

H.527

AN ACT RELATING TO THE STATE'S TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

* * * Agency Cooperation with Regional Planning Commissions * * *

Sec. 31. 19 V.S.A. § 10I is added to read:

§ 10I. AGENCY COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

(a) Legislative intent. The general assembly finds that regional planning commissions possess a unique expertise that enables the agency to conduct rural transportation planning and local consultation activities that build upon the integration of land use, environmental, and economic development inputs. To ensure the agency continues to meet its local consultation requirements found in 23 C.F.R. part 250.212, the general assembly requires the following duties of regional planning commissions as part of an annual contract and work preparing the transportation planning initiative (TPI).

(b) Duties of regional planning commissions. Regional planning commissions, serving areas of the state not qualifying as a Metropolitan Planning Area under federal regulations, shall implement the transportation planning initiative (TPI) program. This program provides the mechanism by which the agency coordinates policy development and planning to ensure the involvement by Vermont citizens and rural local officials. It shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) Ensuring that local officials and citizens are involved in the statewide transportation planning process.

(2) Providing technical assistance to facilitate local officials and staff in making transportation policy and investment decisions.

(3) Coordinating town planning and development regulations to meet better state transportation policies and investment priorities.

(4) Participating in state and national transportation policy and planning development processes to ensure regional and local input.

(5) Implementing a project evaluation process to prioritize all transportation projects within the regions utilizing state or federal funds to be included in the state transportation program.

(6) Developing and maintaining a regional, multi-modal transportation plan that clearly details regional and local project, planning, and policy priorities.

(7) Maintaining a regional transportation advisory committee (TAC) that reviews and provides input on all major state and federal transportation planning and policy decisions. In order to facilitate this input, the regional planning commissions, in collaboration with the agency of transportation, shall provide warning and notice of all public meetings regarding transportation plans, projects, and proposals.