

GMTA TDP Stakeholder Meeting #1

Date: January 5, 2011

Time: 10:30am

Place: Montpelier City Hall

Present:

CCTA/GMTA Staff and Consultants

- Meredith Birkett, CCTA (mbirkett@cctaride.org)
- David Armstrong, CCTA (darmstrong@cctaride.org)
- Tawnya Kristen, GMTA (tkristen@gmtaride.org)
- Steve Falbel, Steadman Hill Consulting (smf@steadmanhill.com)

Stakeholders

- Steve Gladczuk, Central VT Regional Planning Commission (gladczuk@cvregion.com)
- Jack Mitchell, Barre Town Selectboard
- Ed Pcolar, Cabot Creamery (epcolar@cabotcheese.com)
- Scott Bassage, Calais (scott.bassage@gmail.com)
- Clark Eaton, Dept. VT Health Access
- Peter McNichol, Dept. VT Health Access
- Lily Sojourner, VT Agency of Human Services (lily.sojourner@ahs.state.vt.us)
- Judith Stermer, VT Foodbank (jstermer@vtfoodbank.org)
- Barbara Martin, Community College of Vermont (barbara.martin@ccv.edu)
- Irene, Washington County Mental Health Services (happygal1955@yahoo.com)
- Mary Grant, Rural Community Transit (rct@kingcon.com)
- Sharon Habel, VT Dept. of Labor (sharon.habel@state.vt.us)
- Doug Turner, Washington County Mental Health Services (doug@wcmhs.org)
- Kirstin Reilly, Warren (kirstin.reilly@ahs.state.vt.us)
- Craig Kleman, E. Montpelier (eastmontadmin@comcast.net)
- Holly Brown, Stagecoach Transportation Services (hbrown@stagecoach-rides.org)
- Steve Lotspeich, Waterbury (slotspeich@waterburyvt.com)
- Mike Tatro, Washington County Mental Health Services (miket@wcmhs.org)
- Molly Gleason, Green Mountain United Way (mgleason@gmunityway.org)
- Kreig Pinkham, Washington County Youth Services Bureau (kpinkham@vcysb.org)
- David Ellenbogen, VT Bike & Pedestrian Coalition (pianomath@gmail.com)
- Susan S. Russell, Central VT Council on Aging (srussell@cvcoa.org)
- Mike Miller, Barre City (mmiller@barrecity.org)
- Beverlee Pembroke-Hill, Montpelier (bhill@montpelier-vt.org)



Getting you where you need to go!

Ms. Birkett began by introducing staff and asking those present to introduce themselves, (see attached list of those present). Ms. Birkett continued with a brief outline of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) process: Stakeholder meeting(s) will be followed by a public hearing(s), GMTA will write the Plan with direct Stakeholder and public oversight and finally the GMTA Board will approve the Plan. The TDP is the cornerstone document that GMTA will use to guide its growth, change and improvement over the next 5-10 years. Ms. Birkett thought it worthwhile to note that the TDP should be a well-rounded document, including, but not limited to; inventory levels, marketing needs and goals, service needs, strategies for growth, governance and finance.

Mr. Falbel continued the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation outlining GMTA's current services and resources, areas served, ridership characteristics, and ridership levels. At the conclusion of the presentation, Mr. Falbel asked the stakeholders to comment on the services and amenities that had been identified and to offer additional suggestions on areas of need:

New Routes and/or Services

- GMTA should revisit involvement in Stagecoach's 89-ER Route (Montpelier to Randolph) in order to offer more round trips each weekday
- Service to CCV on Route 12
- Montpelier Circulator
- Washington County Mental Health in Montpelier has unmet demand for service
- Service to East Montpelier
- Service to Graniteville/Barre Town

Questions/Commentary

- Volunteer drivers
 - Very important in rural areas; cheaper to reimburse for mileage than running a bus or other program to those areas/customers
 - Hours worked by volunteer drivers count towards local match for 20% local E&D requirement
 - Limited visibility to general public as drivers use private vehicles (unmarked)
 - Ticket-to-Ride program, designed to support the individual transportation needs of seniors and persons with disabilities.
 - Barter system and/or time-bank system (e.g. REACH in Montpelier) could be a good alternative for volunteer drivers
- Is GMTA threatened with reduced governmental funding (Medicaid, E&D, CMAQ)?
 - ~87% of total funding through Federal or State programs (~25% of total through Medicaid)
 - Elderly & Disabled funding from 20% local
 - TDP should advocate for continued Medicaid funding at or above current level



Getting you where you need to go!

- Political situation too hard to forecast, though public transit funding typically stable
- Park & Rides, Facilities
 - E. Montpelier, Graniteville/Barre Town and other new Park & Rides
 - Some of these smaller communities have pockets of higher density, (Barre Town Industrial Park), but lack ability to fund P&R
- Technological advancements
 - Budget items?
 - GMTA benefits from partnership with CCTA; new technologies can be tested, implemented, smoothed out at CCTA first
 - Wireless internet on buses, GPS equipped buses (enable passengers to know where bus is), etc.
- GMTA capital campaign (e.g. United Way)
 - GMTA always accepts donations, though does not conduct an official campaign.
 - Local funding support based on a fare share equation from serviced municipalities is the current priority of focus.
- Public surveys
 - Should include employers and their needs (seasonal, etc.)
 - More detailed population data available and/or analyzed, particularly for the aging or retired/retiring populations
 - Exponential growth of this demographic in the near future
 - Funding questions
 - People support additional public transit funding, yet don't support additional taxes; taxes are primary "local" funding mechanism
 - GMTA included a question on funding in its Washington County Phone Survey
 - Needs vs. Knowledge
 - Were those surveyed simply unaware of existing services and how to utilize them, or genuinely need/want more service(s)
 - Surveys did rate public knowledge from "high" to "low"
 - More marketing and public outreach?
- CCTA/GMTA merger (July 1, 2011)
 - CCTA Board will include nine CCTA and four GMTA reps
 - CVRPC to help advise Washington County representative on CCTA Board
 - May have additional GMTA town reps if towns vote to become CCTA member communities
 - CCTA membership means the towns give CCTA assessment authority.
 - GMTA communities: Level funding for FY12 (July '11 – June '12)
 - No GMTA service changes tied to merger
 - GMTA TDP will help guide funding mechanism(s) for GMTA communities wishing to become CCTA member community



Getting you where you need to go!

Additional Post-Meeting Service Requests

- Mid-day US 2 Commuter service
(Barbara Bendix ~ The Health Center, Plainfield)
- More bike rack availability on all buses
- Covered, secure bike racks at all park-and-ride locations
- Bus service that connects the more popular bicycle routes
- Bus stops at locations that are at convenient locations with regard to walking routes popular with seniors and school children, as well as in regard to bike path access points
(David Ellenbogen ~ Vermont Bicycle Pedestrian Coalition)
- Additional service between Montpelier and Northfield
(Kevin Moore ~ Veterans' Place, Northfield)

