

# CCMPO Policy Statement on Public Transportation

## December 21, 2005

**Legislative action is needed to free CCTA from its funding constraints in order to meet the current and growing needs for public transportation service in Chittenden County.** This can be achieved by either:

- Alternative methods to raise revenue locally/regionally and/or,
- By additional state funding of public transportation.

Positive action now will reduce growing congestion and future investment in highway capacity. Failure to act will result in even greater congestion and the need for greater investment in highway capacity than currently projected in the CCMPO's MTP.

Public Transportation in Chittenden County is hampered in its ability to expand necessary services by a lack of access to additional funding, including funds other than the local property tax. The local property tax revenue base is over extended in Vermont and many question the use of local revenues as a source to fund a regional service. Only 5 of 18 Chittenden County municipalities are members of CCTA. No new municipalities have joined CCTA since 1983 due to local funding constraints. Only CCTA member municipalities have access to state and federal general public transportation operating funds.

While commuter services serving primarily residents of communities outside of Chittenden County have been established by the state and CCTA, there has been no additional local public investment to expand public transportation in Chittenden County. This lack of investment in Chittenden County services is compounded by the fact that Chittenden County municipalities, with the exception of Burlington and Williston, have only the property tax as a revenue source to support these services. Williston has access to local sales tax revenues until 2008.

The state, in Title 24 § 5082, declares that "Public transportation is an important matter of state concern, essential to the economic growth of the state and to the public health, safety and welfare of present and future generations of Vermonters." As gasoline and other energy prices increase and our populace ages, this statement only grows in importance.

**The CCMPO believes that the service recommendations found in the state's transit providers Short Range Transit Plans must be fully funded within the timeframes outlined in those documents. This can be achieved by either allowing municipalities to raise revenues by additional means beyond the local property tax or through additional state funds. This policy is fully consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Chittenden County Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).**