November 30, 2015 Parkway Meeting

Comment 1: Is the highway restricted access (will there be intersections with side streets?)? How will pedestrians and bicyclists interact with the highway?

Response 1:

The Champlain Parkway is a controlled-access facility. There will be signalized intersections at Home Avenue, Flynn Avenue, Sears Lane, and Lakeside Avenue. All existing intersections along Pine Street will remain. New traffic signals will be installed at the intersections of Pine/Maple, Pine/King, and Pine/Main Streets.

Pedestrians and bicyclists will be accommodated with a combination of separated shared use paths, on-road bicycle accommodations and sidewalk improvements. Pedestrians and bicyclists will be accommodated at intersections with crosswalks and traffic signals with exclusive pedestrian phases.

Comment 2: Why are there no roundabouts in the design? Roundabouts are safer and faster for drivers, bikers, and walkers.

Response 2:

Roundabouts were considered during the initial scoping and preliminary design development. It was determined that signal control was the preferred alternative.

Comment 3: How will a shared use path be safe for pedestrians? And an efficient route for bikers? I already avoid walking on bike path because of speedy bikes.

Response 3:

The proposed shared use path was designed in accordance with state and federal standards that specify required slope, width, and clearances from obstructions on either side of the path. Pedestrian-activated rectangular rapid flashing beacons at mid-block crosswalks have also been proposed. Bicyclists wishing to take a more efficient route will benefit from improved on-road bicycle accessibility along Pine Street. In addition to the shared use path adjacent to Pine Street, improvements include a northbound bike lane between Lakeside Avenue and Locust Street, shared lane markings, and buffered bike lanes, for northbound and southbound cyclists, between Kilburn Street and Maple Street.

Comment 4: Who do we go to about problems with the parkway while being built and once built? What noise mitigation measures and buffer tool will be used?

Response 4:

The Burlington Department of Public Works will address questions and concerns during and after construction. A contact person will be assigned to the project when the project goes to construction, and their contact information will be made available at that time. Construction activities could result in temporary noise increases along the affected roadways. Noise levels and duration would depend on the type and extent of each construction activity. Time of day restrictions on construction activity

may be used to mitigate construction noise impacts in the vicinity of residential areas in accordance with the City of Burlington's noise ordinances.

Comment 5: At this time, about 50% of drivers ignore Rapid Flashing Beacons. How will crossings and speed limits be enforced?

Response 5:

Enforcement of traffic laws is the responsibility of the Burlington Police Department. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) are meant to alert drivers that a pedestrian wishes to cross the street at that location. It has been DPW's observation that drivers do yield to pedestrians when the RRFBs are flashing. Traffic calming features have also been included in the project design to encourage travel within the speed limit.

Comment 6: If you are still able to incorporate changes, such as a new North bound bike lane on Pine Street, why are you not also willing to look at recommendations from Bikewalk Council and Safe Streets Burlington?

Response 6:

Numerous features have been incorporated into the project based on input from several local groups/organizations, including Local Motion and the Burlington Bicycle Coalition.

Comment 7: How can you justify such a costly project that appears to direct even more single occupancy vehicles to congested intersections at the north-end of Pine Street? Does this solve its intended purpose?

Response 7:

The Parkway provides a mechanism to restore the functional integrity of local residential streets by diverting through traffic away from these streets, thereby improving the quality of the local streets for multimodal access and mobility. The Parkway has been planned with the benefit of modern ideas about sustainable multimodal transportation systems and complete streets, and provides new and expanded facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. The project also includes modern traffic control systems to improve mobility and reduce congestion.

Comment 8: It seems that VTRANS can easily scratch a lot of the amenities by saying they are too costly or inconvenient to implement. Why shouldn't they be mandatory?

Response 8:

VTrans supports many amenities that have been incorporated into the project. However, the governing factor for consideration of these amenities has been consistency of the proposed amenities with NEPA and Act 250 permits.

Comment 9: Will there be Park and Rides? Plan BTV S.E. popular vote was for Park & Rides!

Response 9:

Public transportation was considered as an alternative to the proposed project and has been evaluated in the City of Burlington for many years. Expanded public transportation is recommended

to be pursued in the city, but is not, by itself, considered to be a reasonable solution to address the purpose and need of the project. The project, however, does not preclude the implementation of future public transportation projects.

Comment 10: In what form is the 7-some odd million dollars that BVT would owe the federal government if the project isn't pursued?

Response 10:

The City of Burlington has entered into a Cooperative Agreement with the State of Vermont Agency of Transportation to design and construct the Champlain Parkway. One section of the agreement stipulates that if the City fails to meet its obligations to construct the project, the Secretary of Transportation shall determine the amount of and schedule for the repayment to be made to the State by the City, considering all applicable laws and regulations.

Comment 11: How long will the Champlain Parkway dump traffic in low income neighborhoods (King, Maple) before the Railyard Project comes to fruition?

Response 11:

The Champlain Parkway project includes improvements along Pine Street to encourage more existing and future traffic to remain on Pine Street to access downtown rather than using King Street and Maple Street as is the current situation.

A comparison of the 2028 (ETC+20) design year Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes on Pine Street, between Maple Street and Main Street shows a 1,800 vehicle increase as a result of the project compared to the No-Build Alternative, including traffic diverted from Maple Street and King Street. Compared to the No-Build Alternative, the completed project will improve the Level of Service (LOS) at the intersections of Pine Street with Maple Street and King Street through the installation of traffic signals.

Comment 12: Are Lyman, Morse & Ferguson going to Dead-end when City Market is opened to prevent excess traffic from going through the neighborhood? Or will it be done when connector is built?

Response 12:

The dead-ending of Lyman, Morse and Ferguson Streets are currently under consideration as part of the City Market project. These discussions are continuing as of the preparation of these responses to questions, so a more definitive answer to this question cannot be made at this time.

Comment 13: Will it fund Park and Rides which are eligible projects under federal regs?

Response 13:

Park and Ride facilities will not be included as part of this project. Although public transit is an integral component of the region's transportation system, the expansion of these services is not, by itself, considered to be a reasonable solution to address the purpose and need of the project.

Comment 14: Isn't creating dead end roads in the plan just like the Urban Renewal debacle of the mall?

Response 14:

Lyman and Ferguson Avenues are local residential streets. The dead end sections of these streets created by the Parkway does not significantly disrupt the connectivity of the street network in this residential area, and is not inconsistent with other dead end streets within the City's street grid. The Parkway expands the availability of travel routes for traffic circulation and retaining the character of these local streets.

Comment 15: Please explain the south end connection at Pine Street with the new Parkway Design? (i.e. Burlington/South Burlington location) Re: traffic flow and neighborhood, dead-ends, safety, etc.

Response 15:

The Pine Street connection to Queen City Park Road will be closed as part of the project. The existing shared use path connecting Home Avenue and Queen City Park Road will be maintained. This will be supplemented with a new shared use path constructed as part of the project connecting Pine Street and Shelburne Road. Vehicle access to Queen City Park Road will be achieved by optionally using the Champlain Parkway to Ramp G or via Industrial Parkway.

Comment 16: How will one get from Lakeside to Palace 9 Movie Theater without going on Shelburne Rd? (Now Pine joins Queen City Park Road and this makes it possible.)

Response 16:

The southern terminus of Pine Street will become a cul-de-sac, however Queen City Park Road will continue to be accessible from Industrial Parkway as well as Shelburne Road (U.S. Route 7). Ramp G will also provide access to Queen City Park Road from the Champlain Parkway.

Comment 17: Will it address new concerns about toxic soils not addressed in outdated EIS/NEPA?

Response 17:

The City is currently coordinating with VTrans and DEC regarding soils in the project area. Additionally, it is anticipated that any soils issues will be addressed as part of the project in order to be in compliance with federal and state regulations.

Comment 18: Are there safe walk/bike facilities throughout the route?

Response 18:

The project will feature a new shared use path connecting Shelburne Road to Pine Street in the C-1 Section, and will retain the existing bike path along the western side of the C-1 Section of the Parkway (i.e. between the Parkway and the train tracks). The C-2 Section will include a shared use path paralleling the eastern side of the Champlain Parkway between Home Avenue and Lakeside Avenue. Sidewalks will connect the shared use path with the existing sidewalks along Home Avenue, Lyman Avenue, Ferguson Avenue and Flynn Avenue. A new sidewalk will be constructed on the northern side of Sears Lane within the project limits to provide continuous access to the shared use path. The C-6 Section of the project will continue the shared use path along Lakeside Avenue, continuing along the western side of Pine Street and terminating at Kilburn Street.

The project will also improve on-road bicycle accommodations along Pine Street through the implementation of a northbound bike lane between Lakeside Avenue and Locust Street, shared lane markings, and buffered bike lanes between Kilburn Street and Maple Street.

Comment 19: Will there be roundabout to create connectivity between Pine Street neighborhoods, Queen City Park and shopping?

Response 19:

The Pine Street connection to Queen City Park Road will be closed as part of the project. FHWA concluded that roundabouts were not feasible for the Champlain Parkway during a value engineering process for the project. Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity will be provided by a system of sidewalks and shared use paths. Vehicular connectivity will be provided from Ramp G of the Champlain Parkway and from other existing street connections via Industrial Parkway and Shelburne Road.

Comment 20: Left turn lane at Pine and Lakeside?

Response 20:

There will continue to be a left-turn lane for eastbound to northbound traffic from Lakeside Avenue to Pine Street and also a left-turn lane for northbound traffic turning left onto Lakeside Avenue from Pine Street.

Comment 21: WCAX announced a delay on the Parkway on the six o'clock news which would be addressed on the eleven o'clock news. What is the delay?

Response 21: The project is advancing as expected.

Comment 22: Can it realign Pine Street from Howard to Curtis Lumber by adding 6 feet of green space and sidewalk on east?

Response 22:

There is currently no plan to realign any section of Pine Street with the project. The proposed design includes seven feet of green space and five foot wide sidewalks between Howard Street and Curtis Lumber.

Comment 23: How will people get in and out of Lakeside Neighborhood during construction?

Response 23:

It will be the contractor's responsibility to maintain traffic in and out of the Lakeside Neighborhood during construction. It is anticipated that flaggers will be available to assist motorists through the construction zone; this includes residents and employees of the Innovation Center. Additionally, the contractor will be required to maintain one open lane of traffic at all times, with construction flaggers. If for any reason the traffic signal at the intersection of Lakeside and Pine Streets needs to be taken offline, a Uniformed Traffic Officer will be available to direct traffic. A Transportation Management Plan will be prepared as part of the design process to identify the strategies and requirements for maintaining accessibility and managing the work zone impacts.

Comment 24: Have you forgotten that the city serves the citizens and that our voice (revisions, criticisms, negatives) must be taken into consideration? What ever happened to representational democracy?

Response 24:

The project has followed all applicable Federal, State and local laws and procedures, including NEPA and Act 250. The public and stakeholders have been engaged throughout this process. The project has received all of the appropriate permits to allow the project to be constructed.

Comment 25: At what point does the parkway reduce to one lane in each direction?

Response 25:

The Champlain Parkway will now provide one lane in each direction. The C-1 Section between Shelburne Road (U.S. Route 7) and Home Avenue will be reconfigured to reduce the cross-sectional width of the roadway surface which includes replacing the majority of the existing concrete median barrier with a raised grassed median, removal of excess pavement, and the installation of lighting and landscaping amenities. The C-2 Section from Home Avenue to Lakeside Avenue will also feature one travel lane in each direction. Both C-1 and C-2 Sections will include left-turn only lanes at Home Avenue, Flynn Avenue and Sears Lane.

Comment 26: What happens on Main Street from Pine to Battery?

Response 26:

The northern project terminus is the intersection of Pine Street and Main Street. Main Street, between Pine Street and Battery Street would not be changed by the Champlain Parkway project.

Comment 27: The parkway is full of contradictions: A way to bring cars into a downtown that hopes to reduce cars…A modern transportation idea conceived in the 60s. Do we really need the Champlain Parkway in 2016?

Response 27:

Although the Parkway was originally conceived in the 60s, it continues to have a relevant function in the context of a contemporary multimodal transportation system. It provides a mechanism to restore the functional integrity of local residential streets by diverting through traffic away from these streets, thereby improving the quality of the local streets for multimodal access and mobility. The project provides new and expanded facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. It improves transportation access to commercial property along Lakeside Ave and Sears Lane, supporting economic development while also addressing the traffic impacts of this development (and reducing impacts of this traffic on the residential areas south of Lakeside). The Parkway has been planned with the benefit of modern ideas about sustainable multimodal transportation systems and complete streets, and evolved from a 5-lane vehicle-oriented arterial to a compact roadway (single lane in each direction with center landscaped median and turn lanes provided at intersections) and having enhanced pedestrian and bicycle features.

Comment 28: Why not turn the current built section of the parkway into an access to a solar roof park & ride lot with electric buses to alleviate cars in Downtown and provide a route for trucks?

Response 28:

Park and Ride facilities will not be included as part of this project. Although public transit is an integral component of the region's transportation system, the expansion of these services is not, by itself, considered to be a reasonable solution to address the purpose and need of the project.

Comment 29: What's wrong with Shelburne Road as a direct access route to Downtown?

Response 29:

The principal existing problems and deficiencies that have necessitated the Champlain Parkway project are:

1. **Congestion (including insufficient capacity to appropriately service traffic volumes and provide appropriate access);**
2. **Safety concerns created by vehicles utilizing roadways that functionally operate at a higher classification than intended, both along the minor arterials and in neighborhood areas which are acting as short-cuts; and**
3. **Mix of local and through-traffic in neighborhood areas (including truck traffic) created by a lack of a north/south arterial to access the city commercial district.**

The section of Shelburne Road leading into the city is heavily developed with commercial properties, most of which have direct access onto U.S. Route 7; therefore, traffic wishing to proceed in to the city center district or through the city is heavily congested. Motorists wishing to avoid this congestion often utilize the local street network in an attempt to bypass the congestion and cause problems 2 and 3 above. The added network capacity created by the Champlain Parkway will enable Shelburne Road to continue to be a key route for access to Downtown.

Comment 30: This project has become a poor excuse for the lesser of two evils.

Response 30:

The project has evolved over time and reflects the collective efforts of government representatives and their consultants, guided by public involvement and stakeholder coordination throughout the process to meet the public Need and Purpose. The project that resulted reflects a balance of priorities and objectives of the many stakeholders in the context of environmental constraints, current objectives for sustainable/multimodal transportation systems, and fiscal considerations.

Comment 31: Other than the Parkway, you have described many add-on projects outside the actual scope. How will these be funded? How will the utilities under Pine Street be rebuilt?

Response 31: The City currently has a project that is relining water, sewer and storm lines beneath Pine Street, which is being funded through a capital improvements fund approved by the Burlington Board of Finance and City Council. This work is taking place prior to the construction of the Champlain Parkway. Other projects, such as the City Market development project at Flynn and Briggs Street, are being paid for by the developer/owner.

Comment 32: How will residents of the Lakeside neighborhood cross over to Sears Lane?

Response 32:

The Champlain Parkway will not impact the Lakeside neighborhood residents' ability to cross at the existing pedestrian rail crossing at Sears Lane. Residents will be able to cross the Parkway at the signal-controlled intersection with Sears Lane.

Comment 33: My understanding is that bikes, pedestrians, and cars will not be able to get to Queen City Park Road from Pine Street. Won't this significantly alter traffic patterns creating more traffic on streets such as Home Ave?

Response 33:

The traffic modeling conducted for the project reflects the traffic diversions associated with the proposed changes of the roadway network. This modeling, and the resulting project traffic volumes, which are described in the FSEIS, show that there is a net reduction in traffic on Pine Street south of Lakeside Avenue as well as reduced volumes on local streets such as Home Avenue and Flynn Avenue.

Comment 34: Changing the Pine Street segments of the project to shared lane markings and a shared use path is a regression for cycling infrastructure. How can conditions for people biking instead be improved?

Response 34:

The design of the Pine Street segments of the project has been responsive to the input and feedback of a variety of stakeholders, including active transportation advocacy groups. The project will improve on-road bicycle accommodations along Pine Street through the implementation of a northbound bike lane between Lakeside Avenue and Locust Street, shared lane markings in areas where street-width is not adequate to support separate lanes, and buffered bike lanes between Kilburn Street and Maple Street.

Shared Lane Markings will be placed in the center of the travel lane to alert motorists to the presence of bicyclists and to reinforce bicyclists' right to the full lane. Additional measures taken to improve bicyclists' safety in these areas include enhanced signage and a red painted four foot buffer between the parking lane and the shared travel lane.

Comment 35: Please say more about the RR Enterprise Zone, the meeting date is schedule at same time as Burlington Telecom public forum (Dec. 9th).

Response 35:

The Railyard Enterprise Project is intended to provide a connection between Pine Street and Battery Street. This project is still in the development stages, and would not be constructed until after the Champlain Parkway project is completed.