Assessing Vermont Public Transportation: Costs, Coverage, and Coordination

Rockefeller Center
Policy Research Shop
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Summary

- Overview of VT Transit Agencies
- Coordination of Transportation
  - Information Coordination
  - Infrastructure Coordination
- Funding of Transit Systems
- Policy proposals
Public transportation services vary throughout the rural state.

Population dispersion
- Low density areas
VT Public Transportation Agencies

- Local/Regional public transit services provided by 13 different agencies
- Uncoordinated and highly varied public transportation system
Some Common Threads

- Originally, largely for Human Services
- Elderly, Disabled, Blind, Medicaid
- Medical and Social Services
- Fixed, Deviated Fixed, Demand Response
- Commuter Routes Growing
Varied in Time
Varied in Formation

- Rural Community Transportation (RCT) - Federal Grant
- Special Services Transportation Agency (SSTA) - needs of elderly and disabled
- Chittenden County Transportation Agency - Vermont General Assembly
- Addison County - Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Varied in Coverage

The State of Vermont
Public transit services by Town, with Pop. Density and School Districts

- Rural Community Transportation
- Advanced Transit
- Town of Brattleboro
- Connecticut River Transit
- Green Mountain Community Network
- Marble Valley Regional Transit District
- Deerfield Valley Transit Association
- Chittenden County Transit Authority
- Northwest Vermont Public Transit Network
- Stagecoach Transportation Services, Inc.
- Town of Stowe
- Green Mountain Transit Agency
- Addison County Transit Resources
- Greyhound stations
- Train (Amtrak, Vermonter, Ethan Allen Express) stations

Population per sq. mile
- <1
- 1-10
- 10-25
- 25-50
- 50-100
- 100-250
- 250-500
- 500-1000
- 1000-2500
- 2500-5000
- >5000

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Census 2000 Summary File 1 population by census tract.
## Varied in Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>RIDERSHIP</th>
<th>BASE FARE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addison County Transit Resources</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>Free Inside County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Transit</td>
<td>476,887</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chittenden County Transit Authority</td>
<td>1.6 million</td>
<td>$1.25 on Fixed Routes ADA Paratransit fare is $2.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut River Transit</td>
<td>198,388</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Northwest Vermont Public Transit Network</td>
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<td>$1.00-$3.00 on Fixed Routes, Varied by Service/Distance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deerfield Valley Transit Association</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Mountain Transit Agency</td>
<td>136,439</td>
<td>$0.50 - $4.00, depending on the service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Green Mountain Community Network</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>$0.50 on Fixed Routes; Others varied by service and distance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marble Valley Regional Transit District</td>
<td>728,000</td>
<td>Free in Rutland City; $1.00 Proctor; Varies by type of service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stagecoach Transportation Services</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>$1.50 - 2.50 depending on route.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Community Transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.50 on Fixed Routes; $20.00 for monthly passes; $13.50 for 10 day pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>Town of Brattleboro</td>
<td>71,516</td>
<td>$0.75 One-way Adults (ages 19 over)$0.50 One-way Students (Ages 13-18)$0.25 One-way Child (Ages 12 and under)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Stowe</td>
<td>47,266</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
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</table>
VT Transit Agencies: Summary

- Public Transit providers varied
- VT similar to other rural states
- New Jersey, Rhode Island
- Ways to improve VT Transit
- Coordination and Funding
Transportation Coordination

Information and Infrastructure
Defining Coordination: An Important Distinction

- Coordination of information
  - Single call center or website

- Coordination of infrastructure
  - Actively linking routes and providers throughout the state
Advantages to Coordination

◆ Coordination of infrastructure:
  – Improved coverage and efficiency
  – Pooling of funding and resources
  – Emergency evacuation facilitation

◆ Coordination of information:
  – Reach more of the public
  – Increase popularity and commuter efficiency
  – If coordination is successful, can lay foundation for next step in coordinating infrastructure
Other States’ Transportation Coordination Strategies

- Go Maine
- New Hampshire Transit Association
- Coastal Georgia
NH Transit Association
- Goal: Improve mobility of citizens
- Works directly with and for transportation providers
- Does little to integrate services, but has potential to improve linkages through relationships among providers

Coastal GA
- Regional coordination of resources and funds
  - GA Department of Human Services and rural transit providers
- Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFTEA-LU),
  - Section 5311 for rural transportation = 5311-funded vehicles
Go Vermont

The Go Vermont carpool program is a long-standing manual carpool matching service operated by VTtrans and currently used by more than 4,000 Vermonters. Go Vermont is transitioning to an improved, automated carpool matching service in the near future.

Complete our online rideshare form to find carpool partners in your area.

or

Call 1-800-685-RIDE (7433)

Why is Go Vermont the smart choice for me?

IT SAVES YOU MONEY!

Carpool Listings
Guaranteed Ride Home
Mileage Calculator

Downloadable Poster to use in your workplace
Transportation Funding
VT Local Public Transit Funding

- Based On Reports from VAOT
- Federal
- State
- Private/Local Aid
Fare Systems

A. Fare Free Systems: Advanced Transit
   (Revenue through Contribution/Government Support)

B. Limited Fare Systems: Addison County
   (Revenue through Government Support and Contracts)

C. Typical Fare Systems: Chittenden County
   (Revenue through typical Fare method)
Policy Proposals
Policy Proposals: Coordination

◆ Gather information on consumer need and current services

◆ Regionalization
  – Insurance
  – Reimbursement

◆ Central coordinating location
  – New technology for communication
Policy Proposals: School System Funding

- Contracts with School Districts
- Manchester Transit Authority: Combine Public School Systems with Mass Transportation (A new financial pool)
- In addition to financial benefits, systematic transportation benefits
Stimulus Package Spending

- $126 million under American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
  - Criteria for allocation: eligibility and readiness, federal guidelines
  - “use it or lose it”

- Infrastructure

- Funds can be flexed to fit transportation projects

- $5.6 million to public transit
Summary

- More Information
- Coordination
  - GoVermont
  - Public-Private Partnership
- Partnership with School Districts
- Stimulus Package Spending
Transit and Economic Health

- Improvements in Infrastructure
  - Mass Transit as Long Term Infrastructure Investment
- Going Green in the Green Mountain State
- Job Creation
  - State Mobility