

Housekeeping Items

Vergennes PEL Study Public Meeting

- The meeting is being recorded and will be posted on the project website
- Remote attendees are muted throughout the presentation



**For those joining us by
computer or web browser**

Questions may be entered in the Q&A Window at any time (button appears at the bottom of the screen) - please include your email address



**For those joining us by
phone**

Press *9 to raise your hand to be called on during the question-and-answer session following the presentation



For those joining us in person

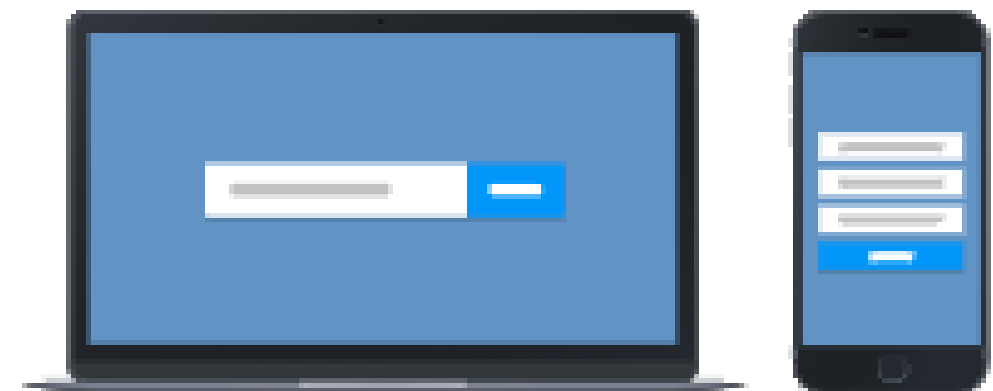
Please raise your hand and a member of our team will alert you when it's your turn to speak during the question-and-answer session

Housekeeping Items

Polling Logistics and Test

- This meeting will use live polling with Poll Everywhere.
- Follow the instruction on the right to join via the internet on a computer or smartphone.
- Test out the poll before the meeting starts – see the following screen for a test question.

Join by Web



1

Go to **PollEv.com/PELSTUDY** to enter the poll via web browser on your smartphone or computer.

2

As new poll questions are open you will see the question on your device and be able to answer.

When you think of Vergennes what word comes to mind?

V E R G E N N E S

Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL) Study



Vergennes PEL Study Public Meeting Presentation

November 4, 2021



Team Introductions

Joe Segale, VTrans

Katharine Otto, VTrans

Adam Lougee, ACRPC

Mike Winslow, ACRPC

Bryan Pounds, WSP

Stephen Chiaramonte, WSP

Ken Robie, Dubois & King

V E R G E N N E S

Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL) Study



Why Are We Here?

- Address truck traffic on Route 22A through downtown Vergennes
- Build upon previous planning efforts
- Evaluate all viable alternatives
- Be inclusive in this process



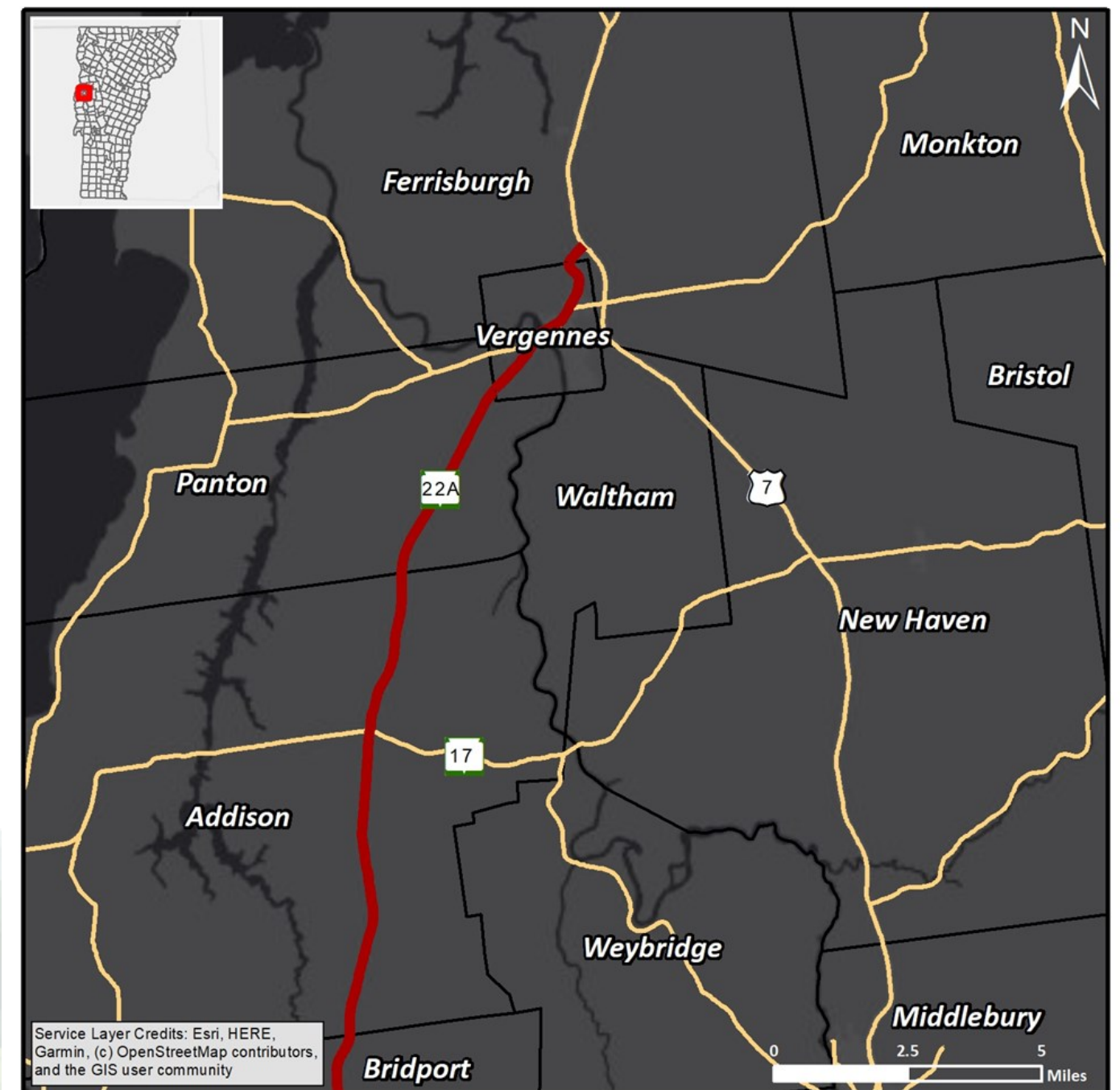
Meeting Agenda

- Project background
- Corridor data
- Review previous Purpose and Need Statement
- PEL overview
- Public outreach efforts
- Study schedule



Vergennes Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL) Study – Public Meeting Goals

- Introduce the Study and Project Team
- Identify the problem and previous work
- Identify and discuss critical issues
- Explain what a PEL Study does and why it is important
- Layout the PEL Study process and timeline
- Hear other important issues and concerns from the public



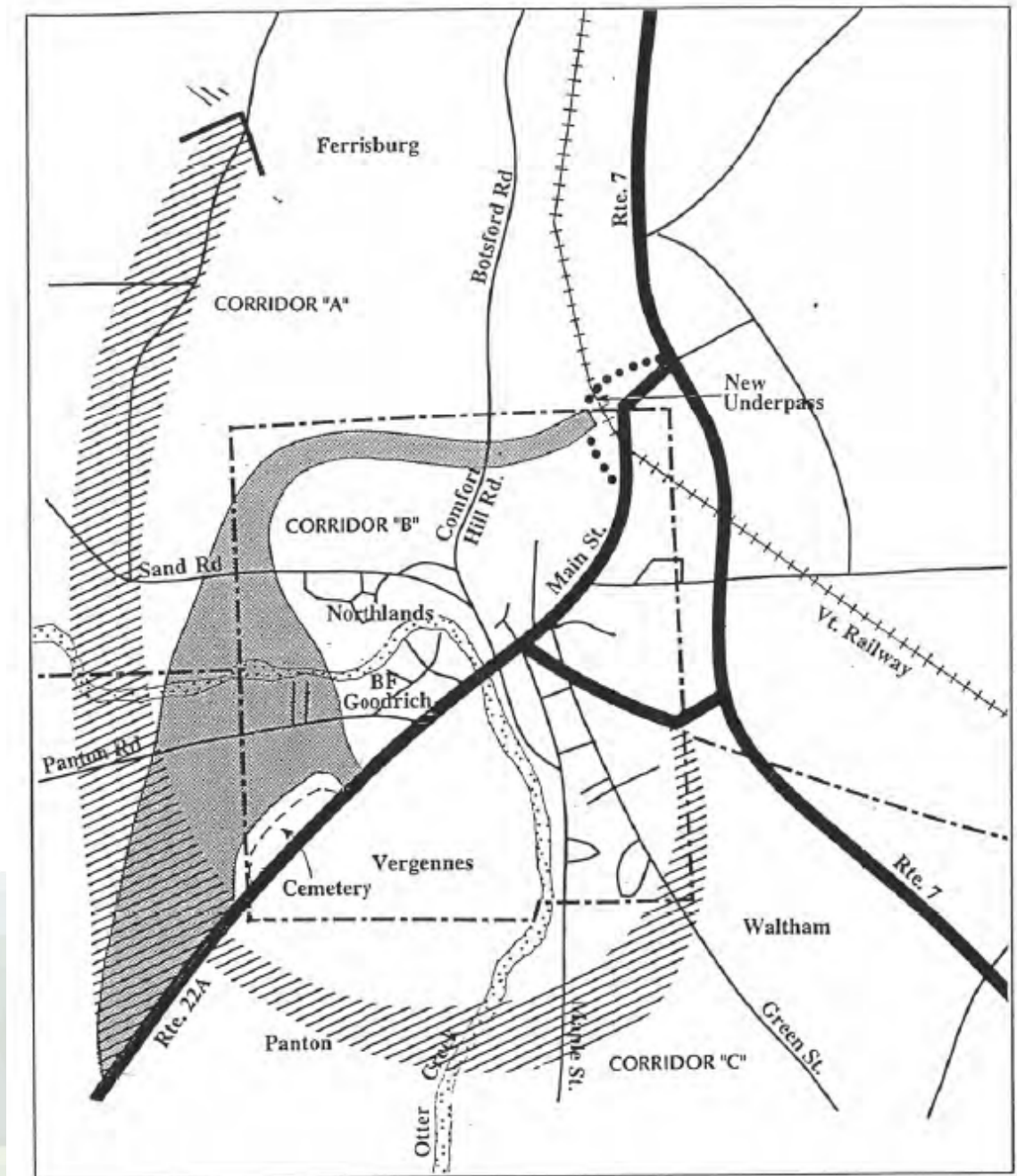
Background & Previous Planning Efforts

1995 Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

- Studied three potential bypass corridors
- Settled on Alignment B ~ 2.5 miles, includes a new bridge over the Otter Creek
- Approximate cost - \$52 million

2002 Vergennes Traffic Impact Study

- Included Public Workshop/ Brainstorming
- Studied several alternatives
- Approximate cost to reconstruct Route 17 - \$13.7 million
- Approximate cost of Vergennes Bypass - \$13.3 million



Previous Planning Efforts - 2019

- Agreement that the truck issue needs to be addressed
- Near consensus by meeting participants in support of New Alignment
- Approximate cost - \$27.5 million
- Reframed as the Vergennes Economic Corridor
- VTrans Secretary Flynn commits to PEL with letters of support from legislative bodies from Vergennes and six surrounding Towns
- Funding for PEL in VTrans 2021 Capital Program approved by General Assembly



How do you use Route 22A through Vergennes?

Work along the route or use the route to travel to and from work

Live along the corridor

Bike/walk along the route

Shop and conduct business along the route

Medical

School/children's activities

Did you know about and/or participate in the previous studies?

Yes - I participated in the previous study or studies by attending a meeting or discussing the study with the project team

Yes - I knew about the previous study or studies but I did not participate

No - This is the first Vergennes study I am aware of

Unsure

Corridor Profile – VT Route 22A

■ Traffic Volumes (AADT)

- Heaviest volumes within Downtown
- Traffic flows slightly declining but still substantial
- Truck percentages generally 10-15%

■ Identified Crash Clusters (2016-2021)

- Route 22A, Elm Street to Coventry Lane
- Monkton Road, Route 22A to Crescent Drive
- Heavy Truck Crashes clustered within downtown core and vicinity of Live Young Kitchen

■ Transit Ridership

- Tri-town - ~5,000 boardings in Vergennes (FY19)

■ VT Rail Line

- Top commodities – Stone/Concrete Clay, Lumber, Petroleum, Paper, Nonmetallic Minerals
- NY/Canada/Maine account for ~70 percent of all inbound/outbound tonnage



Critical Issue: Truck Traffic

Previous 2019 Study Identified:

- VT 22A carries a high volume of trucks.
Up to 800 trucks/day
 - 500+ tractor trailers daily
- Similar Routes/Downtowns in Vermont carry smaller truck volumes:
 - US 7 in Brandon – 190/day
 - VT 116 in Bristol – 50/day
 - VT 103 in Ludlow – 370/day
 - VT 9 in Wilmington – 360/day

Many trucks using VT 22A are regional (New York-based), traveling via US 4 (Fair Haven) or VT 17 (Lake Champlain Bridge)



July 2021 Vergennes PEL Study traffic data

- 22A (North of Vermont Discount Store):
 - Medium Truck: 230/day
 - Large Truck: 530/day
- 22A (South of Hopkins Road):
 - Medium Truck: 200/day
 - Multi-Unit (Large): 540/day

Key Themes: Equity, Mobility, Environment, Economy



Former Purpose and Need Statement - 2019

Enhance the economic vitality and quality of life in downtown Vergennes by reducing the noise, vibration, fume and dust impacts of truck traffic while:



Maintaining a high level of service for the movement of freight in the region



Minimizing and/or mitigating traffic impacts to other transportation corridors



Minimizing property and environmental resource impacts in neighboring communities



Supporting the continued movement of non-truck traffic through Downtown Vergennes



Providing a cost-effective use of resources.

Does the former Purpose and Need statement adequately define the issues that need to be addressed?

Yes - perfectly

Yes - mostly

No - but it would be ok with small edits

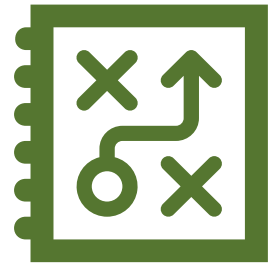
No - far from what is needed

Vergennes Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL) Study – What is a PEL?

- Identifies transportation issues, priorities, environmental concerns and economic goals to inform the environmental review process.
- Builds upon previous study efforts.
- Broadens the range of stakeholders to State and Federal Regulators.
- Recommended when projects:
 - Are regionally significant
 - Need to respond to community context
 - Are likely to have environmental constraints
 - Are likely to be costly
 - May be controversial



What are the Benefits of the Vergennes PEL?



Streamlines efforts
from Planning
into NEPA



Shortens timelines for
NEPA review and project
delivery



Stimulates the
development of
new tools



Helps identify
stakeholders early
in the process



Fosters relationships
among agencies and
the public



Engages non-
transportation agencies
in decision-making



Creates better real-
world outcomes for
the community



Improves planning
products that improve
the NEPA process

Current Vergennes PEL Study Project Outcomes

Development of the Purpose and Need Statement

Identification of all reasonable Alternatives that address the Purpose and Need Statement

Detailed evaluation of the most promising Alternatives and Land Use Visioning

Narrowing to a short list of Alternatives to advance for Federal Environmental Review

Public Outreach



Expanded and more inclusive than previous studies

Seeks local input and buy-in within decision-making process

Gathers public feedback on draft concepts at well-defined stages of the process

Conduct community land use visions to be considered in the PEL Study

Provide transparency throughout the study process

Completed and Ongoing elements include:

Vermont Truck and Bus Association survey

Targeted Selectboard/City Council presentations

Focus Groups (Equity, Mobility, Environment, Economic)

Public Outreach: What We've Heard So Far....

Vermont Truck and Bus Association Survey (September 2021)

- 10-question survey sent to 335 members (11% response rate)
- Almost 70% of trips have no origin/destination in Vergennes
- Primary cargo is related to timber and dairy industries
- Key issues are: Congestion, Roadway grade/features and Parked Vehicles
- Most respondents believe a detour from Route 22A would be greater than 10 minutes
- 86% of respondents indicated that they would use Route 7 as an alternate route



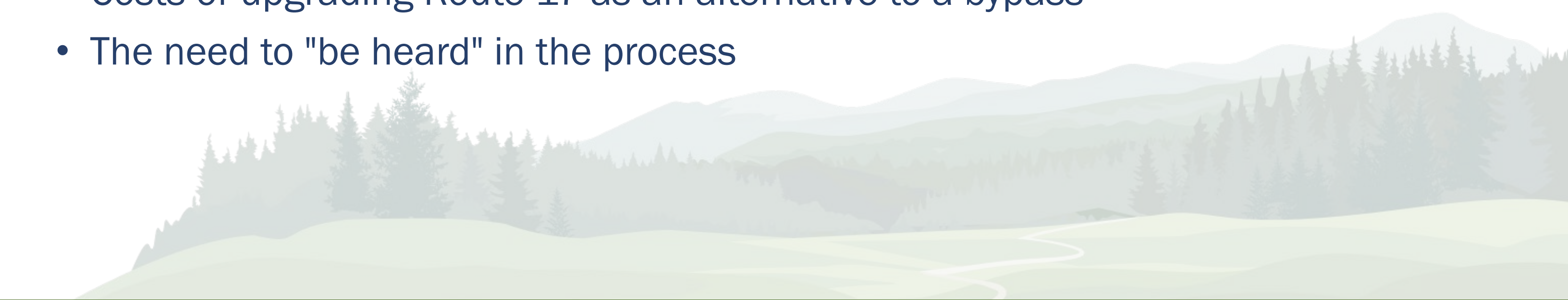
Source: Vermont Public Radio

Public Outreach: What We've Heard So Far....

Selectboard and City Council Meetings *September – October 2021*

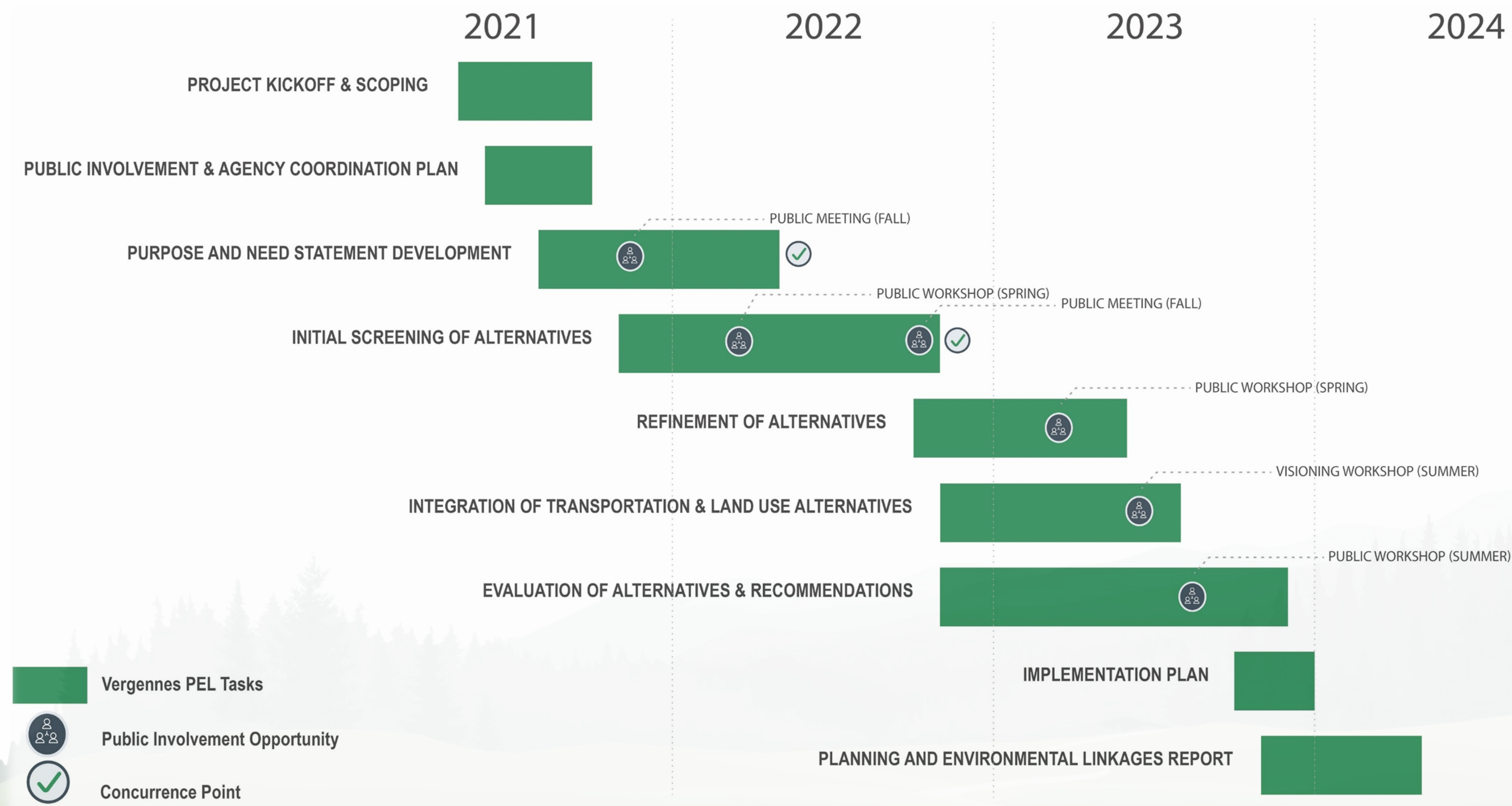
Communities Visited:		
Ferrisburgh	New Haven	
Vergennes	Waltham	
Weybridge	Addison	Panton

- Why is the Route 22A corridor being studied again?
- Is the study going to revisit all alternatives?
- Concerns about a potential bypass threatening the economic vitality of Vergennes
- Costs of upgrading Route 17 as an alternative to a bypass
- The need to "be heard" in the process



At the end of the study, I would like to see...

Study Schedule Overview



Former Purpose and Need Statement - 2019

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and-answer session

Thank You!



We welcome your input and appreciate your feedback.

Please visit
www.vergennespel.com for
further information, to submit
comments or to contact the
project team.