

Appendix B
Interview Questionnaire

CIRC-WILLISTON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Scoping Interview Questionnaire for Municipal Officials and Stakeholders

This questionnaire is intended to be an outline for a one-hour interview. **You don't need to fill it out in advance.**

Not all parts of every question can be covered in one hour. The questions include detail to indicate the types of information which the study team needs to prepare the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Purpose of the Scoping Interviews

The interviews have two purposes:

1. To get a cross-section of opinion about the need for the Circ-Williston project and what the EIS should cover.
2. To identify sources of data and get first-hand information.

Personal interviews are a good way to introduce the consultant members of the study team to officials and leaders of organizations, and to learn the best ways to engage the public in the preparation and review of the EIS.

Interviews are most effective with one to three people. The interviews are not a substitute for meetings with town/city boards or organizations: The study team plans to do both during the December 2004-March 2005 EIS scoping and in subsequent phases of work.

For more information about the interview, the study, or the project, please contact:

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Attachments:

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement
Fact Sheet on the Notice of Intent and Scoping Process

CIRC-WILLISTON EIS

Scoping Interview Questions for Municipal Officials and Stakeholders

The interview is intended to take about one hour. The format is flexible: the questionnaire is intended as an outline.

We are interested in your views as an individual, which may or may not fully reflect those of your community or organization.

PART 1: SCOPING THE EIS**Introduction: About the Circ-Williston Project**

Circ-Williston is a new project. Its purpose is to improve transportation from I-89 to Williston, Essex, and Essex Junction, as shown on the regional map. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Circ-Williston is a fresh look at ways to do this, and it is not limited to the previous design for this section of the Circ Highway.

Please take a moment to look at the attached Fact Sheet and map showing the project area. The first part of the scoping interview will be a briefing about the project and the EIS process.

Because the Circ-Williston EIS is taking a fresh look, the study team would appreciate your input on specific transportation needs and improvement alternatives that should be considered and specific issues that the EIS should address. This is the purpose of the scoping phase, which is just beginning.

The following questions are intended to provide input to the scoping process.

1. Travel Patterns

- a) What are the main commuting, shopping, and other travel patterns to/from your locality [use regional and local map].

- b) How have these travel patterns changed in the past?

- c) What transportation needs will your community have over the next 10 to 25 years and how do you expect travel patterns to change?

- d) What do you see as the main transportation needs and deficiencies in the Williston-Essex project area and the region as a whole?

- e) Do you see the need for transportation improvements in the project area?

2. Alternatives for Improving Transportation

The Notice of Intent to prepare the Circ-Williston EIS listed a range of possible alternatives that could be studied, both for effectiveness and potential impacts; the list is open-ended, not exclusive:

- No Build (take no action)
 - Transportation Demand Management (e.g., ride sharing and encouraging travel modes other than single-occupancy vehicles)
 - Improvements to public transportation (bus/rail)
 - Improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities
 - Roadway improvements
 - Improvements to existing roads (such as Route 2A and the I-89 Exit 12 interchange)
 - Roadways on a new alignment, including the Circ Highway Williston segments as previously proposed
 - Design variations on the previous Circ design (e.g. profile, interchange locations, and interchange design)
 - A combination of two or more of the above
- a) Do you think the alternatives listed above are the right options to consider?
- b) Are there additional alternatives that should be added to the list?
- c) Are there specific combinations of improvement alternatives that you think should be studied?
- d) Are there specific features that should be included in the alternatives you think are important to consider?
- e) What transportation improvements in the project area do you believe would affect travel patterns positively? Are there transportation options that you believe would have a negative effect on travel patterns?
- f) Would you expect improvements in the Williston-Essex project area to significantly alter travel times to/from or through your community or the reliability of rush-hour travel for your community's residents and businesses?

3. Issues for Study

What types of issues do you feel need to be examined in the Circ-Williston EIS region-wide and/or in the Williston/Essex project area? (Check items you feel should be included; double-check the most important ones.)

	Region-wide	Project area
• Traffic flow	_____	_____
• Accessibility/travel time to facilities and services	_____	_____
• Safety	_____	_____
• Public transportation	_____	_____
• Pedestrian and bicycle facilities	_____	_____
• Water quality	_____	_____
• Air quality	_____	_____
• Wildlife/habitat	_____	_____
• Historic/archeological	_____	_____
• Land use/growth and development patterns	_____	_____
• Cumulative effects, including all other projects	_____	_____
• Compatibility with local and regional planning and zoning	_____	_____
• Economy and jobs	_____	_____
• Land use and its effects on transportation needs	_____	_____
• Social effects	_____	_____
• Housing	_____	_____
• Community services	_____	_____
• Open space	_____	_____
• Agriculture and forestry	_____	_____
• Recreation and recreation areas	_____	_____
• Waste management	_____	_____
• Traffic Noise	_____	_____
• Visual Quality/Aesthetics	_____	_____
• Energy conservation	_____	_____
• Other (describe)	_____	_____

4. Summary

Overall, in your opinion, what are the most important interests that should be addressed by the Circ-Williston EIS?

5. Communication

- a) What is the best way to get information about the EIS to your constituents? Website? CCTV? Flyers and newsletters? Public Meetings? Other?

- b) How far will people travel to a public forum? Where should public forums be held?

- c) What time of day and what day of the week?

- d) Any preference as to meeting format (e.g., workshop, hearing) and activities you think should be part of the meetings.

- e) Would your town/organization like a presentation and opportunity to have a dialogue with the study team?

PART 2: LAND USE AND PLANNING DATA

The second part of the interview concerns information needed to analyze land use/development, growth patterns, and economic impacts, both direct and indirect. In this part, we hope to get suggestions for data sources to consider and other individuals who can help to provide more information as well as information based on your own experience.

It will not be necessary to cover every question in detail in the interview, but we welcome as much information as you can provide and the time permits. Any data it is convenient to have on hand at the interview is also appreciated. The study team will follow up on the leads you can provide.

Municipal officials: please respond to the following questions as they apply to your community.

Other individuals: please respond to the questions as they apply to the community where you live or your view of conditions in the region (Chittenden County and parts of adjacent counties).

1. Planning and Zoning

- a) Do you think the local comprehensive plan and land use controls (zoning, subdiv regs, etc.) are currently adequate? Would they be adequate to address future issues with/without transportation improvements in the Circ-Williston project area? What about Act 250 and other state laws and regulations that affect land use?
- b) Are major changes in zoning or land development regulations likely to occur in the near or distant future? Describe if possible.
- c) Has your community enacted or is your community considering growth management regulations (adequacy/timing of public facilities ordinance, large lot zoning, performance standards, overlay districts)?
- d) Does your community's planning explicitly address the effect of land use patterns on transportation needs?
- e) When is your community's comprehensive plan next going to be updated?

- f) Other than your community's comprehensive plan, are there existing special area redevelopment plans, buildout analyses, demographic projections, or any other studies of future land use/development patterns?

- g) What are the key transportation needs and services identified in your community's comprehensive plan? What is the relationship between your community's plan for transportation facilities and services and the types of improvement alternatives that will be studied in the Circ-Williston EIS? Was the previously proposed Chittenden County Circumferential Highway (CCCH) addressed in your plan and land use regulations?

2. Land Use and Development (Be specific as to type of development if possible)

- a) What have been the trends in development activity in your community over the past 25 years (type, size, location of residential, commercial/industrial development or institutional, loss of agricultural or forest land, etc.). How will these trends change or continue over the next 10 to 25 years--with/without transportation improvements in the Circ-Williston project area?

- b) Can you provide a list or indicate to the interviewer the location, type, and size (number of lots/units, size in square feet) of substantial residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional development projects that are under construction, approved, planned for the next few years? (Please indicate developments of 10 units or 20,000 square feet or more) Are there any large-scale developments or upcoming phases of current developments planned for the future? Would transportation improvements in the Circ-Williston project area have any effect on the timing or probability of these developments?

- c) Are there any specific concerns about recent land use and development trends in your community, in the region?

- d) Have there been any public or private initiatives in your community to preserve agricultural, forest land, or open space (fee simple acquisitions, purchase of development rights, agricultural land use taxation districts, etc)?

- e) On the regional map, please indicate to the interviewer the most likely locations in your community for growth, and where there will be the least growth?

 - f) How significant a role do transportation and accessibility play in residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional development in your community? Has any part of your community been poorly served by or isolated from the transportation network? How do you expect that to change in the future?

 - g) Has any part of your community been adversely affected by transportation projects and increased accessibility?

 - h) Do you think transportation improvements in the Circ-Williston project area will cause growth? If so, do you anticipate that your community will face additional capital investments (utilities, infrastructure, community services to support future development) that otherwise would not be made?
- 3. Community Services**
- a) Are community services and schools currently adequate to serve demand?

 - b) Will they continue to be adequate in the future? Are there current plans to expand them?

 - c) Do you think transportation improvements in the Circ-Williston project area will have will any direct or indirect effect on the provision, financing, or accessibility of community services?

4. Jobs, Housing, and the Economy

- a) What are the key industries and types of employment in your community? Which industries are poised for growth in the future, which are vulnerable or in decline? Has your community prepared an economic development plan? If so could you share it with us?

- b) Would transportation improvements in the Circ-Williston project area have any effect on job growth or the retention/attraction of industries? Would these improvements have any effect on the location of employers? Are there particular alternatives that would have more or less of an effect on job growth or location?

- c) Is your community growing and attracting new residents? Have there been significant changes in growth/building activity since the 2000 Census?

- d) Would you characterize the local housing market as growing or appreciating in value, staying steady, or in decline? Is affordable housing currently an issue in your community? Do you expect it to be an issue in the future?

- e) How do you think the housing market affects the regional economy?

- f) Do you think transportation improvements in the Circ-Williston project area will have an effect on the supply or value of housing? Will any of these effects impact your community's tax base?

5. Quality of Life

- a) What do you see as the key components of the quality of life and community character in your community (or in the region)?

- b) Specifically, how has the quality of life changed over the past 25 years?

- c) What changes do you expect in the future?

- d) What positive or negative effects, if any, do you think transportation improvements in the Circ-Williston project area would have on the quality of life or the character of your community? Are there particular alternatives that you believe would enhance or detract from quality of life in your community? The region as a whole?

6. Population and Demographics

- a) What are the population trends in your community?

- b) What are the demographics of the population in your community (e.g., changes in family size, age groups, income)?

7. Community Information Sources and Contacts Sources of Community

- a) Information (i.e. databases, long time residents, files, reports)

- b) Contact Persons for Public Involvement Activities (i.e. names, area of interest/expertise, contact information)