

Public Transportation Local Funding: Opportunities & Challenges

Senate Transportation Committee

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Benefits of Enhanced Public Transportation Options:

- **Economic Development Benefits**
 - Meet demand and expectation of younger adults
 - Access to employment and training centers, including the tourism industry
 - Increase roadway capacity without costly new construction
- **Energy/Environmental Goals**
 - Reduce carbon emissions – Just one driver per household switching to commuting by transit can reduce a household carbon footprint by 8%.
 - Not everyone can drive & not everyone can afford an electric vehicle
- **Societal Benefits**
 - Seniors aging in place
 - Access to medical services and treatment centers

The current local funding framework will continue to prevent public transportation growth, which will impede progress across multiple sectors of society.

We are asking the State to recognize these challenges and to work with transit providers statewide on finding a solution.

Challenges with Current Local Funding Framework:

- **Municipal Funding, but Regional Need** - Local funding for transit is tied to municipalities, but transportation needs do not stop at municipal boundaries.
 - Regional Services – Some transit trip generators are truly regional in nature, such as hospitals, education centers, and State offices. Under the current framework, the host municipality would likely bear a disproportionate cost for service when passengers are from a broad area.
 - Example 1: Grand Isle Ferry to Burlington Commuter Route
 - Example 2: Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital in Berlin
 - Example 3: UVM Medical Center facilities at Tilley Drive in So. Burlington
 - Example 4 : State Office Complex in Waterbury
 - Areas with Greatest Need Go Unserved – New services are only implemented when the required local funding is available, which is not always the area of greatest demand or need.
- **Over-burdened Property Tax** – The ability for transit providers to increase service levels is severely limited by the reliance on the property tax to raise needed local match funds.