



Chittenden County I-89 2050 Study

I-89 Advisory Committee #2 – Meeting Notes

<https://envision89.com>

DATE: December 16, 2019
TIME: 1:00 – 3:00 PM
PLACE: Delta Hotel, 1117 Williston Rd, South Burlington
PRESENT: Please See Attached

1. Introductions & Welcome to New Members

The meeting was called to order at 1PM by Chair Charlie Baker of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC). Introductions were made and new member (Kelly Stoddard Poor of AARP, Seth Bowden of GBIC, and Evan Langfeldt of O'Brien Brothers) were welcomed. The remaining vacancy from the Preservation Trust has not yet been filled.

2. Public Comment Period

No members of the public were present.

3. Project Update

The presentation is available at: <https://envision89.com/3522/documents/7157>

Operating Procedures

Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC informed the Advisory Committee (AC) that the Committee's Operating Procedures have been updated in response to comments from an AC member. Under Item IV. Voting, the following was added: "Organizational members may abstain from voting. Votes will be noted in meeting minutes."

Project Overview

David Saladino of VHB explained that the project team is nearing completion of Task 2 (Current & Future Conditions). Task 3 (Draft Corridor Vision & Goals) is currently underway with crafting the vision, goals, and objectives and preparing for public outreach this winter. The study scope has been revised to respond to AC comments, including reinforcing the importance of evaluating bike/ped considerations at interchanges, and including a high-level review of a possible Bolton interchange, per discussion with Bolton Valley Resort. Four stakeholder meetings (VTrans Asset Management, VTrans ITS/TSMO, Emergency Management, and Environmental/Regulatory Agencies) and two Technical Committee (VTrans & CCRPC staff and CCRPC TAC representatives) meetings were held since the last AC meeting in June. The existing conditions assessment is almost complete.



Final review for the calibrated microsimulation model includes the scenarios listed below that incorporate name changes agreed upon by the TC.

- 2020 Base (AM & PM) – Current Conditions
- 2035 Committed Build (AM & PM) - with TIP & Front of Book projects
- 2050 Committed Build (AM & PM) - with TIP & Front of Book projects
- 2035 MTP Build (AM & PM) - with TIP & Front of Book & MTP projects
- 2050 MTP Build (AM & PM) - with TIP & Front of Book & MTP projects

Sandy Levine of the Conservation Law Foundation asked if climate change is incorporated into the travel model. Dave explained that the [Metropolitan Transportation Plan](#) (MTP) assumptions are included in the model. Although not directly reflected in the regional model, there were electric vehicle fleet assumptions that were made in the post-processing of model data to align the MTP with the region's energy goals out to 2050. The starting point for this study is the MTP travel model for 2050. Eleni Churchill of the CCRPC offered to meet with AC members who are interested in learning more about the MTP assumptions and the model. It's important to understand both the assumptions and the limitations of the model. Sandy would like to see a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions reflected in the modeling. The [Regional Energy Plan](#) envisions 90 percent renewable energy by 2050 in accordance with the State's Energy Plan.

The Planning Framework for developing the vision, goals, and objectives utilizes the future (2050) condition assumptions from the MTP. For land use and demographics, the projections are:

- **Population:** Projected to grow by over 20,000 people (14% increase)
- **Employment:** Projected to grow by nearly 50,000 jobs (35% increase)
- **Growth in Existing Centers:** 90% of future household growth in Chittenden County to occur in areas planned for growth

Kelly Stoddard Poor of AARP Vermont asked if the team was integrating aging trends that anticipate people driving less or not at all. Charlie responded noting that the state and county demographic projections do account for anticipated aging trends through 2050. These projections along with other population, employment, and household data are based on the state funded EPR estimates with adjustments to reflect the anticipated increase in population and employment growth within Chittenden County compared to the statewide EPR projections. Although the population and employment trends are reflected in the data inputs to the model and influence the resulting travel patterns the model produces, the regional model is not generating outputs specific to aging demographic trends or other specific cohorts.

For Transportation System Improvements, the framework also comes from the MTP and includes the following investments (totaling \$450 million through 2050):

- **Major Transportation Projects:** Champlain Parkway, Exit 12, Exit 16, Exit 17 Improvements
- **Enhanced Transit Service:** 15-minute headways for all trunk routes and 20 to 30-minute headways on all other routes
- **Other Enhancements:** Major Bike/Ped system expansion, ITS investments, TDM programs, Safety, System maintenance

4. Review and comment on Draft Vision, Goals, and Objectives

DRAFT Vision Statement

The 2050 Vision for the I-89 Corridor through Chittenden County is an interstate system (mainline and interchanges) that is safe and resilient and provides for reliable and efficient movement of people and goods in alignment with municipal, ~~and~~ regional, and state plans.

There was a discussion of the word “resilient,” intended to mean “hardiness” in response to weather events.

Karen Yacos of Local Motion emphasized that the driving experience matters; aesthetics are important. Kate McCarthy of VNRC noted that the vision is mode neutral. Karen would like to add “resilient to environmental and future changes.” Eleni suggested this be included in the goals. Daniel Currier of CVRPC asked that state plans also be included. Kate would like to see a statement about transportation affordability at the household level.

DRAFT Goals & Objectives

The group reviewed the draft goals and objectives (additions are shown underlined, deletions are shown as ~~strikeouts~~, and comments for discussion in highlighted parenthesis).

1. **Safety:** Improve safety along the I-89 Study Corridor and Adjacent Interchanges for all users.
 - Reduce the number, frequency, and severity of crashes along the I-89 Corridor and adjacent interchanges.
 - Enhance safety of bicyclists, ~~and~~ pedestrians, transit riders, and park and ride users at interchanges. (Is this more appropriate in the mobility goal?)
 - Improve incident response.
2. **Mobility & Efficiency:** Improve the efficiency and reliability of the I-89 Corridor for all users.
 - Accommodate current and anticipated future traffic demand and mobility needs for all users.
 - Maintain reliable travel times for ~~passengers~~ users and freight and goods along the corridor.
 - Improve network connectivity to ~~enhance~~ support walking and bicycling through the study area interchanges.
 - Accommodate current and future public transportation services.
3. **Environmental Stewardship & Resilience:** Establish a resilient I-89 Corridor that minimizes environmental impacts associated with the transportation system. (Possibly add reliability here; travel time/congestion is about reliability and resiliency is about climate issues).
 - Improve water quality and stormwater treatment.

- Improve the ability to withstand and recover from extreme weather (and climate?) events ~~resilience~~ of the I-89 Corridor.
 - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with fossil fuels used in transportation.
 - Improve wildlife and habitat connectivity.
4. **Economic Access & Vitality:** Improve economic access and vitality in Chittenden County.
- Support anticipated economic growth in the region.
 - Accommodate freight and goods movement served by the I-89 Corridor.
 - (A third bullet about the need to consider aesthetics and its importance to tourism?)
5. **Livable, Sustainable and Healthy Communities:** Promote livable, affordable, vibrant, and healthy communities.
- ~~Discourage~~ Encourage transportation investments that result in land use patterns that are ~~not~~ consistent with state, regional and local goals and plans.
 - Ensure that transportation improvements do not disproportionately impact underserved (Define?) populations. (Add “facilitate independence?”)
 - (Invest in improvements and that support neighborhoods)
 - (Affordability?)
6. **System Preservation:** Preserve and improve the condition and performance of the I-89 Corridor.
- Provide for sound and effective maintenance and preservation activities to achieve a State of Good Repair of the I-89 Corridor.

Discussion of Goals & Objectives

For Goal 2, Sandy Levine is concerned that the goal is very focused on providing for cars and accommodating everyone else rather than providing for the mobility of all people and goods, which is more mode neutral. There was concern that a solution that makes sense for bike/ped may scare drivers.

For Goal 3, resiliency should be defined; it’s included in both the goal and objective, but its definition is not clear. Localized air quality issues (proximate to the I-89 Corridor) should be addressed.

For Goal 4, Karen suggested we add aesthetics; there is too much design dedicated to the car. The character of Vermont is important – open space with no barriers. Tourism and quality of life are part of economic vitality. Kate recognizes that economic vitality depends, in part, with what is done around the highway; perhaps a third bullet is needed.

For Goal 5, there was concern about what would be done if state, regional, and local plans conflict. Charlie noted that municipal plans and the ECOS regional plan are very well aligned in Chittenden

County. There was discussion of the definition of “underserved” and that the federal government has a specific definition and process outlined for evaluating potential Environmental Justice impacts (Eleni will follow-up). The group encouraged using positive statements instead of negative ones. There was discussion of whether to include statements about healthy communities, food deserts, air pollution, and environmental health.

Goal 6 is a work in progress because metrics are being developed in cooperation with VTrans. Jesse Devlin of VTrans discussed the agency’s funding (funds dedicated to maintenance, modernization & expansion, etc.) and noted that the final product of this study will likely be a prioritized listing of large- and small-scale improvements for the I-89 corridor. It’s not clear what will actually be implemented and funded. The state is working on a new project prioritization process and this study will help outline improvements along the I-89 corridor in Chittenden County through 2050. There was discussion about whether to add a technology goal. The integration of technology and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) solutions will likely be included in the metrics.

5. Preparations for First Round of Public Engagement

Dave discussed the upcoming public meetings and the outreach plan, including flyers that he distributed and asked committee members to post (with additional information to be provided soon for Front Porch Forum postings, municipal newsletters, etc.). The public meetings will be live streamed with opportunities for live engagement.

In addition to the public meetings, there will be focus groups (municipal staff at CCRPC TAC and PAC presentations, federal, state, and local elected officials, freight and logistics providers, and major employers). Charlie and Eleni will offer to visit municipal legislative bodies this winter. If committee members would like a presentation to their constituents, Charlie is happy to meet with them. Recently, the CCRPC hosted a Legislative Breakfast and discussed the study. The study will also be featured on several Channel 17 programs through the winter.

6. Next Steps

- Complete Modeling of 2035 & 2050 Scenarios - December
- First Round of Public Meetings & Focus Groups (January 30, South Burlington City Hall; February 13, Williston Town Office; March 11, Winooski City Hall)
- Begin Interchange Evaluation – Early Spring 2020
- Technical Committee Meeting #4 – April/May 2020
- Advisory Committee Meeting #3 – June 2020

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50PM.

ATTENDEES

Advisory Committee Members

Amy Bell, VTrans
Matt Boulanger, Williston
Seth Bowden, GBIC
Daniel Currier, CVRPC
Jesse Devlin, VTrans
Chris Jolly, FHWA
Evan Langfeldt, O'Brien Brothers
Sandy Levine, CLF
Nic Longo, BIA
Nicole Losch, Burlington
Kate McCarthy, VNRC
Jennifer Mojo, ANR
Justin Rabadoux, South Burlington
Kelly Stoddard Poor, AARP Vermont
Sandy Thibault, CATMA
Karen Yacos, Local Motion

Advisory Committee Alternates

Marla Keene, South Burlington
Larry Lackey, BIA
Bethany Remmers, NRPC

CCRPC Staff

Charlie Baker, Jason Charest, Eleni Churchill

Consultant Team

Aaron Guyette, Diane Meyerhoff, David Saladino, Karen Sentoff