



# Amtrak Fact Sheet, Fiscal Year 2017

## State of Vermont

### Amtrak-Vermont partnership

- Grants from the State of Vermont help support the daily *Vermont* service from St. Albans to New York and Washington
- State grants also help support the daily *Ethan Allen* express service from Rutland to Albany and New York
- Over 17,000 Vermont residents are members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards frequent user program
- Vermont completed a federally funded track improvement project along the *Vermont* route in 2012

### Amtrak Service & Ridership

Amtrak operates two State Supported trains in Vermont, the *Vermont* (Washington, D.C.-New York-St. Albans) and the *Ethan Allen Express* (New York-Albany-Rutland).

During FY17 Amtrak served the following Vermont locations:

<u>City</u>	<u>Boardings + Alightings</u>
<a href="#">Bellows Falls</a>	4,752
<a href="#">Brattleboro</a>	16,702
<a href="#">Castleton</a>	4,198
<a href="#">Essex Junction</a>	19,893
<a href="#">Montpelier</a>	8,186
<a href="#">Randolph</a>	1,833
<a href="#">Rutland</a>	14,267
<a href="#">St. Albans</a>	3,742
<a href="#">Waterbury</a>	5,830
<a href="#">White River Junction</a>	13,554
<a href="#">Windsor-Mount Ascutney</a>	1,200
<b>Total Vermont Station Usage:</b>	<b>94,157</b>

(up 1.9% from FY16)

## **Procurement**

Amtrak spent \$1,366,117 on goods and services in Vermont in FY17, about half of it in Burlington.

## **Employment**

At the end of FY17, Amtrak employed 3 Vermont residents. Total wages of Amtrak employees living in Vermont were \$445,823 during FY17.

## **PRIIA Section 209 and State Supported Services**

The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-432) required, by October 2013, an equitable arrangement of cost sharing between Amtrak and state or public agency partners that provide funding for short-distance, intercity train services. Agreements were reached with all parties, including Vermont, by the deadline, and the services continued to run without interruption.

## **Stations**

In 2013, the State purchased the station at White River Junction, which previously had been privately owned. This will enable the State to plan rehabilitation and economic development efforts at the station and surrounding property.

New platforms were installed in 2013 at St. Albans and Waterbury as part of the Accessible Stations Development Program, providing improved train boarding, platform access, and lighting.

Under the same program, improvements were made at Montpelier, including construction of accessible parking, a new sidewalk linking the parking lot to the station, new stairs, and an ADA-compliant ramp, along with modifications to the existing entrance doors, restrooms, and other improvements to the waiting room. Exterior and interior signage will be provided, as well.

Construction on additional ADA compliance projects including new platforms, accessible parking and sidewalks are scheduled to begin in 2018 at Castleton and Windsor. Planning and design for ADA projects at Essex Junction and Brattleboro will also take place in 2018.

## ***Vermont* Route Improvements**

In October 2012, the State of Vermont completed a \$70-million track rehabilitation project along the route of the *Vermont*, on track owned by the New England Central Railroad. Of that amount, \$50 million was from the ARRA Stimulus program and \$20 million from the State. The project consisted of replacing jointed rail with continuously welded rail, new cross ties, grade-crossing safety improvements, and other track improvements along a 190-mile section of track from St. Albans to Vernon (just north of the Massachusetts border). These upgrades allow trains to travel up to 59 mph (79 mph in some sections). Maximum speeds were raised from 55 to 59 mph from St. Albans to White River Junction; and from 59 to 79 mph White River Junction to the Massachusetts state line. This allowed a schedule reduction of 28 minutes in March 2013.

In January 2010, Massachusetts was awarded \$70 million in federal stimulus funds for final design and construction of the “Knowledge Corridor” along the Connecticut River in western Massachusetts. Track restoration began in 2013 and was completed in late 2014. At that time, Amtrak’s *Vermont* service was rerouted onto this shorter and faster line. This also eliminated a cumbersome reversal move at Palmer, Massachusetts. At the same time, the *Vermont* began serving the former Amtrak station in Northampton and a new stimulus-funded intermodal transit center in Greenfield. A station in Holyoke was constructed by the City of Holyoke, where work continued after the change in route. Service to Holyoke began in summer 2015.

**Bicycles:** In May 2016, Amtrak and the State of Vermont began a pilot program for carry-on bicycles along the entire length of the route from Washington. Luggage racks within the coaches were removed and replaced with newly retrofitted racks that fold down to convert to bicycle racks. The carry-on bicycle program on the *Vermont* has proved to be very popular, carrying 971 bicycles in FY 2017, up from 608 bicycles the previous year.

### **Western Corridor improvements**

In September 2013, the State of Vermont was awarded an \$8.9 million federal TIGER grant to rehabilitate a portion of the western corridor between Rutland and Burlington. This grant funded Phase 1 of the project, including installation of seven miles of welded rail and surfacing upgrades to the rail bed between Rutland and Leicester, completed late in 2015. In October 2015, Vermont was awarded another TIGER grant for \$10 million for Phase 2 of the project, which will allow restoration of passenger rail service along the corridor. The state-owned rail line will be improved by installing new, heavier-gauge (weight) rail, ballast, and ties between Leicester and Burlington; also new crossing gates, a new passing siding in Pittsford, and new crossover in Leicester to allow for increased operational flexibility. There will be new platforms at Vergennes and Middlebury. Vermont hopes to extend the *Ethan Allen Service* north to Burlington by late 2019.

### **Vermont Shires Connector Bus Service**

In September 2017, the Vermont Agency of Transportation, in partnership with Amtrak launched the Vermont Shires Connector bus service to/from Manchester and Bennington. This became part of the Amtrak Thruway Connection system offering connecting busses and through-ticketing to Amtrak trains at Albany-Rensselaer to and from New York Penn Station. The service operates twice daily in both directions. The Vermont Shires Connector bus service also includes stops at the Albany Greyhound Terminal and the Albany International Airport.

