



**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**WRC Transportation Committee**  
**June 9th, 2025**  
**4:00 p.m.**

---

*Members Present:* Stephan Chait, Chair, Andy Coyne, Rick Cowan, Georgianne Mora, Christine Howe

*Members Absent:* Nick Morgan, James Bressor

*Staff present:* Colin Bratton

*Guests:* Abe Koffman (VTrans), Sen. Wendy Harrison,

---

Meeting convened at 4:03 p.m.

**Changes to Agenda:** Added update on the Vermont Statewide Rail Plan.

**Minutes:**

**Approval of Minutes from 5/12/25:** Motion to approve the draft minutes of the Transportation Advisory Committee May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting made by Commissioner Mora, second from Commissioner Cowan. Minutes of May 12<sup>th</sup> approved unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes from 4/3/25:** Motion to approve the draft minutes of the Transportation Advisory Committee Special Meeting of April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 made by Commissioner Mora, second from Commissioner Cowan. Commissioner Coyne Abstains. Approved Unanimously with one abstention.

**Presentation from Abe Koffman, VTrans Planning Coordinator:** VTrans Planning Coordinator Abe Koffman presented to the Windham Region Transportation Advisory Committee on his role with the Agency of Transportation and relationship to the Windham Regional Commission. Abe is the assigned VTrans Coordinator for the Windham Region and coordinates the Transportation Planning Initiative for our region. The Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI) is an annual agreement between Windham Regional (as well as the other ten Vermont RPCs) and the Agency of Transportation which funds a large proportion of transportation planning work in the region. This funding allows WRC to work with towns on project development, grant applications, data collection, long term planning and a variety of other transportation related work.

Abe's role is primarily to oversee this work at the State level and ensure compliance with relevant FHWA rules and regulations. Abe also provides an important link between the Regional Planning Commissions and by extension Windham Region towns and the Agency of Transportation. In his role, he is able to coordinate internally with relevant VTrans staff related to local or regional transportation concerns. Additionally, Abe works on a variety of different state level initiatives in his

role as Planning Coordinator, including the Better Connections program, Legislative Study requests, Act 181 Transportation Evaluation and Demonstration Projects in the State Highway ROW, among others. In addition to his work with the Windham Region, Abe also serves as the Planning Coordinator for Lamoille County and the Northeast Kingdom.

**Vermont Transportation Challenges:** Abe discussed major transportation challenges facing Vermont towns that he has encountered in his role as VTrans Planning Coordinator for various regions around the State. Major takeaways included the need for improved resiliency in the face of repeated extreme weather events. Major storms in both 2021 and 2023, as well as more localized stormwater events across Vermont in the past year, have placed a substantial strain on our state's infrastructure. It is important that both state and local transportation officials plan for increased major stormwater events. One tool available to towns to assist in this work is the Transportation Resiliency Planning Tool, an online application created by VTrans which scores and ranks for priority all of Vermont's transportation infrastructure based on vulnerability to flood damage.

These events have significantly impacted the overall statewide transportation infrastructure funding outlook. VTrans had huge unanticipated emergency repair costs in 2021 and 2023 that are still impacting the availability of funding for regularly scheduled infrastructure replacements. This has impacted towns in the Windham Region, including Rockingham, where the Depot Street Bridge Replacement and Pedestrian Bridge construction has been delayed several times due to lack of funding and is now not expected to begin construction until 2029. Jamaica similarly had a long-scheduled bridge replacement project at Jamaica State Park delayed and then changed substantially in scope due to prohibitive replacement costs. The town had originally expressed a preference for a rehabilitation project of the existing 1920s single-lane steel frame bridge which was pursued by VTrans as the preferred alternative in late 2020/ early 2021. Cost increases recently lead the State to approach the town about changing the scope of the project to a more cost effective modern concrete structure in order to ensure the project is completed on time. This remains a challenge across the state.

Planning for Smart Growth is additionally a major priority across Vermont. In accordance with Act 181, Vermont towns are expected to designate growth centers where Act 250 regulations will be relaxed in order to promote the development of dense housing, in keeping with Vermont's historic compac settlement pattern. This will inevitably have significant impacts on both the state and local transportation system. VTrans is in the process of evaluating the statewide land use designations currently being developed by the Regional Planning Commission on the state highway system. It is critical that Vermont towns follow VTrans lead and include transportation infrastructure needs in their implementation of Act 181 policies.

**Update on Vermont Statewide Rail Plan and SEVt Mini-Moo Service:** The Committee discussed a combination of updates related to both rail and bus transit in the Region. VTrans has recently released a draft of the Vermont Statewide Rail Plan. This included language submitted to VTrans by the Windham Regional Commission related to the impact of passenger rail on our region and the interconnectedness of the Connecticut River Valley Region currently served by Amtrak service. Some concerns were raised that the wording used in the draft report somewhat misinterprets Windham Regional's comments, attributing existing economic activity between towns in the Connecticut River Valley to the presence of the existing Amtrak service when the intention of our statement was to say that this interconnectedness exists despite the significant limitations of the existing once a day service and indicates an unmet passenger rail need in the region. Windham Regional staff will reach out to VTrans to clarify these comments.

Additionally, the Brattleboro Micro Transit service, known as the 'Micro-Moo' was recently announced as one a handful of planned service cuts in the region due to statewide challenges with transit funding. This service provided an important missing link in the overall regional transportation network, providing night time access to employment for residents of the region's largest economic hub. Without the continuation of the Micro Moo, many who work shifts that begin or end later than the Moover's normal service hours may be unable to access employment. This is a negative development for the overall regional transportation network. The Committee will discuss potential next steps to demonstrate support for continued efforts to expand micro transit service in the region at a future meeting.

**Next Meeting Scheduled:** 4:00pm July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Meeting adjourned approximately 5:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Colin Bratton, Staff*