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Agency of Transportation

January 8, 2019

Adam Lougee, Executive Director
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
14 Seminary Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

Re: Safety Improvements on State Highway 125

Dear Adam:

Thank you, the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) Transportation Committee, and the Selectboards of the Towns of Bridport, Cornwall, and Middlebury for contacting VTrans to discuss safety concerns along VT 125 on the town border between Middlebury and Cornwall. VTrans staff has evaluated the safety concerns outlined in the letter dated November 7, 2018 by reviewing crash data, reviewing the site conditions, and looking at currently planned projects.

Based on our review (see attached), our recommendation to ACRPC is to commit to the following actions in FY19 (pending available funds) or FY20.

- Continue to monitor crash statistics along this segment of state highway;
- Program a project and/or work order to install centerline rumble stripes and improve signage along this section of road, AND
- Program a scoping project to further evaluate geometric concerns/solutions at this location and identify improvements to be considered during the next roadway or paving project.

We look forward to your feedback on the recommendations and to collaborating with ACRPC to address the safety concerns raised on VT 125.

Best Regards,



Wayne B. Symonds
Chief Engineer
VTrans Highway Division

Adam Lougee, Executive Director
Addison County Regional Planning Commission

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Cc: Phil Scott, Governor
Joe Flynn, Secretary, Agency of Transportation
Michele Boomhower, PPAID Director
Joan Huestis, Chair, Town of Bridport
Benjamin Marks, Chair, Town of Cornwall
Brian Carpenter, Chair, Town of Middlebury
Chad Allen, Bureau Director, Asset Management Bureau
Jackie Cassino, AOT Planning Coordinator

Preliminary Analysis: Safety Improvements on VT 125

1/8/19

Location

VT 125 near Cornwall/Middlebury Town Line

Crash Data Review

VTrans reviewed the last eight (8) years of crashes that we have in the web crash system. Our review revealed that there is no predominant crash type. From January 1, 2010, there have been four reported crashes roughly near the site of the September 9, 2018 crash. None of the reported crashes happened in the location of the September 2018 crash. The following is a breakdown of those crashes and their locations.

- November 27, 2011 at 10:45 pm - Cornwall MM (mile marker) 4.1-Single car injury crash involving a car and a deer. The weather was clear and dry.
- September 9, 2018 at 3:47 pm - Cornwall MM 4.2- Two vehicle fatal crash involving a car and a fire truck. The weather was clear and dry. Fire truck responding to an incident travelled left of center into the path of the other vehicle.
- April 12, 2013 at 7:14 pm - Middlebury MM 0.02- Two vehicle property damage only crash involving two cars. The collision was a rear end impact, it was dusk and road conditions were wet.
- December 29,2011 at 12:32 pm - Middlebury MM 0.03 - Single vehicle property damage only crash. The weather conditions were sunny and road conditions were dry.
- January 20, 2016 6:06 am - Middlebury MM 0.08- Two vehicle property damage only crash. The collision was a right-angle broadside impact. Sunrise is roughly at 7:19 so it was still dark. The road conditions were snow covered.

None of the other reported crashes were directly adjacent to the hump in the road and there appears to be no similar roadway characteristics that are common factors in the crashes. However, the vertical hump in the roadway near MM 4.2 in the Town of Cornwall may have been a possible contributing factor.

VTrans also reviewed archived crash records starting in 2009, going back to the early 1990's. These records are very limited in the amount of information that they provide other than mile marker (MM), crash type, some rudimentary causes and basic weather information. In these archived crashes, from 2002-2006 there were five crashes within 250 ft of MM 4.2 in Cornwall, VT. There are no narratives for these crashes, but we do know that three of these five crashes were serious in nature with 5 injuries and 3 fatalities. While it is not possible to draw any conclusions from this information it does appear that this area deserves a second look with regard to safety.

Safety Analysis

In 2004, this stretch of highway was addressed as a part of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). At that time, the VTrans Safety Unit reviewed the site and installed a new sign and upgraded several others. The signs were then upgraded on July 7, 2005. The following year, 2006, saw two more crashes in that area. However, since 2006 no fatal crashes were experienced until the fatal crash earlier this year. The data reviewed indicated that there have been 18 crashes, resulting in 10 injuries and 4 fatalities since the early 2000s.

Roadway Characteristics / Site Conditions

This roadway segment is a horizontal tangent with what appears to be a substandard crest vertical curve. Those geometric features alone are not unique along Vermont roadways and the Average Daily Traffic is approximately 2,800.

Roadway width:	26 ft
Pavement:	Bituminous Asphalt
Terrain:	Rolling
Curvature:	Horizontal – straight Vertical - Hump, limited vertical sight distance over a short stretch near MM 4.2 in Cornwall.

Overall Assessment: VT 125 is typical of roadways in the Champlain Valley.

Recommendations

Based on our review of the safety data, analysis and information, our collective recommendation is to commit to the following actions in FY19 (pending available funds) or FY20. We are recommending that VTrans:

- Continue to monitor crash statistics along this segment of state highway;
- Program a project and/or work order to install centerline rumble stripes and improve signage along this section of road, AND
- Program a scoping project to further evaluate geometric concerns/solutions at this location and identify improvements to be considered during the next roadway or paving project. All fatal and significant injury crashes are tragic. Even with this in mind, this site, given its crash/safety history, would likely **not** meet the criteria for a high priority safety project.