



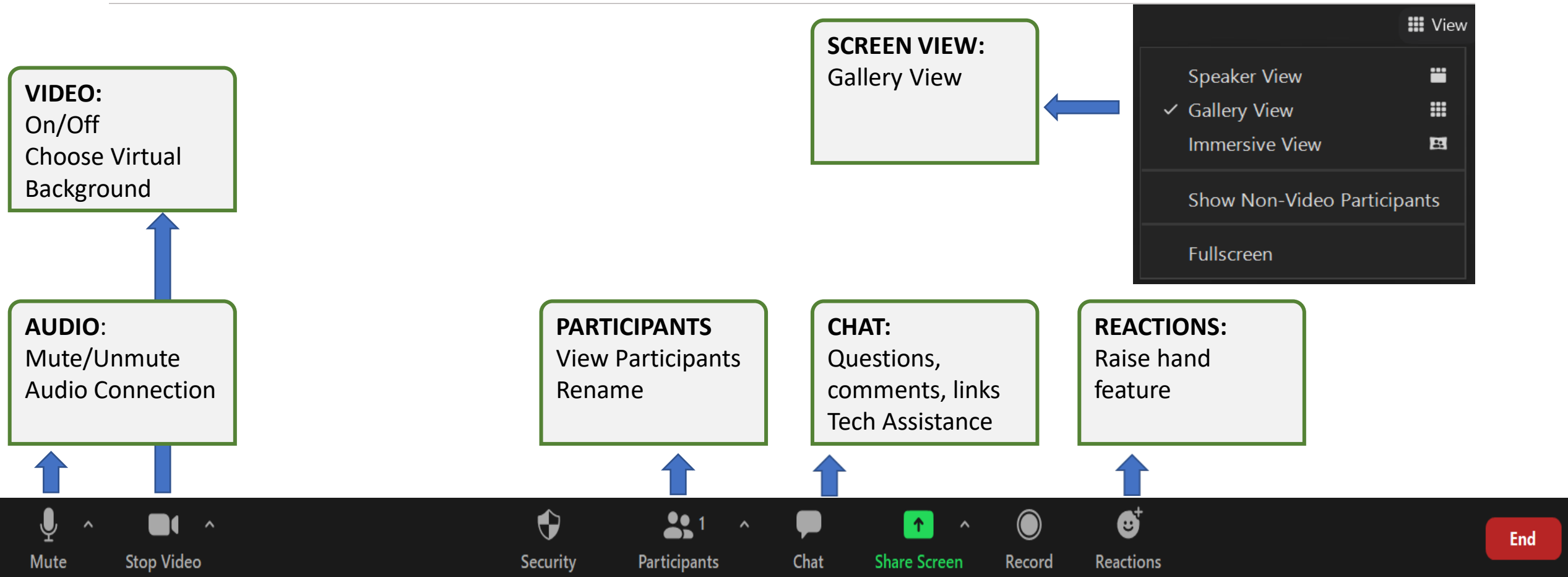
Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages Study: Concepts Development and Screening

Technical Committee and
Agency Coordination

November 10, 2022



Zoom Orientation



Roll Call – Technical Committee

VOTING members

- **Chair:** Katharine Otto, VTrans
- John Bull, Town of Ferrisburgh
- Jim Cota, VTrans
- Shannon Haggett, City of Vergennes
- Fred Kenney, Addison County Economic Development
- Jim Larrow, City of Vergennes
- Bruce Martin, VTrans
- Joel Perrigo, VTrans
- Katie Raycroft-Meyer, ACRPC
- Jeff Ramsey, VTrans
- Mike Winslow, ACRPC

NON-VOTING members

- Jacqueline DeMent, VTrans
- Chris Jolly, FHWA
- Jon Kaplan, VTrans
- James LaCroix, VTrans
- Adam Lougee, ACRPC
- Elizabeth Shipley, FHWA



Roll Call – Agency Partners

Federal Agencies

- Federal Highway Administration, Christopher Jolly and Elizabeth Shipley
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Michael Adams
- U.S. Coast Guard, Donna Fisher
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Beth Alafat and Tim Timmermann
- U.S.D.A. - Natural Resource Conservation Service, Obediah Racicot
- Federal Emergency Management Agency, David Robbins and Eric Kuns
- [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Susi von Oettingen]

State Agencies

- Agency of Natural Resources, Billy Coster
- Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, Laura Trieschmann
- Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Department of Housing and Community Development, Chris Cochran and Amy Tomasso
- Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets, Diane Bothfeld
- Buildings and General Services, Vermont Agency of Administration, Eric Pembroke

Agenda

Call to Order | Chair Update

Roll Call

1. Goals, Roles, and Responsibilities
2. Recent Activity and Concepts Proposed for Further Study
3. Feedback on Concepts
4. Additional Feedback and Next Steps
5. Discussion / Consensus Points
6. Member Updates/Announcements

V E R G E N N E S

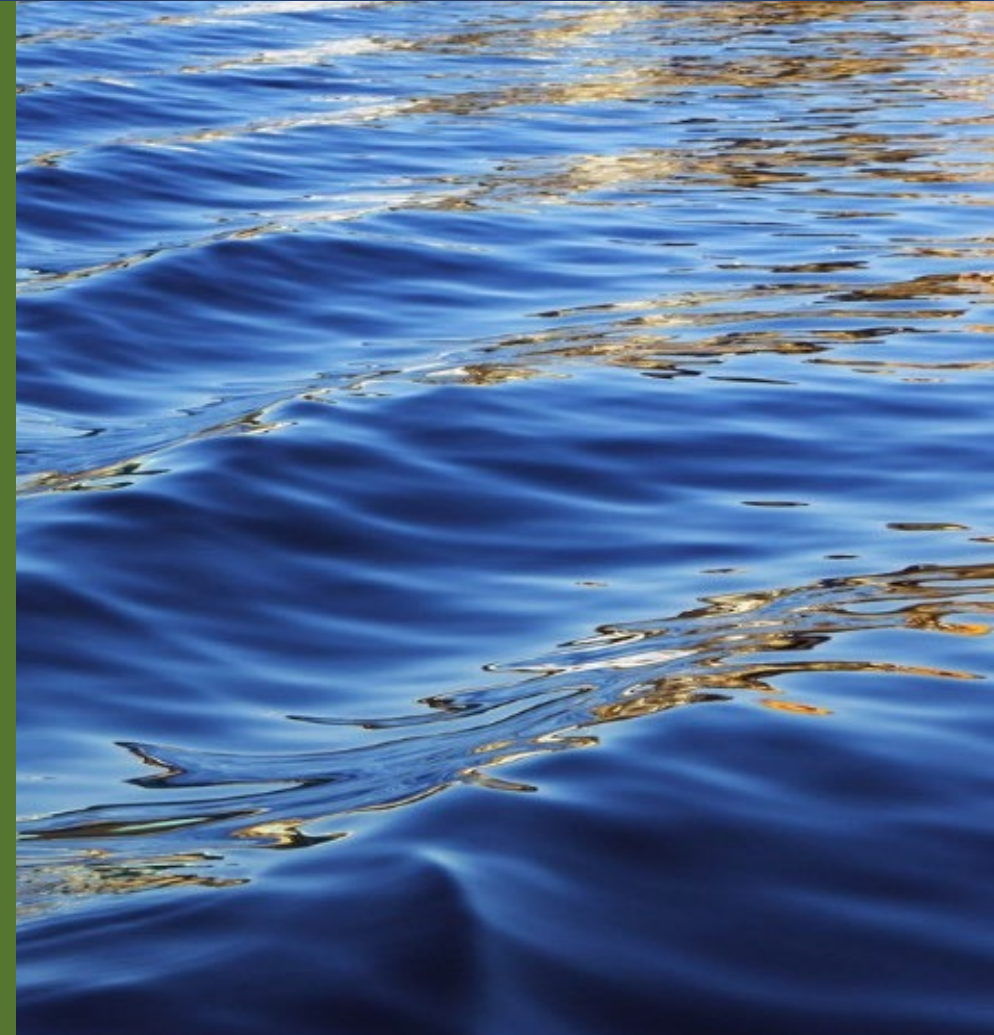
Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL) Study



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Goals, Roles, and Responsibilities



Goals for Today

Share input received on initial screening



Obtain Technical Committee and agency feedback

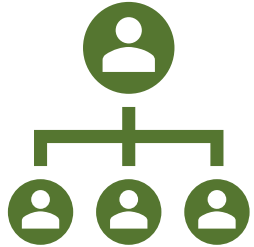


Review next steps

Recent and Upcoming Meetings

- 10/4 onwards – Selectboard and City Council meetings
- 10/11 – Technical Committee meeting
- 10/17 – Agency Coordination meeting
- 11/3 – Public meeting
- 11/10 – Technical Committee and Agency Coordination meeting
- TBD [December/ January] – Policy Committee meetings

VTrans and Study Team Role



Vermont Agency of Transportation

Role

Fund and manage study, consider study conclusions and recommendation of the Policy Committee on how to proceed with implementation, approve next steps as relevant

Members

VTrans Leadership



Study Team

Role

Guide study, write memos and engage stakeholders to provide information for the Technical Committee to consider

Members

VTrans Project Manager – Katharine Otto

Team includes VTrans, ACRPC, WSP, and D&K staff

Technical Committee and Agency Roles



Technical Committee

Role

Guide, review, and validate the consultant's methods, analyses, findings, and recommendations on which the Policy Committee will make its decisions

Members

Subject matter experts from VTrans, region, and municipalities



Agency Coordination

Role

Guide coordination activities through the duration of the study with interested, involved agencies that may be likely cooperating and participating agencies under NEPA

Members

Likely Cooperating and Likely Participating Agencies

Policy Committee and Stakeholder Roles



Policy Committee

Role

Endorsement of key assumptions and recommendations to VTrans

Members

Municipal representatives, VTrans, ACRPC, FHWA

Stakeholders representing business and economic development, the environment, pedestrian and bicycle users and potentially other interests.



General Public

Role

Provide local input, knowledge, and preferences to support the technical work and decision-making process

Members

Residents of Vergennes and the surrounding communities, businesses in the region, the trucking industry

Focus of Today's Meeting

Role as technical expert

Decision-making based on scoring criteria not just opinions

- **Today's presentation focuses primarily on opinions shared recently**
- **Study team will re-examine the scoring criteria before making a recommendation**

Need Technical Committee to propose concepts to advance to Policy Committee

- **Decision does not need to happen today!**

Need agency concurrence, particularly on which concepts will not advance

- **Decision does not need to happen today!**

What are we asking of you today?

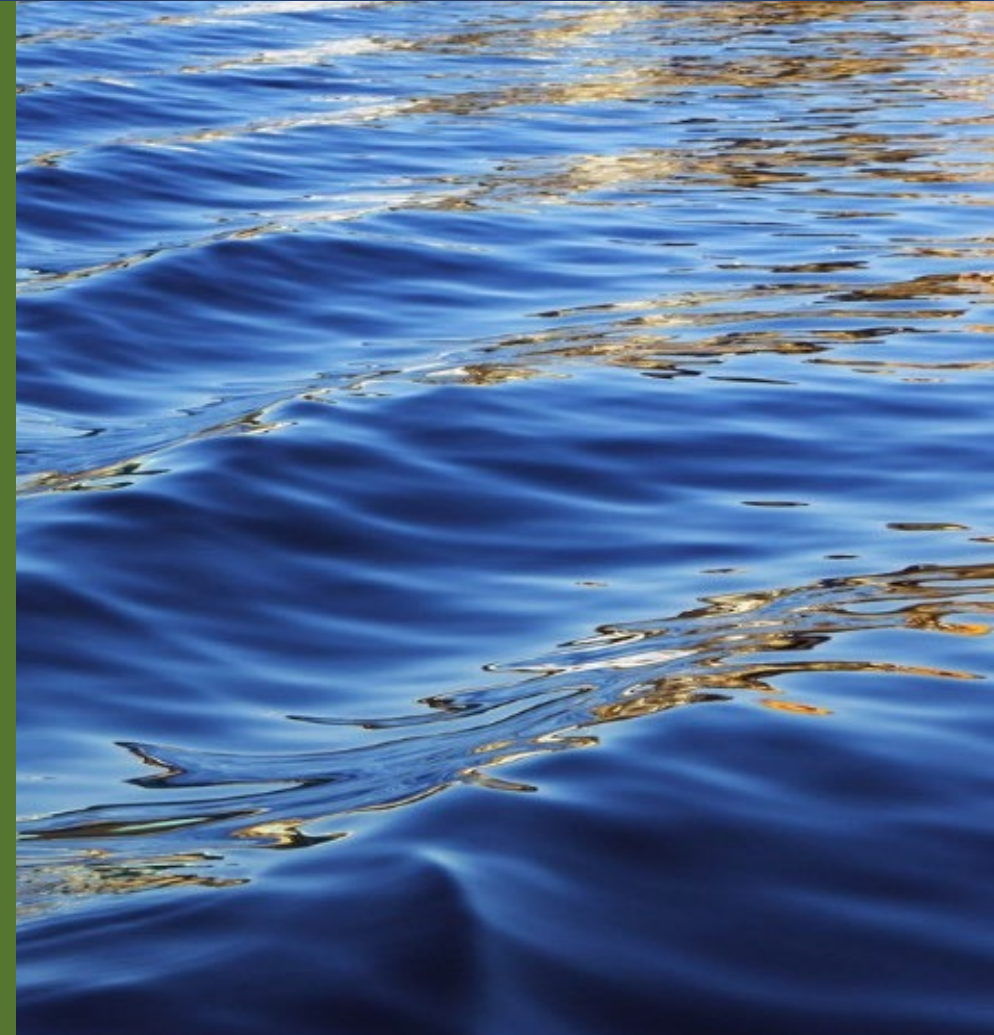
- Listen to the input received from the fall outreach / meetings
- Provide additional input throughout discussion including how to treat concepts without a fatal flaw
- Consensus point and the need for additional meetings/communication preference

Questions we hope to answer with you

- Given what you have heard today
 - Should the **orange** route continue for further study, pending score refinement?
 - Is there sufficient justification for reconsidering the **green** and/or **red** routes for further study?
- We do not have sufficient information for the Technical Committee or Agency Partners to make recommendations for further study today.
 - To make this recommendation, are you comfortable with an email decision, one-on-one meeting, or a large group meeting?



**Recent Activity and Concepts
Proposed for Further Study**



Top 3 concepts proposed for further study
 Additional concepts that could have further study



Concept Screening Results in October

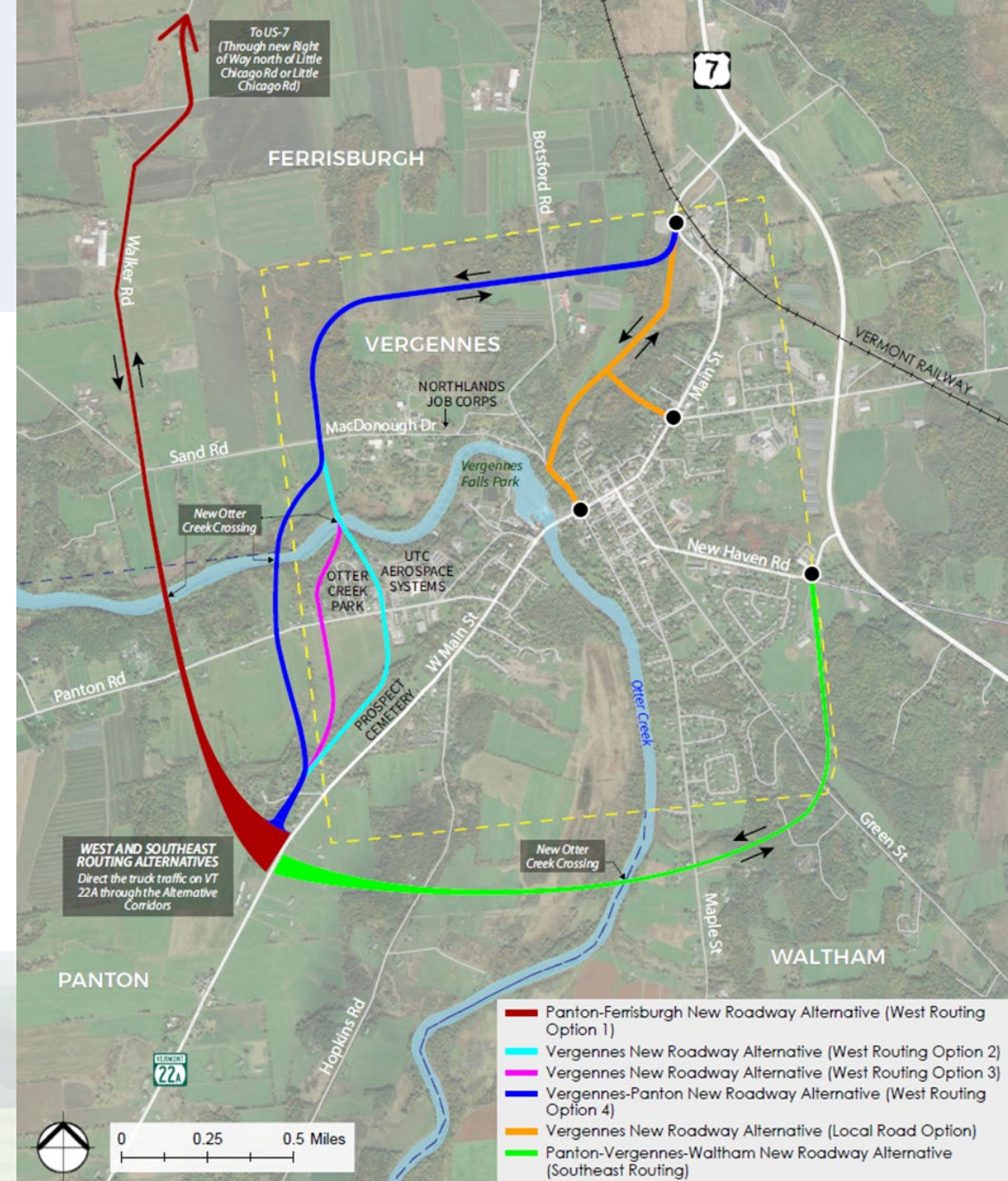
Concept Screening Results	Systemwide	VT-17 / Route 7	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions
Total Score	5	1	-3	6	1	5	5	7	0	6	0	-7	5
Fatal Flaw or does not meet P&N	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Map color	N/A	N/A	N/A	Purple/ Yellow	Red	Light Blue	Pink	Dark Blue	Green	Orange	N/A	N/A	N/A

Concepts Proposed for Dismissal in October due to Fatal Flaw

Concept	Fatal Flaw
Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Proximity to Otter Creek Mobile Home Park
Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Proximity to Otter Creek Mobile Home Park
Systemwide	Does not adequately balance regional impacts nor maintain freight mobility
VT-22A Corridor Improvements	Does not meet purpose and need
Rail Modes	Does not adequately meet purpose and need
Water Modes	Does not adequately meet purpose and need
Smart Freight Solutions	Does not adequately meet purpose and need

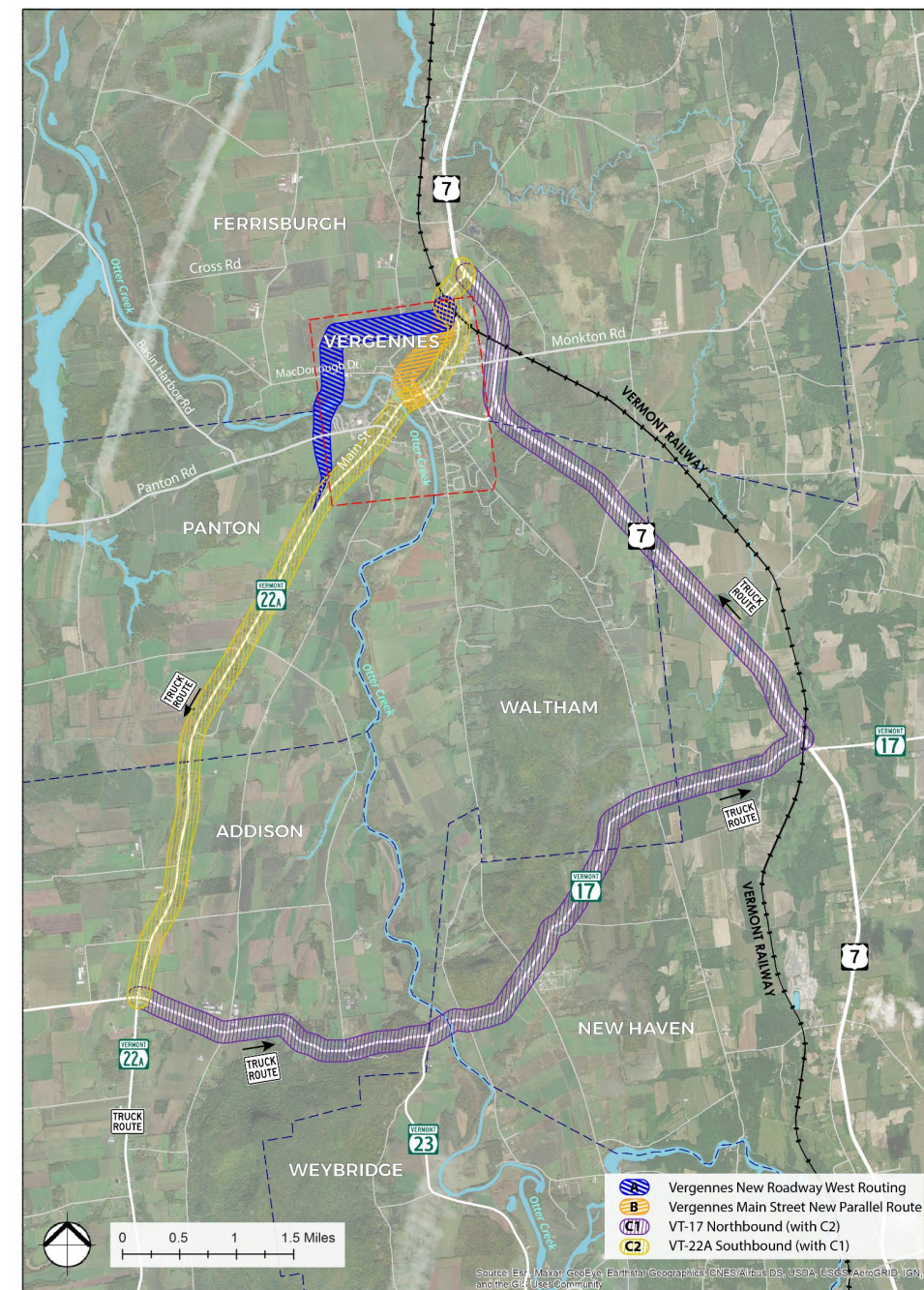
Concepts Proposed for Dismissal in October due to Total Score

- No fatal flaw, but do not provide the greatest benefit
 - Total scores substantially lower when compared to scores of preferred concepts
- Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1) [red route]
- Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) [green route]
- VT Route 17/U.S. 7 Existing Roadways



Concepts Proposed for Further Study in October

- Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4) [blue route]
- Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route [orange route]
- VT-17 Northbound/VT 22A Southbound [yellow/purple]
- No Build option serves as baseline for comparison of benefits and impacts
- Recommended concepts can be supplemented by elements from some of the concepts that have been dismissed (e.g., smart freight, other modes)



Top 3 concepts proposed for further study
 Additional concepts that could have further study



Concept Screening Results in October

Concept Screening Results	Systemwide	VT-17 / Route 7	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions
Total Score	5	1	-3	6	1	5	5	7	0	6	0	-7	5
Fatal Flaw or does not meet P&N	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Map color	N/A	N/A	N/A	Purple/ Yellow	Red	Light Blue	Pink	Dark Blue	Green	Orange	N/A	N/A	N/A

Technical Committee – October 10

- Questions and clarification on screening and concepts
- Some suggestions on adjusting the scoring of some concepts/criteria
- Concern regarding topographic challenges with Vergennes New Main Street Parallel Route [orange route]
- Consensus that methodology and information considered in the scoring matrix is sufficient to be recommended for public review, agency concurrence and policy committee consideration

Federal and State Agency Partners – October 17

- Questions and clarification on screening and concepts
- Some suggestions on adjusting the scoring of some concepts/criteria
- Consensus that methodology and information considered in the scoring matrix is sufficient to be recommended for public review and policy committee consideration
- Follow up meetings held with FHWA and VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD)
 - Add clarity that analysis of environmental resources will be more detailed in next steps
 - Acknowledge the potential for displacements with new roadway concepts

Public meeting – November 3

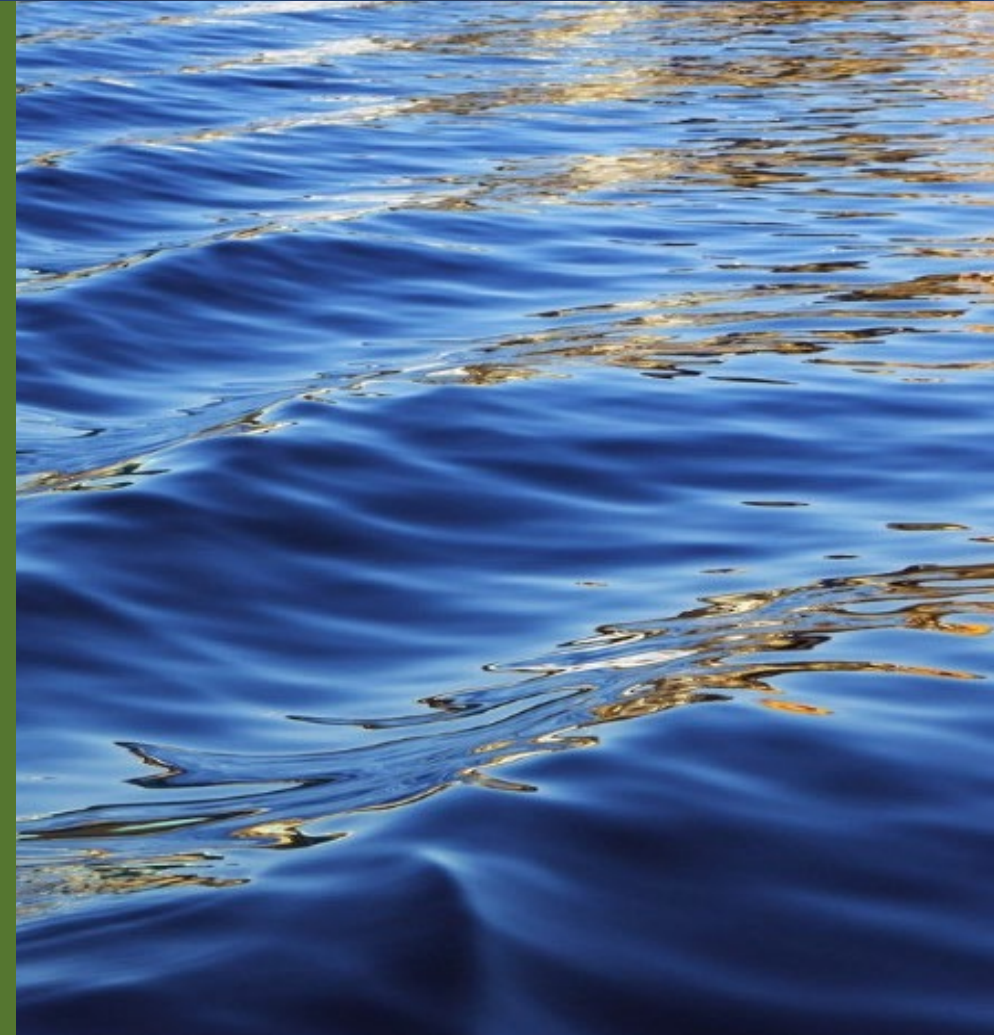


- 34 attendees in person
- 25 attendees via Zoom
- Polls answered by 20 - 30 people (depending on the question)
- Meeting recording is available on the website:
<https://vergennespel.com/public-outreach/>
- Summary of online, emailed and handwritten notes is forthcoming
- Additional comments online or via email since the meeting

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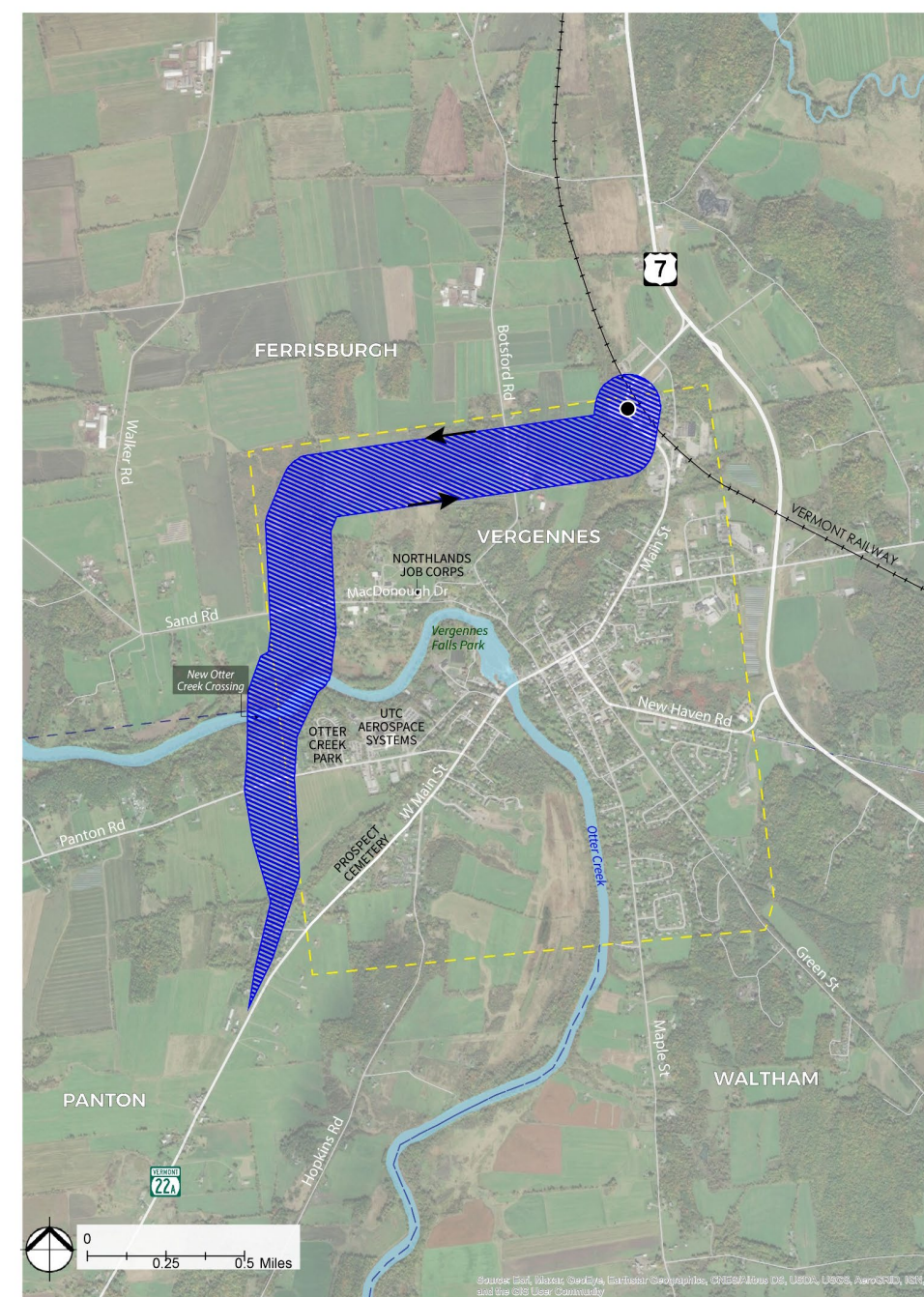
Feedback on Concepts



Vergennes-Panton New Roadway

[Blue route] Feedback

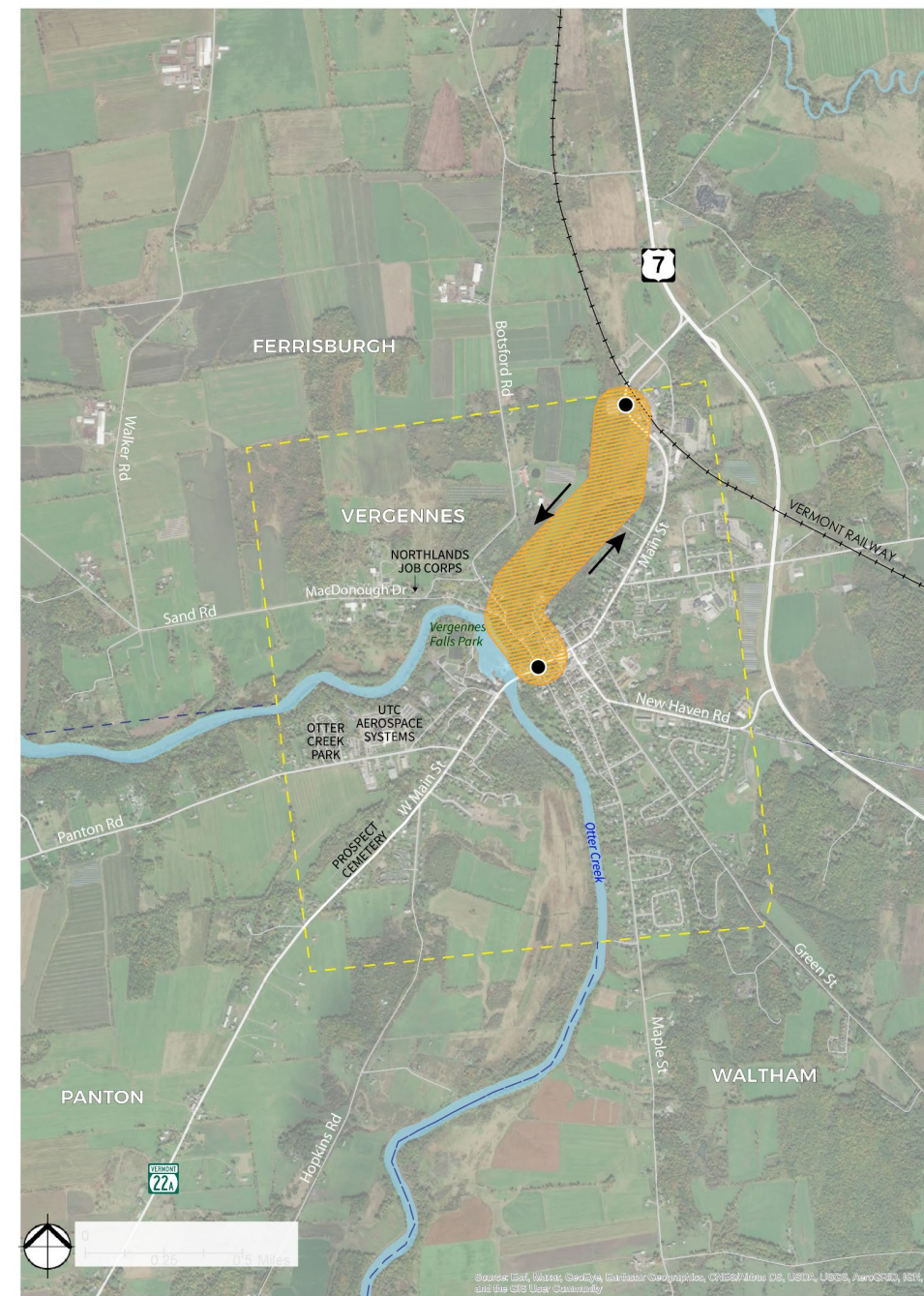
- Concept proposed for further study due to total score
- Potential to stay closer to Vergennes
- Supported during the public meeting
 - Avoids moving truck traffic to another community
 - Redundancy of Otter Creek crossing
 - Potential for additional housing
- Concerns raised at Panton Selectboard
 - New road concept goes into the Town of Panton, which is not compatible with the existing agricultural land uses.
 - Noise and engineering challenges of high bridge over Otter Creek
- *Any additional feedback?*



Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route

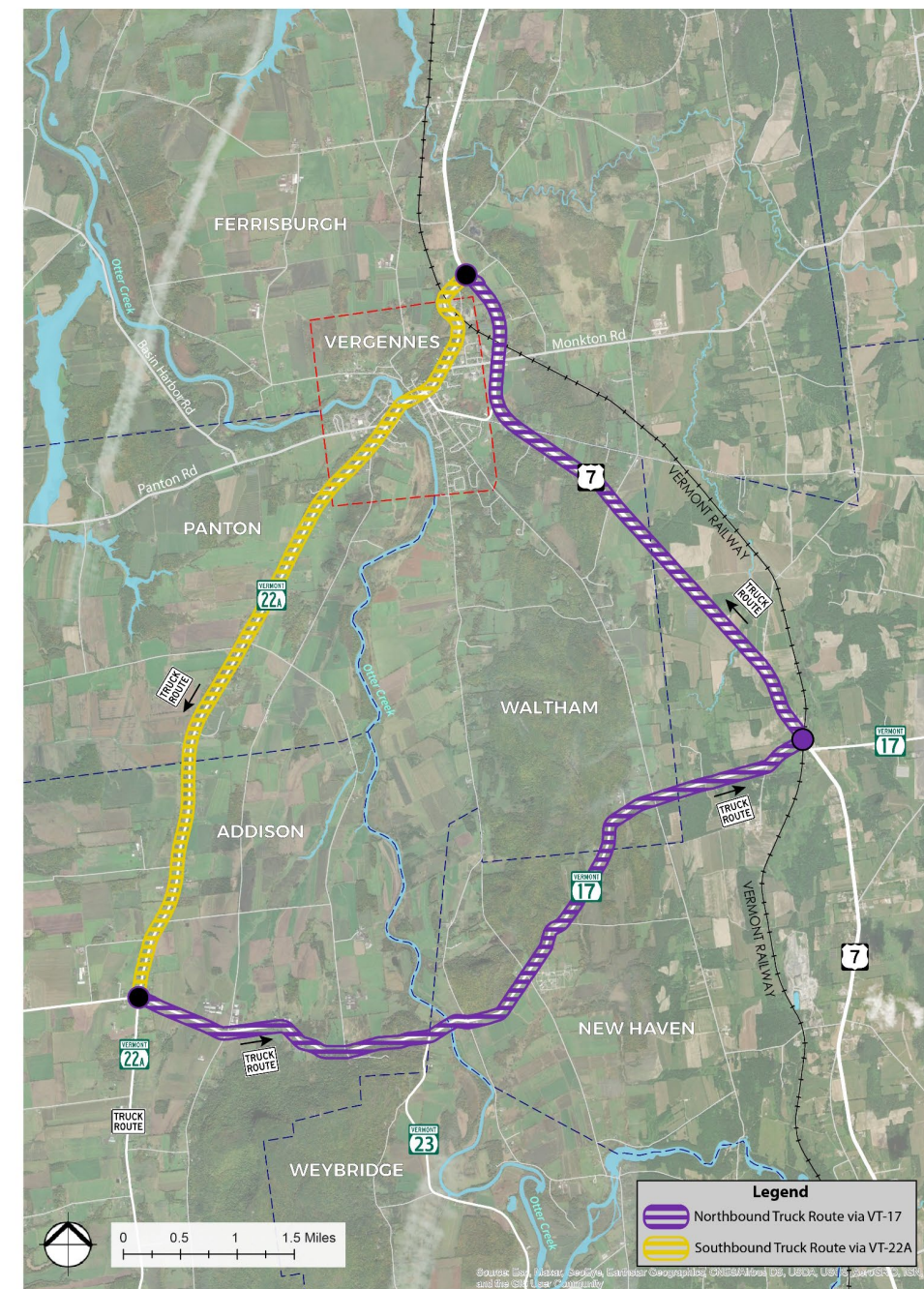
[Orange route] Feedback

- Concept proposed for further study due to total score
- Emerged during May public workshop as a concept that keeps benefits and impacts entirely within Vergennes
- No support heard during fall outreach
- Concerns raised at the Technical Committee and public meeting
 - Topographic challenges along MacDonough Drive
 - Intersection improvements at MacDonough Drive/Main Street
 - Does not provide a new Otter Creek crossing
 - Would not reduce noise impacts
- *Any additional feedback?*



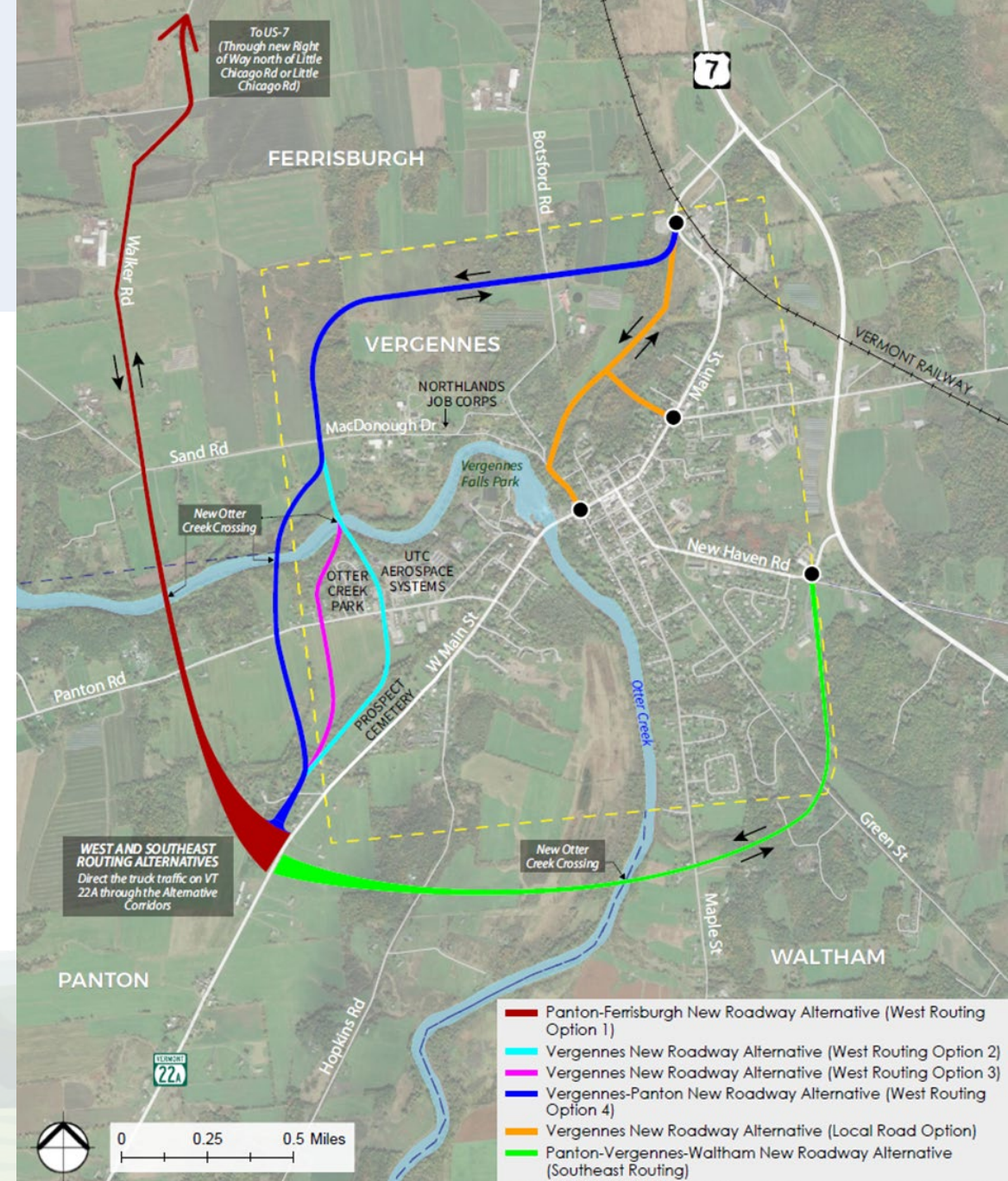
VT-17 Northbound/VT 22A Southbound [Purple/Yellow Route] Feedback

- Concept proposed for further study due to total score
- Support from agencies and public because of use of existing roadways and does not require new infrastructure
- Concerns raised by selectboards and during the public meeting
 - Challenges to making the routes safe for truck travel
 - Many slow-moving agricultural vehicles
 - Route 7/17 intersection challenges include railroad crossing and hill
 - Does not truly mitigate truck traffic; moves the problem to other communities
 - Would result in environmental impacts along Route 17 corridor
 - Enforcement could be a challenge
- *Any additional feedback?*



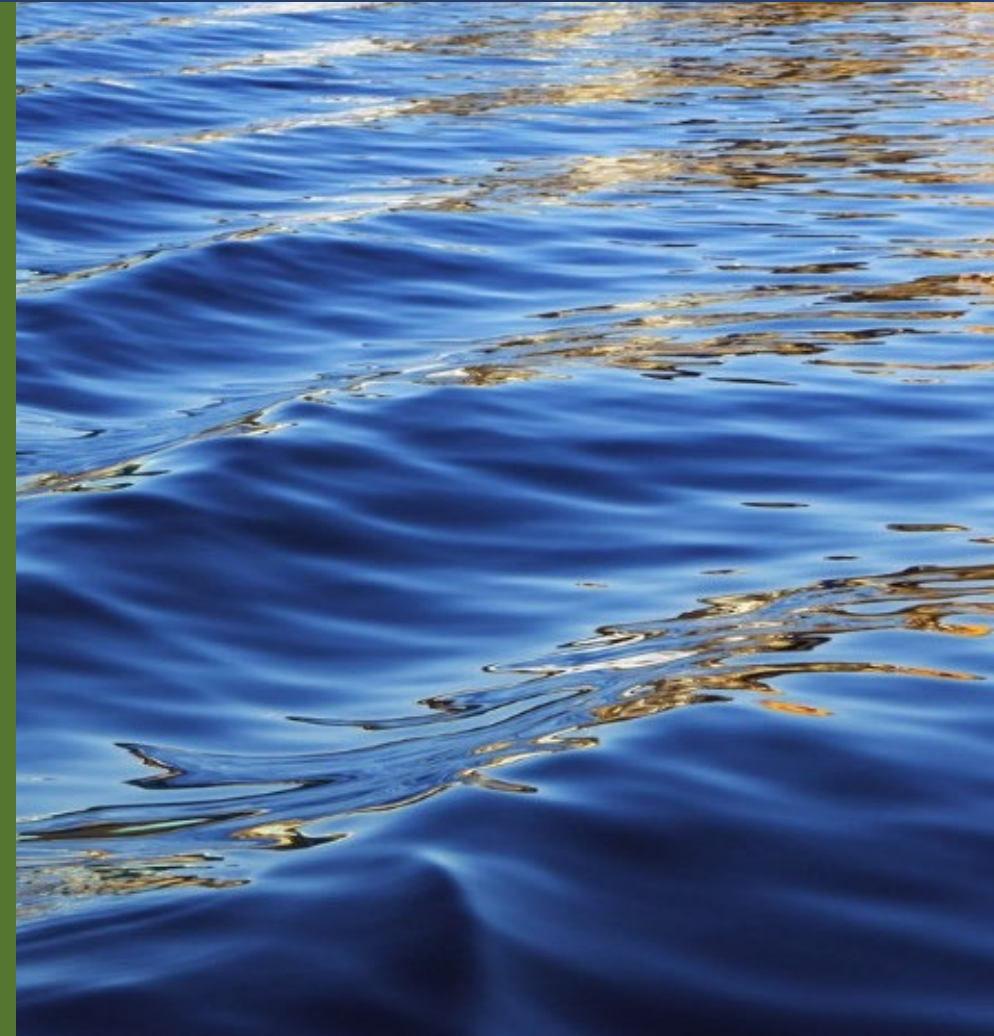
Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) [Green route]

- Concept proposed for dismissal due to total score
- Issues raised during public and selectboard meetings
 - Wetland and topographic issues
 - Proximity to school and housing
 - New road concept goes into the Towns of Panton and Waltham, which is not compatible with the existing land uses
- Public meeting had some support for further study
 - Provides redundancy with new bridge
 - New bridge would not need to be tall enough to accommodate sail boats
 - Is a better option than the orange route?
- *Any additional feedback?*





Additional Feedback and Next Steps



Comments/Concerns Raised that will be Considered in Next Steps

Conceptual Engineering

- Consider historic site impacts and cemetery boundaries
- Historic site impacts including vibrations
- Noise of potential new tall bridge
- How close is too close for Otter Creek Mobile Home Park?
- How many homes and properties could be impacted?
- Passing lanes on Route 17
- Keep the solution as close to the problem as possible so that additional issues are not added

Land Use Visioning

- Vergennes is looking at neighborhood designation
- Vergennes pursuing ANR funding for water and sewer upgrades
- Sewer and water capacity
- How do we preserve the character of Panton's gateway?
- Downtown vitality is important – is a limited access highway the only option to limit negative economic impacts?

Comments/Concerns Raised that will be Considered in Next Steps

Public Outreach and Engagement

- How do we bring people up to speed with the project?
- How do we provide context and frame expectations?
- How do we ensure we continue to reach a wide audience going forward?
- How do we encourage voices who feel unheard?



Next Steps

**Deciding
which
concepts to
advance for
further
study**

By 11/23 – Provide any additional feedback on what you've heard today to vergennespel@gmail.com

November – study team incorporates comments into technical memo and re-examines the current scoring

December/ January

- Study team finalizes any changes and share documents with Policy Committee for review
- Policy Committee meeting(s)

What Comes Next?

Technical Work

Concept Engineering

- Design constraints including existing ROW and land use, environmental resources, location of adjacent roadways, municipal boundaries

Transportation and Land Use Integration

- Local land use controls/zoning, economic conditions and growth trends, environmental constraints

Evaluation of Concepts

- Traffic impacts, multi-modal considerations
- Environmental impacts – wetlands, floodplains, habitats, noise

Outreach Activities

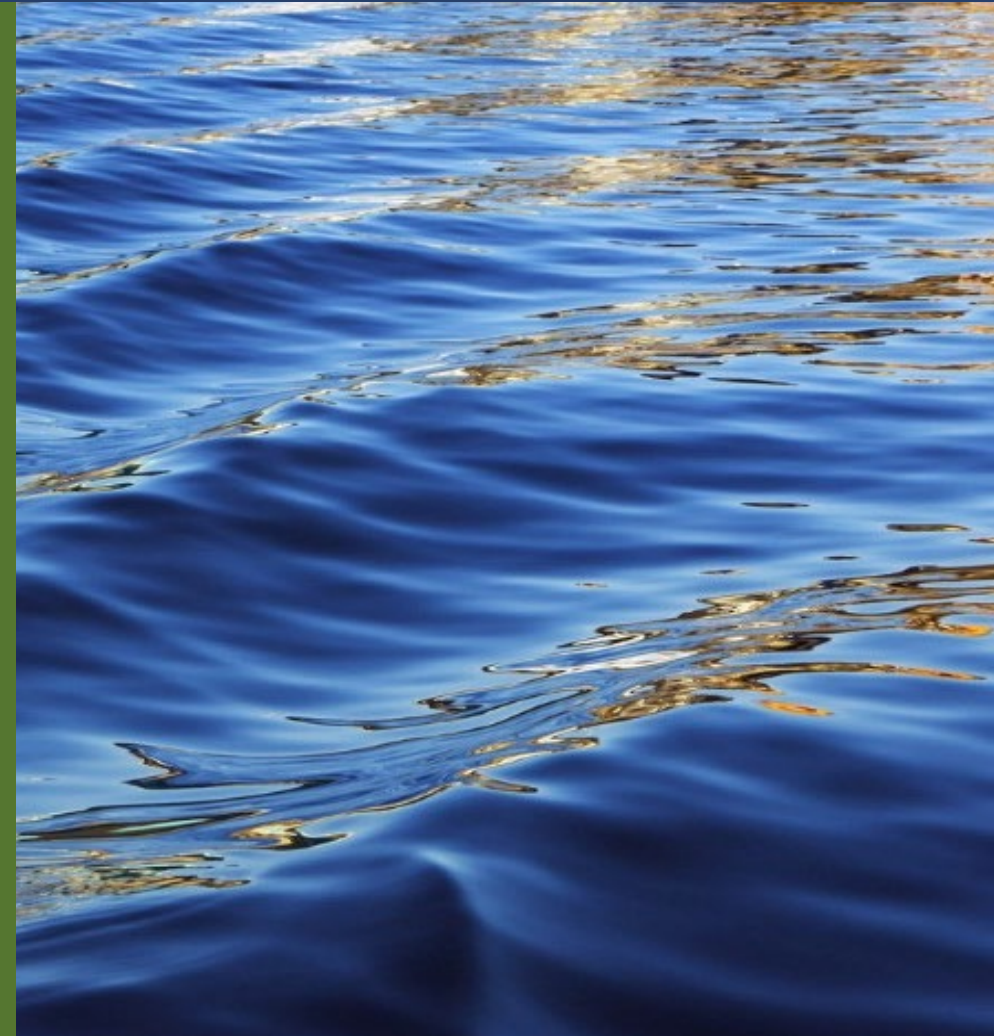
Public
Workshops
Spring 2023

Land Use
Visioning
Summer 2023

Public
Workshop
Summer 2023

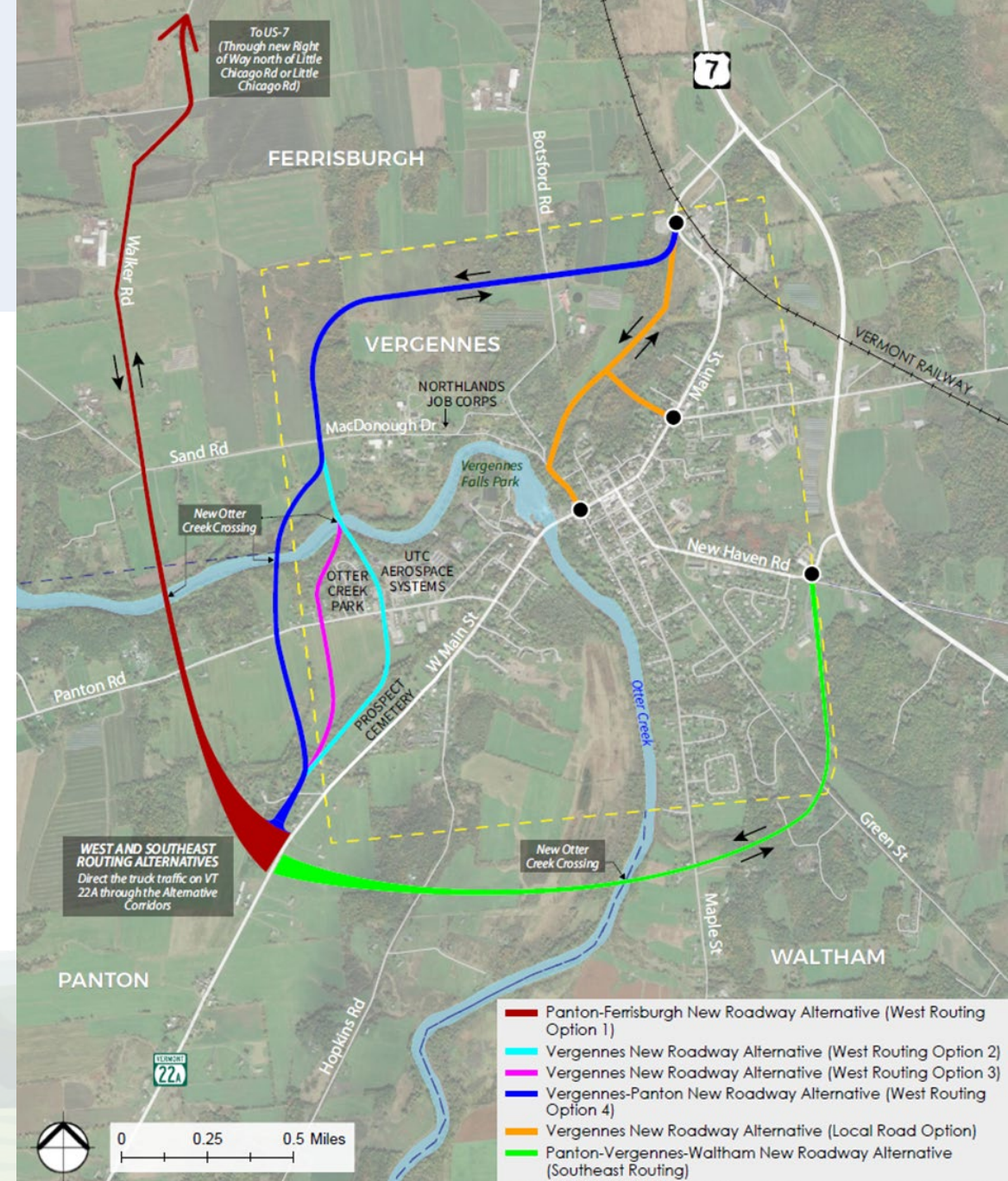


**Additional Discussion
and Consensus Points**



Discussion [If Needed]

- Given what you have heard today, should the **orange** route continue for further study, pending score refinement?
- Given what you have heard today, is there sufficient justification for reconsidering the **green** and/or **red** routes for further study?
- Any additional feedback for the study team?



Consensus Points

- Study team will touch base with the Technical Committee and Agency Partners to share a final list of concepts to be recommended for further study and ask committee members/agency partners for confirmation
- How would you prefer to be updated and provide your opinion?
 - A. Email
 - B. Group meeting
 - C. One-on-one meeting



Updates and Announcements



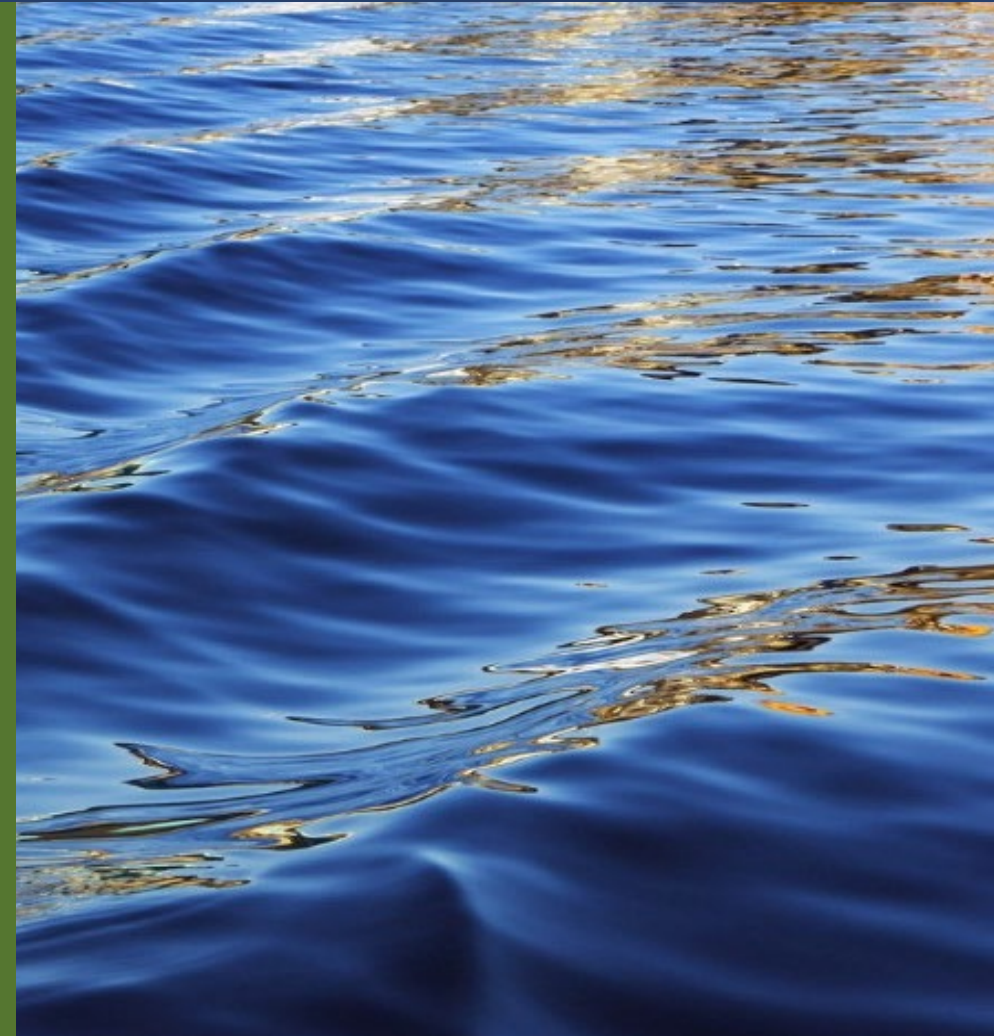
We welcome your input and appreciate your feedback. Please visit <https://vergennespel.com/> to join our email list for Study updates

Please visit email us at vergennespel@gmail.com for further information, to submit comments or to contact the Study team.



October Screening Results (Subject to refinement in the next month)

*Please refer to the technical memorandum for rationale
for how the concepts were scored.*



October Screening Results - Quality of Life

Screening Criteria	Systemwide	VT-17	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/ VT-22A Southbound	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions	No Build
Reduces truck noise, dust, and emissions in downtown Vergennes	++	++	--	+	++	++	++	++	++	+	-	-	+	--
Avoids potential impacts to natural and water resources	O	O	O	+	--	--	--	--	-	O	O	--	+	O
Maintains and/or supports community character of downtown Vergennes	+	+	O	+	+	O	O	O	+	-	+	O	O	-

**Refer to the technical memorandum for rationale for how the concepts were scored.*

October Screening Results - Equity

Screening Criteria	Systemwide	VT-17	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/ VT-22A Southbound	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions	No Build
Balances distribution of transportation resource benefits	O	-	O	+	-	O	O	O	-	+++	+	+	+	O
Avoids impacts to surrounding communities, including disproportionate impacts to environmental justice communities	-	==	O	-	==	==	==	O	-	O	O	O	O	O

**Refer to the technical memorandum for rationale for how the concepts were scored.*

October Screening Results – Mobility and Access

Screening Criteria	Systemwide	VT-17	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions	No Build
Maintains freight mobility throughout the region	-	-	-	O	O	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	O	O
Improves access to destinations in downtown Vergennes for all modes of transportation	+	+	O	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	O	O	O	-

**Refer to the technical memorandum for rationale for how the concepts were scored.*

October Screening Results - Economic Vitality

Screening Criteria	Systemwide	VT-17	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/ VT-22A Southbound	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions	No Build
Promotes economic vitality of Downtown Vergennes	+	O	+	+	O	+	+	+	O	+	-	-	O	O
Promotes regional economic vitality	+	O	-	O	O	+	+	+	O	+	O	O	O	O

**Refer to the technical memorandum for rationale for how the concepts were scored.*

October Screening Results - Safety, Circulation, Resilience

Screening Criteria	Systemwide	VT-17	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions	No Build
Creates redundancies to improve resilience of road network	O	O	O	O	++	++	++	++	++	O	O	O	O	O
Improves motorized circulation through and within the region	O	+	O	O	+	+	+	+	+	O	O	O	+	-
Improves active transportation (bicycle, pedestrian, transit) through and within the region	O	O	O	+	+	+	+	+	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improves motorized and non-motorized safety on Vermont Route 22A through downtown Vergennes	+	+	O	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	O	O	+	-

October Screening Results - Land Use

Screening Criteria	Systemwide	VT-17	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions	No Build
Consistent with existing regional land uses	O	-	O	-	⚡	⚡	⚡	⚡	⚡	-	+	-	O	O
Aligns with future and projected regional land uses and statewide goals	+	O	O	O	-	O	O	O	-	+	O	-	O	O

**Refer to the technical memorandum for rationale for how the concepts were scored.*