



CHITTENDEN COUNTY RPC
Communities Planning Together

***VERT!* Vermont Economic Revolution & Transit
USDOT RAISE Grant Application**

**CITY OF BURLINGTON, CITY COUNCIL
TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY & UTILITIES
COMMITTEE**

September 28, 2021

Two Feasibility Studies

1. Lakeside Intermodal Facility for Transportation (LIFT!)
2. Vermont Economic Revolution and Transit (VERT!)

Big Picture

Leverage what is happening at HULA to support multi-modal, smart growth addressing climate change and equity

- HULA IT Accelerator Campus on Lakeside Avenue with about 600 high income entrepreneurs and employees with more (500?) to come
- Opportunity to address the three challenges for all VT employers: housing, mobility, and day care
- Build multi-modal hub with bus, EV car sharing, bike sharing, bike lockers, car intercept facility (parking), and potentially, future rail (electric?).
- Benefits GMT's existing rider base with a modern climate controlled south end transit hub for south end transit users and directly to HULA
- HULA and partners to build adjacent parking, housing serving as a catalyst for potential all-electric rail service as other downtown transit-oriented developments in Opportunity Zones gather momentum

RAISE Grant Application

- Submitted an application to USDOT for a RAISE grant in July. Should hear decision by end of 2021 (probably November)
- 2 major parts:
 - Examine feasibility of **transit hub at HULA** including all modes of transportation, housing, parking and child care. Market demand, conceptual plans and cost estimates, and financial plan and governance model - \$500,000
 - Explore feasibility of **community-based rail system**; develop estimate of costs of low-cost (potentially electric) passenger rail, examine opportunities for TODs in rail towns/opportunity zones, and determine financial feasibility and governance model - \$1,400,000

Engagement with all potential parties and the public throughout the process

Letters of Support

- Governor Phil Scott
- City of Burlington CEDO
- St. Albans City
- Vergennes Partnership Inc.
- Lake Champlain Chamber
- Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce
- Car Share VT
- Vermont Rail Action Network
- All Earth Rail
- HULA
- Green Mountain Transit
- Vermont Rail Systems
- Local Motion
- Old Spokes Home
- Champlain Housing Trust
- Vermont Clean Cities Coalition
- Sierra Club Vermont
- Net Zero Vermont
- Let's Grow Kids
- Pine Forest Children's Center
- AARP
- Generator

Lakeside Intermodal Facility for Transportation

Proposed Scope

- A. Market Demand - Explore demand for housing, commercial, and parking at the Lakeside site.
Deliverable: Market demand report.
- B. Conceptual Plans and Cost Estimates - Develop conceptual plans and cost estimates for site and building at Lakeside. Include any environmental assessment and cleanup needed as well as all other federal, state, and municipal permitting requirements. Utilize the FHWA Planning and Environmental Linkages approach as appropriate. Include features to address climate change to reduce carbon footprint and ensure resiliency; seeking to be a net zero site. Include elements to address equity. Conduct community engagement. Deliverables: Conceptual plans, cost estimates, report describing environmental requirements.
- C. Business and Governance Plan - Develop both a financial plan and a governance structure to implement the Lakeside TOD to meet identified public and private needs. If needed, develop an economic impact analysis. Conduct an equity impact analysis with City of Burlington. Develop a marketing plan. Develop the public private partnership (P3) agreements to implement the recommended governance structure. Engage with partners in the development of above.
Deliverables: business plan, financial plan, equity analysis, marketing plan, governance structure and draft P3 agreement.

Vermont Economic Revolution and Transit

Proposed Scope

- A. Rail Service Improvement Needs - Identify track, tunnel, bridges, and grade crossing upgrades using existing data. Determine cost estimate for necessary upgrades. Determine costs of rail cars (rolling stock), including converting Budd cars to electric power. Examine issues of accessibility, dispatch, positive train control and others needed to implement rail service. Communicate with rail owners and operators (New England Central Railroad (NECR), Genesee & Wyoming Rail, Brookfield Asset Management, Vermont Rail Systems) and VTrans regarding rail upgrades Deliverable: Report with recommended rail upgrades and cost estimates.
- B. Possible Station Locations and Transit-Oriented Development/Opportunity Zone Development Potential - Identify potential community rail station/platform locations and multimodal opportunities. Analyze station land development market demand and potential highest and best use for development. Catalog known environmental issues. Forecast ridership demand and operating costs. Engage Regional Planning Commissions, municipalities, the public, and other stakeholders with a focus on underrepresented communities. Deliverable: Report with recommendations for potential station locations and Transit-Oriented Development potential.
- C. Feasibility Analysis – Develop initial ridership projections, operating cost estimates, environmental assessment, station-area land development market demand analysis, and development revenue model including land value capture opportunities. Identify the ability to capture increases in land value and any state and/or municipal policies that need to be updated. Develop business plan identifying capital and operating costs, revenue model, rail operator costs, municipal and state tax revenues, and proposed governance structure. Conduct engagement with rail operators, municipalities, state agencies, the public, and other stakeholders. Deliverable: Report documenting above and including recommendations regarding feasibility of community rail.
- D. IF COMMUNITY RAIL IS DETERMINED FEASIBLE, Develop Implementation Plans – P3 Governance Structure and Agreement, Rail Integration Plan, Rail Vehicles Electrification Plan, Rail Operator Agreements, Track and Station Upgrade Plans, Conceptual Plans for TOD sites and Stations, and other tasks as are determined necessary to prepare for community rail service.

Thank you

Questions?

Charlie Baker, CCRPC