VTrans Public Transit Coordinators shall:

- Serve as liaison to the E&D Committees.
- Attend at minimum, two E&D Committee Meetings in their assigned regions to assist RPCs with project introduction and to present findings.

VTrans Planning staff shall:

- Serve in a support role and as liaison to RPCs.
- Attend all Project Team meetings.
- Support UW in RPC training and project education.
- Support UW in resource development.
- Assist in developing next phase of this work as is relevant to the RPC TPI contracts.
- Work with the PM to analyze and compile report based on survey results. The report shall, at minimum, provide robust data analysis of results, provide a current snapshot of service satisfaction levels, summarize findings, and provide recommendations that will inform E&D Partner budgets for the next contract cycle. As relevant, recommendations should be clearly linked to the 2019 PTPP.
- Present results to Project Team and incorporate review and feedback.
- Prepare results for various audiences: riders, VTrans, RPCs, Transit Providers, E&D Partners, PTAC, legislature, etc.

Project Summary for October 2019 VPTA & TPI

United Way of Northwest Vermont

In collaboration with VTrans, United Way shall:

- Review and contribute to the E&D client survey, cover letter, and outreach materials.
- Review and contribute to project timeline, template tools and educational materials for RPC.
- Facilitate initial training and project education for RPC.
- Advise RPC as needed on project implementation, client follow up needs, etc.
- Participate in key findings review/discussion after data analysis is complete and support RPC in reporting back to clients.
- Process Evaluation: Collect feedback from VTrans and RPC's on process, outcomes, and learnings to refine the process to move forward.

RPCs

RPC role may vary by region depending on E&D Partner needs and survey response rates. At a minimum, RPCs shall:

- Facilitate E&D Committee meetings. Work with VTrans Public Transit Coordinators to introduce the project.
- Work with the E&D Partners and transit providers to deploy the survey and relevant informational materials to clients (online and hard copies will be available).
- Deploy the survey- utilizing the E&D Partners for assistance as needed.
- Facilitate survey response monitoring- utilizing the E&D Partners for intensive outreach via phone or in-person survey completion as needed if response rates not being met.
- Collect completed paper surveys and facilitate survey response data entry.
- Once survey data is entered, submit all completed surveys to VTrans PM.
- RPCs will also assist in post-survey follow up with E&D Committees.

E&D Committee Partners

E&D Committee Partners (Partners) roles may vary by region depending on Partner capacity and survey response rates. At a minimum, Partners shall:

- Attend E&D Committee meetings.
- Provide client contact information to RPCs.
- Work with the RPCs to deploy the survey and relevant informational materials to clients (online and hard copies will be available).
- Assist RPCs in survey response monitoring, conducting more intensive outreach via phone and/or direct contact as needed if response rates not being met.
- Collect and submit completed paper surveys to the RPCs.
- Assist RPCs in client follow up post- report completion.

Transit Providers

- Serve as active participants in the project.
- Deploy relevant informational materials to riders.
- Provide rider contact information to RPCs.

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

DRAFT Minutes

September 24th, 2019

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission Office

Attendees:

X	Barre City: Scott Bascom		Northfield: Patrick DeMasi
X	Barre Town: Rob White	X	Orange: Lee Cattaneo
X	Berlin: Robert Wernecke, Vice- Chair	X	Plainfield: Bob Atchinson
	Cabot: John Cookson	X	Roxbury: Gerry D'Amico
X	Calais: David Ellenbogen	X	Waitsfield: Don La Haye
X	Duxbury: Alan Quackenbush		Warren: Jim Sanford
X	East Montpelier: Frank Pratt		Washington: Vacant
X	Fayston: Kevin Russell	X	Waterbury: Steve Lotspeich, Chair
X	Marshfield: Robin Schunk	X	Williamstown: Rich Turner
X	Middlesex: Ronald Krauth		Woodbury: Vacant
X	Montpelier: Dona Bate		Worcester: Bill Arrand
X	Moretown: Joyce Manchester	X	Staff: Daniel Currier

Guests: Joe Segale (VTrans), Ashlynn Shanahan (CVRPC), Devon Mason (GMT)

Steve Lotspeich called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Quorum was present. Introductions were completed.

Adjustments to the Agenda:

Updates from Marshfield on the RAMP project to be discussed before TAC updates.

Public Comments:

There were no public comments

Presentation from VTrans on the use of Autonomous Vehicles (AV)

Joe Segale VTrans researcher presented on preparing for AV in Vermont.

AV testing act - requires AV test permit for level 3-5 automated driving systems.

Forecast of AV use on the road - expected to be between 1-2% in 2020s, 40%-60% by 2050.

A mix of different levels of AV and conventional vehicles is expected. Cost and convenience will drive adoption rate.

Why care about this in transportation world? Over 90% of crashes are due to bad human behavior, AV could remove human error and decrease crash fatalities.

Expected impacts depend on ownership model, individual vs shared ownership with mobility as a service. Cars with no passengers will be driving on the road. If AV ownership is primarily individuals, this would mean more vehicle miles travelled, shared ownership means less cars on the road, fewer emissions, fewer crashes, less needs for road capacity, more efficiency.

1 Less time lost, improved mobility for those who can't drive. Half cost of transit agency is labor,
 2 transit cost goes down improve access and ridership. This raises concerns on displacing transit
 3 employees. Asked to speak to stakeholders, safety is a major concern for transitioning to AV.
 4 Not all states are regulating use of AV. If public roads are used to test AV, the public deserves to
 5 know and be able to weigh in. Transportation is heading in the direction of av, Vermont needs
 6 to be ready. Broadband is an issue that will inhibit AV use.

7 Q- Are most electric? Yes most are, AV goes well with EV.

8 Q- Why will av be important to Vermont's economy? Why any transportation is good for the
 9 economy, tourism could be restricted if Vermont cannot accommodate AV.

10 Q- Can AV handle mud seasons? Testing across the country is mainly done in urban areas.

11 Needs to be tested in VT context; gravel roads, snow, ice, low visibility, mud, etc. Hard to know
 12 what this will look like in VT depends on what tester is looking for.

13 Federal government responsible for Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

14 The State's role includes licensing, education and training, registration, insurance liability,
 15 enforcing traffic laws, and building infrastructure. The state cannot prohibit AV.

16 AV legislation has spread rapidly among states between 2016 and 2018.

17 Act 60 sections 16-18 will allow and regulate testing of AV in VT.

18 Q-This requires accurate positioning for safety how will it work with GPS, does this depend
 19 more on GPS or the road itself? It must respond to its environment not just rely on GPS.

20 Q- How does it navigate, using lanes on road? Artificial intelligence is going to learn to interpret
 21 roads, even covered in snow, it will learn through experience. Vehicles share their "knowledge"
 22 within manufacturers.

23 Q- Most roadways in Vermont are dirt or gravel, can cars really handle snow covered gravel
 24 roads? Won't work in VT unless tech can interpret environment around it.

25 Q- Can level 4 and 5 work in VT? Yes, it is just a matter of when.

26 Traffic committee can approve AV testing on highways and class 1 roads, municipalities must
 27 pre approve testing on other classed roads with their own conditions, permit must still be
 28 reviewed by traffic committee. Municipalities may withdraw authority to test at any time.
 29 Municipalities and state are not responsible to upgrade infrastructure.

30 Q- Are municipalities liable for crashes if they approve AV testing in their town? No, normal
 31 duty of care should be taken.

32 Next steps, recruit municipalities willing to preapprove testing on their roads. Would be
 33 interested in providing info to any select boards or councils. Complete av guidance and permit
 34 application, VTrans may do their own pilot.

35 Q- Most have to adjust to differences of new cars they purchase, if AV varies between
 36 companies there will be a lack of predictability, will there be any attempt to regulate behavior
 37 of these cars so there is some sort of standardization? Federal government has the power to
 38 regulate this aspect, not sure this is possible at the state level. Currently there is a push from
 39 industry to not regulate and let them innovate for now.

40 Q- CA has their own standards for pollution and gas mileage, is something similar possible for
 41 VT to set their own standards of operations certifications? CA Did this with permission from the
 42 federal government.

43 Comment: Government must play a role in ethics, AV must determine difference between
 44 crashing into pedestrians and killing occupant in vehicle. Mercedes decided to take out driver.

1 Government must play a role in answering these ethical questions rather than leave them to AI
2 or engineers. Unknown who will make those decisions.

3 Comment: Hope that there will be a failsafe even in completely autonomous vehicles so that a
4 human may take control in an emergency.

5 Q- What about the ethics of pushing technology to be deployed before it's ready?

6 Joe Segale has a draft resolution for communities to allow testing, he leaves his contact info
7 and where to access his presentation.

8
9 **Minutes from July Meeting** – No comments on minutes. Motion to approve minutes, seconded,
10 and approved.

11
12 **Functional Classification change request for Plainfield and Orange** – Reservoir road in Orange
13 connects to route 302, this intersects with Brook road in Plainfield followed by Mill street, Main
14 street, then route 2 in Plainfield.

15 Currently classified as minor collectors, bringing local roads to major collectors. These roads
16 connect to arterial roads, have higher amounts of traffic, and are widely used to get from route
17 302 to route 2. Data is provided on traffic volumes and widths of roads.

18 Q- What is average speed? Speed has no impact on if road is major or minor.

19 Q-Is it benefit to town for a road to be a major collector? Yes, the town will qualify for
20 additional disaster funds.

21 Q-Surprised that major collector is gravel road, if it doesn't need to be paved is it really major?
22 State roads are gravel in VT too. If approved tonight will go to VTrans, then to federal level.

23 Motion to approve by Kevin Russell, seconded by Bob Atchinson, motion passes.

24
25 **Community Rail Grant: Montpelier to Barre Community Connector** – Daniel Currier, CVRPC
26 staff presented on a submitted grant application to convert 8 miles of existing rail to be a
27 commuter rail connecting the cities of Montpelier and Barre. This section of rail is primarily
28 used for freight. Will begin at Montpelier junction in Berlin, through Montpelier, ending at
29 Spaulding High School in Barre. Focused on moving members of communities through 3 towns
30 the rail would operate in.

31 Why do this? Private and public talk about how to use Washington county rail line more
32 effectively. Characterize opportunities and obstacles this project would present.

33 Q- The rail is state owned but managed by VT Railways, will VT Railways manage this? This will
34 be determined through the study.

35 Want to work with communities to provide more reliable faster transportation

36 Consultant draft idea for corridor and adjacent land uses.

37 Q-Was the Montpelier St Albans commuter rail study utilized? Positive train control, ADA
38 compliance add to costs. Cars competition for train usage.

39 Partners for this project - Barre city, Berlin, Montpelier, VTrans, VT Rail systems, VT state
40 senator, VT state representative, Net Zero VT, federal delegation.

41 Project objectives- provide info to state and local policy makers, business leaders, rail
42 operators.

43 Continued Project Objectives: Assess infrastructure needs. Assess value capture opportunities

1 Identify barriers in zoning land use and other regulatory documents. Conduct education
2 outreach public engagement.

3 9 tasks with project total of \$858,000, majority of funding going to infrastructure feasibility
4 studies. Would be 3 year fed grant with no match requirement, grant is focused on
5 implementation, planning is eligible activity.

6 Q-Are there other funding sources this project can use? Yes it's possible to break down whole
7 project into tasks and work on separately with separate funding.

8 Q-Why did TAC not see this before application was sent? CVRPC director approved sending and
9 municipalities have already been involved. Would TAC like to see grant applications like this
10 prior to submitting?

11 How project will be executed if funded- CVRPC will act as project lead, study committee,
12 stakeholder group, consultant to work with CVRPC and study committee, CVRPC would send
13 out an RFP for consultant.

14 Comment: TAC is skeptical about this grant, request that CVRPC discuss TAC role in grant
15 applications related to transportation, TAC has been circumvented. What is the role of TAC?

16 Comment: Missed opportunity for TAC to advise so application can be more robust. Important
17 for TAC to be involved especially when municipalities are being asked to be involved.

18 Idea started with cities of Montpelier and Barre, the cities then invited CVRPC and asked if
19 CVRPC would be applicant for the grant.

20 Representative from Berlin did not know about this project.

21 Q- If any town wants to work with each other and CVRPC why must it go to TAC?

22 Comment: Then what is purpose of TAC? Provide advice on transportation in region. Maintain
23 role within region and being involved helps stay motivated, TAC support strengthens any
24 application.

25 Debates to be had about rail travel, with recent flops in rail investment in other regions. Rail is
26 challenging at the local level.

27 Q- Why would town come to TAC with a project knowing they would not support it?

28 All levels of involvement are skeptical. CVRPC did not intend on circumventing TAC,
29 representative from Berlin feels it was circumvented.

30 Next steps, grant notification in November.

31 If this is approved, one of the main considerations for the study should be to come to TAC
32 meetings several times to solicit input.

33 Comment: In years past a trolley ran between Montpelier and Barre, now cars are so widely
34 used that rail must compete, trying to get people out of their cars.

35 Comment: Smallest commuter rail is in Nashville with a population over 1 million, with a small
36 population and bus cars to compete with is it viable? It will be costly to retrofit stations to be
37 compliant.

38 Q-How many uncontrolled crossings between Montpelier and Barre?

40 **Marshfield RAMP updates and request for additional safety measures:**

41 Applied for RAMP grants to VT council of rural development, received grant in December and
42 meetings started in March.

43 Route 2 is being repaved, considering what to ask VTrans for upgrades.

1 Requests include: traffic calming islands in village similar to Danville, converting the
 2 intersections of route 215 and route 2 to be a "T" intersection, speed feedback signs to help
 3 slow traffic down, more advanced warning of speed reduction leading into village

4 Q-Is TAC willing to support these changes?

5 Q- Is there interest in changing speed limits through the village? This was discussed, speed
 6 limits not being followed on 215. Municipality can't regulate speed on state road or federal
 7 highway.

8 Earlier notice of transition is need for reduced speed entering village.

9 Q-What is safety improvement program VTrans has, can it be paired with RAMP? Safety
 10 highway corridors not taking new locations not funding new signs trying to get through their
 11 own backlog. Safety audit review identified same concerns brought by Marshfield about speed
 12 safety, speed change is abrupt on creamery st

13 Q-How many state crosswalks in village? No crosswalks at all, there are only sidewalks

14 Comment: Robust pedestrian infrastructure such as crosswalks can help driver alertness
 15 through the village.

16 Comment: Town facilities like town clerk, library, and post office have no nearby crosswalks.
 17 VTrans won't take responsibility to update pedestrian infrastructure through this project. Town
 18 hopes that VTrans will consider these fixes as they work on route 2, focusing on road, signage,
 19 guardrails, not crosswalks. T intersection off route 215 will hopefully be considered.

20 Q-Is there interest in access management in Marshfield, there is no no controlled access by
 21 stores? Town has had studies done, barriers to controlled access-one person owns entire block
 22 with businesses and the general store has a different owner. Getting them to agree on layout is
 23 tricky, but islands could control where vehicles enter and exit. VTrans was supposed to put
 24 sidewalk and crosswalk in this area but met with opposition.

25 Alan Quakenbush motions to have letter of support from TAC composed by Dan Currier
 26 requesting traffic calming measures, improvement of route 215 and route 2 intersection,
 27 pedestrian facilities to be added in conjunction with RAMP project. Motion is seconded by
 28 Richard Turner and approved.

29 Q- Did the safety audit look into pedestrian access? Request of audit was to look at speeds on
 30 route 2, not pedestrians

31 Q-Why was this not part of a safety audit?

32 Comment: Prudent to add safety audit language to motion, building on safety audit as
 33 consultant entity, to be clear with language to VTrans knows what is expected and that towns
 34 get what they need.

35 Q-What about complete streets?

36 Dan will incorporate complete streets language and safety audit into letter and share letter for
 37 review first.

38 Motion passes as amended.

39
 40 **TAC Updates:** flashing lights on construction flagging signs, starting to be used at district level

41 Comment: Hard to find these signs and operators if they are hiding in shade, lights will be
 42 helpful.

TAC Member Concerns

Space to unload along riverbank used to be Plainfield hardware now requires tractor trailer deliveries now green space with 25 degree slope down, don't know how water will flow off intersection. With regards to route 2 closure, got creative in East Montpelier putting in bridge, rip shred and tear of road with massive crew should be done in weekend, keep at least 1 lane open there are few or no alternative routes for heavier duty vehicles. Sewer and water cross the intersection will be exposed, costly to work around closing route 2. Costly to loose commerce. Will have to be dealt with through project design. Needs of local businesses not being considered with intersection planning. Keep TAC informed

Retaining wall looks like it's about to collapse past 215 east bound heading toward Montpelier, wall poses safety threat.

Started repairs on route 2 Plainfield resurfacing, route 12 and 14 are also poor shape. One instance visitors said they probably won't come back because of roads. Roads in region are in worse shape compared to other parts of state and should be addressed.

Fayston was sent plans to replace route 17 regional significance, might consider for agenda on future date to get feedback. Plan review will provide feedback and assessment. Community can provide input during this process too. Unknown what the town's opportunity is to provide input no public hearings. To be brought up at Mad River Planning District meeting.

Set Agenda for Future TAC Meeting

Public transit policy plan - coming back to provide update will have 30 minutes

VTrans looking for new process to prioritize projects introduce process with presentation, will replace regional process.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.