

**The Vermont Agency of Transportation, VTrans Public Transit Section,
Barbara Donovan, Public Transit Administrator, October 30, 2013 report to
the Vermont State Legislative Child Poverty Council.**

Two items in the original 2009 Report, Improving the Odds for Kids, of the Child Poverty Council addressed transportation:

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- 2. State government will continue its efforts to increase the availability of public transportation, especially in our rural areas.**
- 3. State government will work with localities to review existing public transportation systems and explore potential changes to public services in order to increase the access of low income parents to employment opportunities, child care, and other resources.**

2. State government will continue its efforts to increase the availability of public transportation, especially in our rural areas.

- a. The State Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has increased the budget for and availability of public transit for both commuter services; fixed route bus services; demand response services; and volunteer services.

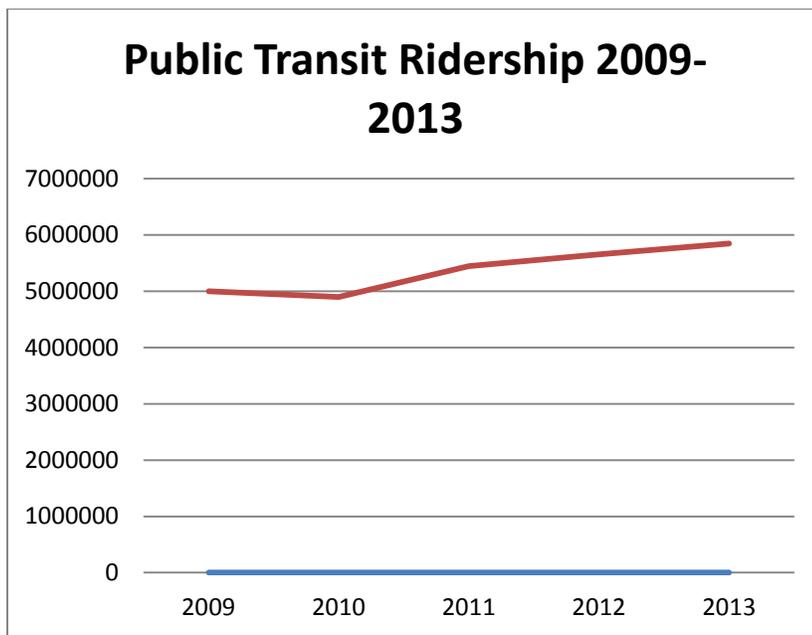
	State VTrans investment	Federal investment	go!Vermont
2009	\$6,627,897	\$14,666,378	\$450,000
2010	\$6,828,234	\$16,551,162	\$450,000
2011	\$6,812,927	\$19,275,535	\$450,000
2012	\$6,842,111	\$19,339,323	\$550,000
2013	\$7,482,900	\$20,074,147	\$550,000

- b. Since 2009, VTrans has awarded funds for new commuter services from rural areas into areas of high employment such as the route from St. Johnsbury to Montpelier; Stowe to Waterbury with connectivity to Burlington and Montpelier; routes into White River Junction from Randolph and Bradford as well as Bellows Falls and Springfield; increased commuter service along Rt. 7 between Bennington, Rutland, Middlebury and Burlington; and additional service connecting Bennington and Brattleboro among others. VTrans pays particular attention to serving trip generators such as education facilities which are well used by those working themselves toward self-sufficiency.

Some examples: an express route between St. Johnsbury and Lyndonville, between Newport and Derby Line and 2 morning and afternoon runs between St. Johnsbury and Montpelier with connecting service to Burlington Monday through Friday.

Brand new service between Northfield and Montpelier 2 morning and afternoon as well as 1 mid-day trip and soon Mid-Day service from Montpelier to Marshfield. 5 morning and afternoon LINK Express commuter routes between Montpelier and Burlington as well as one mid-day return trip to Montpelier. 2 round trip Link Express buses between Middlebury and Burlington 6 days/week as well as 2 between St. Albans and Burlington. Extensive commuter routes run between White River Junction and the Bellows Falls area. The White River Junction area supports a fare free transit service supporting employment transportation to the big employers such as Dartmouth Hitchcock, Dartmouth College, the VA and others.

As a result of these investments, transit ridership has steadily increased, providing more and less expensive access to steady employment and educational opportunities.



- c. In November of 2013 VTrans will award funding for three intercity routes, one between Springfield, MA and White River Junction area continuing existing Greyhound service, one between White River Junction and Rutland and one from Albany, NY to Burlington, VT. Services in these areas have not run for 7 years.
- d. VTrans has begun funding smaller vehicles more suited to low density rural areas and more economical for demand response service allowing for continued expansion of service.

- e. VTrans has regularly funded routes specifically designed as Job Access routes which have brought new services to employment centers across the state. This has mostly been centered in the Burlington area, the route to Williston for ex.

3. State government will work with localities to review existing public transportation systems and explore potential changes to public services in order to increase the access of low income parents to employment opportunities, child care, and other resources.

VTrans works closely with local and regional planning agencies, local transit services, local committees for the elderly and disabled and DVHA, the Office of Vermont Health Access, which funds the Medicaid program. These programs are run collaboratively using VTrans vehicles, facilities and software. VTrans has held joint meetings with TPI (Transportation Planning Initiative) and PTAC (Public Transit Advisory Council)

- a. VTrans secured a competitive grant to purchase new dispatch software for all the existing transit providers with the potential for use by others to fully coordinate available space and rides needed.
- b. VTrans runs the go!Vermont program which subsidizes and promotes car and vanpooling, information services and emergency rides home, all of which have been proved to reduce expenses for low income families and make lower cost services a viable option for those with children at home. It supports an emergency ride home program so that anyone with an emergency, a sick child for ex., could reach home without waiting for the bus, van or carpool. This supports reduced transportation costs.

VTrans has many upcoming initiatives: intercity runs; enabling the use of Google transit by contracting for development of 'gtfs' feeds so can be used for trip planning, extensive UVM studies to help determine the best way to provide and access service; personal transportation plans, veterans transportation needs, refugee population transportation issues, senior access to healthcare, transit availability statewide, and latent demand for intercity service.

Additional mapping of homeless shelters, federal health clinics, hospitals, schools, factories, etc. Further coordination with groups such as the Creative Workforce Solutions group for a variety of transportation disadvantaged groups. Veterans initiatives, personal transportation planning, and enhanced coordination and collaboration between transportation agencies.

Link to the list of public transit providers in the State of Vermont
<http://publictransit.vermont.gov/providers#buses>