

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This document presents the Short-Range Public Transportation Plan (SRPTP) for Chittenden County, Vermont.<sup>1</sup> This SRPTP was conducted for the area of Vermont served by the Chittenden County Transportation Authority (CCTA) and Special Service Transportation Agency (SSTA). It has been prepared by the KFH Group under contract to the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), with the assistance and cooperation of CCTA, SSTA, and the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO).

An SRPTP is a study process that includes determining the transit needs of the community, analyzing current transportation services and their ability to meet those needs, and recommending both organizational and service initiatives aimed at improving service delivery and meeting identified unmet needs, over a five-year time frame. The SRPTP process is distinct from service planning done internally by CCTA staff. The SRPTP has identified types of transit services and areas of the County where they might be appropriate. Beyond the SRPTP process, CCTA planning staff will develop detailed service plans for each new service or new route at the time of implementation.

The SRPTP planning process was guided by a Study Advisory Committee created expressly for this purpose. The consultant team met periodically with the Advisory Committee as it reviewed materials, provided input, and guided the direction of this study (a list of Advisory Committee members is included in Appendix A). In addition, the study team 1) conducted surveys of major employers in the region, and 2) conducted surveys of human services agencies

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<sup>1</sup> SRPTPs for Vermont's transit providers are required under Section 19, 24 V.S.A. (f).

that provide transportation to their clients. Finally, two public forums on public transit needs and alternatives were held in Burlington; one at the beginning of the project and another to review alternatives with the public. The remainder of this chapter presents some background on why and how the SRPTP was developed, including both local and state goals of the project and issues addressed during the planning process.

Chapter 2 presents the land use and demographic characteristics for the County that affect public transit needs and services. Chapter 3 presents a review of the current transportation services in the area including the results of the employer survey. An overall assessment of the potential for transit services and coordination is included in Chapter 4 along with alternatives for improving public transit in the County. Chapter 5 presents the framework for improving public transit services in the County, including a projected budget and capital plan.

## **PURPOSE OF PLANS AND LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT**

In Section 13 of H760/Act 144, the Vermont legislature required that VTrans produce a Public Transportation Policy Plan (PTPP) that includes legislative recommendations. VTrans produced a final report to the legislature on January 15, 2000. This report described the proposed planning policy for public transit in Vermont, which identified the roles of the transit operator, the regional planners, and the state.

The primary transit planning tool was identified as the SRPTP, prepared under the direction of the local system provider, with input from the Regional Planning Commission Transportation Planning Committees, the Board of each system, the VTrans public transit program, agency contract customers, and the public. A recommended scope of work for use in each SRPTP is provided in this report, which corresponds to the process of this study and recognizes the need to address additional local issues.

VTrans provides a very significant portion of the funding for the capital and operating expenses of the rural transit systems in its role as the recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding for the rural and small urban systems, for Job Access, for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding, and as a provider of state operating funds. Consequently, it has an interest in ensuring that the funds are used to provide effective transit services needed by

the residents of the state, and are used in an efficient manner as part of a statewide public transportation program. This is reflected in the state statutes that require these plans.

## **PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES**

CCTA provides fixed-route, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit, Medicaid transportation, and rideshare services to citizens of its service area in Chittenden County. Its member communities include Burlington, South Burlington, Essex, Winooski, and Shelburne. All of its services are operated within these towns, except for a fixed-route segment in Colchester, ridesharing services, and some Medicaid trips. In addition, in recent years, CCTA has provided services in the town of Williston under the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program. These services have been funded 100 percent using state and federal funds (no local share has been required of the towns).

SSTA is a private non-profit corporation founded in 1982 to assist in the provision of transportation service for the elderly and disabled. SSTA provides a number of paratransit and brokerage services in Chittenden County, including CCTA's ADA Paratransit and Medicaid van paratransit, paratransit for general public elderly, and disabled persons in Williston, Colchester, Richmond, Milton (under S. 5310 program), and other human service transportation. SSTA also provides drivers for the hospital shuttle services under contract.

## **OVERVIEW OF THE SERVICE AREA**

This study encompasses all of Chittenden County, including the Cities (Burlington, South Burlington, and Winooski) and 15 towns. Figure 1-1 illustrates the service area towns and major roads. Situated along Lake Champlain in northwestern Vermont, Chittenden County encompasses approximately 540 square miles and has a population of almost 147,000 persons in the 2000 Census. Overall the population density in the County is 272 persons per square mile.

Only parts of the County are served by the CCTA fixed route services (Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski, Essex and Essex Junction, and Shelburne). Of the 146,571 persons residing in Chittenden County in 2000, 86,834 persons or almost 60 percent of the population reside within the CCTA service area,. Although it accounts for 60 percent of the population, the



CCTA service area covers only 92.1 square miles or about 17 percent of the County. This leaves the 59,737 persons and 447 square miles unserved by public transit (relying solely on human service transportation). The population density in the CCTA service area is 943 persons per square mile, leaving a much lower population density in the remainder of the County (134 persons per square mile).

## **REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES**

CCTA has a *Short-Range Transit Plan* (SRTP) prepared in 1996 that has guided the improvements to the system since that time. In addition, CCTA and CCMPO prepared an *Operational Analysis, System Plan, and Funding Alternatives for CCTA* in 1999. The results of these two studies are reviewed below. In addition, a number of other CCMPO studies are reviewed for their relevancy to public transit.

### **CCTA Short-Range Transit Plan, January 1996**

The 1996 Short Range Transit Plan (SRPT) included a performance review of CCTA operations, a profile of current services, a management plan, and a three-to-five-year schedule for implementation of service changes, determined based on public participation.

The consultant found CCTA to be “one of the most effective and efficient transit agencies” of a peer group of 12 systems in similarly-sized cities. CCTA received high scores for financial performance, operating efficiency, ridership, and safety. Customer satisfaction as measured by a rider survey was also very high. The study also identified areas for improvement, namely customer dissatisfaction with the Cherry Street Terminal and slack time between routes.

#### **Transit Needs from 1996 SRTP**

The consultant for the 1996 SRTP found population distributions in Chittenden County to follow traditional patterns, with major concentrations in Burlington, Winooski, and Essex Junction and lower densities in outlying areas. Notably, some parts of Burlington had very high densities of over 7,000 persons per square mile, comparable to those in much larger urban areas.

School-age children were evenly distributed throughout the county. The study also takes note of the concentration of college students in the University of Vermont area. The highest percentages of senior citizens were found in the urban cores of Burlington, Winooski, and Essex Junction and in the block groups immediately outlying those towns, with smaller concentrations in Shelburne and Richmond. The block groups in which the lowest incomes prevailed (averaging less than \$20,000/year) were located exclusively in downtown Burlington and in the University of Vermont (UVM) area. High concentrations of households with no access to a motor vehicle were found, predictably, in the urban core of Burlington, but also in Richmond and Shelburne. Persons with mobility limitations, who would most likely qualify for CCTA's paratransit service, were conveniently concentrated in the CCTA service area.

### **1996 SRTP Recommendations**

The recommendations in the 1996 SRTP included some added or expanded services, shorter headways on some routes, and fewer allowed deviations. Minor changes (such as adding or changing stops) would take place first and other, more significant ones (changing existing routes or adding new ones) would be implemented later, after further public consultation.

The 1996 planning process also presented three alternatives to the current fare structure. All three alternatives involved raising fares and varying levels of ridership losses were predicted. At that time, the CCTA Board of Commissioners chose Alternative 3, which raised fares, but also offered discounted ten-ride punch cards to minimize the burden on more frequent riders.

The study group found CCTA's Medicaid Transportation Service to be functioning effectively at minimal cost. The only recommendation was to standardize the multiple charge rates for participating taxi services.

### **CCTA 1999 Operational Analysis, System Plan and Funding Alternatives**

In 1999, CCTA and the CCMPO conducted the *CCTA Systems Plan and Operational Analysis*, intended to redesign the transit system, and the *Transit Funding Alternatives Analysis*, to explore the alternative funding mechanisms to generate the funds to support the new design. One report included both study efforts; the systems plan and funding alternatives.

The purpose of these studies was not to make minor changes to the existing CCTA route structure. Such changes were addressed in the 1996 *Short-Range Transit Plan*. Rather, these projects looked at the broader picture -- exploring a vision of what services CCTA would need to operate to optimize efficiency (how well resources are used) and effectiveness (how well services meet the needs of residents in the greater Burlington region).

The study included a review of current services, the analysis of transit needs and potential, and the design of new services to meet those needs. The study team acknowledged that implementation of the new service concepts in the Plan would require institutional changes needed to expand services beyond the current CCTA member communities -- this aspect is currently being studied by CCTA management staff. The second part of the study explored alternative funding sources and arrangements for implementation.

### **1999 Study Goals and Service Concepts**

The overall study goal was to develop the ideal transit system to meet the needs of Chittenden County residents in the greater Burlington area, given the current and projected land-use pattern, travel behavior, population growth, and demographic patterns. The study began by looking at improving the use of current resources, while serving *existing areas within the existing budget*. However, after examining where people live and where they need to go, it was difficult to design an optimum system for the region that is confined to the current CCTA service area. Meeting the study goal and designing a system that is effective means expanding the service area and developing a route structure (including routes, frequencies, service types, transfer opportunities, and linkages to other modes) beyond CCTA member boundaries. Because it became clear that the optimum transit system for the region reaches beyond the CCTA service area, the funding study reviewed proposed options for funding the local share of the CCTA operating budget, identified additional potential sources, provided additional detail, and developed recommendations regarding future funding.

## **1999 Areas with High Transit Needs**

The following areas were identified in the 1999 study as having the highest relative need based on the population segment in question:

- ? The central business district of Burlington
- ? The North Avenue corridor in northern Burlington
- ? The Village of Milton as well as the eastern part of the Town of Milton
- ? Northern Williston
- ? The Village of Richmond
- ? Southeastern Colchester (St. Michael's College/Fanny Allen Campus/Fort Ethan Allen area), northeastern Colchester, and the Malletts Bay area of Colchester.

Thus, while Burlington and Winooski have the greatest relative transit need, areas of Essex Junction, South Burlington, Milton, Colchester, and Williston do as well -- the last three not being in the CCTA service area.

Most of the major destinations in the region were served by the CCTA fixed routes. Some exceptions included employment and shopping in the Tafts Corner area in Williston (which are now served by CCTA on the Williston route), the Exit 16 shopping and employment area in Colchester, and apartments/mobile home complexes in southeastern Colchester and Malletts Bay. With a few exceptions, all of the human service agencies and medical facilities identified were on the CCTA route.

However, many of the industrial parks were outside the CCTA service area, including areas along Williston Road in Williston (now served) and I-89 on the Colchester/Milton border. Also, there were a number of high density housing facilities outside the CCTA service area, primarily in southeastern Colchester and the Malletts Bay area. While only Burlington and Winooski rely on CCTA routes for pupil transportation, all schools inside the CCTA service area have CCTA fixed-route bus service available. Obviously, schools outside the CCTA service area are not served.

## Other CCMPO Transportation Studies

The CCMPO has, and is currently, conducting a number of other transportation studies with implications for public transit in the County. Excerpts on these studies taken from the CCMPO web page follow.

- ? **Burlington - Essex Alternatives Analysis** - a study of possible improvements to the transportation system in the Burlington - Essex Corridor that could help alleviate the congestion in the area. The study evaluated five options, including: doing nothing, making the existing system more efficient, major highway improvements, bus service enhancements, and initiation of commuter rail service in the corridor. Bus system improvements include express bus service along Route 15 and I-289 (Circumferential Highway), served by new local bus routes and park-and-ride lots. The commuter rail service would be an extension of the Charlotte to Burlington service, running as far as the IBM facility, with up to six stops in Burlington, Winooski, and Essex Junction. The consultant has issued a set of initial recommendations for the corridor. These recommendations include a multimodal list of projects, including highway, bus, and rail alternatives. The executive summary below describes the recommendations in detail and the complete report contains additional information and analysis. The CCMPO Board is now deliberating on this information and will discuss next steps at their September 26, 2001 CCMPO Board Meeting. Depending on actions taken by the CCMPO Board, more in-depth study will be performed in later phases of the alternatives analysis.
  
- ? **Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) - 2025 Update** - CCMPO is in the process of updating the 20-year Metropolitan Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), with a completion target in 2003. The major focus areas of the MTP Update include:
  - Designing our transportation system to continue supporting the land use and growth management principles in the Regional Comprehensive Plan and municipal plans.
  - Ensuring our ongoing transportation system preservation and maintenance needs are adequately funded and prioritized.
  - Stretching our limited transportation dollars further through expansion of modal choices, including transit and bicycle/pedestrian options, and application of innovative technologies.
  - Enhancing our region's livability through transit and pedestrian/bicycle-friendly facility design and community-sensitive transportation projects.

- Addressing and incorporating long-term freight transportation issues and needs into an overall transportation plan.
  - Emphasizing transportation system safety improvement.
- ? **Chittenden County LRTP Regional Indicators Report** - In 1997, the CCMPO adopted "A Twenty-year Vision for Transportation in Chittenden County," LRTP for the greater Burlington region. The LRTP set forth a vision for the region that was founded on preserving the existing transportation system, using the existing system more efficiently, increasing use of walking, biking and transit, closely linking transportation, and land use planning and development and completing key highway system facilities. The LRTP presented a blueprint for future transportation facilities and related community development under the broad umbrella of regional goals. This report, *Regional Indicators: Measuring Our Progress Toward Chittenden County's 20-Year Transportation Goals*, reviews the 1997 LRTP evaluating progress towards satisfying the 19 subgoals falling under the key areas above. For each of the 19 subgoals, progress is gauged based on an assessment of specific measures and actions.

## INITIAL PUBLIC MEETING FOR THE 2003 SRPTP

The initial meeting for this project, to elicit public input on the area's transit needs and how they are currently being met by CCTA, was held on Monday, July 9, 2001 at 6:00 p.m. at Union Station on Main Street in Burlington. There were 25 attendees including Laurie Adams of VTrans, Peter Keating of CCMPO, and Jeanette Berry of CCTA. The section below on local goals provides details of the issues discussed in the meeting.

### Funding/Institutional Issues

- ? How CCTA is currently funded was discussed at length. (*This is a continuation of the funding and institutional studies that have been conducted for CCTA over the last few years*). Many of the local residents were opposed to any new taxes to pay for transit (others disagreed). One local elected official at the public meeting strongly indicated that the transit service should not have to rely on the local property tax – that the state should be contributing more – and that a broader tax basis should be used.
- ? Services are needed outside the current CCTA member towns. The issue that needs to be discussed is how these services will be funded and from which sources. This also is a continuation of the recent CCTA/CCMPO recent funding studies. The formula for allocating costs among member jurisdictions is not conducive to the

inclusion of new member towns nor to the creation of new services in current member towns. Can the allocation formula be redesigned to make it more “town friendly”?

### **New Service Needs Identified**

- ? Service is needed to Corporate Way in So. Burlington.
- ? Could Essex Mall be used as a hub?
- ? Can we consider signal prioritization for buses? Tax on use of streets into downtown by cars – or charge for going through specific congested intersections? What about bus lanes on Main Street?

### **Service Design Issues**

- ? Transit service improvements need to interface with the existing Champlain Flyer commuter rail services in the Route 7 corridor and the extension into the Winooski/Essex Junction corridor. The SRPTP should be consistent with the Essex Commuter Rail plan being conducted for CCMPO by DMJM-Harris. Commuter rail alternatives include six potential stations (including Burlington) and feeder routes to three of those stations (Essex Junction, Fairgrounds, and Winooski). Ridership projections in this study suggest that half the rail riders would switch from buses. Transportation system management transit alternatives considered included more frequent bus service during peak hours on two new routes; 1) Winooski-Water Tower Hill, and 2) Susie Wilson Road/Kellogg Road. Express bus alternatives considered included express routes on VT 15, I-289.
- ? In two years, when the system has a new downtown transfer point at the Multimodal Center, routes will have to be redesigned. Is there still a need for a pulse system? What does keeping the pulse do when trying to add other hubs and move to a regional system? What other methods of operating might work better?
- ? A representative from the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired pointed out the need to maintain that agency’s statewide program – the Rural Transportation Project – that provides free, statewide transit for Vermonters who are blind or visually impaired.
- ? There is an increasing need to serve new developments in Williston. For example, transit is needed to serve the new 550,000 square foot retail, office, commercial, and affordable housing being built as Maple Tree Place Williston.
- ? There is a lot of support for extending the rail service to Winooski, Essex Junction, and St. Albans.

- ? There were a number of specific changes people suggested to the existing routes. An overall comment is the need to extend bus service into the evening to allow riders to go downtown for dinner and recreation (especially on the weekends). Another overall comment is on the need to improve on-time performance. Other service-related comments included:
  - Need to run the Williston route on Saturday.
  - Want the am and pm rush hour runs on University Mall/Airport to stop at Country Park (cannot be on bus for on board request if waiting at the bus stop – presumably these riders are going in the off-peak direction).
  - Would like Riverside/Winooski to operate every half hour, all day until 11:00 p.m.
  - Need to improve on-time performance on South End bus; extend to 11:00 p.m.
  - Would like the Lakeside bus to operate until 11:00 p.m.
  - Seat in the shelter on Shelburne Road at Flynn Avenue faces the wrong direction – change.
  - Older buses need air conditioning; replace driver seats on older buses.
  - Need to maintain bike racks on the buses.
  - College Street Shuttle needs to operate on weekends year-round.
  - There is a lot of confusion (and dirt) at the Cherry Street transfer point. It is hard to find the right bus to transfer onto. One rider suggested having a “starter” at Cherry Street; another suggested putting signs on the buses that are perpendicular to the road to make it easier for riders to spot their bus; another suggested a Public Address system to announce buses.
  - Bus drivers should wait for riders to be seated before moving.
  - Riders would like fewer transfers...or at least for the drivers to tell them when the next bus is coming.
  - What about posting the bus schedules at the bus stops?
  
- ? Can the system begin using smaller vehicles in more remote areas? (Note CCTA is planning on this).

## **GOALS FOR THE 2003 SRPTP**

VTrans and the local community established goals for this study upon its initiation. There are two sets of goals for this SRPTP – one set from the perspective of the state and another from the local community perspective. Both are reviewed below.

## Local Issues for Public Transit

CCTA is facing a number of issues that affect public transit services in the County, many of which are inter-related. Many of these issues were raised during the *1999 System Plan and Operational Analysis* discussed in the next section. Issues include:

- ? **Service Area** - The CCTA service area includes only member towns (Burlington, Winooski, Essex, South Burlington, and Shelburne). The recent CCTA System Plan and Operational Analysis identified the need to expand services into other areas with high transit potential, especially in Colchester, Williston, and to some extent Milton. This expansion is not possible, or at least difficult for a number of reasons, including the CCTA charter language on member towns and the manner in which CCTA allocates local costs to member and non-member jurisdictions. These issues are being explored by the CCTA management.
- ? **Funding Needs and Assumptions** - During the course of the recent funding alternatives study, it became apparent that the issue of organizational structure is integrally related to the development of new funding sources as well as expanded services. Service expansion is unlikely to take place unless CCTA addresses barriers to membership by towns outside the current partnership. Similarly, these areas are not going to be supportive of new funding options until they can see the services that will be received and their role in the organization. The organizational issues need to be addressed in the near future to begin a process that will lead to improved transit for the region.
- ? **Commuter Rail** - Commuter rail service from Essex Junction to downtown is being planned. CCTA will be providing feeder services (and perhaps redesigning some services in the Essex corridor) as the rail services come on line. A unified marketing program (shared stops, maps, fare structure, telephone information, advertising, and promotion) for CCTA and the commuter rail system would make it more seamless for riders.
- ? **Downtown Transit Services** - CCTA services currently use Cherry Street as a transfer point for the timed transfers in downtown. The downtown routings and schedules will have to be redesigned when the new multimodal terminal is built.
- ? **Changes in Activity Centers - Suburban Growth** - While Vermont's concern for maintaining livable communities has led to delays in the development of suburban big box retail, and suburban office and industrial parks, the greater Burlington area is growing at the urban fringe, and as in many parts of the country, there is a need to develop cost-effective and attractive means of serving such areas. Not only are there residents of newer suburban areas who have public transportation needs, but residents of older neighborhoods need to be able to reach retail, employment, and business opportunities that are increasingly located in fringe areas. The need to serve the new

Maple Tree Place development in Williston is a good example of CCTA's challenge. As new areas are served, routes get longer and the timed transfers get more difficult to meet.

- ? **Traffic Congestion and Parking** - Traffic congestion and parking are issues in downtown. Transit provides an opportunity to reduce auto travel and parking needs in the downtown area. Congestion also is an issue in the Shelburne Road corridor since there are only two travel lanes on the Williston Road corridors -- unfortunately, buses will sit in traffic with cars/trucks further reducing the attractiveness of transit. This is one reason for the interest in commuter rail, and the potential exists to improve bus transit performance through priority arrangements at congested traffic lights.

### **Local Goals for Public Transit in 2003**

Based on the above issues, the following goals were established in 2003 for improving public transit in Chittenden County:

1. Development of a broad-based source of local funding – decrease reliance on property taxes.
2. Expansion of public transit services to areas outside CCTA member towns.
3. Expansion of commuter rail to new markets.
4. Re-routing in downtown through the new multimodal center.
5. Meet the transit needs of suburban growth areas.
6. Assist in decreasing traffic congestion and parking problems in downtown and on the hill.

### **State Goals for Public Transit**

The overriding state purpose in requiring that local areas develop a SRPTP is to improve public transit services throughout the state. The State of Vermont has established state goals for public transportation. Following the completion of the PTPP, the 2000 session of the Vermont legislature adopted a declaration of policy for public transportation. The state policy goals for

the maintenance of existing public transit services and creation of new services include, in order of precedence, the following:

- (1) Provision for basic mobility for transit-dependent persons, as defined in the public transit policy plan of January 15, 2000, including meeting the performance standards for urban, suburban, and rural areas. The density of a service area's population is an important factor in determining whether the service offered is fixed-route, demand-response, or volunteer drivers.
- (2) Access to employment, including creation of demand-response service.
- (3) Congestion mitigation to preserve air quality and the sustainability of the highway network.
- (4) Advancement of economic development with emphasis directed toward tourist areas. Applicants for "new starts" in this service sector shall demonstrate a high level of locally derived income for operating costs from fare-box recovery, contract income, or other income.

As can be seen, this statement sets forth goals for public transportation in Vermont that need to be addressed in each SRPTP, both in terms of the analysis and the proposals for service and organizational changes. The SRPTP addresses the question of the needs for basic mobility in each transit service area in terms of the population characteristics, the density of the population as it will affect the possible service alternatives, the need for employment transportation, travel patterns, or potential markets that could support transit service levels attractive to auto users (which addresses congestion mitigation), and transportation needs for economic development (in terms of the likely destinations or trip-generators).

Increased equity is another statewide goal being addressed in the allocation of state transit resources, and increased equity will result in a higher level of funding for some areas. This funding should be provided only in response to identified and adopted local plans that will address identified needs in an efficient and effective manner. New services proposed in the SRPTPs will need to address the multiple goals for transit in the state, and hold the prospect of meeting usage and cost targets that are appropriate to the service area and type of service. Thus the SRPTP process is critical to the growth and improvement of transit statewide.

Because of these policies and the state funding formula, it is important for the SRPTPs to examine the relative needs in each service area in terms of the state policy priorities and the statewide level of need using these measures.

### **State Goals for the Plan**

As indicated above, the role of the SRPTP in the planning process is critical as it forms the principle tool for assessing existing services, for identifying local needs, and for developing alternatives to better meet these needs. It is mandated if grantees are to receive state and federal funds through the agency. The 2000 session of the Vermont legislature created the Public Transit Advisory Council (PTAC), as recommended in the PTPP. This advisory body will act as a state-level Advisory Committee for the preparation of the SRPTPs. In addition, it is tasked with developing standards for evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of existing services in terms of meeting identified priority goals for public transit in Vermont. Such standards can be developed, but the PTAC will need to know the range of current performance on basic standards in order to help define the appropriate standards and the desired levels for each. The SRPTP process is a statewide data collection process that can and should bring this information together and provide it to the PTAC, so that it can fulfill its mandate. Thus a goal of the SRPTPs is to collect standardized, detailed operating data by service type from all of Vermont's transit operators.

Another state goal for the SRPTPs is to produce consistent, comparable data and plans for all the public transportation providers in the state. The plans are being developed simultaneously, to the same scope, and as part of a statewide process to ensure consistency in the plans, and to develop comparable performance assessments. The scope is designed to provide information needed for VTrans, the PTAC, and the legislature to be able to project capital and operating needs for public transit in Vermont, based on sound replacement plans for existing vehicles, and fleet and facility needs to provide service in areas that are currently unserved or underserved.

Another goal for the SRPTPs was development of plans that will address transit service coverage of the entire state. The plans consider both regional and intermodal service connections to create seamless transportation services across the state. Vermont desires a truly

multimodal system that offers not only local mobility, but also access to other regions in the state, and to and from destinations outside the state.

A final goal from the state's perspective is that the SRPTP be a useful management tool for the local operators, who need to know how they are doing and if there are better ways to meet local needs by shifting resources from one service type or area to another, as well as through expansion. An outside look can aid an operator by providing external confirmation that some services need to be changed or reduced, and by helping to identify new ways to address needs. The plans can also support capital requests, and requests for demonstration (new service) funding.