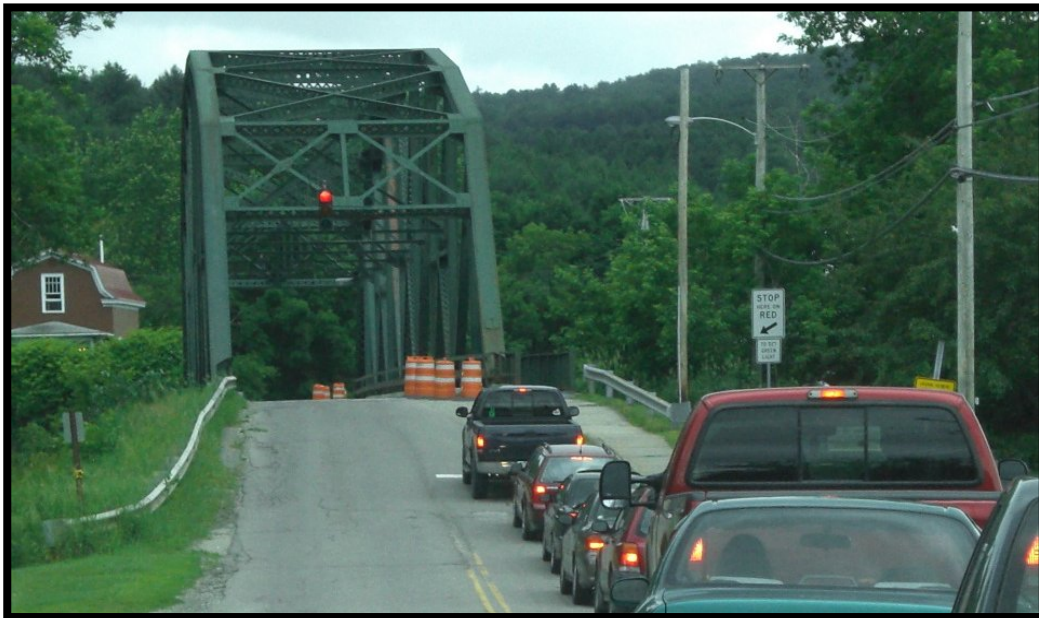




Snelling Center for Government

Vermont Roads and Bridges *To Fix or Abandon*



November 2008

Snelling Center for Government

Vermont Roads and Bridges

To Fix or Abandon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

During 2007 and 2008 the Snelling Center conducted a project focusing on the preservation of Vermont's roads and bridges. The premise was that the condition of roads and bridges is critical to Vermont's prosperity and to the viability of our communities in the 21st century. Failure to invest enough in preventive maintenance is leading to geometric increases in future costs. The project has included presentations, discussions, development of a Critical Data Guide, a business leaders' conference, and public surveys.

In September 2008, the Snelling Center convened business leaders from across Vermont, from many industries and with diverse philosophies, in a think-tank conference. The goals were to assess the priority transportation holds in relation to other pressing budgetary needs, and to reach consensus on strategies for long run transportation funding. The Snelling Center then posted the Critical Data Guide on the web and posed the same questions with an online survey, garnering 463 responses.

Recommendations: Four strategic recommendations to Vermont's policy-makers emerged. In advancing these we acknowledge Vermont's economic downturn and budget stress; the timing is difficult. That said, the following recommendations reflect a long term view, likely to span several business cycles.

- **Bridge rehabilitation is top priority.**
Transportation, and especially bridge rehabilitation, should become a high priority in Vermont's fiscal policy, with sufficient resources to reverse the trend of deterioration.
- **Political compromise on funding is required to amass sufficient resources for transportation.**
Compared to the current spending course, participants overwhelmingly favor a funding compromise. 89% of conferees and 63% of online respondents support "an equal share" of funding from their "least favored" source. For new revenue, participants strongly favored "user related taxes and fees," including fuel taxes, over sales, income, or other taxes.
- **Public debt has a significant role to play.**
Participants strongly favored the use of substantial new public debt to accelerate the pace of road and bridge rehabilitation.
- **Manage differently for more efficient use of transportation resources.**
Especially among business leaders, there was a strong view that there are opportunities to manage transportation projects more cost-effectively and efficiently.

The full report of this project and the Critical Data Guide are available at www.snellingcenter.org.

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I. BACKGROUND TO THE SNELLING CENTER'S PROJECT ON TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES AND FUNDING

During 2007 and 2008, the Snelling Center for Government conducted several projects bearing on the future of transportation in Vermont and on strategies to advance Vermont's transportation systems.

- As part of the Agency of Transportation's long range business plan, the Snelling Center developed a tool to help make the \$400 million transportation budget more transparent and user friendly for non-experts.
- In conjunction with the University of Vermont's Transportation Research Center, the Snelling Center researched innovative transportation finance options that are under discussion nationally and internationally.
- The Snelling Center is assisting the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization's Blue Ribbon Commission in reviewing innovative options for financing and managing regional transportation projects.
- During 2007 and 2008 the Snelling Center has conducted its own project, focusing on priorities and funding options for addressing the deterioration of Vermont roads and bridges.

Snelling Center Project: Transportation Priorities and Funding Options

Vermont's roads and bridges are deteriorating. The basic facts are not in dispute. The current level of funding results in the postponement of cost-effective rehabilitation projects which, in turn, leads to extraordinarily expensive replacement / rebuilding projects. With continued delay, Vermont will be forced to choose between full replacements at extreme cost or continued deterioration and abandonment of some infrastructure when traveler safety cannot be assured. For decades, political leaders have been unable to agree on how to provide sufficient funding to reverse the deterioration.

The Snelling Center recognizes that adequate investment in roads and bridges is among the most basic responsibilities of government and strategically critical to economic development and to the viability of Vermont's communities. In keeping with its mission, the Snelling Center's project is making it possible for more Vermonters to inform themselves with key information, weigh the policy choices, and participate in crafting the best strategic solutions.

The Snelling Center has worked with the state treasurer, legislators, the Joint Fiscal Office, VTrans, the congressional delegation, the regional planning commissions, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the University of Vermont, and many others. We have made numerous presentations and led many discussions around the state. We developed a book of "Critical Data" that distills and presents key elements from a vast quantity of budget and other technical data. The Critical Data Guide is available at www.snellingcenter.org/vermontroadsandbridges. In addition, we have conducted two online surveys and a think-tank conference for business leaders.

Focus of the Report

This report focuses first on the results of the business leaders' conference entitled *Vermont Roads and Bridges: To Fix or Abandon?* Second it reports the results of an online survey, conducted between November 1 and November 14, 2008, posing the same questions presented to the business leaders. The conference used the Critical Data Guide, expert presentations, small group discussions, and the I-Clicker instant voting system to reach a set of informed, consensus conclusions. The online survey respondents, totaling 463, also had access to the Critical Data Guide.

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to provide structured, informed citizen input to executive and legislative decision-makers on an issue of enormous consequence to Vermont's future. The conclusions demonstrate that a broad constituency of concerned citizens is ready and willing to make sacrifices, in current state programs and in terms of new tax revenue, in order to reverse the deterioration of Vermont's roads and bridges.

II. CONFERENCE OF BUSINESS LEADERS

VERMONT ROADS AND BRIDGES: TO FIX OR ABANDON?

Conference Overview

On September 26, 2008, the Snelling Center for Government convened a conference of about 60 business leaders from around Vermont. The conference was entitled: *Vermont Roads and Bridges: to Fix or Abandon?* The premise of the conference was that:

- The transportation system and, specifically, the condition of the roads and bridges is of central strategic importance to Vermont's economic prosperity in the 21st century;
- Vermont has fallen behind in the rehabilitation of its roads and bridges, leading to geometric increases in cost. Political leaders have not been able to reach consensus on how to muster sufficient resources to curb the deterioration; and
- A facilitated conference of informed business leaders might achieve consensus on a set of priorities and recommendations that could assist Vermont's political leaders.

Participants came from across Vermont and represented large and small companies from many industries. The industries ranged from value-added agriculture, to energy conservation, to hospitality and recreation, to micro-processor manufacturing, to architectural, financial, medical, transportation and fulfillment services, to housing development and higher education. Most were private for-profit companies, although several were large non-profit employers. There was balanced participation across major business membership organizations, including the Vermont Business Roundtable, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility, the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, the Lake Champlain Chamber of Commerce, GBIC and the Central Vermont, Springfield and Brattleboro regional development corporations.

Conference Goal

The goal of the conference was for the participants to reach consensus and recommend a strategic direction for Vermont's future funding of roads and bridges. The goal was met. The outcomes data show that conferees achieved a high level of consensus on the long-range priorities and strategies that should be enacted to reverse the deterioration of roads and bridges.

Conference Agenda (See Addendum 4)

The agenda featured six expert presentations:

- A problem statement
- The federal picture
- The view from the Vermont executive branch
- Vermont's budget
- Vermont's transportation budget
- Vermont tax-supported debt obligations.

The presentations were followed by two facilitated breakout sessions. The first focused on priorities and approaches. The second session focused on strategies. Each breakout session was followed by a survey using the I-Clicker survey system. Each participant voted with a wireless handset that transmits to a base station where audience-wide results were compiled. The survey questions and numerical responses are reported in Addendum 2.

Critical Data Guide (www.snellingcenter.org/vermontroadsandbridges)

The Critical Data Guide was organized around the six expert presentation topics. The guide presents information about a range of topics including:

- the inventory, age and condition of road and bridge infrastructure
- the dynamics of construction inflation,
- the forecast of cost to sustain current performance of the transportation system,
- the principles of the "Road to Affordability" policy of the Douglas Administration,
- a summary chart of the 2008 Vermont budget
- a summary chart of the 2008 Vermont transportation budget
- a chart of transportation revenue trends
- charts depicting state debt trends and comparisons
- a chart of public debt interest rate trends

Post-Conference Participant Survey (see Addendum 3)

The conference break out sessions generated 22 innovative ideas ranging from taxation concepts to ideas for improving project management. In the week following the conference, participants were invited to rate their agreement with these ideas. 30 conferees participated in the post-conference survey, the results of which are reported in Addendum 3.

Fiscal Environment

The month preceding the conference was a period of chaos in the world financial and credit markets. The public debt markets had stalled. The U.S. government had taken control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, Bank of America acquired Merrill Lynch, Lehman Brothers filed for bankruptcy, and the U.S. government took an 80% ownership position in AIG, a global insurance company. Moreover, it was well-understood that Vermont state government had suffered two significant revenue downgrades in the prior six months and was likely to suffer a third later in the fall.

Notwithstanding these unprecedented dynamics, the conferees recognized that road and bridge preservation is a matter of long term thinking. The findings clearly indicate that the conferees did not allow significant, temporary financial turmoil to drive their long term conclusions.

Major Conference Conclusions

Conference participants view transportation, and most specifically bridge rehabilitation, as a high priority for Vermont's fiscal policy compared to other pressing, high growth state expenditures.

Conferees shared a strong belief that management of transportation projects and systems could be much more innovative and cost-effective.

A strong majority of conferees would prefer to see current state revenues rebalanced from the Education and General Funds to transportation, rather than to see taxes increased. However, conferees overwhelmingly favored compromise, including an equal share of new revenue, rather than continued stalemate and deterioration of the roads and bridges.

Conferees strongly favored a substantial increase in tax supported public debt (ranging from 25% to over 100% increase in public debt) to accelerate road and bridge preservation.

Detailed Findings:

(Addendum 2)

Fiscal Policy and Transportation Priorities

1. Over 80% of conferees said transportation should be equal to or greater than public education, Medicaid, and other human service programs as a fiscal priority for Vermont.
2. Among transportation priorities, 70% of conferees said that the preservation of existing infrastructure is the highest single priority compared to rail, public transit, commuter supports, or construction of new roads.

On a weighted scale ascribing 3 points to highest priority, 2 points to the second highest, 1 point to the third highest, and 0 points to 4th and 5th highest priorities, and with a maximum possible score of 150 points:

- Road and bridge preservation scored 119 points
- Public transit scored 51 points
- Park & rides, bicycle, pedestrian, other commuter supports scored 41 points
- Rail system upgrades scored 38 points
- New road construction scored 35 points.

3. Within the category of infrastructure preservation, 76% said bridge rehabilitation is the highest single priority compared to repaving or bridge replacement.

4. 70% of the conferees said high priority should be given to “managing differently” within the Agency of Transportation to ensure the most cost-efficient use of current tax revenues.

Sources of Funds for Infrastructure Preservation

5. To provide new or additional funding for road and bridge preservation, 80% said their most favored source (compared to new taxes) was a reallocation of current state revenues from public education (i.e. motor vehicles purchase and use tax) or the General Fund (i.e. ending the transfer to public safety) or from other transportation expenditures. 20% said their most favored source was new tax revenue.
6. 89% of the conferees said they favored political compromise given a choice between:
 - i. No change or
 - ii. A compromise that includes an equal share from their least favored source of additional money.
7. Among possible tax sources, 74% of the conferees favored “user related taxes and fees” including fuel taxes rather than income, sales, or other taxes. 19% did not support raising any taxes.
8. 93% of conferees supported public borrowing to accelerate road and bridge preservation.
 - 28% favored increasing debt by \$440 million or more (i.e. by 100%).
 - 30% favored increasing debt by \$220 million (i.e. by 50%).
 - 35% favored increasing debt by \$110 million (i.e. by 25%).
 - 7% did not support increasing Vermont’s debt.
9. 63% opposed the idea that long term debt would be used to make up a shortfall in expected transportation revenues.

Innovative, Cost-Efficient Management Practices

10. Conferees endorsed that “Vermont should strongly consider” a series of innovative management practices to improve cost-efficiency in the execution of infrastructure projects.
 - 93% favored consideration of standardized bridge designs.
 - 89% favored consideration of streamlining the permit processes.
 - 88% favored consideration of using “design-and-build” construction contracts.
 - 77% favored consideration of having contractors bid on multiple projects with extended delivery deadlines.
 - 79% favored consideration of “strategic disinvestment” in least critical roads and bridges.

III. ONLINE SURVEY OVERVIEW

The Snelling Center circulated the conference survey, by online, to a broad audience of over 1,000 Snelling email contacts. Recipients were urged to forward the link to their networks. Accordingly, 463 Vermonters participated in the online survey. The online is not statistically valid. However it represents views of many Vermonters who are not otherwise actively engaged in policy discussions on transportation. Some online results differ marginally from the conference results. Much more striking, however, is the degree to which the results of the two surveys are similar.

Major Online Survey Conclusions

(Addendum 2)

The majority of online participants view transportation as essentially equal in priority to other major, high growth state expenditures. A strong majority (71%) view “timely bridge rehabilitation” as the single highest transportation priority.

For possible sources of money for bridge rehabilitation, online participants expressed relatively balanced support for new taxes and reallocation of General Funds. A clear majority (64%) do not favor reallocation from the Education Fund. However, a clear majority (63%) do favor political compromise including, presumably, an equal share from the Education Fund, compared to continued political stalemate and deterioration of the roads and bridges.

If new taxes are part of the solution, 69% of the online participants favored “user related taxes and fees” (including fuel taxes) over sales or income taxes. 8% did not support raising any taxes.

79% of online participants favored a substantial increase in tax supported public debt (ranging from 25% to over 100% increase in public debt) to accelerate road and bridge preservation.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The results of the I-Clicker survey of business leaders and the online survey with 463 responses, reflect a strong bias for action in favor of increasing Vermont’s investment in the preservation of roads and bridges, with the highest emphasis on rehabilitating bridges. There is a clear understanding that the cost of delay is very high, especially with the rehabilitation of bridges.

There is a clear recognition that amassing more resources for transportation will require political compromise. There is a clear desire to see compromise achieved, even if it requires an equal share from a “least favored” funding source, such as new taxes or reallocation of current revenue. On the assumption that new tax revenue will be required, there is a strong preference for user related revenues such as fuel taxes. Last, but not least, there is unambiguous support for the use of substantial public debt to accelerate the pace of road and bridge rehabilitation.

V. ADDENDA

Addendum 1: Conference Participants

Ted	Adler	President	Union Street Media
Lawrence	Barber		Merrill Lynch
Leon	Berthiaume	General Manager	St. Albans Cooperative Creamery
David	Blittersdorf	NRG Systems Inc./Founder/Inventor	Earth Turbines, Inc.
Ted	Brady		Office of Senator Patrick Leahy
Guy	Breault		McDermott's Transportation
Shawn	Bryan	Vice President	National Life Group
Frank	Cioffi	President	Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC)
David	Coates		
William	Dailey		
Clarence	Davis	UVM State Relations Officer	University of Vermont
Dan	Feeney	President	North Star Leasing
Robert	Flint	Executive Director	Springfield Regional Development Corporation
Sky	Foulkes	Vice President, General Manager	Stratton Mountain Resort
Dawn	Francis		Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC)
Bruce	Gardner		Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
Juli Beth	Hinds		VHB Pioneer
Scott	Johnstone	President	Vermont Energy Investment Corp.
Steve	Kimbell	Principal	Kimbell, Sherman & Ellis
Trevor	Lashua		Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Jeffrey	Lewis	Executive Director	Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
Julie	Lineberger	Principal	Linesync Architecture & Planning
Bruce	Lisman		J.P. Morgan
Linda	Markin	Chief Financial Officer	Concept2, Inc.
Duane	Marsh	President	Vermont Chamber of Commerce
Susan	Matthews	Executive Vice President	Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation

Richard	Mazza	Chair, Senate Transportation Committee	State Legislature
Peter	McDermott	President	McDermott's Transportation
James	McIntyre		Morgan Stanley
Rick	Moulton		Rick Moulton, Fundraising
Jeffrey	Nelson	Director, Environmental Services	VHB Pioneer
John	O'Kane	Manager of Government Relations	IBM Systems and Technology Group
Jason	Oleet	Founder and Principal of Worth Mountain Capital Partners	Worth Mountain Capital
Will	Patten	Executive Director	Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility
Nancy	Port	Former Managing Director	Manchester Capital Management LLC
James	Pratt		Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Inc.
Parker	Riehle	Executive Director	Vermont Ski Area Association
Brad	Robertson	President and Publisher	Burlington Free Press
David	Rush		Morgan Stanley
Bill	Sayre		Duncan Hermanson Corporation
Diana	Scalise	Vice President	Fletcher Allen Health Care
David	Scheuer	President	Retrovest Companies
William	Schubart	Chairman and CEO	Resolution, Inc.
Brian	Searles	Director of Aviation	Burlington International Airport
Nicholas	Sherman		Kimbell, Sherman & Ellis
William	Shouldice	President and CEO	Vermont Country Store, Inc.
Daniel	Smith	Vice President	Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation (GBIC)
Michael	Spencer	President	Spencer Group
Mary	Sprayregen	Business Liaison	Office of Congressman Peter Welch
Robert	Starr	President	Radiantec
Heather	Stewart		Lake Champlain Transportation Co.
Dawn	Terrill	CEO	JaniTech
Tom	Torti	Executive Director	Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce
Lisa	Ventriss	President	Vermont Business Roundtable
Douglas	Wacek	President and CEO	Union Mutual of Vermont
Larry	Williams	President	Redstone Commercial Group
Bradford	Worthen		V/T Commercial

Addendum 2: Chart of Conference and Web Survey Questions / Results

For any new state revenue, the <i>priority</i> of transportation should be _____ Public Education?						
	Much Lower Than	Lower Than	Equal To	Higher Than	Much Higher Than	TOTAL
Conference	0	20%	35%	29%	16%	100%
Web Survey	3%	30%	50%	12%	5%	100%

For any new state revenue, the <i>priority</i> of transportation should be _____ Medicaid?						
	Much Lower Than	Lower Than	Equal To	Higher Than	Much Higher Than	TOTAL
Conference	4%	14%	31%	24%	27%	100%
Web Survey	3%	26%	51%	15%	5%	100%

For any new state revenue, the <i>priority</i> of transportation should be _____ other human services?						
	Much Lower Than	Lower Than	Equal To	Higher Than	Much Higher Than	TOTAL
Conference	0%	10%	32%	40%	18%	100%
Web Survey	3%	23%	45%	22%	7%	100%

Select your HIGHEST transportation priority:		
	Conference	Web Survey
Public Transit	20%	24%
New Road Construction	0%	2%
Rail-system Upgrades	2%	5%
Road and Bridge Preservation	70%	49%
Park-and-rides, bicycle, pedestrian, and other commuter supports	8%	20%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Select your SECOND-HIGHEST transportation priority:		
	Conference	Web Survey
Public Transit	25%	31%
New Road Construction	31%	8%
Rail-system Upgrades	20%	16%
Road and Bridge Preservation	14%	20%
Park-and-rides, bicycle, pedestrian, and other commuter supports	10%	25%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Within road and bridge preservation, which category should be the HIGHEST priority?		
	Conference	Web Survey
Repaving	17%	16%
Timely bridge rehabilitation	71%	71%
Bridge replacement (to avoid weight restrictions)	12%	7%
Other	0%	6%
TOTAL	100%	100%

If more money flows to road and bridge preservation, which source do you FAVOR MOST?		
	Conference	Web Survey
Increased taxes, fees, or tolls	20%	32%
Reduced transfer from Transportation to Public Safety	24%	26%
Reallocation from Education to Transportation	40%	9%
Reallocation within Transportation	16%	33%
TOTAL	100%	100%

If more money flows to road and bridge preservation, which source do you FAVOR LEAST?		
	Conference	Web Survey
Increased taxes, fees, or tolls	34%	22%
Reduced transfer from Transportation to Public Safety	11%	6%
Reallocation from Education to Transportation	25%	64%
Reallocation within Transportation	30%	8%
TOTAL	100%	100%

If a political compromise requires an equal share <i>from your least-favored source</i>, should we		
	Conference	Web Survey
Compromise, to pick up the spending pace?	89%	63%
Stay the course?	11%	37%
TOTAL	100%	100%

If the State had to increase ONE tax source to support road and bridge preservation, which of these should it be?		
	Conference	Web Survey
User taxes (gas & diesel, vehicle purchase-and-use)	74%	69%
Sales Tax	0%	6%
Income Tax	0%	8%
Other	7%	9%
None: I do not support raising any taxes	19%	8%
TOTAL	100%	100%

If the gas tax were raised, the State should institute a tax credit to cushion the impact on lower income Vermonters.		
	Conference	Web Survey
Strongly Agree	19%	27%
Agree	29%	35%
Disagree	36%	26%
Strongly Disagree	16%	12%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Assuming minor impact on Vermont's bond rating, do you support long-term public borrowing to accelerate road-and-bridge preservation?		
	Conference	Web Survey
Yes	93%	79%
No	7%	21%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Assuming minor impact on Vermont's bond rating, and an interest rate of less than ½%, what level of increased debt would you support?		
	Conference	Web Survey
Over 100% (more than \$440 million)	16%	9%
100% (around \$440 million)	12%	15%
50% (around \$220 million)	30%	30%
25% (around \$110 million)	35%	26%
I do not support increasing Vermont's debt	7%	20%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Given an \$8M shortfall in transportation taxes, the State should use long-term debt to make up the difference.		
	Conference	Web Survey
Strongly Agree	5%	N/A
Agree	33%	N/A
Disagree	39%	N/A
Strongly Disagree	23%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	N/A

On BRIDGE REPLACEMENTS, the State should <i>consider</i> standardizing designs to save cost, in lieu of preserving historic styles.		
	Conference	Web Survey
Strongly Agree	60%	25%
Agree	33%	29%
Disagree	2%	33%
Strongly Disagree	5%	13%
TOTAL	100%	100%

The State should <i>consider</i> use of “design and build” contracts.		
	Conference	Web Survey
Strongly Agree	66%	21%
Agree	23%	63%
Disagree	9%	14%
Strongly Disagree	2%	2%
TOTAL	100%	100%

The State should <i>consider</i> having contractors bid on multiple bridge projects with extended-delivery deadlines.		
	Conference	Web Survey
Strongly Agree	51%	17%
Agree	26%	54%
Disagree	21%	26%
Strongly Disagree	2%	3%
TOTAL	100%	100%

The State should create and adhere to a strict regimen of *strategic disinvestment* in the *least critical* roads and bridges.

	Conference	Web Survey
Strongly Agree	49%	10%
Agree	30%	37%
Disagree	21%	41%
Strongly Disagree	0%	12%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Where are you employed?

	Conference	Web Survey
Chittenden, Addison, Grand Isle	60%	40%
Franklin, Lamoille, Washington	21%	28%
Essex, Orleans, Caledonia, Orange	2%	10%
Rutland, Bennington	5%	8%
Windsor, Windham	12%	14%
TOTAL	100%	100%

What is your employment sector?

	Conference	Web Survey
Private	64%	45%
Non-Profit	28%	34%
Government	8%	21%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Addendum 3: Post-Conference Participant Survey Results

Rate your agreement with the following statements about revenue and funding sources for Vermont transportation infrastructure.						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	TOTAL
Index the gas tax to inflation	10%	24%	14%	38%	14%	100%
Switch the gas tax to "percent of sale" instead of per gallon	11%	25%	14%	39%	11%	100%
Implement a voluntary gas tax	28%	31%	24%	14%	3%	100%
Implement a dedicated gas tax for projects	13%	20%	20%	33%	14%	100%
Implement a dedicated bridge stabilization gas tax with a sunset date	10%	7%	0%	59%	24%	100%
Redirect \$.01 of motor vehicle Purchase & Use tax to the Transportation Fund	0%	7%	7%	60%	26%	100%
Implement a pay-as-you go fee based on mileage and weight of vehicles	17%	17%	32%	24%	10%	100%
Non-traditional approaches that encourages non-government investment in the transportation system	3%	14%	34%	21%	28%	100%
Elicit private sector support for specific community projects like park and rides, bike trails, public transportation system	4%	7%	27%	42%	20%	100%
Implement a carbon tax	21%	17%	17%	31%	14%	100%

Rate your agreement with the following statements about future management and planning of the Vermont transportation system.						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	TOTAL
Promote regional cooperation among towns to share resources	0%	3%	0%	50%	47%	100%
Create an independent commission to make decisions on decommissioning of low priority or redundant transportation infrastructure	0%	7%	13%	47%	33%	100%
Create benchmarks indexed to other cold region states to measure progress	4%	4%	25%	50%	17%	100%
Engage the federal government and question federal regulations that make it more expensive and burdensome to implement projects	0%	3%	3%	37%	57%	100%
Help shape policies for highway fund standards that are fitting for rural states such as Vermont	0%	0%	13%	47%	40%	100%
Allow more trucks onto the Interstate by increasing the Interstate weight limits	3%	3%	20%	47%	27%	100%
Increase the weight limits on the whole system	7%	39%	29%	11%	14%	100%
Develop and articulate a vision for how transportation can best serve Vermonters including settlement patterns, traffic analysis, energy use, economic vitality, equity, community access. Link desired outcomes to projects	4%	0%	23%	23%	50%	100%
Modernize information collection and technology application to better serve the transportation vision, i.e. ITS (Intelligent Transportation System), origin/destination analysis, web-based commute pattern input	0%	4%	24%	34%	38%	100%
Make a fundamental shift to a fiscally and environmentally sustainable system of transportation	4%	7%	14%	39%	36%	100%
Stop building new roads	27%	27%	13%	13%	20%	100%
Develop a methodology for deciding locally which infrastructure to abandon	3%	10%	17%	40%	30%	100%

Addendum 4: Conference Agenda

- 11:15 Registration
- 11:30 Lunch
- 11:55 Welcome
Goals & Agenda Charlie Smith, President
Snelling Center for Government
- 12:15 State and National Perspectives
- Problem Statement* Steven Jeffrey, Executive Director
Vermont League of Cities and Towns
- Federal Picture* Lisa Aultman-Hall, PhD, Director
Transportation Research Center
University of Vermont
- View from the Secretary* Neale Lunderville, Secretary
Vermont Agency of Administration
Former Secretary of Transportation
- 1:00 Vermont's Fiscal Policy Overview
- Vermont's Expenditures, 2008* Jim Reardon, Commissioner
Finance and Management
- Transportation Expenditures* Steve Klein, Director
Joint Fiscal Office of the Vermont Legislature
State of Vermont
- Vermont's Tax Supported Debt* Jeb Spaulding, Treasurer
State of Vermont
- 1:45 Break
- 2:00 Breakout Session I:
Priorities and Approaches
- 3:00 I-Clicker Survey
- 3:15 Breakout Session II:
Strategies
- 4:30 Report Out/ I-Clicker Survey
- 4:55 Wrap-Up

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Appendix A. News Articles

1. “U.S. highway fund crushed by cutback in driving,” www.cnnmoney.com, 9/5/08
2. “Bridge closure stings Richmond,” Burlington Free Press, 9/6/08

Addendum 6: Acknowledgements

The Snelling Center for Government extends special thanks to our:

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Brian Dubie Lieutenant Governor, Vermont
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Presenters

Steven Jeffrey
Lisa Aultman-Hall
Neale Lunderville
Jim Reardon
Steve Klein
Jeb Spaulding

Facilitators

Vermont Regional Planners and Staff

Charlie Baker
Kevin Behm
Mark Blucher
Rex Burke
Eleni Churchill
Catherine Dimitruk
Tim Fluck
Christine Forde
Kevin Geiger
Sara Gilbert
Peter Gregory
Peter Keating
Tara Kelly
Rick Kehne
Tom Kennedy
Adam Lougee
David Pelletier

Addendum 7: Overview

THE RICHARD A. and BARBARA W. SNELLING CENTER FOR GOVERNMENT

The Richard A. and Barbara W. Snelling Center for Government is a non-partisan, non-profit organization. Founded in 1992 in memory of Governor Richard Snelling, the Center is committed to his vision of government that works for the people of Vermont. In 2008, the Center's name changed to include former Vermont first lady and Lieutenant Governor, Barbara W. Snelling whose lifetime of leadership in Vermont has been remarkable as well.

Mission

The mission of the Snelling Center is to foster responsible and ethical civic leadership, encourage public service by private citizens, and promote informed citizen participation in shaping public policy in Vermont.

The Snelling Center fulfills its mission by providing the premier civic leadership development programs in Vermont, engaging citizens in strategic issues facing Vermont, and consulting on projects to make government and government programs more effective.

Leadership Development

The Snelling Center has two primary leadership programs that reflect the Snellings' passion for responsible and ethical civic leadership, democracy, and Vermont. The Vermont Leadership Institute and the Vermont School Leadership Project focus on self-awareness, thoughtful discourse, and whole systems thinking. They provide participants with the skills to work effectively in the public arena and best serve their organizations, communities, and Vermont as a whole.

Citizen Engagement

The Snelling Center engages Vermont citizens in important public policy issues such as the state's transportation infrastructure, health care reform, term lengths for elected officials, and the future of economic development. We believe the Snelling Center's expertise and political neutrality often help to bridge differences when an issue is in political deadlock.

Consultation

The Snelling Center assists in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government and government programs in Vermont. Examples include Rethinking the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, working with adult basic education providers to improve working relationships, and leadership development programs for Vermont Community Foundation grantees. Current work includes assisting AARP on the Burlington Livable Cities Project, staff support and outreach facilitation for the Commission on the Future of Economic Development, and facilitating the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization's "Blue Ribbon Commission" on innovative finance for regional transportation needs.

Addendum 8: Thanks to Snelling Center Staff and Associates

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