CITY HALL

CITY of MONTPELIER Vermont

THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE STATE OF VERMONT

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March 10, 2005

TO: Interested Parties

SUBJECT: PROPOSED MONTPELIER MULTI-MODAL TRANSIT & WELCOME CENTER

The City of Montpelier and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are presently considering creating a Multi-Modal Transit & Welcome Center at Taylor Street on the Carr Lot. A map showing the project location that is under study is attached. This material is intended to inform you of the proposed project and request your input.

We are presently beginning production of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this proposed facility and need to know if it will have an effect, either favorable or adverse, on programs being planned or executed by your agency, or on resources your agency is charged with monitoring or protecting. We request that you review the enclosed material and advise us with your comments on potential environmental impacts or other concerns.

The EA will assess a wide range of concerns including potential impacts on the social, economic and natural environment. We will be sure to address the specific concern that you share with us during the development of the EA. The EA will be circulated to you and other federal, State, and local agencies and officials for review and comments when complete.

We would appreciate receiving your comments, suggestions, and information on this proposal within 30 days. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Donovan at 802-985-2530 or via email at jdonovan@wilbursmith.com.

Cordially,

Valerie Capels

Valerie J. Capels, AICP
Director, Department of Planning and Community Development

MONTPELIER MULTI-MODAL TRANSIT AND WELCOME CENTER BACKGROUND

The City of Montpelier and the State of Vermont, working jointly through the City-State Commission, developed the Capital District Master Plan in an effort to identify, encourage, and coordinate mutually beneficial development plans for the Capitol Complex, downtown Montpelier, and the Winooski River corridor. Completed in 2000 and endorsed by the City Council, Planning Commission, City-State Commission and others, this plan presents recommendations and concepts for meeting the State's projected office space needs, establishing a greenway along the Winooski River, and considering numerous physical improvements to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation and stimulate downtown redevelopment. The development of a transit and welcome center and a public park on Taylor Street is a component of this plan.
A Purpose and Need Statement was developed in 2002 addressing this project and its goal "to improve downtown Montpelier's vehicular transportation efficiency and mobility, provide safety and efficiency for bicyclists and pedestrians, and restore the natural and built environments by creating usable open and green space" on the Taylor Street lot. This project will provide improved pedestrian connections to Montpelier's historic downtown, link two segments of the Montpelier Bike Path system, and provide a central location for regional and inter-city bus service. The proposed urban park is an opportunity for the city to reclaim a portion of its riverfront at the confluence of the Winooski and North Branch rivers.

The Carr lot is a privately owned one-acre parcel of land bounded by the Winooski River to the west, the North Branch River to the south, Taylor Street to the north, and the Washington County Railroad to the east (Attachment A).

The proposed Montpelier Multi-modal Transit & Welcome Center will contain bussing operations for both regional and intercity bus travel, a waiting area, pedestrian and bicycling facilities, bus berths, waiting areas for taxi cabs and van pools, and long term parking for public transit employees and passengers (approximately 50 parking spaces). Non-transit related amenities within the facility include space for regional tourist information and educational displays, a screening room for audio-visual presentations, Welcome Center offices and meeting rooms. The upper floors of the proposed facility may contain either commercial or residential units.

In addition to the transit center and integral to this project is the establishment a structured parking facility to replace the 130 parking spaces that will be displaced with the development of the Carr lot. A feasibility study was recently completed for the replacement parking component of the project, which identifies the Capitol Plaza lot and the North Branch lot as potential locations for this structure (see Figure B). The conclusions of this environmental review related to the development of these two locations will assist the City Council and others in their decision-making process.

The completion of these projects will provide the City of Montpelier with the potential for an integrated and efficient multi-model system with the co-location of a number of transportation features, and an opportunity to reclaim a portion of the Winooski River front, with no impact to

the already compromised parking situation in Montpelier's downtown. All sites have undergone some level of preliminary design.

These projects will be funded through Section 5309 Federal Transit Administration grants, with additional funding from the Vermont Agency of Transportation TEA 21 Grant Enhancement Grant program, related Capital Improvement Funds, and a bond passed by the citizens of the City of Montpelier in 2001. In order to meet the time lines associated with our federal funding sources, it will be very important for this environmental review to get underway and completed as quickly as possible.

Available Background Information

The following reference materials offer significant background information, which consultants are strongly encouraged to review prior to submitting a proposal. They are available for review during regular office hours at the Montpelier Department of Planning and Community Development, 39 Main Street, City Hall, Montpelier, VT 05602, or on the City's Web site as indicated below.

1. *Capital District Master Plan* by Gossens-Bachman Architects, The Office of Robert A. White, Landscape Architects, and Louis Berger and Associates, Transportation Consultant, dated 2000.
   http://www.montpelier-vt.org/docs/index.cfm#plans

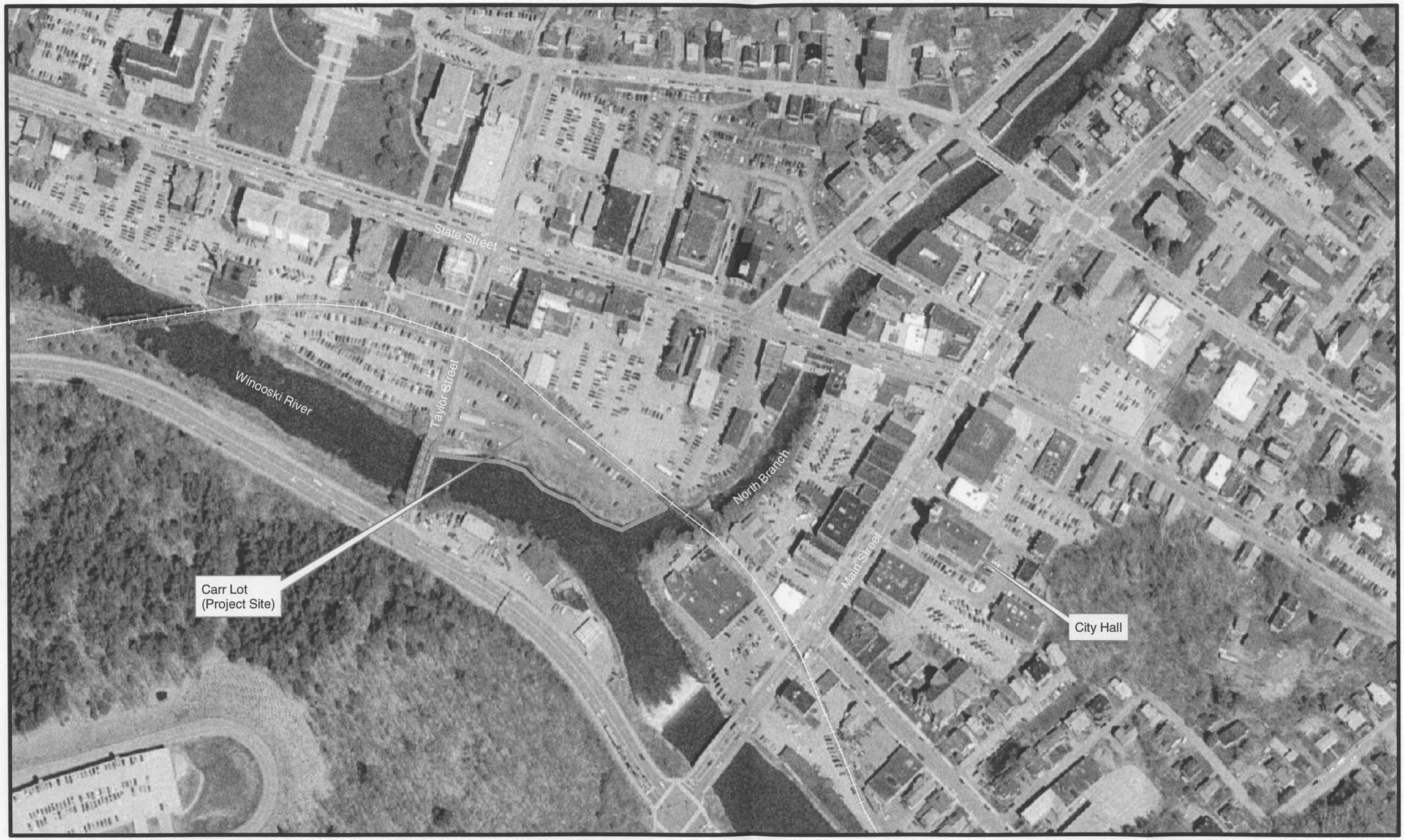
2. *Capital City Welcome & Multi-Modal Center*, prepared by the City of Montpelier with assistance from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission dated March 1, 2002.
   http://www.montpelier-vt.org/wip/carrlot/index.cfm

3. *Winooski West Phase II Bike Path Conceptual Alignment Analysis* by Wilbur Smith Associates, December 2002.
   http://www.montpelier-vt.org/docs/index.cfm#reports

4. *Targeted Brownfields Assessment* by Metcalf & Eddy, January 2003.

5. *Carr Lot Replacement Parking Study*, prepared by Wilbur Smith Associates, January 2005.
   http://www.montpelier-vt.org/wip/carrlot/plans_public.cfm

Montpelier Multi-modal Transit and Welcome Center EA



Legend

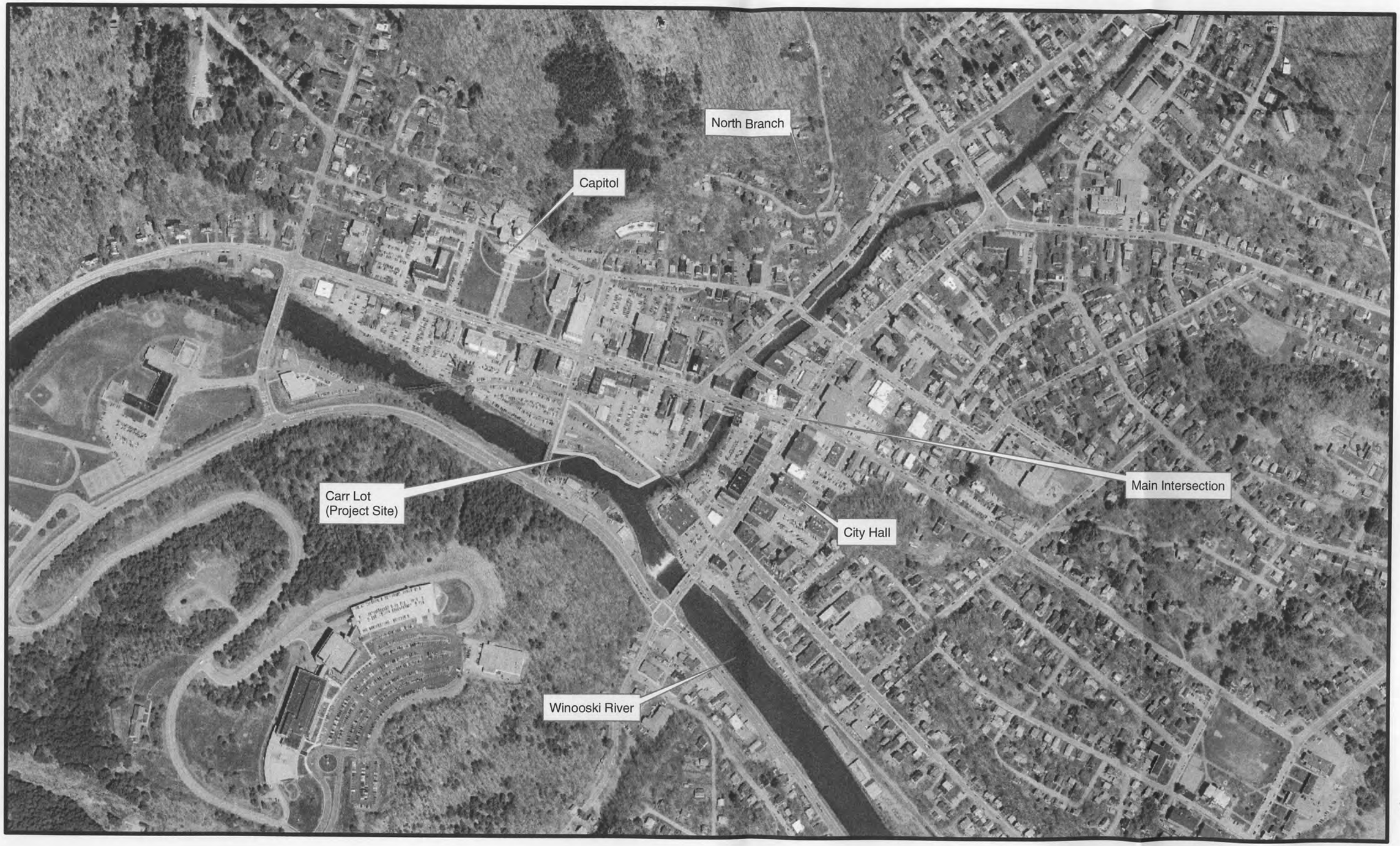
- Study Area
- Railroad

N
W E
S

0 15 30 60 Unknown Units

Base Map

Montpelier Multi-modal Transit and Welcome Center EA



Legend

Study Area

Unknown Units
0 35 70 140

N
W E
S

Base Map