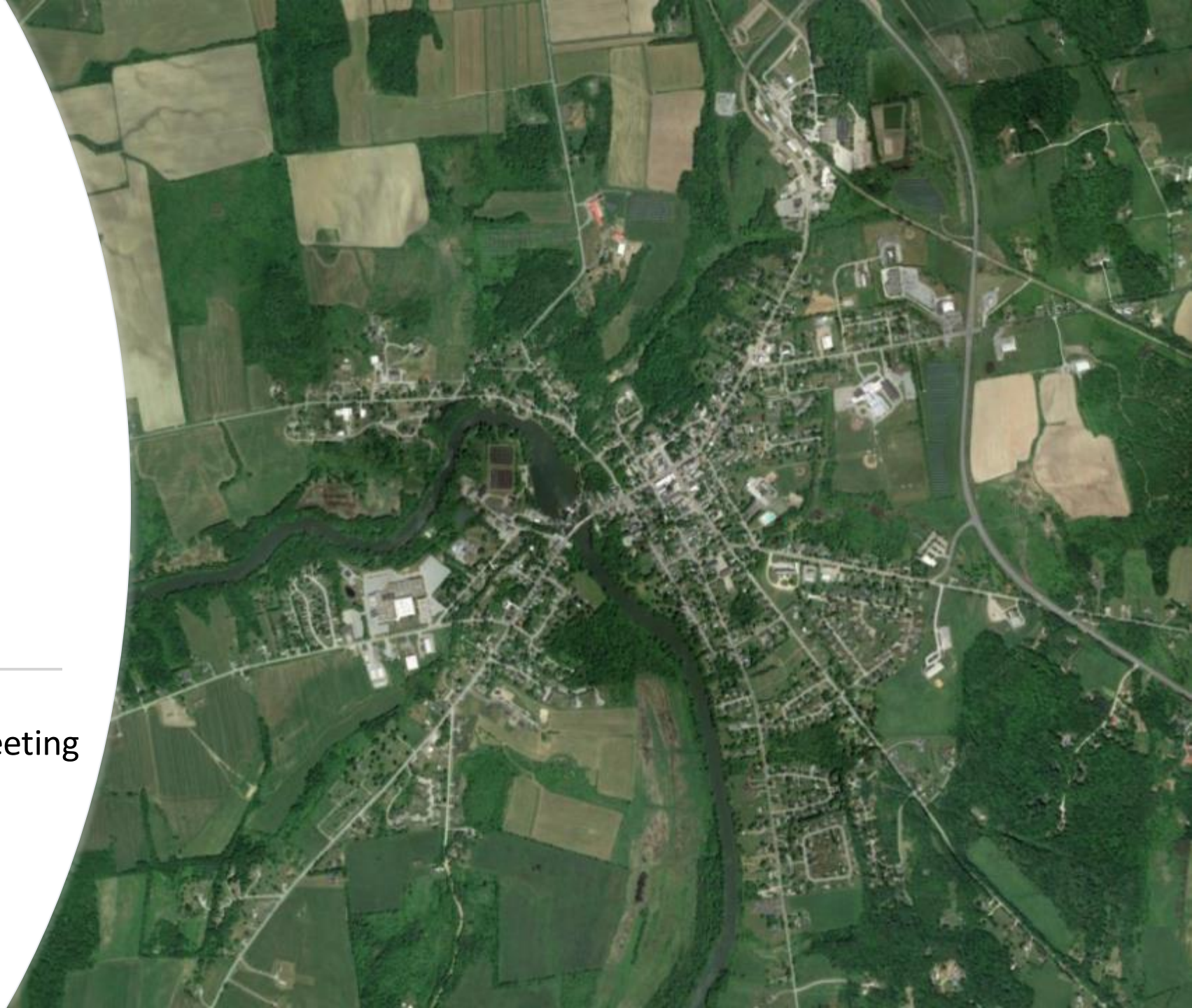




Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages Study: Land Use Visioning

Vergennes Planning Commission Meeting
September 11, 2023



Today's Goals

- Better understand Vergennes' character and vision for the future
- Link Vergennes' planning work to the PEL Study's road concepts
- Discuss upcoming Land Use Workshops

Today's Agenda

- Study overview
- Screening of concepts
- Concepts as they stand now
- Review of zoning regulations
- Roadway examples
- Land use visioning workshops



Study Overview



What is a Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study?

- PEL is a collaborative approach to transportation decision-making that considers environmental, community, and economic goals
- The goal of PEL is collaboration with stakeholders to better inform and accelerate a project moving forward and being built



Why are we doing a PEL study in Vergennes?

- Previous studies indicated regional agreement that truck volume in downtown Vergennes should be addressed.
- PEL study allow us to go:
 - Wider in our outreach and engagement
 - Deeper into details, including conceptual design and land use

Goal is for region to come to *consensus* on path forward

- VTrans and ACRPC role in PEL study is to facilitate regional process, NOT to decide path forward
- In absence of consensus from the region, change is unlikely



Where are we?

PEL Study (tasks completed)

- Started in 2021
- Define what we are working towards (Purpose and Need Statement)
- Narrow down full list of concepts



PEL Study (to do)

- now thru end of 2024
- Land use visioning
- Conceptual design
- Evaluation of concepts
- Implementation options
- Finalize report



Find funding

- unknown timeline



Design & Engineering

- 7 - 13 years
- Conceptual, Draft and Final Design
- Environmental Studies including NEPA
- Permitting
- Right-of-Way Acquisitions



Construction

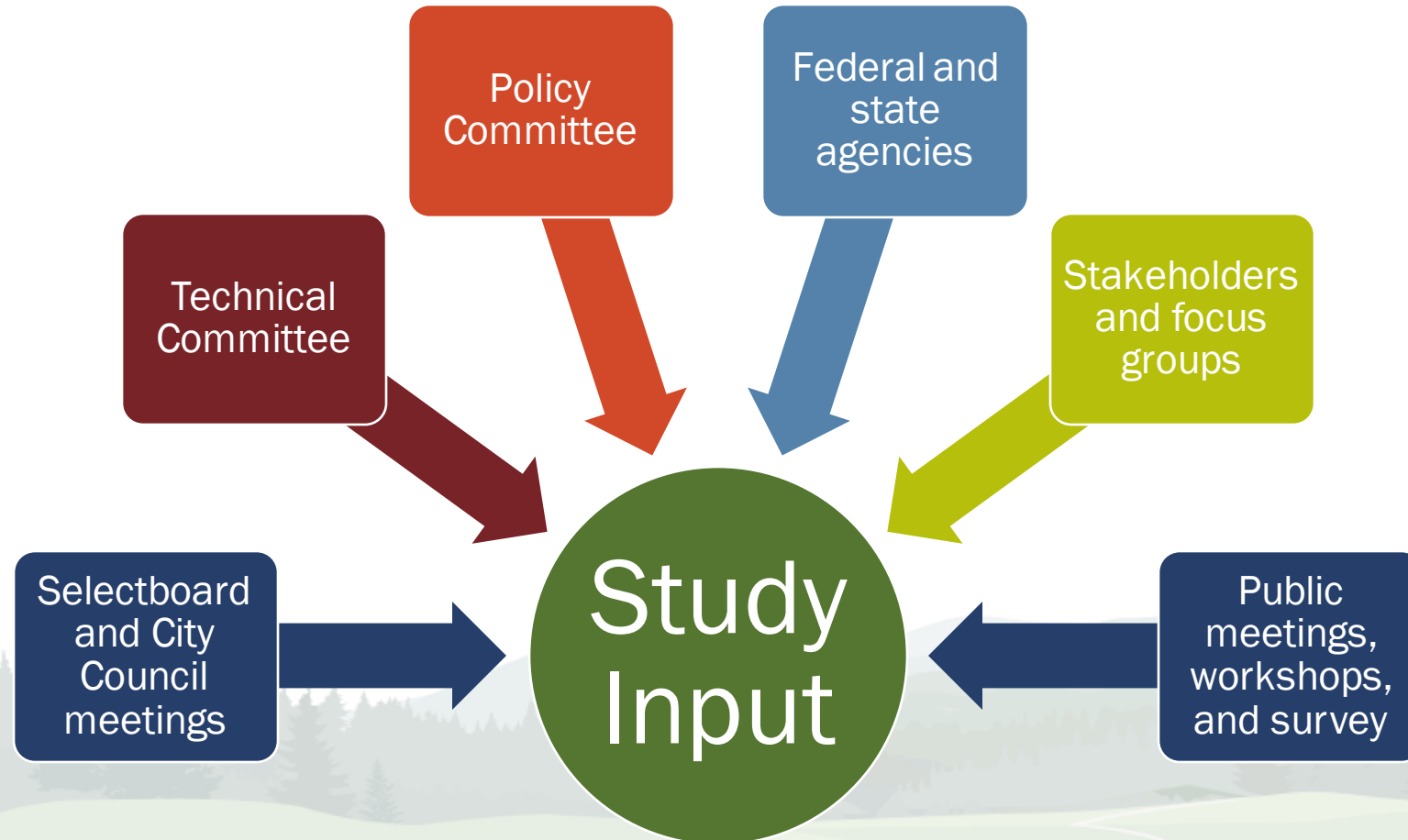
- 2 - 4 years

What we are doing as part of this study

If the study concludes construction is needed, these are the steps which would occur next.

The study may conclude that construction is not needed.

Collaborative Approach





**Screening
Fall 2022 – Spring 2023**



Purpose and Need Statement

The **purpose** is to reduce the impacts of through truck traffic, including safety, congestion, noise, vibration, and dust on Route 22A in downtown Vergennes. Transportation solutions that reduce truck related quality of life impacts should also meet the mobility, safety, and economic vitality needs of Vergennes and the neighboring communities.

A summary of the **needs** identified are detailed below.



Mobility and Access: Maintain opportunities for the movement of freight in the region and minimize and/or mitigate traffic impacts to other transportation corridors



Safety, Circulation and Resilience: Support the continued movement, resilience and safety of travel through downtown Vergennes and in the neighboring communities.



Quality of Life: Improve the quality of life and minimize negative property and environmental resource impacts in downtown Vergennes and neighboring communities.









Land Use: Support local and regional land use plans and policies and state land use goals.



Economic Vitality: Promote economic vitality of downtown Vergennes, goods movement in Vergennes and neighboring communities, and support rural economy.

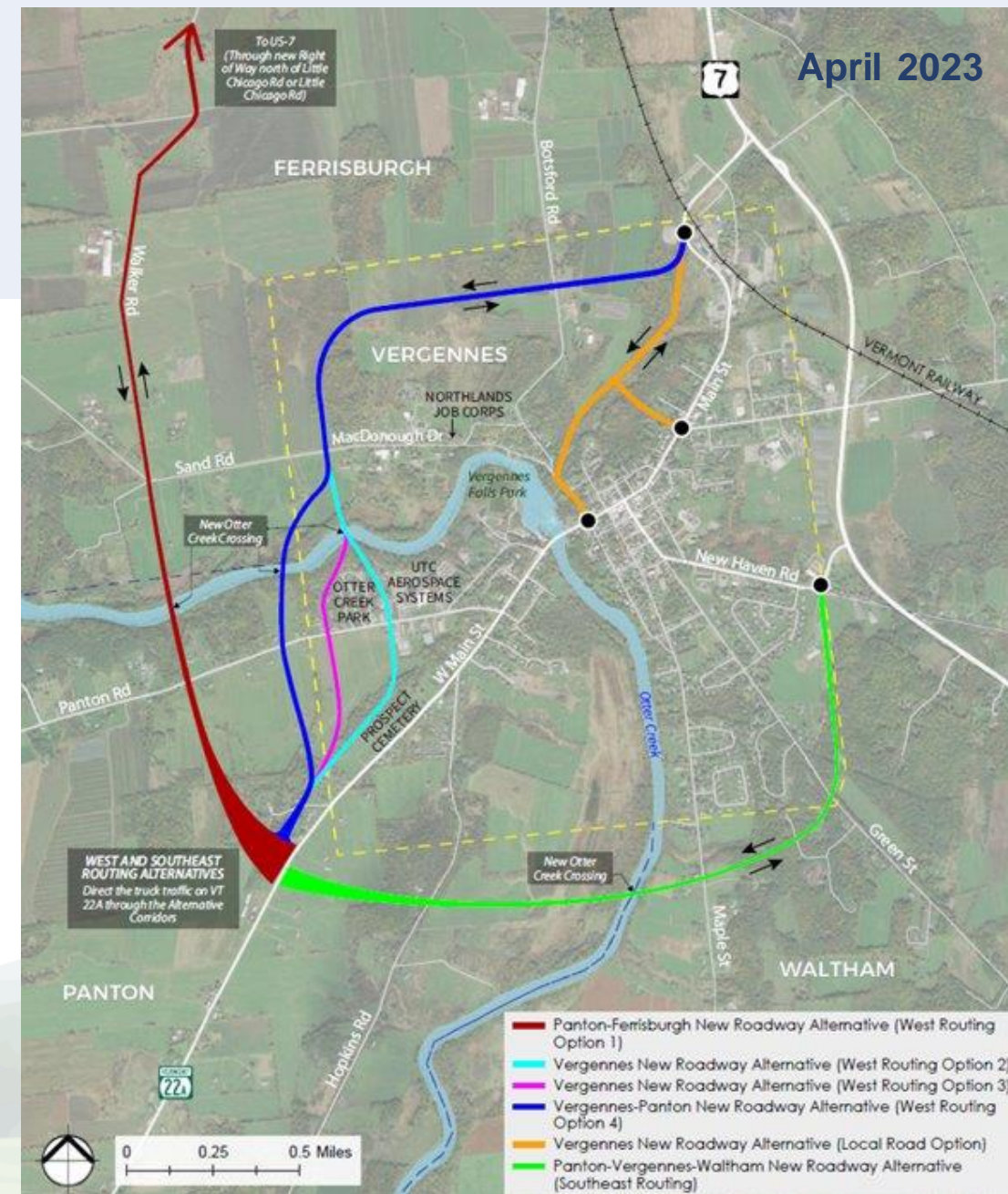
Concepts were evaluated by multiple criteria (Screening Phase)

 Mobility & Access	 Safety, Circulation & Resilience	 Quality of Life & Environment	 Land Use	 Economic Vitality	 Equity
<p>Maintain freight mobility throughout the region</p> <p>Improve access to destinations in downtown Vergennes for all modes</p>	<p>Support circulation through and within region for ALL users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motorized • Active transportation (walkers, bicyclists, and transit riders) • Freight <p>Improve overall safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize conflict point • Improve visibility <p>Improve connectivity of road network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase resilience with alternate routes • Positive impact for emergency response 	<p>Reduce truck noise and emissions</p> <p>Support community character</p> <p>Avoid impacts to vulnerable natural resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rivers and streams • Wetlands • Flood hazard areas • Threatened and endangered species <p>Minimize impacts to protected land & agricultural soils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime agricultural soils • Conserved land • State and municipal land 	<p>Aligns with existing land uses</p> <p>Aligns with future land uses and goals</p> <p>Aligns with statewide goals</p> <p>Identify proximity to existing development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential properties • Nursing homes • Medical facilities • Educational facilities 	<p>Promote economic vitality in downtown Vergennes</p> <p>Promote regional economic vitality</p>	<p>Balance the distribution of transportation resources</p> <p>Avoid impacts to surrounding communities, including disproportionate impacts to environmental justice communities</p>

Full screening process provided in the April 2023 Technical Memo at <https://vergennespel.com/study-documents/>

Screening Approach

- 13 concepts were considered, including improvements to existing roadways, new roadways, and other freight modes
 - 7 concepts were dismissed
- Primary screening scored concepts according to a variety of factors based on the Purpose and Need.
 - 1 concept was dismissed (Red)
- 5 concepts recommended for further study as well as the “no build” concept
- Tech memo is available on study website:
<https://vergennespel.com/study-documents/>



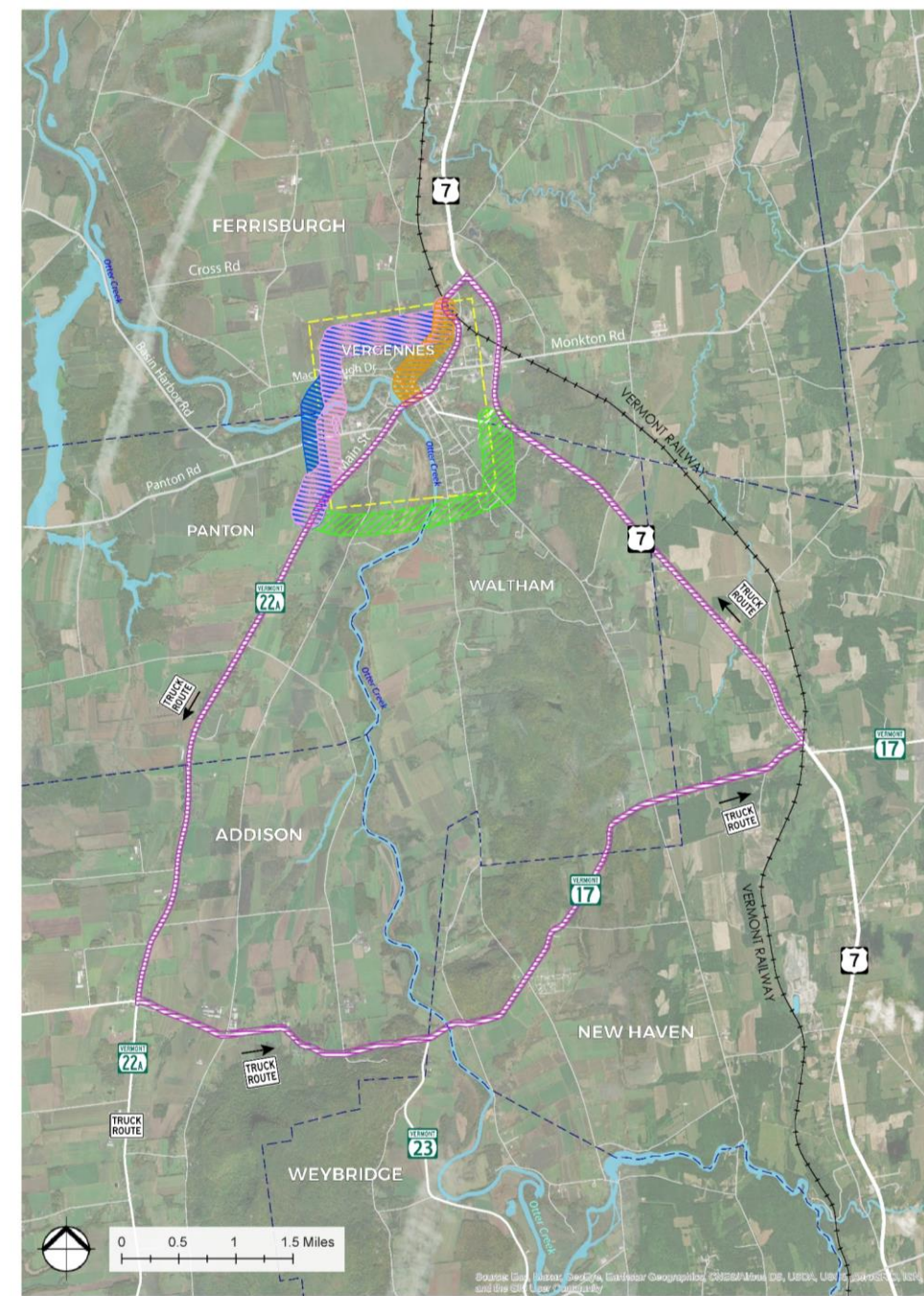


Concepts as they stand now

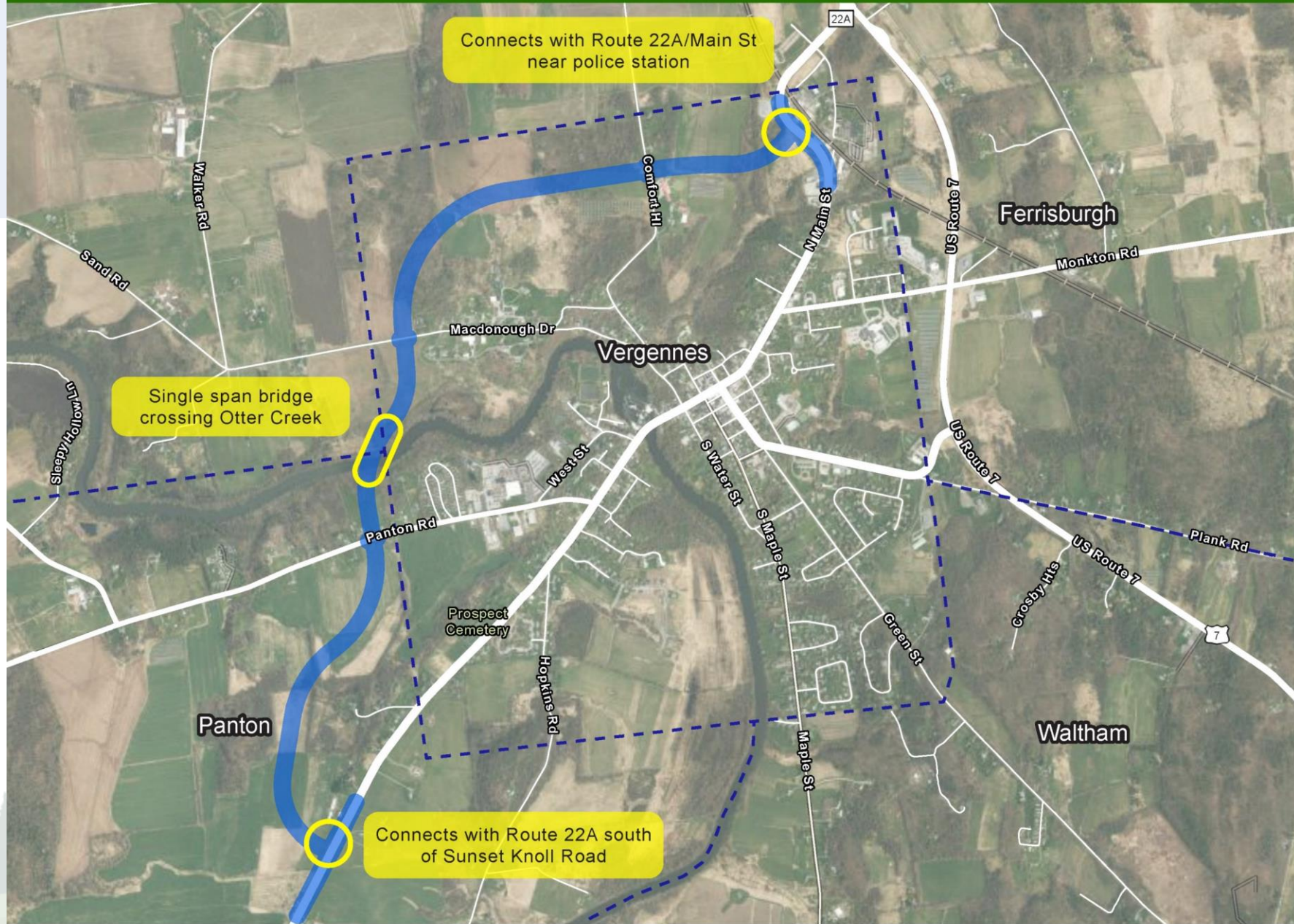


Route Concepts

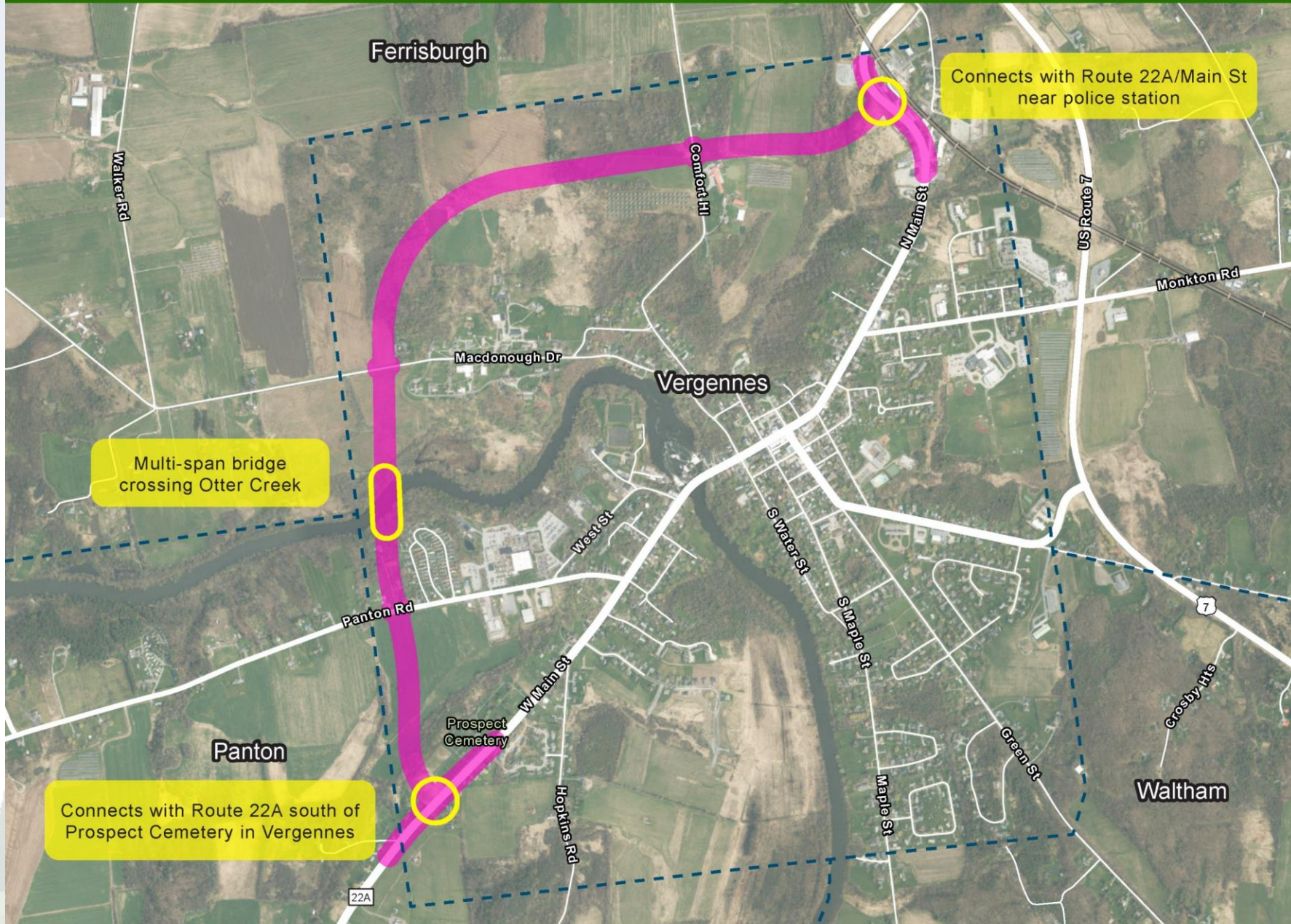
- 4 new roadways
- 1 concept that improves existing roadways
- No Build option that would maintain Route 22A in its existing configuration
 - Continual maintenance and repairs would be performed to ensure the safety of the traveling public
 - Safety measures would be implemented to the extent feasible and practical.



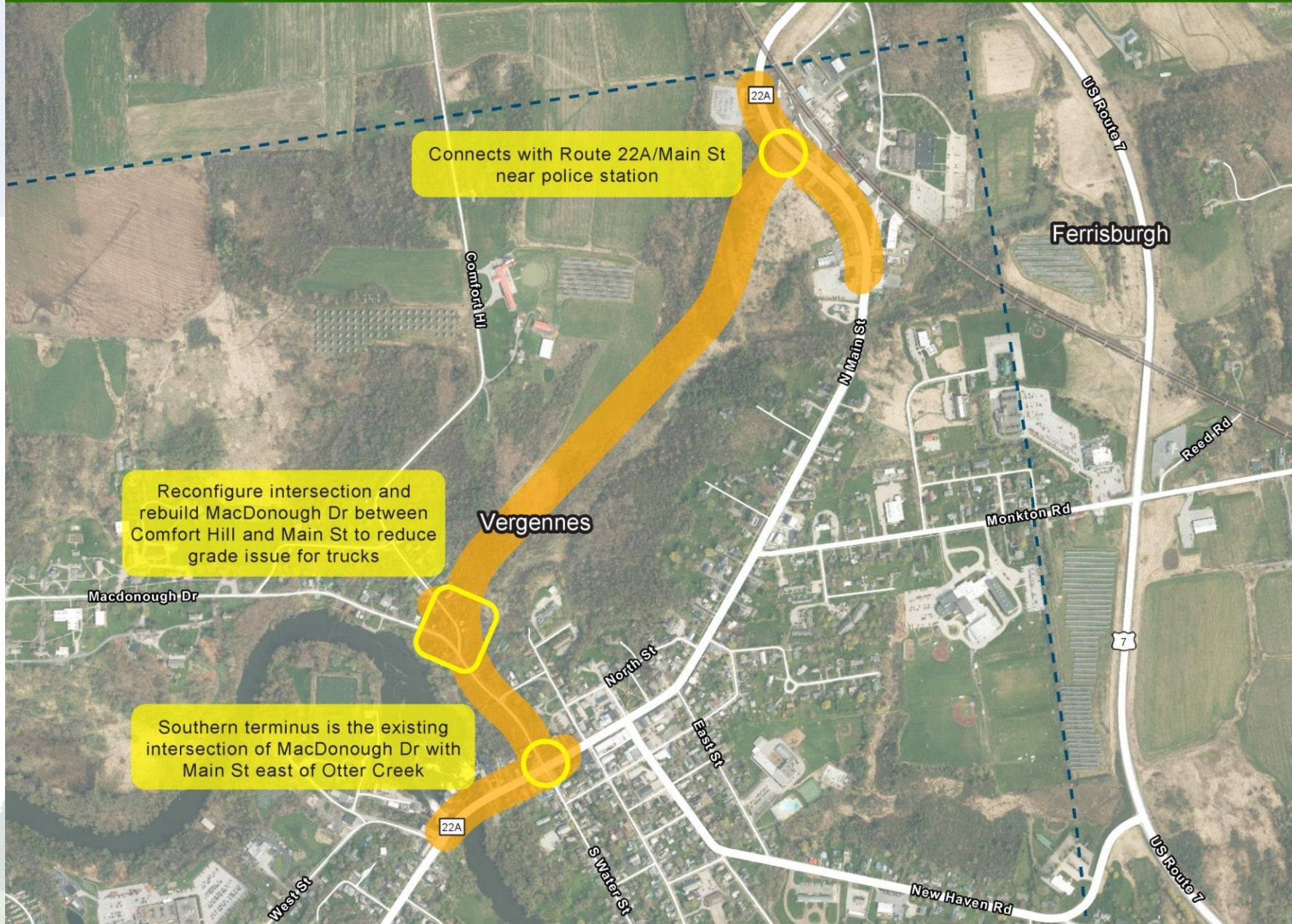
Blue Route



Pink Route



Orange Route

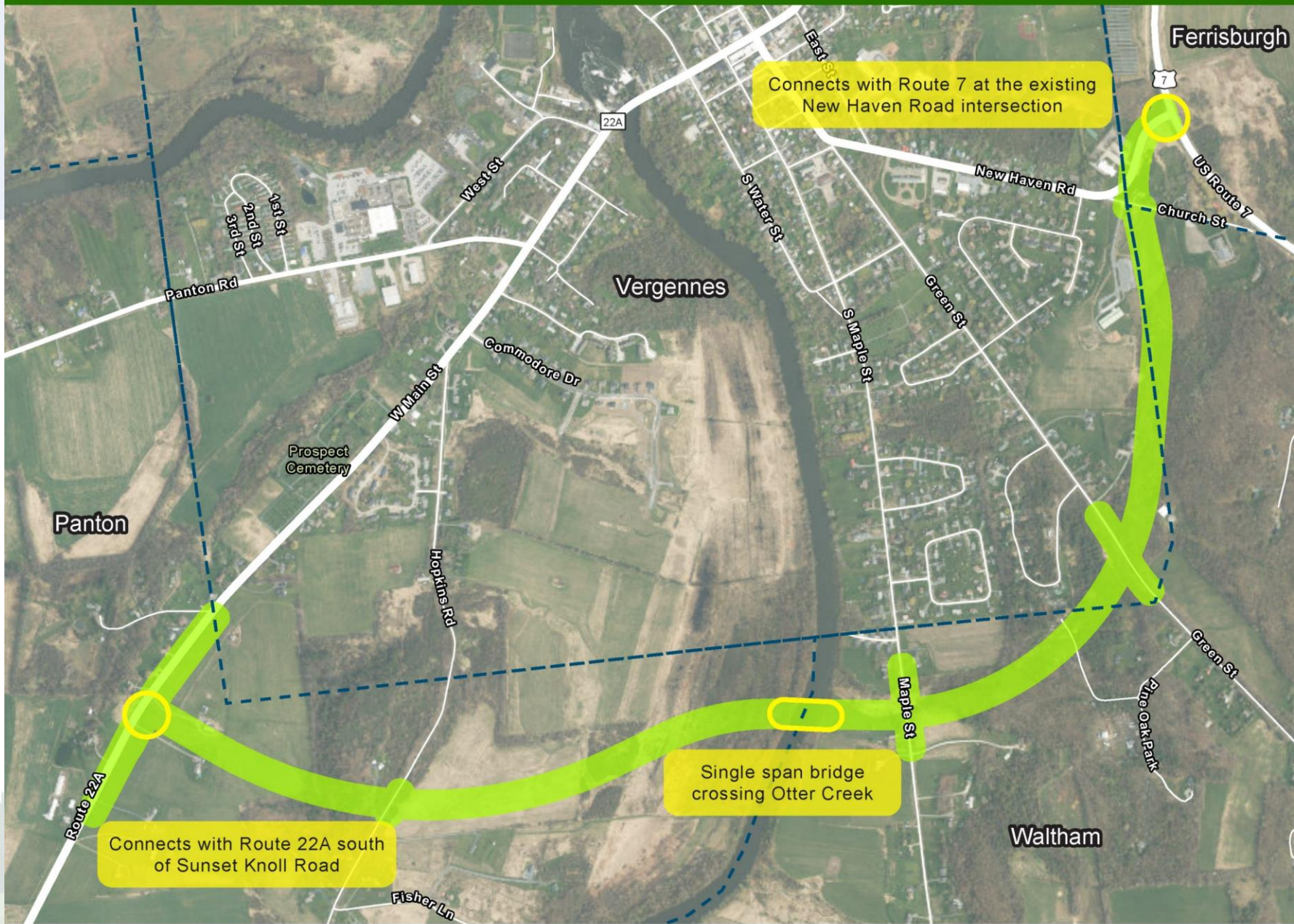


Connects with Route 22A/Main St near police station

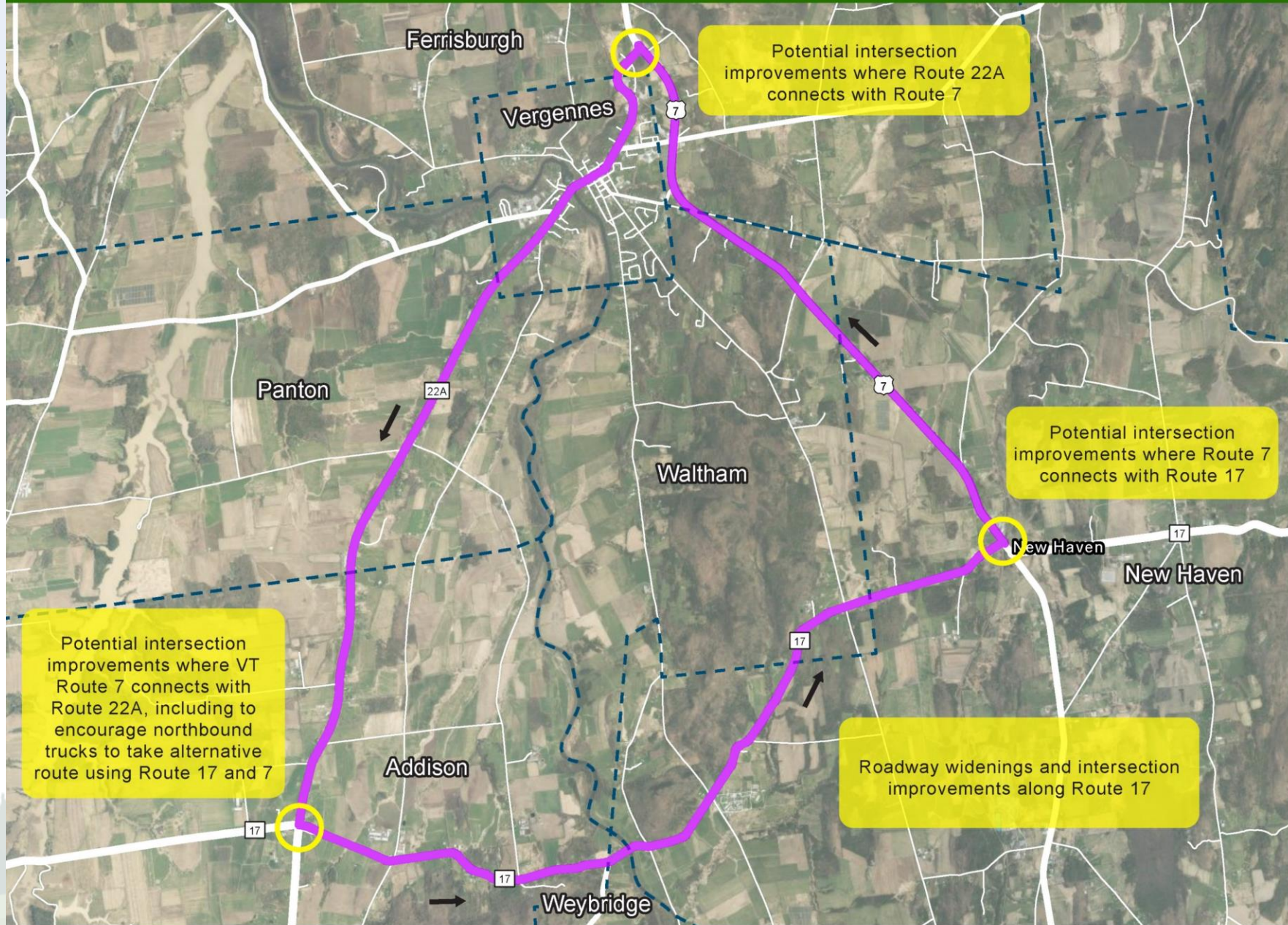
Reconfigure intersection and rebuild MacDonough Dr between Comfort Hill and Main St to reduce grade issue for trucks

Southern terminus is the existing intersection of MacDonough Dr with Main St east of Otter Creek

Green Route



Purple Route





Review of Vergennes Municipal Development Plan



Based on its Municipal Development Plan, Vergennes Values....

- Growth and development that recognizes the natural features of the land and its suitability for use
- Access to public parks, trails, bike paths, playgrounds, and other facilities
- A range of housing options, including owner-occupied, rental, affordable and manufactured units
- Small to mid-size industrial and commercial businesses that are compatible with the City's character
- Public services and facilities that are available, as needed, and will continue to be available into the future
- What else does Vergennes value?

VERGENNES MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2020 – 2028

Adopted by Vergennes City Council on March 10, 2020

Approved by Addison County Regional Planning Commission on _____

This plan is available online at www.vergennes.org

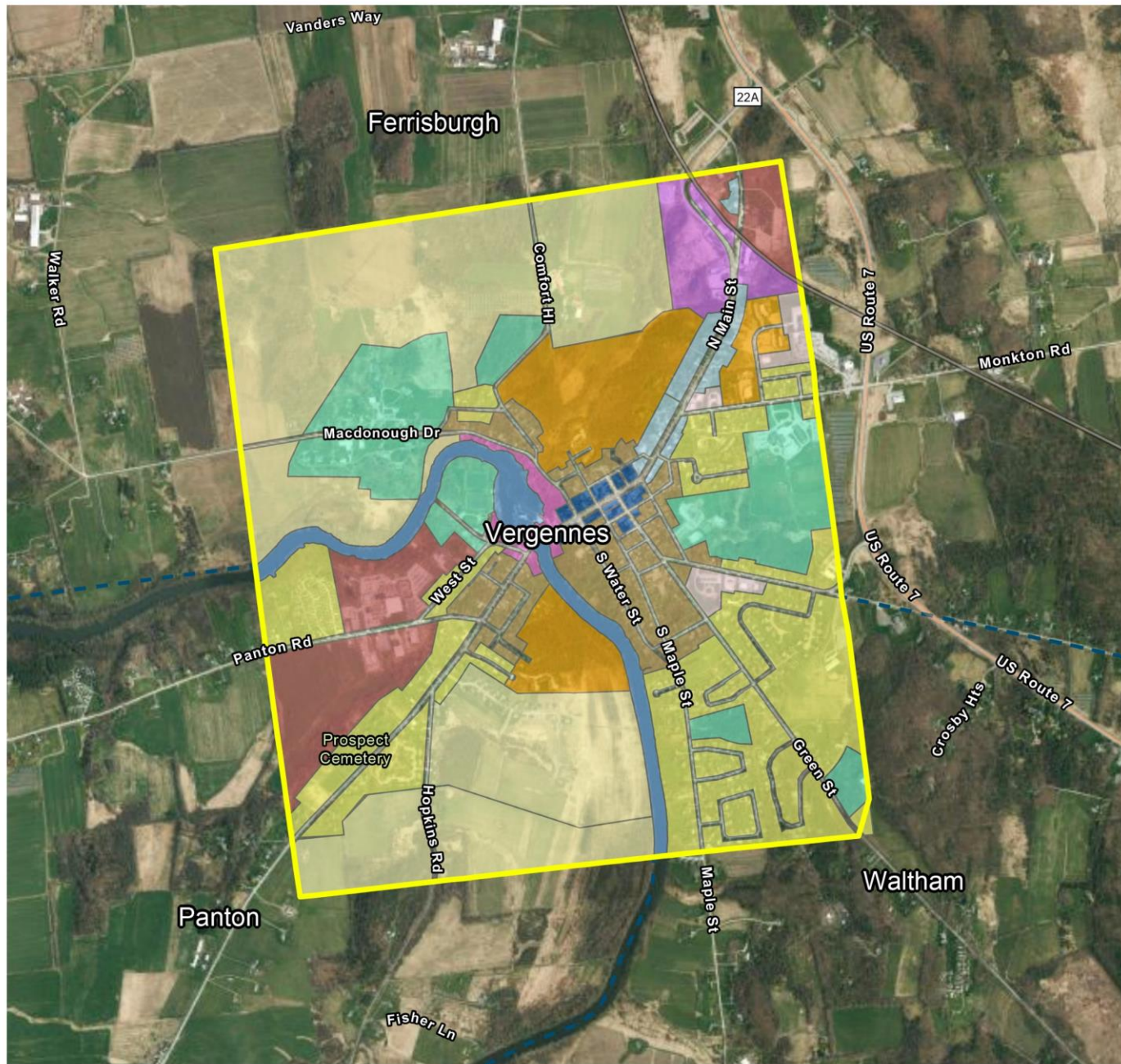
Prepared by:

Vergennes Planning Commission

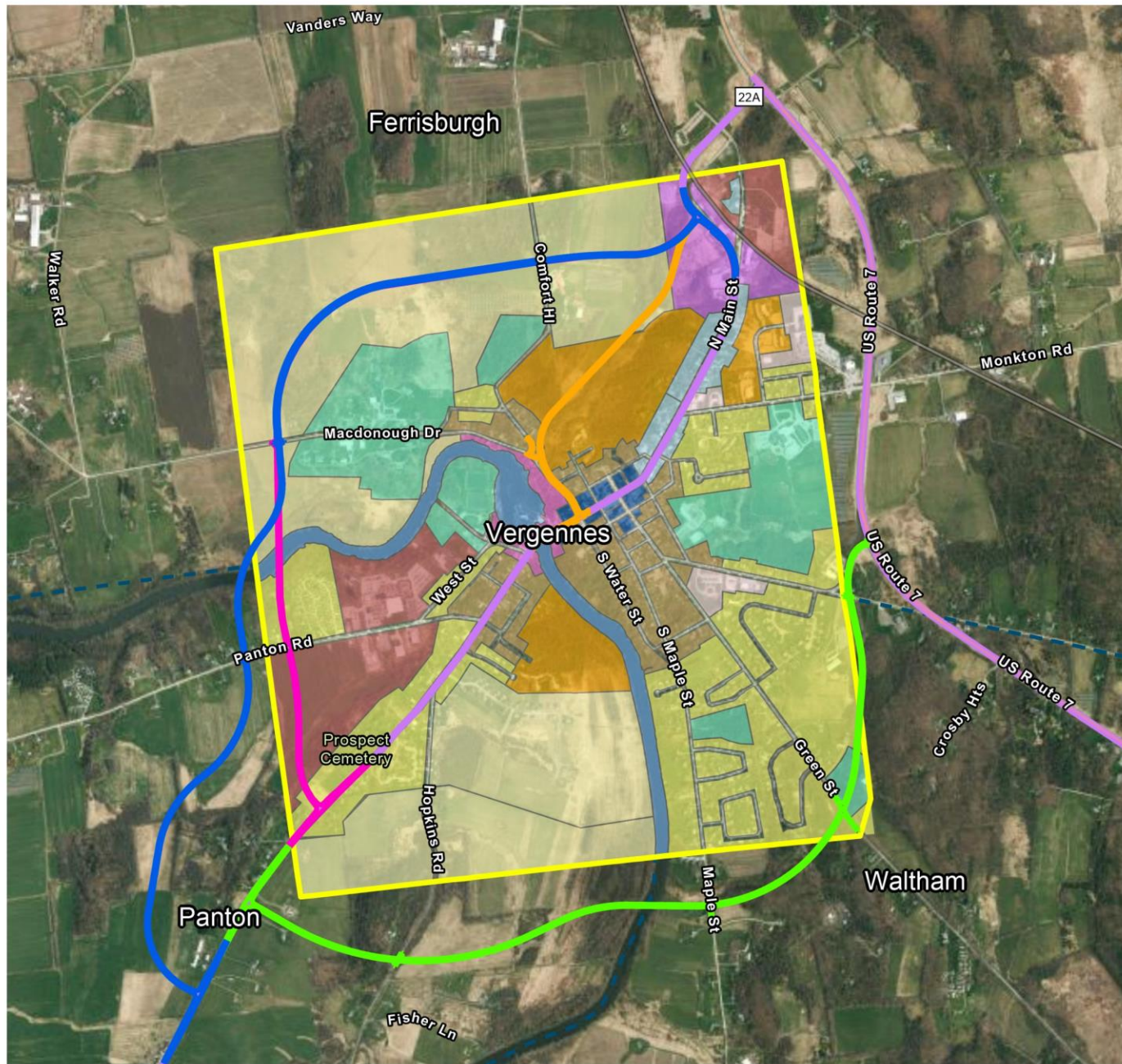
Danelle Birong
Cheryl Brinkman
John Coburn
Tim Cook
Shannon Haggett, Chair
Carrie Macfarlane
Mike Winslow, Vice Chair

Updated from the 2009 Plan which was written with technical assistance by:

LandWorks
Landscape Architecture. Planning. Graphic Design.
228 Maple Street, Suite 32
Middlebury, Vermont 05753
802.388.3011 (phone)
802.388.1950 (fax)
www.landworksvt.com
info@landworksvt.com



- Central Business District (CBD)
- Commercial District (C)
- High Density Residential District (HDR)
- Historic Neighborhood District (HN)
- Industrial District (IND)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Medium Density Residential District (MDR)
- Northern Gateway District (NGD)
- Otter Creek Basin District (OCBD)
- Public District (PUB)
- Residential/Limited Business District (R/LBD)
- Waterbody



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What it Means?

Implications and Options for Vergennes

- New roads in Vergennes can support a variety of land uses, which has tradeoffs.
- Access to and from a road, by cross streets and driveways, affects land use patterns.
- Consider how any new road can align with the City's planning around:
 - development growth or restriction
 - natural feature stewardship
 - transportation
 - public services
 - recreation

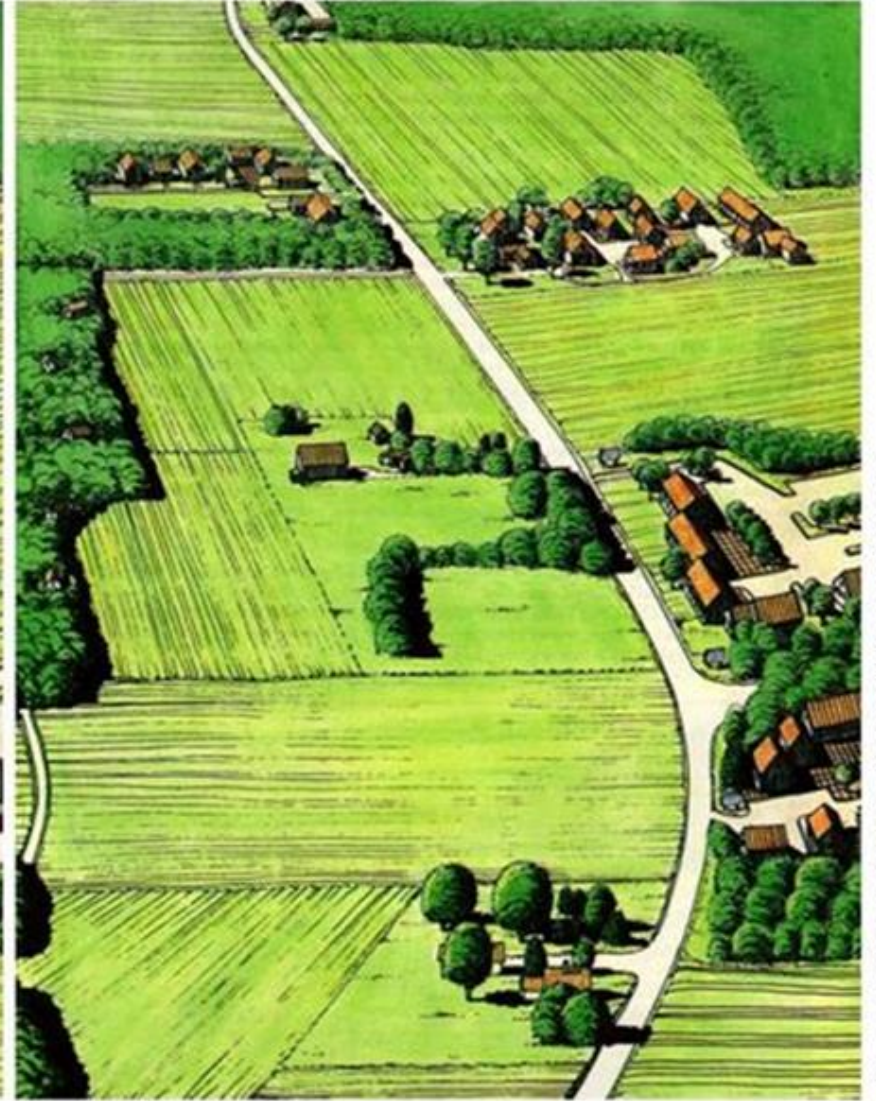
For Consideration

- How can community character – people, land uses, views, traditions – be preserved or enhanced if a new road is built?
- Are there land uses along new road alignments that would be desirable, or uses that should be avoided?
- Should a new road support recreational or active transportation projects?
- How would potential access to and from a road, like cross streets or driveways, work best within different parts of the Study area?

What it Means



Conventional



Design Based

By permission, Center for Rural Massachusetts



Food for Thought: Roadway Examples



Route 100 through Morrisville

- Limited access road
- Signalized and unsignalized intersections with side roads
- This portion of VT 100 does not intersect with private driveways

Note: The way any new road would intersect with existing roads, such as whether a dedicated turn lane would be necessary, has not been determined.



VT 100 intersection with Stafford Avenue (Google Earth)

VT 15 between St. Michael's College in Colchester and Essex Five Corners



VT 15 multi-use path entering Colchester (Google Earth)

- Multi-use path, separated from the roadway
- Most of VT 15 along this stretch only intersects with side roads

Note: Lane width, number of lanes, and posted speeds have not been determined for this Study's road concepts.

Further Discussion and Next Steps

Previous questions:

- How can community character – people, land uses, views, traditions – be preserved or enhanced if a new road is built?
- Are there land uses along new road alignments that would be desirable, or uses that should be avoided?
- Should a new road to support recreational or active transportation projects?
- How would potential access to and from a road, like cross streets or driveways, work best within different parts of the Study area?

Additional questions:

- What else would you like the Vergennes PEL Study Team to consider?
- What do you consider to be the keys to a successful community-wide event in Vergennes?
- Are there any existing local community events we can participate in?

Land Use Visioning Workshop

- Approximate month / time of day?
 - November-December / evening or weekend afternoon?
- Take a deeper dive into Land + Use, what matters to us, and our vision
- An opportunity to listen to all voices and generate ideas in an open forum
 - Are there people or groups that we want to make sure are “in the room”?
- Primarily in person workshops
 - Potential of a virtual workshop
- What will be the best way to work collaboratively?

What does consensus mean?

Levels of Consensus

1. I like it, am on board and can easily accept this decision.

2. I accept this decision but may have some questions/points to clarify at a later time.

3. I can live with this decision even though it may not be my preferred option.

This is our goal for everyone

4. I don't agree but I will not block this decision.

5. I loathe it and cannot accept this decision.



Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/levels-consensus-group-decision-making-success-leah-mether/>

Thank you!

A Public Survey is now open through September 25th at:
vergennespel.com/survey

We welcome your input and appreciate your feedback.

Please visit vergennespel.com to join the email list for Study updates.

You can email vergennespel@gmail.com for further information, to submit comments, or to contact the Study team.