

Communities working together
to meet Chittenden County's
transportation needs



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND THE **CCMPO**



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**Chittenden County
Metropolitan Planning
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THE JOURNEY AHEAD

As the 21st century unfolds, Chittenden County's transportation system must evolve to meet the needs of our growing and diverse population. Throughout its evolution, it must also care for the natural environment, protect the quality of life our citizens now enjoy, and improve our capacity to move people and goods.

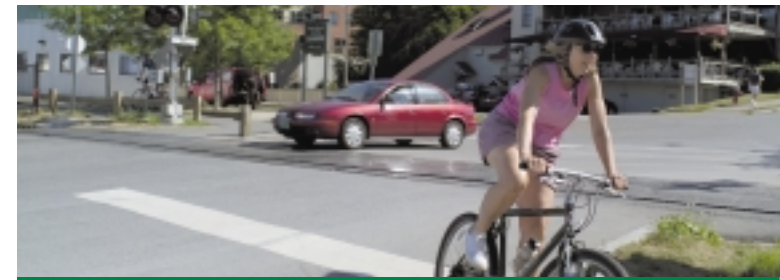
How will we develop and maintain such a system within a limited budget? What enhancements will make public transit affordable and convenient for as many citizens as possible? How can bicyclists and pedestrians travel safely to workplaces, shopping areas, and residences?

The Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization encourages individuals and groups with diverse points of view to join us in finding answers to questions such as these. Since the organization's inception, we have sought input from transportation planners, government officials, community organizations, and — most important — citizens like you. Citizen participation truly makes a difference. Some of our most promising ideas evolved through public dialog.

This brochure and our Web site (www.ccmpto.org) provide the information you need to understand our County's transportation issues and options, as well as the decision-making process for transportation planning. Should you have questions or want further information, you're welcome to call our office (802.660.4071) at any time.

We encourage you to get involved, share your thoughts, and join us in helping shape Chittenden County's transportation future.

—THE BOARD AND STAFF OF THE CCMPO



THE CCMPO STORY

The CCMPO is a federally funded but locally controlled agency that plans, prioritizes, and coordinates the use of about \$30 million in annual federal, state, and local transportation funds. Decisions within the CCMPO are made by a Board with one representative from each of Chittenden County's 18 municipalities and one representative from the Vermont Agency of Transportation. Non-voting, ex-officio members include representatives from the private sector and federal, state, and local agencies with an interest in transportation.

The Executive Committee of the CCMPO Board is comprised of the Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer, as well as two at-large Board members. This committee meets monthly to facilitate administration of the CCMPO, ensure that policy and planning recommendations are brought before the Board, and confirm that CCMPO decisions are implemented.

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) includes representatives from the 18 municipalities; numerous transportation- and transit-related agencies; the business, disabled, senior, environmental, and pedestrian/biking communities; the freight shipping/receiving, rail, and trucking industries; and Burlington International Airport. The TAC recommends transportation plans and programs to the CCMPO Board. It also develops and reviews documents, amendments, and reports.

Subcommittees are assigned to specific areas such as long-range planning and construction of bicycle/pedestrian paths. The subcommittees meet on a regular basis.

The CCMPO transportation planners and engineers are professionals employed to collect and study demographic, land use, transportation, and related data; analyze transportation policy and funding issues; coordinate projects; conduct corridor and scoping studies; sponsor public meetings; and assist communities in solving local and regional transportation problems. Additional consultants are retained as necessary to conduct special studies and analyses.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND YOU

Have you ever waited impatiently for a traffic signal to change? Wanted a bus to stop closer to your destination? Wished you could bike or walk safely to a neighboring town? Then you've thought of ways to improve our transportation system.

As the agency that coordinates transportation programs and projects for Chittenden County and its 18 municipalities, the CCMPO encourages you to get involved and turn good ideas into realities!

Every CCMPO gathering is a public meeting that you're welcome to attend. Opportunities for your participation include:

- **CCMPO Board meetings**, held monthly.
- **Technical Advisory Committee meetings**, held monthly at the CCMPO offices.
- **Subcommittee meetings on particular topics and projects**, held periodically at the CCMPO offices.
- **Public meetings, public hearings, and presentations to selectboards and civic groups**, held as needed in various locations.

Look for notices of upcoming meetings in the Burlington Free Press and many local newspapers, as well as our Web site. You can also watch the meetings on government access channels.

Background information, including publications, data sheets, and maps, is available from the CCMPO offices and on our Web site.

As you become involved in the transportation planning process, remember that your participation need not be limited to attending meetings. You're welcome to expand your role by joining one of our study committees.

The CCMPO is your organization, so speak out. Help make the improvements you envision today the ones you experience in the years ahead.

FROM IDEA TO IMPLEMENTATION: THE LIFE OF A PROJECT

A transportation problem or project idea is identified by members of the public, local officials, a private business, a community group, or a public agency.

Local officials bring the problem or project idea to the CCMPO for definition and discussion.

The CCMPO studies the problem or project. Alternatives are examined through the technical assistance process or a scoping study. If possible, the CCMPO develops a quick fix. Otherwise it becomes part of the long-range transportation plan.

The CCMPO works with community members and VTrans to facilitate the selection of a preferred alternative.

Once an alternative is chosen, the CCMPO considers it for prioritization and inclusion in the TIP.

If the CCMPO votes to include the project in the TIP, the Governor (through VTrans) and federal agencies must approve it. After these approvals, it is added to the statewide TIP and statewide capital program for funding, engineering, design, and construction.

Problem Identification/
Project Idea

Problem/Project
Definition

Alternative Studies

Preferred
Alternative Studies

Project Inclusion in TIP

Project Implementation





LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

VISION

Based on ideas and comments generated at numerous outreach meetings during the development of the MTP, the CCMPO offers the following transportation vision statement:

Our transportation system enhances and connects healthy, vibrant communities. It is safe, multi-modal, and accessible to all. It supports economic vitality and is designed and operated to complement and respect our cherished natural resources and cultural heritage.

MTP

Reflecting the vision statement, the CCMPO's long-range **Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)** provides goals and analysis against which every proposed transportation project is judged, planned, prioritized, funded, and implemented. First adopted in 1997, the MTP was updated in 2003 to reflect new data and include projections to the year 2025.

The MTP addresses a wide range of transportation issues and potential solutions related to transit, growth and development, non-motorized transportation, and highways. Examples of the challenges addressed in the MTP include:

- **Traffic congestion** Projected to increase over 300 percent by 2025, congestion causes significant delays for nearly every mode of travel.
- **Limited transit services** At its current service level and geographic reach, transit does not offer a practical alternative to private vehicles for many people.
- **Urban concentration of bicycle and pedestrian paths** In outlying areas, bicyclists and pedestrians must often share crowded roadways with cars, trucks, and buses.
- **Sprawling land development** When residential, office, retail, and community properties are located at significant distances from one another, the use of private vehicles is perpetuated, to the detriment of alternative modes.

As CCMPO transportation planners look for solutions, they seek projects that accommodate a wide variety of individual and societal needs, anticipate changes in population growth and demographics, and yield the greatest possible long-range benefits from the limited funds available for investment in projects and services.



TIP

The CCMPO implements the MTP through the **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**, a three-year spending plan for anticipated federal transportation project funds. The TIP, updated every year, prioritizes projects, allocates funds, and documents the costs and schedule for each project phase. Highway, public transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, and airport projects are included in the TIP.



UPWP

Each fiscal year, the CCMPO prepares a **Unified Planning Work Program** that offers a careful consideration of current transportation issues and opportunities, as well as the ways that planning can address them. Based on the goals established in the MTP, the UPWP identifies transportation planning activities and priorities; anticipated financial resources and expenditures; agency responsibilities; project timelines; and anticipated products and benefits.



Corridor Studies

The CCMPO collaborates with the municipalities and the State of Vermont on studies of important transportation corridors. Each study documents the corridor's long-term transportation needs based on current and projected development, land use, and travel demand patterns. It also offers a cost-effective strategy for implementing high-priority projects and programs. Among the corridors already studied are I-89, Route 127, Route 7, and Route 15.

Scoping Studies

The CCMPO's scoping studies evaluate specific, localized transportation problems and propose clearly defined projects to solve them. Although most MPOs do not provide this type of study, the CCMPO views them not only as vital bridges to the TIP and project implementation, but also as opportunities to ensure municipal involvement. CCMPO scoping studies have addressed bridge deficiencies in Shelburne, a bike/pedestrian river crossing between Burlington and Winooski, and accessibility deficiencies on Hinesburg's Route 116 corridor.

Collaborative Projects

Recognizing that growth and development patterns strongly affect the costs and benefits of transportation improvements, the CCMPO works closely with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission. The CCRPC develops and updates a comprehensive land use plan that includes a transportation component provided by the CCMPO. In turn, the CCMPO's plans are based on demographic and land use data endorsed by the CCRPC.

This collaboration ensures that transportation and land use planners have the most current, accurate data and information for the decision-making process. It also facilitates coordination of work between the two organizations.

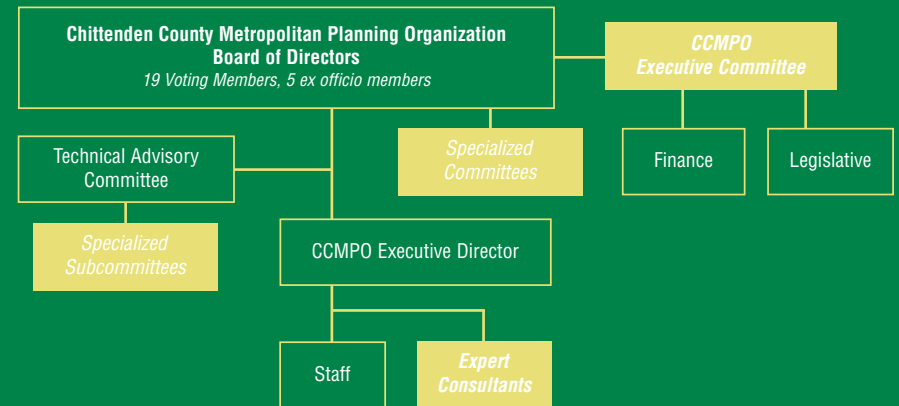
The CCMPO and CCRPC have also developed computer software that helps local planners evaluate land use and transportation alternatives. This Land Use/Transportation Decision Support System (DSS) is available to interested municipalities.

In 2002, the two agencies co-located into one office to facilitate their collaboration.



A LOOK INSIDE THE CCMPO

The CCMPO Board makes policy and planning decisions for the organization. Two standing committees and specialized subcommittees facilitate the decision-making process through consultation and administrative support. A professional planning staff studies transportation data, conducts studies, coordinates projects, and helps communities solve transportation problems. The Executive Director supervises the organization's daily operations and coordinates the work of the Board, committees, and planning staff.



LEARN MORE

The CCMPO offers several ways to learn about and participate in transportation planning. Our Web site offers a meeting calendar, project updates, current and archived publications, a staff directory, and a variety of interactive features that enable you to share your views with CCMPO staff and others.

You may also join our mailing list to receive printed announcements, invitations, and publications. Simply call the CCMPO office or visit our Web site to sign up.



UNDERSTANDING TRANSPORTATION TALK

You may find these terms used in CCMPO publications and transportation planning discussions.

Arterial A major street or highway.

CATMA (Campus Area Transportation Management Association) Organization formed by several institutions in Burlington's "Hill" area to jointly address localized transportation and parking issues .

CCRPC (Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission) Land use planning agency for Chittenden County.

CCTA (Chittenden County Transportation Authority) Operator of Chittenden County's regional bus system and rideshare services.

FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) U.S. Department of Transportation agency responsible for highways.

FTA (Federal Transit Administration) U.S. Department of Transportation agency that provides capital, planning, and operating assistance for public transit.

HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) Vehicle carrying two or more people.

ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems) Technology used to improve the efficiency of transportation systems.

JARC (Job Access/Reverse Commute) Plan. Transit improvement plan designed to meet the work-related transportation needs of low-income residents.

MTP (Metropolitan Transportation Plan) A 20-year plan for transportation development and investment based on the goals in the CCMPO Vision Statement.

Mode One of several major types of transportation such as rail, bus, automobile, and non-motorized (bicycle/pedestrian) transportation.

Multimodal Using several integrated modes of transportation in a given area.

Smart Corridor An area that uses advanced technology to maintain the flow of multimodal traffic at maximum efficiency.

Paratransit Flexibly-scheduled transportation services for the senior and disabled populations.

SOV (Single Occupancy Vehicle) Vehicle carrying only a driver.

SSTA (Special Services Transportation Agency) Chittenden County organization providing paratransit services.

TAC (Technical Advisory Committee) A committee that recommends plans and programs to the CCMPO Board.

TDM (Transportation Demand Management) Low-cost programs that focus on decreasing travel and the use of SOVs, and increasing the use of other modes.

TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century) Federal transportation law that authorizes six years of funding for highways, transit, non-motorized modes, and other surface transportation infrastructure.

TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) A list of federally funded projects planned for a three-year period and consistent with the goals of the MTP.

TLC (Transportation for Livable Communities) A CCMPO grant program that supports development that strengthens the link between transportation investments and community livability.

Traffic Calming The use of education, enforcement, and engineering to change the behavior of drivers and increase safety.

TSM (Transportation System Management) Low-cost projects that focus on how the transportation system responds to people's needs.

UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program) The CCMPO's annual work plan for local and regional transportation planning projects.

VTA (Vermont Transportation Authority) Operator of passenger rail services.

VTrans/VAT (Vermont Agency of Transportation) Agency that establishes state policies and plans, and implements programs and projects, for all modes of transportation.