



APPROVED MINUTES
WRC Transportation Committee
October 20th, 2025
4:00 p.m.

Members Present: Stephan Chait, Chair, Nick Morgan, Georgianne Mora, Christine Howe, Pete Silverberg

Members Absent: Andy Coyne, Rick Cowan

Staff present: Colin Bratton

Guests: Abe Koffman (VTrans), Sen. Wendy Harrison, Rep. Mollie Burke

Meeting convened at 4:05 p.m.

Changes to Agenda: None

Minutes: Minutes from the meeting of 6/9/25 were approved unanimously.

Discussion of VTrans Grant Opportunities:

The Transportation Advisory Committee discussed current grant funding opportunities for transportation infrastructure from the Vermont Agency of Transportation. The fall season is the time of year when a majority of discretionary funding opportunities from VTrans come available. These are the major funding sources available to towns for infrastructure projects beyond annual town highway budgets and are an important mechanism for towns to complete priority projects too large to realistically be financed with local funds alone. The grant cycle has been moved significantly earlier and is more compressed in schedule this year compared with year's past and it is important that interested towns move quickly to identify priority projects and potential funding sources that best your town's needs.

Currently there are three major programs open from VTrans that will fund a range of potential projects: the Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation program, the Transportation Alternatives program and the Better Roads program. The Better Roads program is the smallest in available dollar amounts, with maximum awards ranging from \$20,000 to \$60,000 depending on project type. This program typically funds improvements to ditching and small to mid-size culverts on priority road segments as identified by the Municipal Roads General Permit. Once awarded these projects move to construction quickly, within the same or following fiscal year in which they are awarded with either contracted labor or town highway staff and no engineering is required.

The Transportation Alternatives and Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation program are intended for larger scale, engineered projects aimed primarily at improvements to water quality or bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. This includes but is not limited to box or large arch culverts (generally 6' in diameter or greater), bank stabilization, salt/sand sheds, as well as sidewalks, bike lanes or improved pedestrian crosswalks. While technically separate programs, there is significant overlap in project types fundable through each program and VTrans has combined the application process for both

programs in the past few years. These programs will also pay for scoping studies to identify potential solutions, alternatives and create detailed cost estimates for future construction projects.

Ongoing Transportation Projects in the Windham Region

The Committee discussed ongoing transportation projects in the Windham Region. This included both projects identified and funded through the VTrans Project Prioritization/ Statewide Transportation Improvement Program as well as projects funded through discretionary grant programs. In total there are 39 ongoing projects in the Windham Region, ranging from the replacement of interstate bridges on Interstate-91 in Brattleboro to box culvert replacements in Athens and pedestrian improvement scoping studies in Algiers Village in Guilford. These projects provide a good example of the kind of projects that can be funded through grants and help towns improve their transportation infrastructure. The Committee reviewed the full list of ongoing projects in the Windham Region.

There was significant discussion of ongoing challenges with transportation infrastructure funding in Vermont. The Project Prioritization program, the sole mechanism available towns to submit local projects for inclusion on the Statewide Transportation Improvement program, has been closed since 2022 and there is little indication it will be reopened in the new future. While discretionary grant programs assist in filling that funding gap, there are significant limitations to the amount of funding available and what projects are eligible through those programs, in particular for large scale projects such as bridge replacement projects which are beyond the scope of what is eligible through the TAP and/or MHSM programs. This has left a major gap in the state's infrastructure funding landscape, which together with the recent major changes to available funding from FEMA, has left town's struggling to maintain or improve necessary transportation infrastructure. This was identified as a topic for further discussion at a future meeting.

Next Meeting Scheduled: 4:00pm November 10th, 2025.

Meeting adjourned approximately 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Colin Bratton, Staff