



For Immediate Release
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Transportation Board Announces Public Forums on Rail

MONTPELIER – The Vermont Transportation Board this fall will hold seven public forums for the purpose of gathering public comment about State transportation policy associated with trains, both passenger and freight.

Working with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and the state’s 11 Regional Planning Commissions, the Board identified rail as a topic of growing importance to many Vermonters. The Board wants to discuss railroad issues with the public to determine how future transportation policy can be shaped to best position Vermont’s rail interests to meet the needs of the state residents.

“Vermont is poised to significantly expand passenger rail in the very near future, while at the same time the state also is seeking growth opportunities for both the movement and off-loading of freight,” said David Coen, Acting Chair of the Transportation Board. “As a result, we want to have a conversation with Vermonters to both hear their suggestions as well as understand their concerns regarding these new services and how the state uses its rail lines.”

The Transportation Board each year travels around the state to meet with Vermonters and discuss important transportation issues. While this year’s focus on trains will naturally attract citizens who live along or near railroad tracks, the Board encourages anyone interested in the future of rail to attend.

Topics the Board plans to discuss include:

- Living with railroads as neighbors, and the issues they present.
- Passenger rail expansion along Vermont’s western corridor between Rutland and Burlington.
- Passenger rail expansion from various points in Vermont to Montreal.
- Truck traffic through villages and town centers, and the effect of rail expansion.
- Adjacent rail-side economic development and planning for increased rail activity.
- Starting commuter rail service linking Brattleboro to various points in Massachusetts.
- Rail safety, including crossings, trespassing and response to potential emergency incidents.

At each forum, the Board will present background information regarding each topic to set the stage for discussion and comment. Following the forums, the Board will submit a written report to both VTrans and the Vermont Legislature. The Board also will post the report on its website.

The Board will hold public forums on the following dates:

1. **October 17:** Bixby Library, 6:30 p.m., 258 Main Street, Vergennes. VT.
2. **October 20:** The Gateway Center, 6 p.m., 84 Fyfe Drive, Newport, VT.



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3. **October 27:** The Holiday Inn Rutland, 6 p.m., 476 Holiday Drive, Rutland, VT.
4. **November 9:** Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, 6 p.m., 10 Vernon Street, Brattleboro, VT.
5. **November 10:** St. Albans Museum, 6:30 p.m., 9 Church Street, St. Albans City, VT.
6. **November 14:** Main Street Landing's Lake & College Building, 6:30 p.m. Gallery Room, second floor, 60 Lake Street, Burlington, VT.
7. **November 16:** Hotel Coolidge, 6 p.m., 39 South Main Street, White River Junction, VT.

People who cannot attend a hearing can submit written comment by visiting the Board's website at <http://tboard.vermont.gov/>.

The forums are being conducted pursuant to Title 19 V.S.A. § 5(d)(8), which charges the Transportation Board to work together with the Agency of Transportation to hold public hearings "for the purpose of obtaining public comment on the development of state transportation policy, the mission of the Agency, and state transportation planning, capital programming and program implementation."

For more information, contact the Board's Executive Secretary John Zicconi at john.zicconi@vermont.gov or by calling 802-828-2942.

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