



Act 148 of 2024 - Section 30

Vermont Rail Plan Update Alternatives Analysis

House Transportation Committee Hearing
February 20, 2025

Dave Pelletier, Systems Planning Manager
Zoe Neaderland, Planning Coordinator
Dan Delabruere, Rail Bureau Director

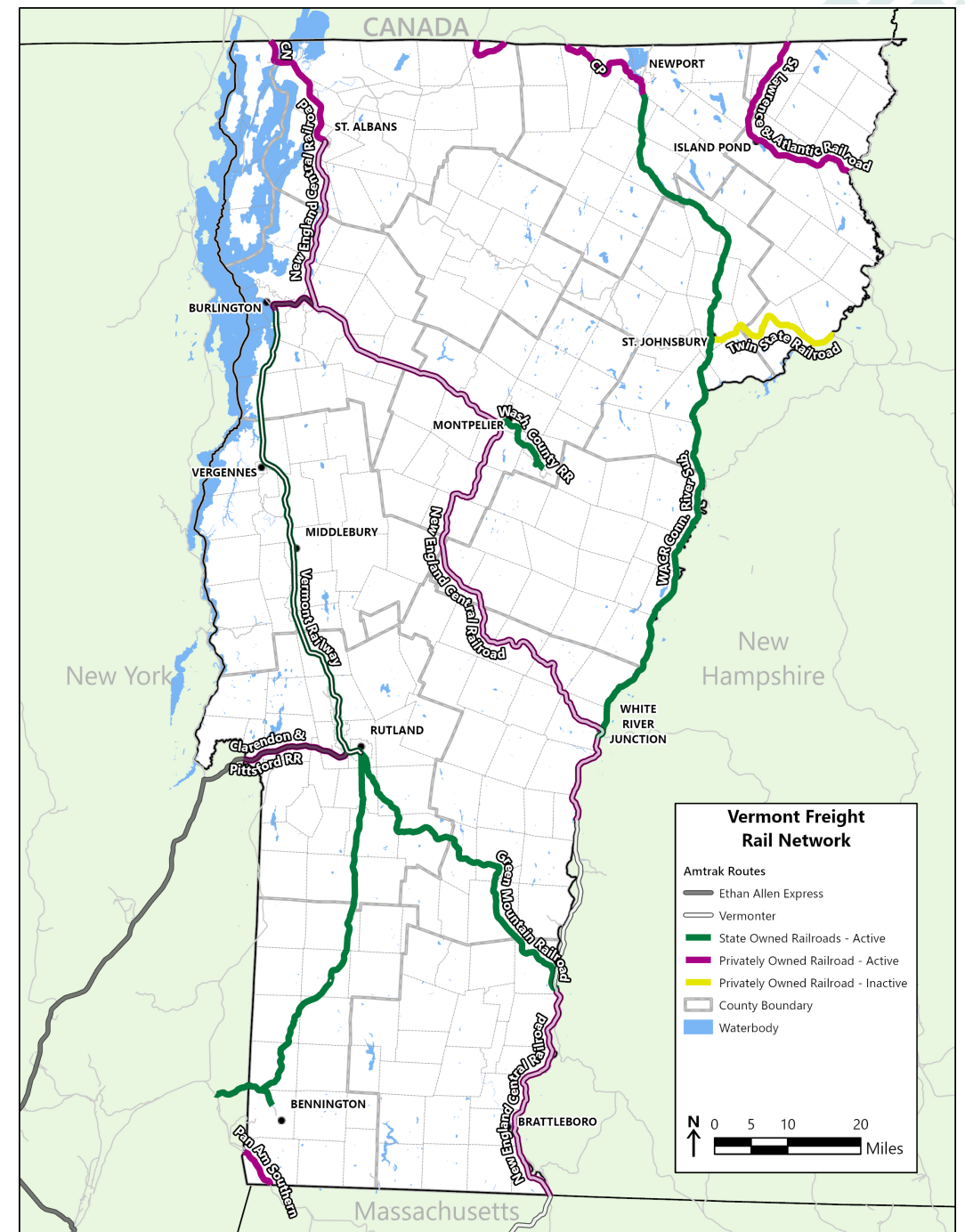
Policy, Planning & Intermodal Development Division
Vermont Agency of Transportation

Act 148 - Section 30

- *(a) As the Agency of Transportation develops the new Vermont Rail Plan, it shall consider and address the following:*
 - *(1) adding additional daily service on the Vermonter for some or all the service area; and*
 - *(2) expanding service on the Valley Flyer to provide increased service on the Vermonter route.*
- *(b) The Agency of Transportation shall consult with Amtrak and the State Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Committee (SAIPRC) on passenger education of and sufficient capacity for **bicycle storage on Amtrak trains on the Vermonter and Ethan Allen Express routes.***
- *(c) The Agency of Transportation shall provide an **oral update on the development of the Vermont Rail Plan** in general and the requirements of subsection (a) of this section specifically and the consultation efforts required under subsection (b) of this section to the House and Senate Committees on Transportation not later than February 15, 2025.*

Rail Matters in Vermont!

- Nearly 580 miles of active rail lines in Vermont, just under 300 miles owned by the State.
- The rail system carries approximately two million tons of freight per year.
- Passenger Service: Vermonter and the Ethan Allen Express.
- Over 116,000 passengers boarded or detrained at a Vermont station in FFY23 and has been increasing.

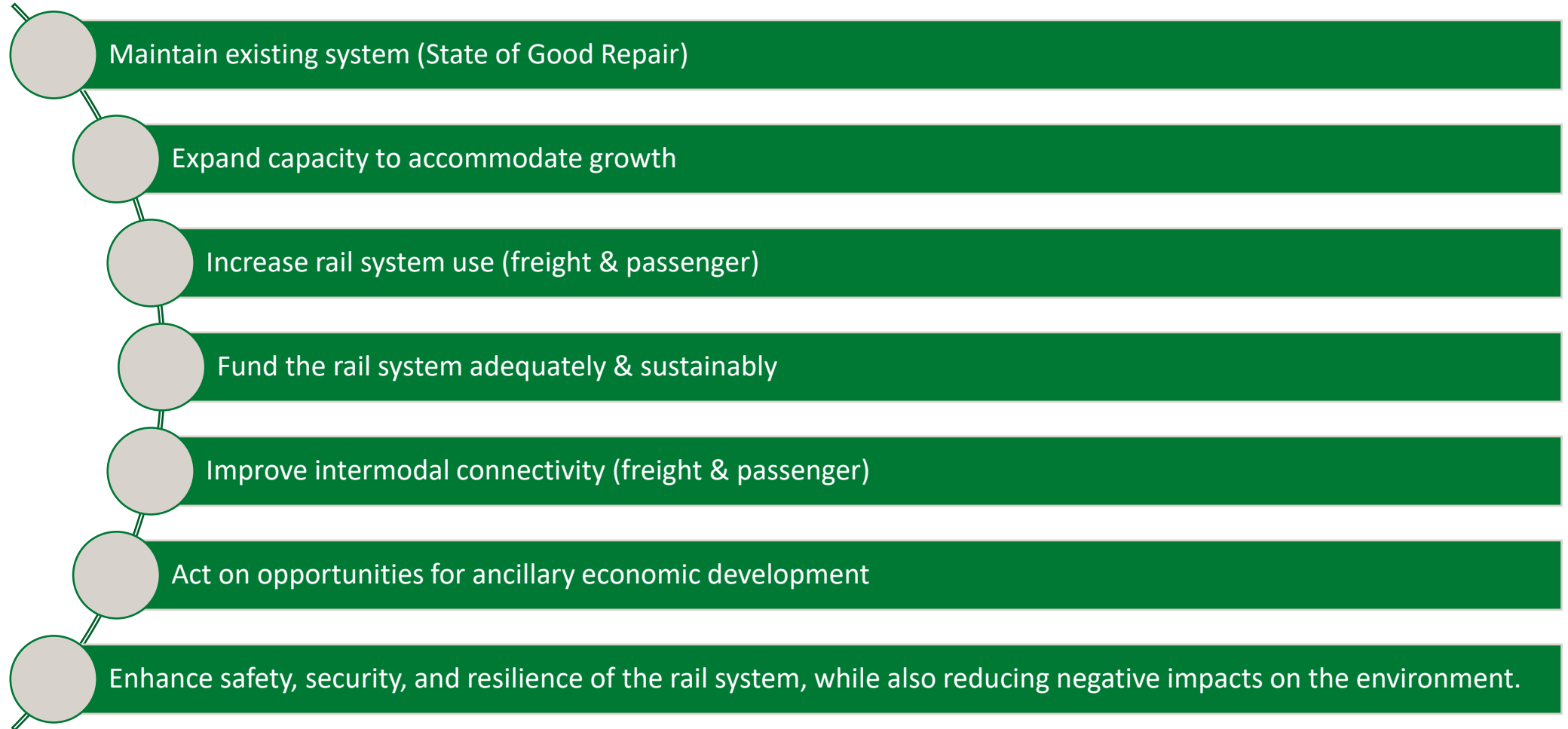


What is a Rail Plan?

- A statewide process and product exploring needs and opportunities for at least the next 20 years.
- The plan is essential for grant applications and guiding the expenditure of federal funds on rail projects within the state.
- The plan is coordinated with other State plans including the Vermont Freight Plan, Climate Action Plan, Resilience Improvement Plan, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies, and others.



Rail Plan Goals



Initiatives Modeled in Vermonter Corridor

Additional daily service on the Vermonter for some or all the service area

- Day train extension to Montreal
- Two trains per day to Montreal
- Night train from Montreal

Expanding service on the Valley Flyer with one additional run per day –
This adds to service options of the Vermonter corridor

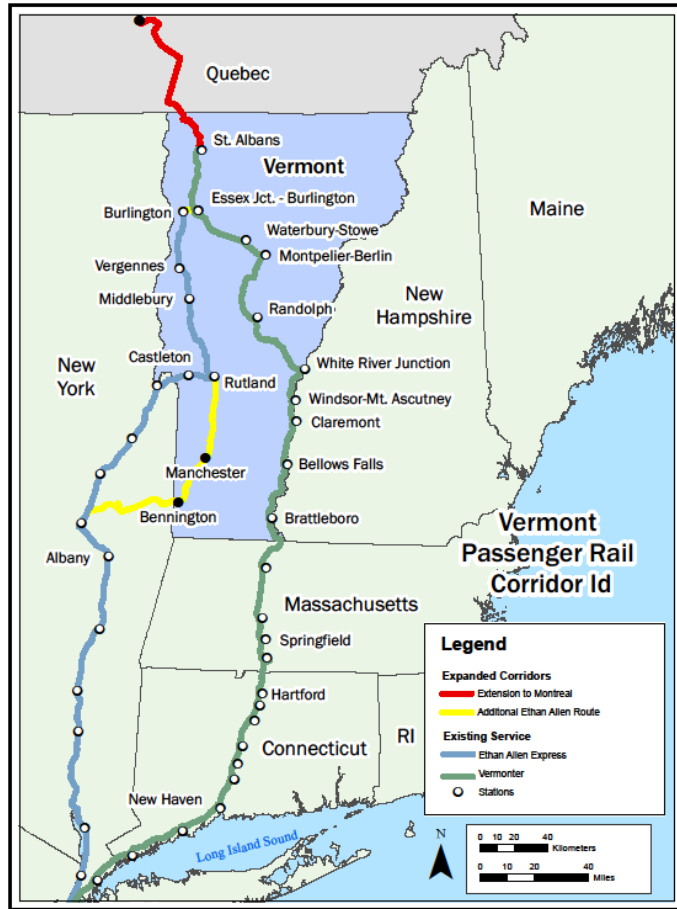
- To Brattleboro
- To White River Junction

Results of Modeling (in Vermont only)

- FFY 2023 base ridership on the Vermonter is approximately 70,000.
- These are results of basic projection modeling.
- The night train from Montreal is a thought exercise of possible impact of middle-of-the night timing.
- Detailed modeling will be conducted in the Corridor ID effort (next slide).

Vermonter Corridor Expansion Scenarios	2045 Medium Growth	Percent Change
No Build (existing service)	80,700	This is the base
Vermonter day train extension to Montreal	103,800	28%
Twice-daily Vermonter service, with both terminating in Montreal	200,400	148%
Night train from Montreal to points south	174,500	116%
Extension of one Knowledge Corridor Valley Flyer train to Brattleboro	93,300	16%
Extension of one Knowledge Corridor Valley Flyer train to White River Jct.	114,100	42%

FRA Corridor Identification & Development Program



What Happens Next—Steps 1, 2, and 3

Grant	Step 1: Scoping	Step 2: Service Development Plan	Step 3: Preliminary Engineering / NEPA
Funding	\$500k / 0% match	\$X / 10% match (SX determined during Step 1)	\$X / 20% match (SX determined during Step 2)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using SDP SOW framework, sponsor develops scope, schedule, and budget for Corridor SDP, accounting for work ongoing and/or undertaken to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor develops a service development plan in accordance with Corridor SOW and in coordination with FRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In coordination with FRA, sponsor completes preliminary engineering for capital projects Sponsor completes environmental review in coordination with FRA for capital projects
Notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After kick-off meeting, FRA will review work undertaken to date Step 1 grant deliverable is SDP SOW to include corridor-specific scope, schedule, and budget for service development planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final service development plan includes a Capital Project Inventory as part of the Phased Implementation Plan If readiness criteria are met, capital projects identified in SDP may be advanced into Step 3 Project Development, at FRA's discretion and subject to funding availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital projects that complete Step 3 will move to Project Pipeline and may be prioritized for funding under Fed-State Partnership Program

Bikes on Trains

- AOT has resolved the pricing discrepancy between the Vermonter and Ethan Allen for bringing along a bicycle.
- Capacity for bicycles has not been an issue to our knowledge.
- Adding additional bicycle capacity would require completely removing seats.

[Bring Your Bike Onboard the Train | Amtrak](#)



Next Steps

Public Meeting #2 of 3

- March 10th at Brattleboro Municipal Center and online, 3:00 to 4:30 PM

Background, meeting registration, and interactive map

- <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/rail/reports>

Milestones

- Draft final report June 2025
- Anticipated FRA acceptance July 7, 2025



Thank you!

Dan Delabruere, VTrans Rail Bureau Director
daniel.delabruere@vermont.gov

Zoe Neaderland, Planning Coordinator / Rail Plan Update
Project Manager
802-793-2778
zoe.neaderland@vermont.gov

Dave Pelletier, Systems Planning Manager
802-595-9675
dave.pelletier@vermont.gov

