

Southern Windsor County RPC 2015 TAC Annual Report

January 2016



The following report was created as a response to a TAC vision request in August 2015 – to have a scoresheet/ tally of what the TAC accomplishes. Some items are collated specifically for this report, while others are extracts from reports SWCRPC already do. If you have any questions about anything referenced in this report, please contact Katharine Otto, kotto@swcrpc.org 802-674-9201.

Outreach methods 2015

During 2015 the following major methods were used for transportation outreach:

- Monthly TAC meetings – 4th Wednesday at 6pm
- Emails
- Website - <http://swcrpc.org/transportation/> and <http://swcrpc.org/tac/>
- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/SWCRPC>
- SWCRPC newsletter - <http://swcrpc.org/publications/>

TAC Meeting Discussions 2015

During 2015 the TAC discussed the following major topics:

- Project Prioritization and Town Highway Bridge Pre-Candidates
- Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative
- High Risk Rural Roads
- Transportation Resilience
- Way To Go Commuter Challenge
- Bicycling and Pedestrian Infrastructure in Southern Windsor County
- Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI) Work Program
- West Windsor Site Visit – particularly Better Backroads Grant Projects and highway maintenance
- Accelerated Bridge Construction Program
- Speed Limits
- TAC Vision
- Transit and Public Transportation Updates
- District Levelling Projects
- Class 1 Town Highway White Paper
- VT-131 Repaving project in Cavendish

TAC Vision 2015

At their August 2015 the TAC discussed their vision – what they would like to do, and what would help the committee stay fresh and engaged. The TAC quickly reviewed their Bylaws which states what the TAC is required to do, and then focused on what the TAC finds useful/ wants to see more of:

- More scoresheet/ tallying of what the TAC accomplishes - eg projects completed and projects on the horizon
- Know what has happened, what is happening and what is coming up – construction projects and other things
- Seeing how the towns fit together as a region, balancing needs, regional awareness - important to have a town rep

- Building relationships is important on a regional level - eg TS Irene help between towns
- Fieldtrips are helpful
- Paving needs more attention in construction - seems forgotten
- Field trips are helpful to raise awareness
- Diversity of subjects helpful - rail, transit, roads, bridge, pedestrian, etc.

FFY 15 TPI Performance Report (Oct 2014 – Sept 2015)

Objective #1 - Cooperation and coordination between VTrans, Regions and Municipalities

1.1 TAC Activity:

| | |
|--|-----|
| TAC meetings – Total number of meetings held | 7 |
| TAC meetings – Average member participation rate | 69% |

1.2 TAC Outcomes: At least three key outcomes of TAC meetings that related to tasks/ deliverables not specifically identified in your TPI agreement:

- Presentations about public transportation in this Region (e.g. Southeast Vermont Transit services, service gaps filled by Springfield Hospital’s Community Health Team, and work of the Mt Ascutney Hospital).
- Presentation and discussion about efforts to create resilient transportation systems in Vermont.
- Field trip to look at town highway maintenance, including water quality related projects.
- Held a strategic planning session with the TAC to clarify required activities and identify what additional activities TAC members want to focus on in the near future.

1.3 Other Outreach:

| | | |
|---|-----|--|
| Number of road foreman meetings held | 2 | Coordinated Windsor & Orange County Road Foreman meetings with TRORC. |
| Number of codes and standards outreach meetings held | N/A | No regional meeting was held; we reached out to towns individually. |
| Number of TMDL outreach meeting held | N/A | |
| Number of Regional Safety Forums held | 0 | No safety forum was held this year |
| Number of Road Safety Audits held | 1 | Intersection of VT-131 and Weathersfield Center Road |
| Number of Transportation Board Forums hosted | 0 | Staff attended and helped to get the word out for the Transportation Board forum in Bellows Falls. |
| Number of Public Transit E&D (Elders and Persons with Disabilities) meetings held | 6 | Coordinated regional E&D meetings with WRC. |
| Number of Roads and Rivers Trainings Held | 0 | No regional training event was held. Staff attended a Roads and Rivers Tier II Training in August. |
| Municipal Infrastructure Inventories (all types combined) | 6 | See a summary of all inventories conducted under Data Collection in Section 1.4. |
| Various other smaller outreach efforts were accomplished during this period – too many to list. | | |

1.4 Data Collection:

| | | |
|--|----|--|
| Number of bridge and culvert inventories completed | 3 | We assisted towns with minor updates to several inventories. |
| Number of road inventories completed | 1 | Andover |
| Number of road drainage and erosion inventories completed | 2 | Andover, Baltimore |
| Number of sign inventories completed | 0 | |
| Number of traffic counts and speed studies completed | 32 | Various locations |
| Number of bike/ped counts conducted | 11 | At 4 routine locations |
| Number of counts completed at each State Park and Ride lot | 13 | We performed monthly counts at state lots. We also performed November counts at both state and municipal lots. |

Objective #2 - Conformance with Act 200 and facilitating decentralized decision making

1.1 Status of Regional Transportation Plan:

- a) During the majority of FFY 2015, the 2014 Southern Windsor County Regional Plan was in effect, which includes the Regional Transportation Plan as a component.
- b) The 2014 Plan was adopted on November 18, 2014 and became effective on December 23, 2014.
- c) The Regional Transportation Plan is incorporated as Volume 2 of the 2014 Southern Windsor County Regional Plan.

1.2 Participation in project development activities:

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Number of project scoping efforts | 1 | Developed the West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan using TPI funds as well as some town funds. Other scoping studies prepared using non-TPI funds are not included here. |
| Number of 502 hearings | 0 | None were held in the region |
| Number of accelerated bridge meetings | 1 | Cavendish Depot St Bridge |
| Number of other project meetings | 5 | Cornish-Windsor Bridge meeting (NH DOT). Charlestown-Springfield Bridge meeting (NH DOT). Springfield (I-91 Exit 7) Park-and-Ride project meeting. Class 1 TH Paving project meeting (Chester, Windsor, Springfield). Hartness State Airport Safety Improvements project meeting. |

1.3 Participation in permit review related to transportation issues:

We review all Act 250 and Section 248 applications for potential transportation impacts. The following only lists projects that had the level of impacts on the transportation system that warranted our participation or comment regarding the application.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Number of Act 250 applications involving transportation issues | 1 | West Windsor wastewater expansion project |
| Number of Section 248 applications involving transportation issues | 2 | New England Clean Power Link, VELCO Connecticut River Valley Project |
| Other permit review activities | 1 | Ongoing appeal process by SP Lands of an Act 250 permit that would have potential impacts on the regional transportation network. |

Objective #3 - Providing transportation planning support to municipalities

3.1 How much of TPI budgets is dedicated to the Short Range Transportation Planning Task as a proxy for % of budgets supporting municipal planning?

A significant amount of our TPI activities is for local technical assistance with transportation planning, but this level of effort is difficult to quantify. **Task 4 represents 25.4% of our FFY 2015 TPI contract amount.**

3.2. Three examples of projects completed in the last year:

- a) Town of Andover inventories of town roads and road erosion problems, and a capital improvement planning element.
- b) Town of West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (final draft).
- c) Prepared a draft Transportation Chapter for the Cavendish Town Plan update process.

SFY 15 TPI Accomplishments Excerpted from VAPDA’s Annual Report (July 2014 – June 2015)

- Adopted the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan (Volume 2 of the Regional Plan), which involved substantial updates including a list of specific needs for each major corridor.
- Participated in the Transportation Committee of the Springfield Medical Care Systems Community Health Team which has been focusing on increasing awareness and access to public transit and filling in gaps in transportation options for transit dependent populations in the area (<http://healthtransit.org/>).
- 20 traffic counts and speed studies completed across most of our towns
- Coordinated with VTrans during development of Exit 7 (Springfield) Park and Ride lot reconstruction and expansion, including to help find alternative parking locations
- Completed the Connecticut River Byway Travel Guide and accompanying website (www.ctriverbyway.org), which includes car, bike and canoe/kayak travel itineraries for over 500 miles of Byway and profiles on 100 historic sites.
- Assisted West Windsor to update their Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Prepared Andover’s Road Erosion Inventory.
- Completed regular annual regional studies, including 20 traffic counts/speed studies, park-and-ride lot occupancy surveys, and bicycle and pedestrian counts
- Gave presentation of Moving Towards Resilience in Vermont at the NADO Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference in Cincinnati OH