



Future of Rural Transit

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Vision


Prepare Vermont to have the most efficient, equitable, and cost-effective rural transportation system in the US



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Project Goal

Expand transportation options for rural communities by offering combined bus services to schools and community members using electric buses.

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Program Partners

Steering committee:

Jennifer Wallace-Brodeur (VEIC)
Cara Robechek (EAN)
Linda McGinnis (EAN)
Peggy O'Neill-Vivanco (VT CCC)
Chris Damiani (Green Mountain Transit)
Dan Currier and Ross McDonald (AOT/Go VT)
Mariah Keagy (VEEP)

Advisory committee includes individuals from: GMP, AARP, VCIL, Vital Communities, VNRC, VSA, VBSR, VPPSA, DPS, WCSU, TRORC, NWRPC



What's Happened So Far

- Researched models of combined service
 - In Vermont and beyond
- Recruited interested school districts
 - Mount Mansfield Unified Union SU
 - Orange East SU
- Feasibility Study
 - Combined service is legal
 - Strong partnership needed among SU and transit agency



Findings

- Students traveling to school on public transit can work
- School transportation can't always support equitable after school opportunities for students
- Public transit could supplement school transportation services
- Replacing school transportation routes w/public transit service is complicated
- Students are an important market segment for public transit ridership
- Education (climate/equity/economy) needed to increase student ridership on a school or transit bus



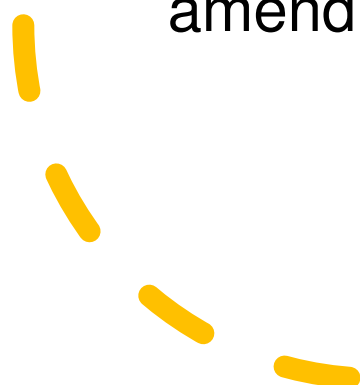
Successes and Challenges

Successes

- Interest among transit agencies (Tri Valley Transit)
- VTrans can fund route amendments

Challenges

- Staffing challenges at schools and transit agencies (opportunity?)
- New routes (or deviations) need ridership
- Successful implementation will require champion(s)

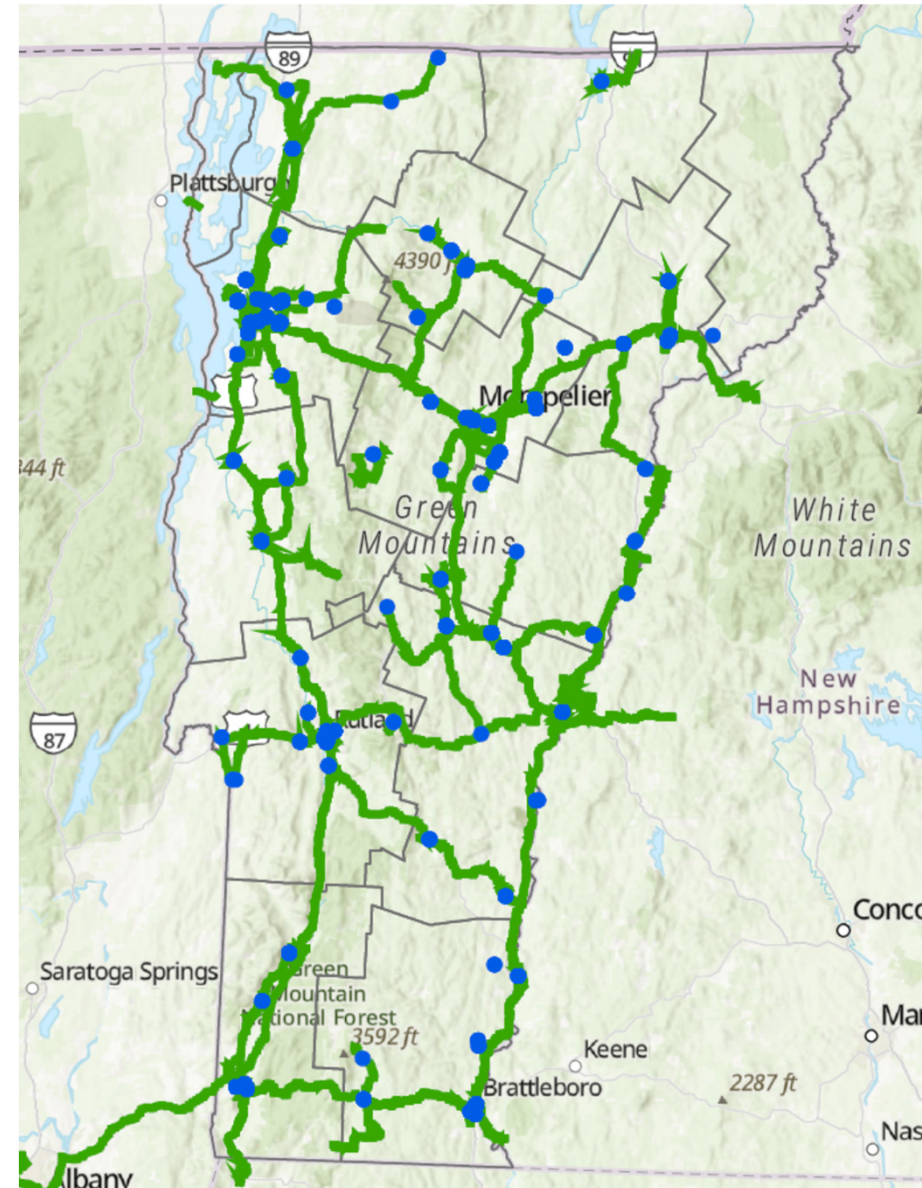


Opportunities

75+ high schools within 3 miles of existing fixed route transit

- Small deviations can increase opportunity for high school students
- Serve communities with school choice
- Serve tech centers with large catchment areas
- Provide work-based learning opportunities with mid-day service

Strengthen transit with more ridership





Value Proposition(s)

1. Transit providers

- Increase ridership
- create life-long transit riders

2. School districts

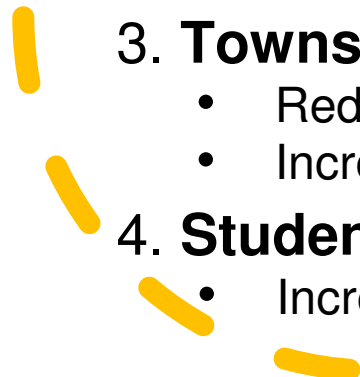
- Increase student (and staff) mobility and access to activities
- Potential to save money
- Reduce number/length of school bus routes

3. Towns

- Reduce school transportation budgets
- Increase transit access for everyone

4. Students and parents

- Increased transportation options and independence for students





For More Information

[Future of Rural Transit – Network Action Team – Energy Action Network \(eanvt.org\)](#)

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Questions and
Discussion
