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## Budget Communication From Richmond Transportation Committee

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Chris Cole <ccole.pc@gmail.com>

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To: June Heston <juneheston@comcast.net>, Josh Arneson <jarneson@richmondvt.gov>, Ravi Venkataraman <rvenkataraman@richmondvt.gov>

Hi June and Josh,

The Richmond Transportation Committee met on October 11 and one of our meeting items was discussion of the FY24 Richmond Town Budget and the Capital Plan. I would like to convey the recommendations of the Transportation Committee regarding the Capital Plan, the FY24 budget, and an overview of some public transit planning that the Committee is working on.

### Capital Plan

The Committee's unanimous recommendation regarding the Capital Plan is to include the Bridge Street improvements to the next five year proposed Capital Plan to highlight the prioritization of that project, and shift Jericho Road to the subsequent Capital Plan cycle.

### FY24 Budget Recommendations

For the FY24 Town Budget, the Committee unanimously voted to include \$80,000 for the sidewalks reserve, per the committee's motion during the meeting. This reserve fund serves two purposes for the town, one as the local match for any federal grant via the Agency of Transportation the town is successful in obtaining, typically 20% of the total project cost and to pay 100% of the costs of a transportation project the town wishes to pursue if we are unsuccessful in obtaining a grant. The reserve fund allows us to meet community needs on local transportation improvements without dramatically impacting property tax rates. We hope you can support this level of investment in our community.

The Committee voted unanimously to recommend \$20,000 for Transportation Planning projects. Based upon the Community discussions regarding Cochran road concerns and the attention Cochran Road received during the Master Planning process for the town for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, the committee would like to pursue a UPWP grant from the CCRPC for a scoping study for Cochran Road, the anticipated budget for this would be \$10,000, which represents the local match for the project.

The Committee voted unanimously to support the Town Planner's request in the FY24 budget of \$5,000 for Contract Services. In general, these funds have previously supported contract services to cover contingencies, temporary services during staffing gaps, land-use planning projects, and unanticipated planning projects. This line could be used for small planning projects that cannot be covered by grants, or engineering.

Thank you for consideration of our FY24 budget recommendations and Capital Plan items.

### Public Transit Update

I'd like to provide a brief update on planning activities around public transportation. Green Mountain Transit (GMT) has received a planning grant from the CCRPC to study the feasibility and viability of a public transit route that connects the Town of Richmond to the Park and Ride lot and the Towns of Williston and Waterbury. We do not know the timetable for completion of this study and do not believe the transit authority has started the project. They have been facing some staffing issues recently, so they may have some diminished capacity in this area. The Committee also wanted to gauge selectboard interest in two other public transit planning ideas: 1) whether in lieu of public transit services offered by GMT, if the town were willing to provide the local match for the purchase of a van financed by federal funds through GMT and employ a driver to meet the Link Express buses at the State Park and Ride and use the van for other public conveyance as the town determined it wanted to support and 2) whether the town was interested in submitting a request to GMT to support a Micro Transit planning study with a neighboring town, either Hinesburg or Jericho (we would want to wait for the first planning activity on the Williston to Waterbury to be concluded and a decision made on that service prior to this request.)

Thank you again for considering our requests. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about our recommendations or other activities of the Committee.

Chris Cole  
Richmond Transportation Committee, Chair

