

CCTA Stakeholder Meeting
July 15, 2008

Bill Evans of Milligan & Company opened the meeting with welcoming remarks, explaining the purpose of the meeting. Evans provided the overview of the meeting. He then went over the Short-Range Public Transportation Plan process. He discussed the state's transit map, explaining that the demand response routes are not indicated on the map.

He continued with the trends in federal and state funding for operations of public transit, which shows continuous increase, commenting that Vermont is one of the top tiers of providing funding in this area in the nation. He provided an overview of governance, operations and CCTA's service area. He then discussed fares, fleet and facilities (bus storage and administrative located in South Burlington). He showed the ridership chart, indicating rise in ridership. He then discussed CCTA's operating budget, pointing out the various funding sources.

Evans highlighted the next steps of the process and availability of materials on the project website. He also stated that comments can also be sent in through the website or through the postal mail. He then opened the discussion.

The following is a list of questions and comments from the audience:

- Service should be established on Route 2 with 15-minute headways.
- Need to subsidize costs by CCTA & SSTA by the Vermont property tax.
- Cost of SSTA (ADA and E&D program) should be included in CCTA's budget analysis. These costs are increasing dramatically and funds are going there that could be used for fixed route expansion.
- An audience member asked what the sustainable approach would be delivered in the plan. Evans indicated that all suggested projects will be reviewed and a cost will be determined for each. The effectiveness of current services will also be evaluated. The plan will include a list of services that are needed and an overall cost to implement these services.
- Why are we developing a five-year plan when we are now faced with service cuts and fare increases? CCTA responded that it is critical that the transit system develop a five-year business plan to determine future directions. This process is not intended to deal with current fiscal year issues.
- There needs to be a method of prioritizing highest service needs that are identified.

- Is the prior CCTA short-range plan being used in development of this new plan? Krista Chadwick, VTrans said yes, the 2003 plan will be used to assist in the development of the new plan. The plan will also take into consideration many other planning documents provided by VTrans & Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- Address the issue of no fixed route service to Richmond (Route 2); would like the service to be included on the Burlington-Waterbury LINK Express.
- There should be commuter service from Richmond to Williston (Route 2), Cambridge (Route 15), Hinesburg (Route 116), and Milton (Route 7).
- Inbound LINK buses should meet up with other services to Williston. Currently to reach Williston, you have to travel to Burlington and then go outbound back to Williston.
- Mainline routes in Burlington should have 15 minute headways.
- Saturday & Sunday service should be similar to weekday service to accommodate people who work on weekends.
- Evening services should also attempt to accommodate people who work evening shifts that get out at 11:00 p.m.
- Service to Colchester should be investigated further.
- A route from Burlington to Rutland should be established that would connect people to the Amtrak station in coordination with train schedules.
- A ferry commuter service (Burlington to Grand Isle) should be considered.
- A Park & Ride lot is needed on Route 2 in Williston.
- The Richmond Park & Ride Lot needs expansion and a traffic signal should be mandated to allow for safe crossing of the state highway.
- Park & Ride lots should have covered shelters for bicycle racks.
- A northeast feeder should be established on Route 128 in Fairfax.
- Park & Ride lots should be established in Essex Center at Lang Farm and Essex Junction.
- There needs to be an indoor transfer center for passengers in downtown Burlington.

- The plan should look at consolidating the number of service providers.
- A major section of the plan should include a discussion of the need for a statewide and/or regional funding mechanism.
- There is a need for a commuter service between Burlington and Waterbury which would require a regional funding mechanism.
- CCTA should be flexible enough to change the size of the bus used to match ridership patterns. A 40' bus should not be used when there are only one or two passengers on board.
- Replacement buses in the future need to use some form of alternative fuel.
- More seniors will be staying in their own homes, thus additional smaller buses will be needed to access these streets and additional services provided by SSTA.
- Saturday and Sunday schedules do not provide access to people who work on weekends.
- The bus station downtown needs to be fixed for safety, cleanliness, brightness, and weather protected in the wintertime.
- SSTA buses should be better utilized for outlining areas; better coordinated to reduce duplicate trips. They seem to run empty or near empty most of the time.
- The SSTA buses should be available for use by the general public. SSTA should offer bus passes and routes. (It was noted that CCTA is in the process of obtaining proposals for the demand response service that is now contracted to SSTA. The new contract will require the provider to have an operations manager and use a computer based dispatching system. These new requirements are intended to result in better service coordination and efficiency.)
- Service for kidney dialysis patients' results in the bus laying over at the medical facility for many hours. These vehicles should be available for other services during this time.
- Lack of volunteer program in Chittenden County.
- The new plan should suggest various cost efficiency ideas for demand response services (SSTA). The rate set by SSTA does not fluctuate for coordination or cost efficiencies per VTrans and Medicaid State Law.
- There appears to be opposition from SSTA to travel outside of Chittenden County when needed or obligated by client needs.

- There should be a higher level of coordination of resources at a state-wide level; for example dispatching software.
- Demand Response systems should use a more appropriate and interactive dispatch software package. The current package required by VTrans may not be adequate for larger operations.
- The CCMPO needs to be more involved in this process. Adoption of the plan by the county's transit plan is not known.

The meeting adjourned