

Sec. XX. STUDY ON COMMUTER RAIL

(a) Findings.

(1) The I-89 corridor between the cities of St. Albans, Burlington, and Montpelier encompasses approximately one-third of Vermont's population.

(2) Interregional commuting travel throughout this corridor has increased over the past two decades.

(3) Development growth within these areas is anticipated to continue into the future, thereby creating additional interregional commuting travel challenges and opportunities.

(4) Vermont has not previously assessed the potential for commuter rail viability along this corridor.

(b) Commuter Rail Study:

(1) the Agency of Transportation shall undertake a commuter rail feasibility study for the I-89 corridor, encompassing the St. Albans, Burlington, and Montpelier areas;

(2) the purpose of the study is to determine the feasibility of implementing a commuter rail system within the study area, estimated costs for operations and capital acquisition, delineation of the time horizon to plan for and design the service, estimated ridership potential, and any other general operational, capital, legal, and administrative requirements.

(3) the agency shall consult with the following organizations: Vermont Rail Council, Chittenden County Transportation Authority and Green Mountain Transit Agency, New England Central Railroad, Vermont Rail Systems, Northwest Regional Planning Commission, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission and the cities of St. Albans, Burlington and Montpelier.

(4) the agency shall update the Vermont Rail Council on the progress of the study on a periodic basis.

(c) Reporting:

(1) the Agency shall deliver a written report of its findings to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation by January 15, 2017.

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