Vergennes Route 22A Bypass

Preliminary Design Report

Final Report

Prepared for:

Vergennes Transportation Advisory Committee
Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Prepared by:

Community Planning & Design
with
Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Kathleen Ryan, Landscape Architect
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Preface

This is the final report submitted to the Vergennes Transportation Advisory Committee and the Addison County Regional Planning Commission which results from a study of the proposed Vergennes Route 22A bypass. This report is a follow-up to the *U.S. 7 Corridor Transportation Management Study,* completed in 1994 by Wilbur Smith Associates. As part of an overall strategy of improvements in the Route 7 corridor, that study recommended further investigation of a bypass to the City of Vergennes that would divert through traffic, particularly truck traffic, around downtown Vergennes.

In addition to the steady growth in traffic and the preference by truckers to use Route 22A instead of Route 7, the City of Vergennes is concerned about the wear and tear on the downtown roadway infrastructure, and potential disruptions from the transport of hazardous materials through the population center. Surrounding communities would benefit from improved regional access. It is estimated that between 2000 and 3000 daily vehicles would be shifted out of downtown Vergennes and onto the bypass. This shift could be offset and supplemented by new traffic generated by new developments.

This study analyzes three potential bypass corridors and selects a corridor on the west side of the City of Vergennes for further study. Analysis of this corridor identified a potential bypass alignment which skirts the western and northern borders of the City. This route would involve construction of a bridge across Otter Creek just west of the Otter Creek Mobile Home Park and the B.F. Goodrich plant. The merits of this route are identified in the study. This route is preliminary and subject to further study, community input and environmental analysis.

Among the objectives of this study has been to work with the community to reach a consensus concerning the suggested bypass. During the study process it became apparent that there was general support for the bypass objectives, however, there was controversy concerning specific locations along the route, particularly in the Panton Road-Otter Creek crossing area. These particular points of concern will need to be discussed further and analyzed in the VAOT scoping process.

There was also public concern that alternatives to road freight movements had not been adequately investigated - particularly rail freight and water-borne transportation. Although this research was not part of the scope of work for this project, indications are that rail transport shows significant potential on the west side of Vermont as an alternative carrier for fixed route, short and long haul of goods. The feasibility of expanding current rail freight operations has not been investigated.

Considerable concern was expressed for the character of a bypass. To address this concern, a preliminary design was prepared which shows the bypass route, roadway profiles, and alternative considerations for integrating the roadway into the Vergennes cityscape. The bypass would be a significant addition to the regional transportation infrastructure. Specific techniques are proposed to maximize its benefit to the City of Vergennes and the region.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background and Objectives

A Route 22A bypass of downtown Vergennes has been discussed for many years. In 1989 89% of Vergennes voters filling out a questionnaire at the polls indicated another route should be designated. The *Route 7 Corridor Transportation Management Study*, in 1994, also recommended a bypass route be looked at. A Vergennes bypass was also recommended in the *Addison County Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan*, which suggested looking at a westerly and southerly route in detail. In a letter to the consultants to the *Route 7 Corridor Transportation Management Study*, the Vergennes City Council, in February 1994 (see Correspondence Appendix F), expressed a strong preference for a route which wraps tightly around the western boundary of the City and effects as little of adjoining municipalities as possible.

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission commissioned the present study to develop a consensus concerning the most acceptable route for the bypass, and to develop preliminary designs to include in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The regional TIP forms the basis for the statewide TIP and for detailed project scoping by VAOT.

This is the final report resulting from the Vergennes Route 22A study. This report includes, in section 2.0, the interim technical memorandum, *Inventory and Analysis Report*, prepared in July 1995. Section 3.0 is the *Preliminary Design Report* which documents the results of the analysis of a specific bypass alignment.

1.2 Regional Significance

The *Addison Region Long Range Regional Transportation Plan, December 1994*, confirms the regional importance of a Vergennes Route 22A bypass. That plan states:

> "The City of Vergennes suffers not only from traffic congestion, but also from a high volume of through heavy trucks diverted through the central part of the City by Route 22A. Route 22A serves excellently as a truck route and is maintained by VAOT for that purpose. An estimated 12 of the daily traffic flow is in trucks along Route 22A near Vergennes. Most of this volume is routed through the City of Vergennes. There is very little interference from other automobile traffic or built up areas along Route 22A until Vergennes. The high volume of trucks which run through the City from Route 22A has been cause for significant justifiable concern for the character of the historic city, and its economic vitality."

The regional importance of the bypass can be summarized by the following points:

- There is expected to be a continuation in the growth of overall traffic volumes in the Route 22A corridor.

- Route 22A has been recognized by VAOT, and is maintained as a truck route for western Vermont.
- The City of Vergennes is the only bottleneck inhibiting the movement of vehicles in the Route 22A corridor.
- Vergennes serves as a regional center for the surrounding towns, access to which is regionally important.

1.3 Community Participation

This study has featured the following steps to involve the public in the planning process:

- Meetings with the Vergennes Transportation Advisory Committee. These meetings were publicly announced and open.
- Public workshop on June 19, 1995, at the Ferrisburg Central School. The results of this workshop are included as Appendix C.
- Press releases to regional and local periodicals.
- Interviews of key individuals.
- Circulation of the initial *Inventory and Analysis Report*, July 1995.
- Story and editorial in the *Addison County Independent.*
- Letters to the editor of the *Burlington Free Press.*
- A second public workshop at the Ferrisburg Central School on September 28, 1995. the results of this workshop are summarized in Appendix D.

Through this public participation process several significant issues were raised which warrant further study. These issues concern the impact of the roadway on towns adjacent to Vergennes, and the specific location of the bypass at the Panton Road-Otter Creek crossing. Comments were received from representatives of the Otter Creek Mobile Home Park, which expressed concern for the impact of a bypass on their community. It is also clear from these discussions that considerable environmental study will be needed during the VAOT scoping process.

There was also public concern that adequate investigation of rail freight alternatives has not been undertaken. Although not part of this study, there have been some previous studies, such as the *Vermont Rail Feasibility Study*, which indicate significant rail potential in western Vermont. It is not clear how much of a diversion of existing roadway freight would occur with the development of rail freight.

1.4 Project Study Area

A broad study area was determined for this analysis which includes the City of Vergennes and portions of the towns of Ferrisburg, Panton and Waltham. The conditions within this study area are described generally. Traffic conditions are analyzed for Route 22A through the City. A much more narrowly defined roadway alignment was analyzed for the preliminary design.

2.0 Inventory of Existing Conditions

This section presents an inventory of existing conditions in and around the City of Vergennes which could effect the location of a bypass road. The first section analyzes traffic patterns and demand. The second section discusses physical, natural and cultural features to be considered in identifying a route. The third section synthesizes the basic information to evaluate three roadway corridors around the City of Vergennes.

2.1 Traffic and Transportation Analysis

Traffic was analyzed through the center of Vergennes and adjoining areas. This analysis included review of existing traffic volumes and turning movement patterns. The data used in the analysis are based on available information from the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VAOT) and the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) and recent surveys conducted by CP&D and BF&J. The results of this analysis indicates that a significant portion of the total daily traffic volume through the center of Vergennes is trucks. The majority of these trucks and other through vehicles exit the City at the intersection of Route 22A and Route 7, and move north to destinations in Chittenden County and points north and east. The bypass must be designed to accommodate these traffic movements.

A. Traffic Volumes

Average annual daily traffic counts (AADT) are available from the VAOT for eleven route segments along Route 22A in Panton, Vergennes and Ferrisburg for the years 1986, 1988, 1990, and 1992. In addition, for the Panton Road to Scovel Road segment, 1994 figures are available. These figures are given in Table 1, along with the percent change per annum for 1986 to 1992.

Traffic volumes are closely related to travel patterns and demand. Several factors have affected traffic volumes in this section of the Route 22A Corridor. These include declines in employment at the B.F. Goodrich plant during the transition from Simmonds, and new commercial development near the intersection of Monkton Road and Route 7. As expected volumes are highest for those segments in the center of Vergennes. However, traffic growth has been highest in the points away from the center of Vergennes.

B. Vehicle Classifications

VAOT has conducted automatic vehicle classification counts in 1992. The segment of the Route 22A Corridor from Panton Road to Scovel Road is reported as having 8.69% of the daytime traffic stream in trucks. This figure ranked in the top 50 segments statewide for truck percentages. The statewide average for rural minor arterials is 6.69%.

Table 1

Average Annualized Daily Traffic, 1986-1992
Route 22A Corridor

Town	Route Log Segment	Mileage	1986	1988	1990	1992	Annual % Change 1986-1992	
Panton	Addison T/L to East Rd. TH 17	1.25	3250	3820	4297	3920	3.17%	
Panton	East Rd. to Vergennes T/L	1.50	3560	4180	3960	4090	2.34%	
Vergennes	Panton T/L to Hopkins Rd.	0.57	3560	4180	3960	4090	2.34%	
Vergennes	Hopkins Rd. to Panton Rd.	0.17	4260	4300	4837	4490	0.88%	
Vergennes	Panton Rd. to Scovel Rd.	0.21	8520	8590	8110	8070	-0.90%	1)
Vergennes	Scovel Rd. to TH 4	0.18	9660	9740	9196	9150	-0.90%	
Vergennes	TH 4 to Green St.	0.10	9760	9840	9290	9244	-0.90%	
Vergennes	Green St. to Monkton Rd.	0.29	9050	9180	8667	8624	-0.80%	
Vergennes	Monkton Rd. to TH 8	0.33	6120	7560	7138	4730	-4.20%	
Vergennes	TH 8 to Ferrisburg T/L	0.34	4540	5610	5297	5270	2.52%	
Ferrisburg	Vergennes T/L to US 7	0.30	4540	5610	5297	5270	2.52%	

1) 1994 AADT is 7370, a 1.8 annual decline from 1986

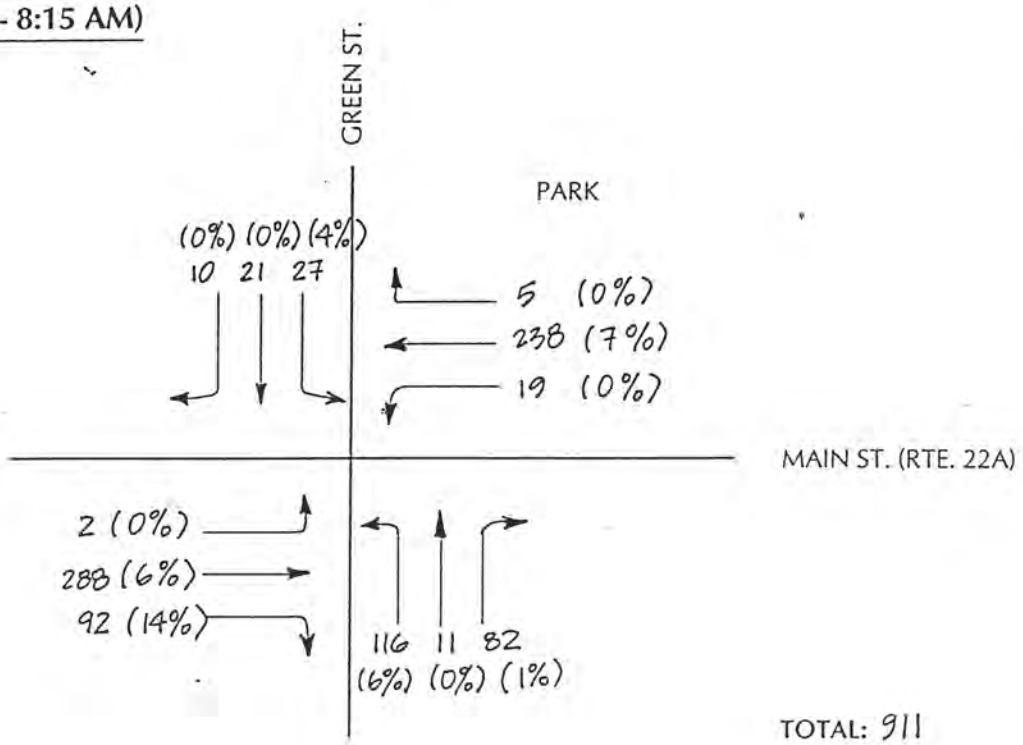
Source: VAOT, January 1994

Manual turning movement counts and vehicle classification counts (cars and trucks) were conducted at the Main Street (Route 22A) and Green Street intersection in Vergennes in May 1995. Figure 1 shows the AM peak hour (7:15-8:15 am) and PM peak hour (3:45-4:45 PM) traffic information. As shown, during the AM peak hour the intersection volume is 911 vehicles, and during the PM peak hour the intersection volume is 1163 vehicles. These traffic counts indicate 6.3% truck traffic during the AM peak (7:15 to 8:15) and 4.2% during the PM peak (3:45 to 4:45). These counts included only heavy trucks, while the VAOT figures include medium and heavy truck . Nevertheless trucks constitute a significant portion of the traffic flow. The tracking survey conducted in May 1995, which is discussed below, indicates approximately 11% of the vehicles entering the City from Route 22A and Panton Road were heavy trucks.

MAIN STREET/ GREEN STREET TRAFFIC COUNT

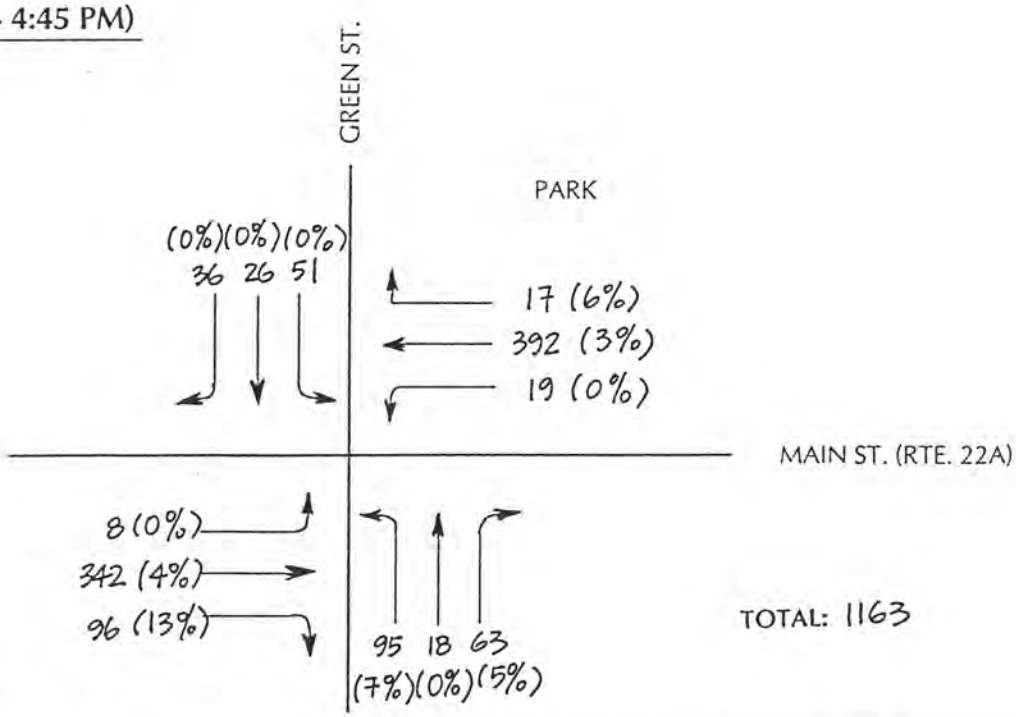
VERGENNES (Wednesday May 24, 1995)

AM PEAK HOUR (7:15 - 8:15 AM)



TOTAL: 911

PM PEAK HOUR (3:45 - 4:45 PM)



TOTAL: 1163

% PERCENT TRUCKS

VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 1 May 1995

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design

C. Origin and Destination

A tracking survey was conducted in May 1995 to measure vehicles entering the City from the south (Route 22A and Panton Road) and exiting the City at three points on Route 7 - New Haven Road, Monkton Road and Route 22A. The results of this survey are summarized on Figures 2 and 3 for the AM period (7:00 to 10:00) and in Figures 4 - 7 for the Midday period (11:00 to 2:00)of the survey. The purpose of the survey was to determine the origins and destinations of traffic flows through the City.

In the AM period approximately 46% of these movements were locally generated traffic movements. Of the 54% that moved through the City toward other destinations, 52% exited north of the City at Rt. 22A and Route 7, 22% exited at Monkton Road and 26% exited at New Haven Road. As shown 306 vehicles entered the City of Vergennes via Panton Road, of which 8% (26) were trucks. Of the 420 vehicles that entered the City via Route 22A, 14% (60) were trucks.

During the midday period approximately 37% of those vehicles entering from the south also exited at one of the three points; about 63% of the traffic was locally generated. About 54% of the exiting vehicles used the northern exit; 26% used Monkton Road; and 20% used New Haven Road. For the midday survey the results are shown separately for Route 22A and for Panton Road. Of the 291 vehicles entering the City of Vergennes via Panton Road, 9% (26) were trucks, and of the 287 vehicles entering via Route 22A, 11% (32) were trucks.

Table 2 summarizes the overall results of the tracking survey. It can be seen that, as expected, the northerly direction is much more important than the southerly direction (about 4 to 1). This distribution pattern to the north is similar for Panton Road (although not as strong as for Route 22A traffic).

Table 2
Summary of Tracking Survey

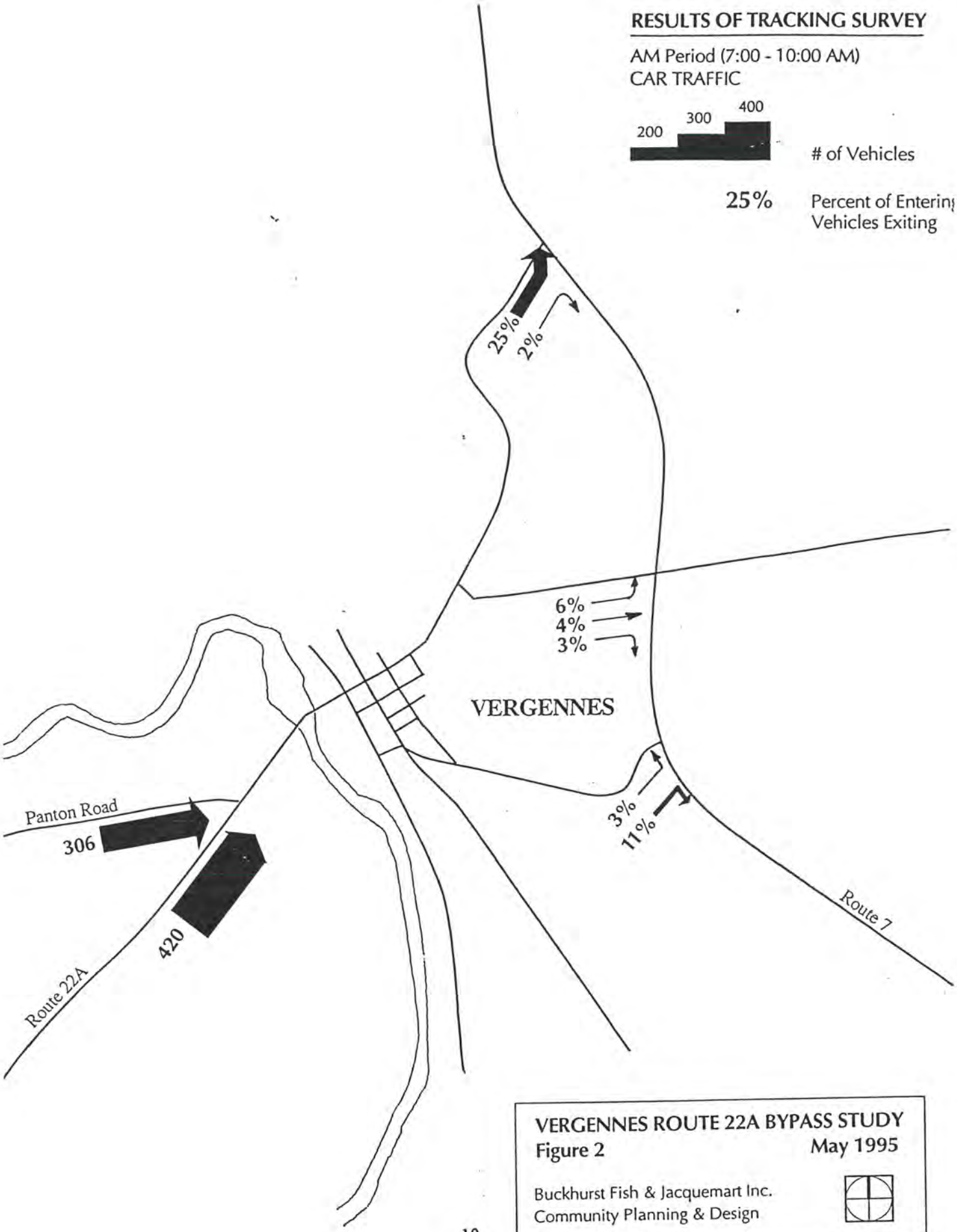
Period	Traffic Type	Traffic North	Traffic South	Traffic East	Local Traffic
AM	Car Traffic	34%	16%	4%	46%
	Truck Traffic	54%	8%	1%	37%
Midday	Route 22A Cars	33%	9%	4%	54%
	Trucks	22%	0%	6%	72%
	Panton Rd Cars	20%	9%	2%	69%
	Trucks	11%	1%	0%	88%
Average		29%	7%	3%	61%

Clearly, the major traffic movements through the City are to the north and the majority of these exiting vehicles use the northern exit on to Route 7 despite the dangerous Vermont Railway underpass north of the City. This traffic flow pattern indicates further north movements. This underpass is currently being replaced by a new underpass several hundred feet north. The new underpass can be expected to facilitate truck movements through the City since the height of the underpass will be suitable to all trucks. The underpass height was a limiting factor in the past.

D. Hazardous Materials

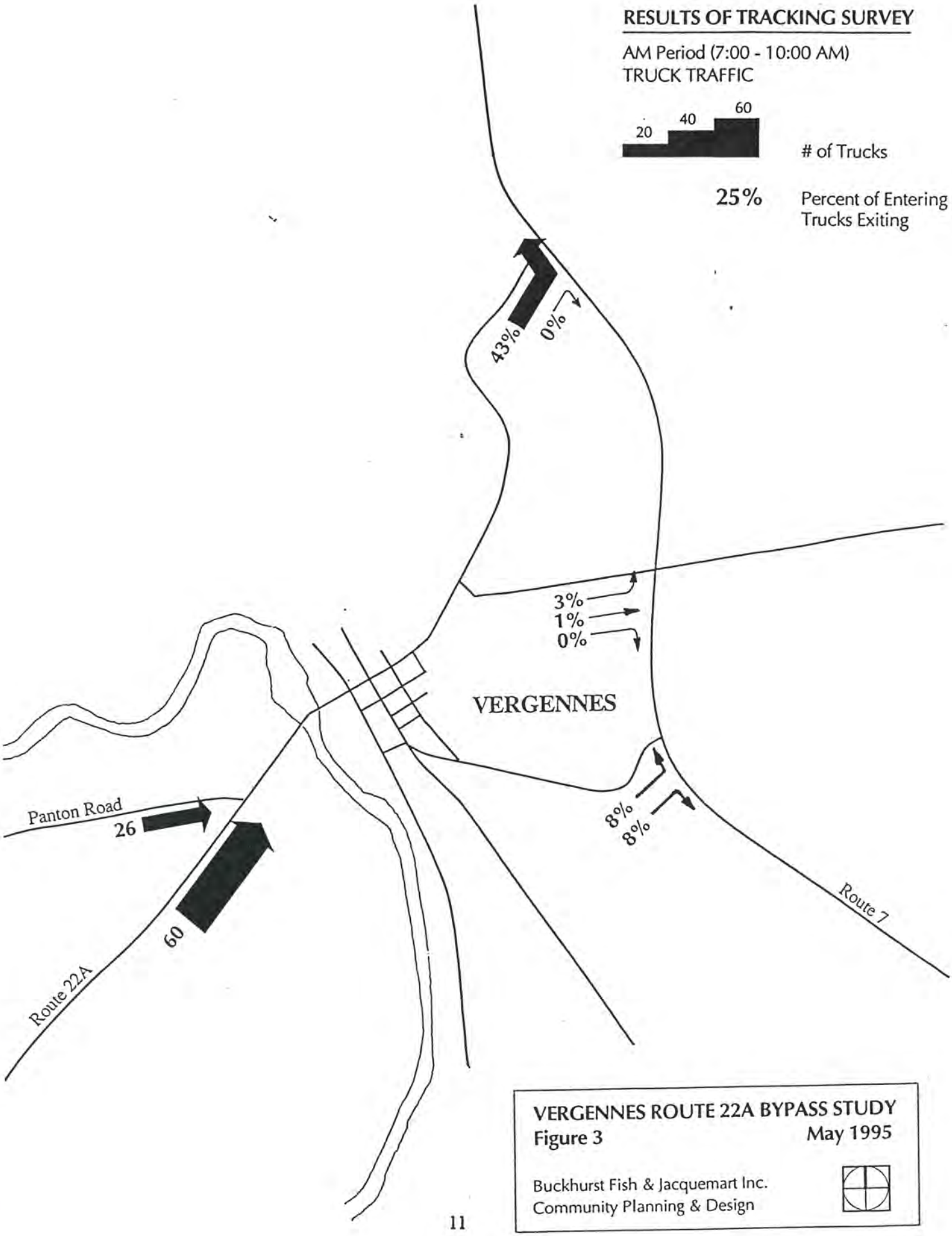
For seven days from June 24 to July 1, 1990 the City of Vergennes conducted a 24 hour survey of vehicle traffic at the intersection of Route 22A (Main Street) and Green Street. All truck traffic was documented, including hazardous materials transporters. Among the findings of this study were the following:

- Weekday traffic averaged 565 trucks; 18% of bulk transports carried hazardous materials, including gasoline, propane, and liquid nitrogen.
- 52% of truck traffic was northbound.
- Heaviest volumes of heavy truck traffic occurred between 3 AM and 5AM and 9AM to 3 PM
- Many trucks were poorly or illegally marked



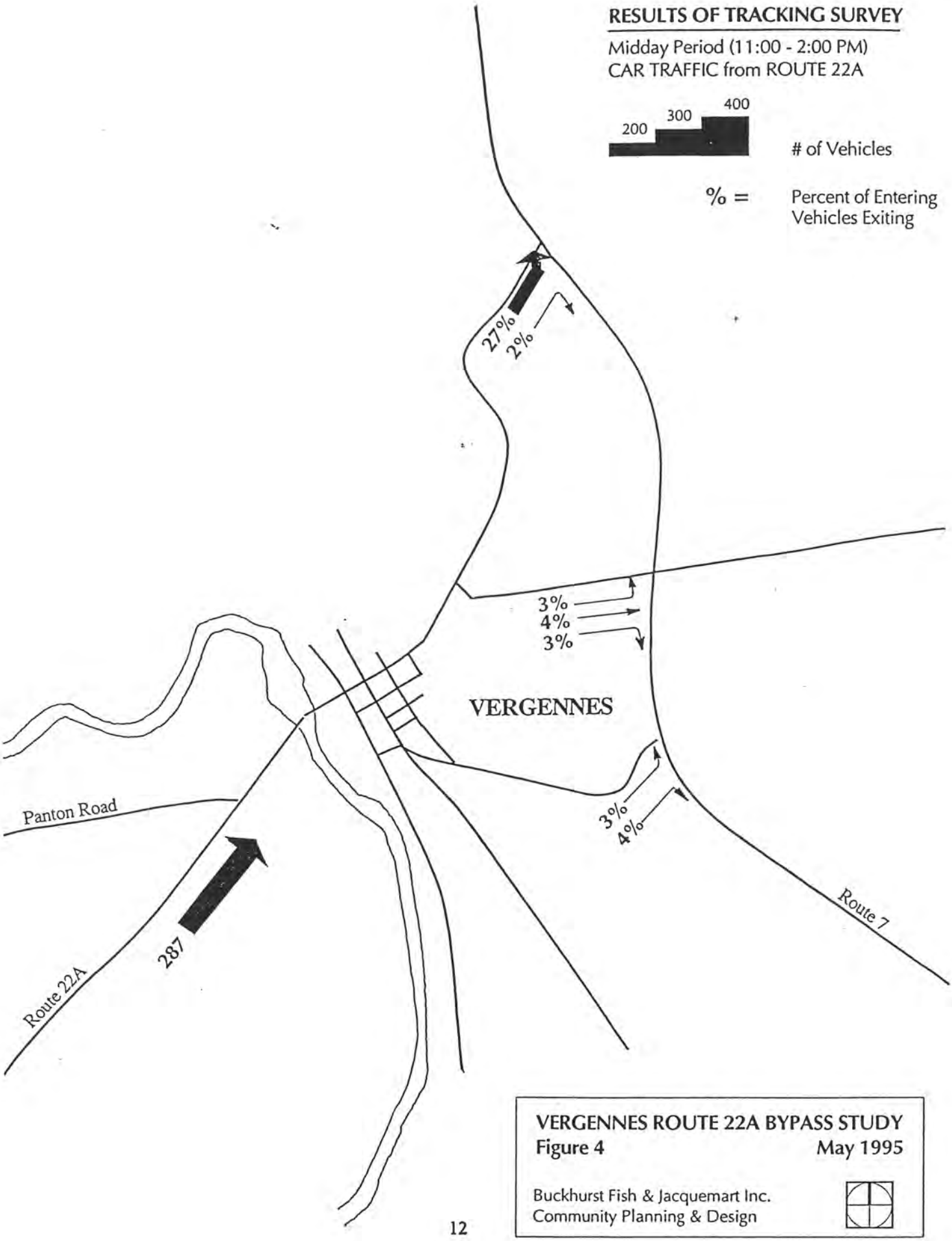
VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 2 **May 1995**

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design



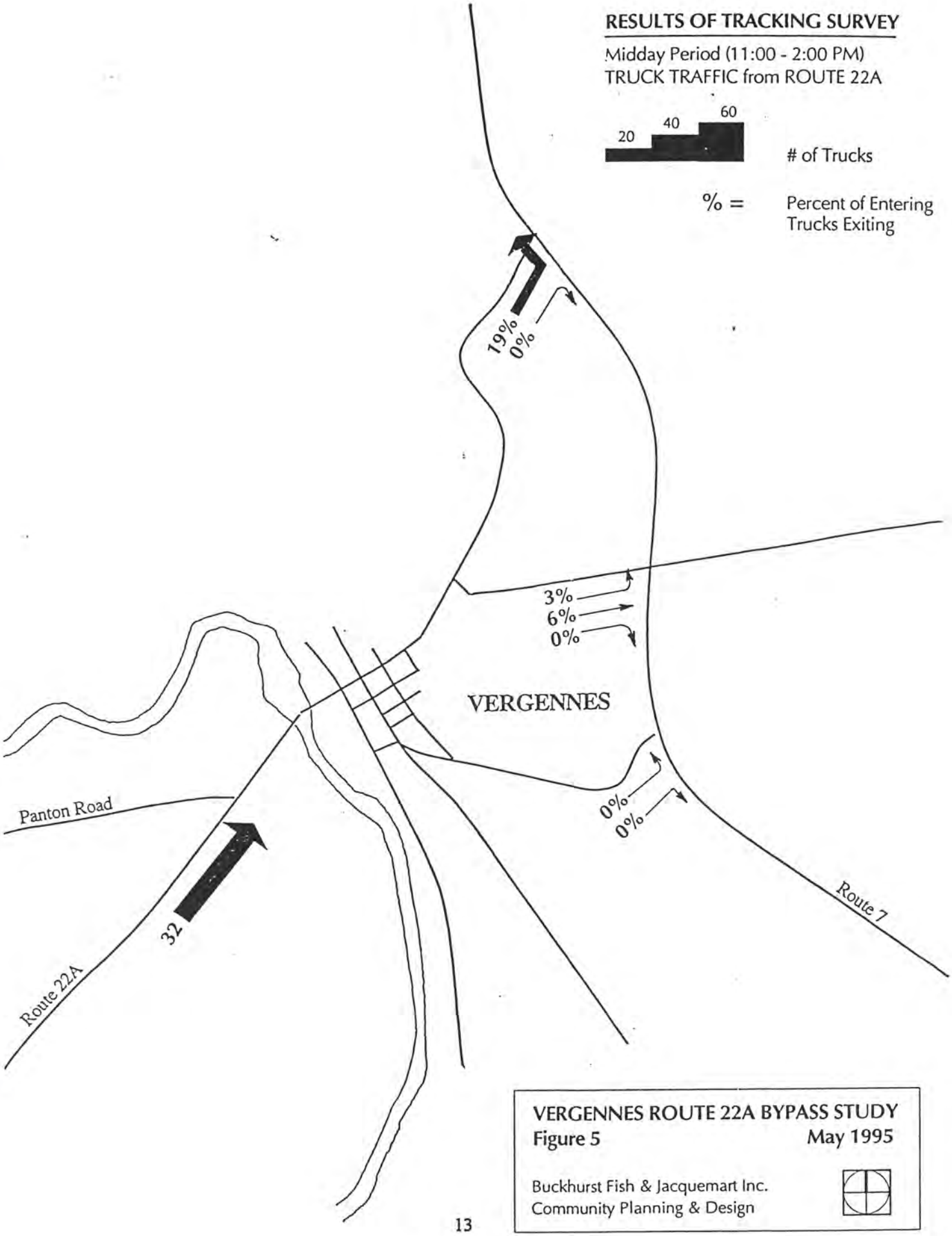
VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 3 **May 1995**

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design



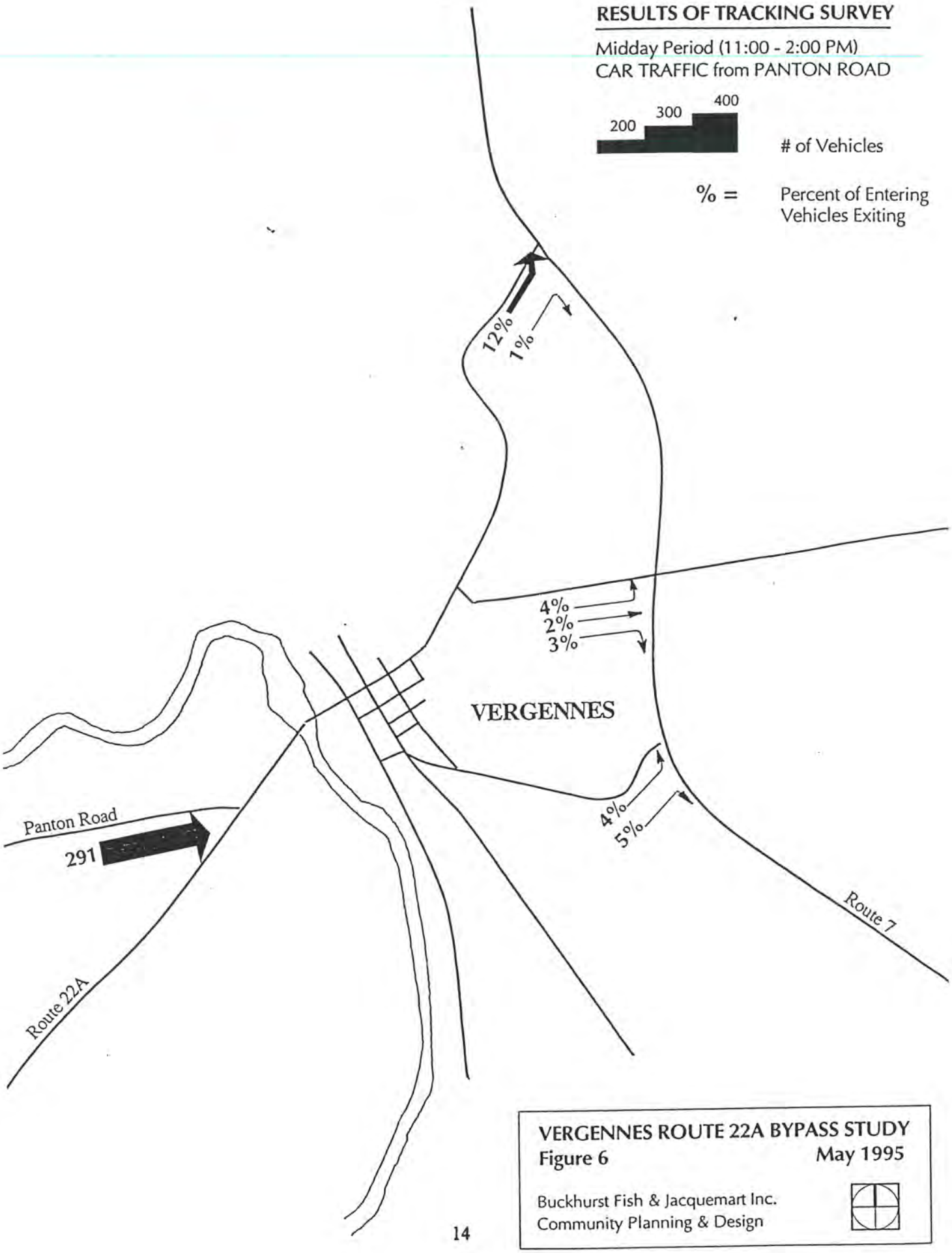
VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 4 **May 1995**

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design



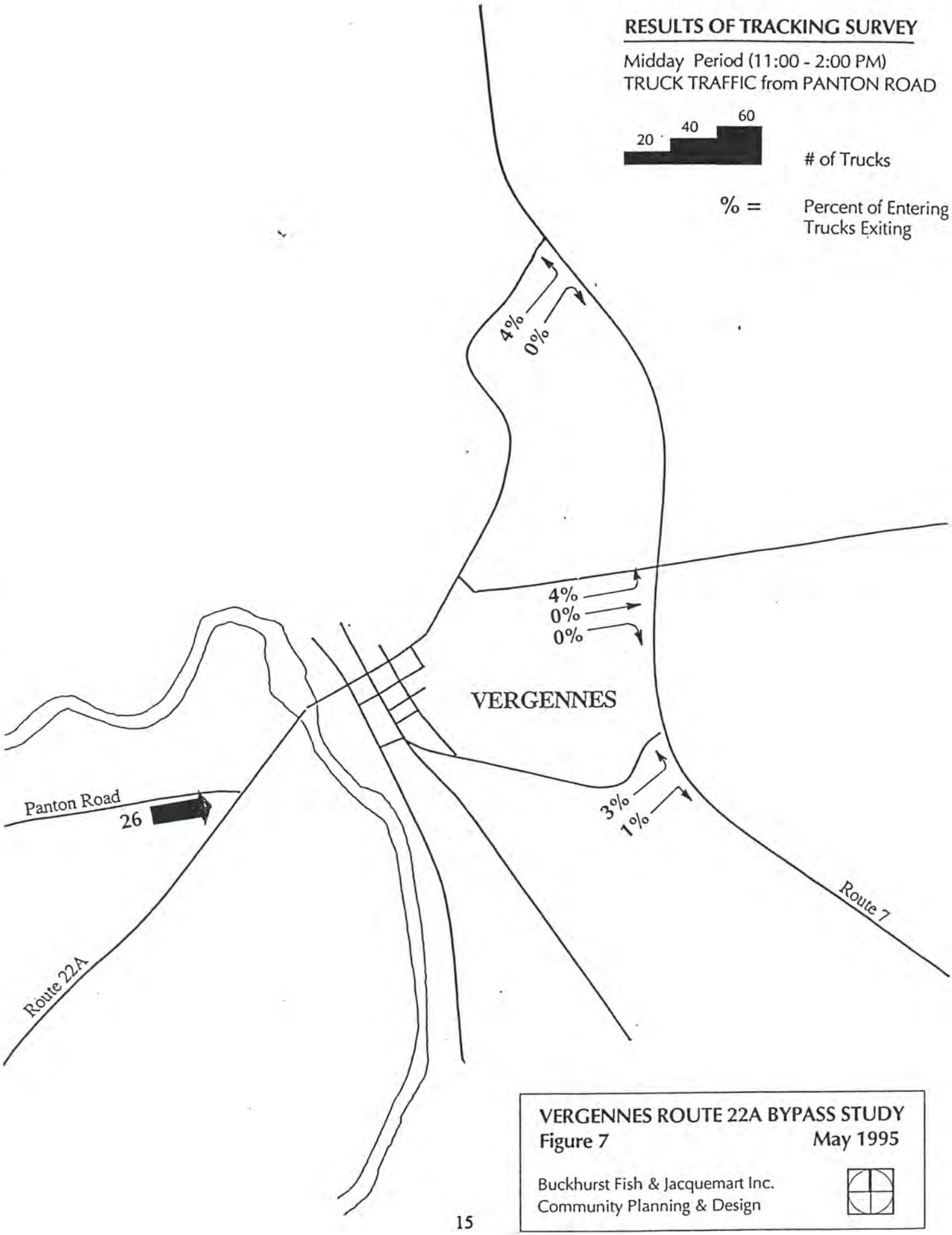
VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 5 May 1995

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design



VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 6 **May 1995**

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design



VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 7 **May 1995**

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design

E. Rail Freight

Rail freight service in the region is provided by Vermont Railway which skirts the eastern portion of the study area and serves western Vermont. There is a railroad siding and potential freight stop in Vergennes. This station was used in the summer of 1995 as a passenger stop for the Sugarbush Express tourist train. The Vermont Railway has the potential of connecting to a branch of the Delaware & Hudson Railroad in Rutland and the New England Central Railroad in Burlington to provide the Addison region with national rail freight links. At present these connections are not significant. Vermont Railway is used primarily for importing bulk products, such as grain, feed and fertilizer, and petroleum products. In 1993 the railway moved approximately 1.1 million tons of cargo.

According to the Vermont Railway, rail traffic in the region is increasing. The railway is currently exploring ways to achieve intermodal connections in Middlebury, Rutland and Burlington. The objective of these intermodal connections is to become complementary, rather that competitive with roadway freight.

2.2 Physical, Natural and Cultural Features

This section presents an overview of the important physical, natural and cultural features in and around the City of Vergennes which would impact the location of a bypass route. The base for this information is the ACRPC GIS system, which has been supplemented with field observations, interviews and information from the Vergennes Transportation Advisory Committee. The purpose of this analysis is gain an understanding of the physical conditions which would constrain the development of a bypass route.

A. Land Use and Ownership

Land cover information from the ACRPC GIS is shown in Figure 8. This information was field checked in May 1995. It illustrates the classic Vermont settlement pattern of a tightly developed urban core surrounded by farmland, forest, wetlands and open areas. While there has been some development, primarily residential, in the adjacent towns of Ferrisburg, Panton and Waltham along main roads leading from the City, infrastructure limitations in adjacent towns, along with development policies, restrict intensive building construction.

Within the City of Vergennes a diversity of land use exists. The downtown business district is centered at Main Street (Route 22A) and Green Street where business blocks and public buildings dominate. Further north on Main Street, handsome former residential buildings have been converted to business use. The largest land uses east of Main Street is the Vergennes Union High School and the National Guard Armory.

The City contains two clusters of industrial and commercial uses. One of these is located around Kennedy Brothers in the northeast quadrant. The other is centered on the B.F. Goodrich plant on Panton Road, near where the sewage treatment plant is located. Several

smaller locations of non-residential development are located at scattered locations in the City.

Outside the central business district much of the land is residential. In particular, the southeast quadrant of the City is developing as a residential community. In the southwest, along Route 22A, approximately 8 acres is occupied by the Prospect Cemetery.

Finally, the State of Vermont and the US Government manage operations on the Northlands Job Corps Center on MacDonough Drive in the northwest quadrant. The State of Vermont is the largest landowner in the western portion of the City, with over 200 acres of land, including the Northlands Center. John Chappel III is another large landowner on the north side of the City with over 90 acres.

A tax lot map of the study area is shown on Figure 9. It illustrates a pattern of smaller lots and more fragmented ownership east of the Otter Creek. On the whole, west of Otter Creek and northwest of the City contains fewer and larger land owners. A list of property owners on the western edge of the City is included as Appendix B. Aside from the State of Vermont and John Chappel, large landowners include Marcel and Paul Bourgeois (40 acres), B.F. Goodrich (26 acres), Vermont Industrial Parks (21 acres) and the Addison County Community Trust, which owns the Otter Creek Trailer Park (17 acres).

Future Land Use, shown on Figure 10, indicates the interrelationship of land use policies of the City of Vergennes and adjacent towns which has been compiled in the Addison County Regional Plan. Outside the City, large-lot rural residential and agricultural uses are envisioned. Higher density is assumed along major roadways leading into the City, and in the Town of Ferrisburg. Large areas in Panton, Waltham and Ferrisburg are identified as conservation areas. These areas include flood hazard locations along the Otter Creek, steep slopes and wetlands.

Within the City, moderate density residential uses dominate the outlying areas. Non-residential uses are located in the downtown, and in a large area of the western portion of the City. Commercial and industrial uses are foreseen around Kennedy Brothers.

A more accurate view of projected land use patterns within Vergennes is shown on the city's Zoning Map, Figure 11. Current zoning reinforces agricultural and rural residential uses in the northwest and southwest sections. A large area of industrially zoned property in the southwest quadrant includes the B.F. Goodrich plant and a large area south of Panton Road. Commercial and industrial uses are also seen for the northeast section.

B. Natural Features

Topography : The study area is part of the rolling, lowland domain of the Champlain Valley, with a gentle rise in topography from west to east. West of Route 22A is open farm land with gentle slopes of plus or minus 1%. Typical elevations varying between 150 to 200 feet extend for miles. After dropping at the Falls in Vergennes, the Otter Creek, flowing westward, cuts deep through this flat landscape forming steep banks for about 2

miles. Continuing Northwest the streambanks flatten out to form a wide marshland. South of Vergennes, the Otter Creek is wide, flat and bordered by many wetlands.

East of Otter Creek and a line roughly defined by Route 7, the lay of the land becomes more irregular. The topography rises to form several knolls and hills whose peaks reach 300 - 500 feet. Hillsides of 10 - 15% slope are typical. These elevations are shown on the USGS map in Figure 12. This map has been created by splicing 2 USGS quadrants with slightly different scales. Note that the elevations on the west side of the map are measured in meters.

Water Bodies : Otter Creek is the dominant body of water in the study area. It drains a vast watershed which extends south over 75 miles to the Town of Dorset. This slow-moving and broadly meandering stream is bordered by many low lying lands and large significant wetlands. It is also subject to flooding, particularly in the Spring when surface runoff is greatest.

West of the Falls at Vergennes, Otter Creek becomes a navigable stream that is frequented by local boaters and the many boaters who make the approximately two hour trip up from the mouth of the river at Lake Champlain. Mooring speeds are restricted to 5 mph in order to preserve streambanks and wetland environments. Once in the basin visitors can view the falls, dock at the mariner facilities and visit the City. Vergennes considers the Otter Creek Falls and Basin area an important feature of their City that has great potential for recreation, commercial and industrial use. This future development potential, the location of a bridge across Otter Creek west of the Falls, plus the flood potential of the Creek are additional factors to consider in locating the bypass roadway. Plans for the bypass will need to consider preserving boat access; minimizing the visual and noise impacts on the Otter Creek Basin, and avoiding the impact of flooding potential at other locations along the Creek.

Wetlands: Figure 8 shows wetlands within the study area which are included in the National Wetland Survey of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (1977). As a primarily lowland domain, wetlands form a significant portion of the land cover. Major wetland areas occur along Otter Creek, Little Otter Creek and Dead Creek. The bands of wetlands along these streams become wider as they approach Lake Champlain. In addition to these stream based wetlands numerous wetland locations are scattered throughout the study area.

Area wetlands serve multiple ecological functions. In addition to their water storage capacity during times of flood, they are important habitat reserves. In some wetland areas along Otter Creek migratory geese have been spotted. These multiple values need to be taken into consideration when siting a roadway near a wetland.

The *Vermont Wetland Rules* require non-exempt uses to go through a conditional use review to determine their impact on the identified wetland functions. Permits can be issued if impacts are minimal or if mitigation measures are approved. *Army Corps of Engineers Regulations* will require a permit for impact on wetlands greater than one acre. Permits

could be granted if avoiding the wetland is not possible by realignment and if the roadway is to serve "the greater public good."

Agricultural and Forest Lands: Figure 8 documents the major areas of agricultural and forest lands in the study area based on land cover data. Addison County is one of the major agricultural centers in Vermont. Much of the agricultural land is actively farmed. Fragmentation of these lands hinders agricultural efficiency. Sensitivity to agricultural practices must be taken to avoid the adverse impacts of new roads or building construction.

C. Scenic and Cultural Features

The study area is one of great scenic beauty and distinctive character. The landscape of wide level open fields framed by Lake Champlain and the distant peaks of the Adirondacks to the west and the Green Mountain range to the east creates amazingly beautiful scenery unique to this area of Vermont.

The current Route 22A runs along a slight ridge between Otter Creek and the Champlain lowlands to the west Beautiful westward views are typical from this route driving both north and south. The presence of Otter Creek and related wetlands contribute to the scenic diversity of the area. The Falls at Vergennes is one of the most dramatic in the state, but is visible from only a few vantage points downstream from the center of Vergennes.

The beauty of the study area is also due to the historic development pattern that endures today. The villages of Panton and Ferrisburg, and the City of Vergennes, have remained compact. Residential development has been primarily in or close to the city where sewer service is available. Much outlying residential development is tucked in wooded knolls. Commercial development is also located within the City limits. Sprawl and commercial development that is typically found at the edges of even small Vermont towns has been avoided. Broad panoramic views of the landscape uninterrupted by commercial buildings and signs begins at the City's edge. The City of Vergennes stands out as a compact urban area and the largest population center in the study area. Panton and Ferrisburg villages also have retained their small historic character.

The persistence of an historic development pattern is also due to the prosperous nature of farming in Addison County and the quality of soils that often are much more valuable for farming than development. The large farms have kept the fields open and less scenic land uses at bay.

Many historical structures and sites in the study area also contribute to the scenic quality and cultural interest. These are documented in the book entitled *the Historic Architecture of Addison County.* Structures include both rural farm houses and mansions in the City of Vergennes. By diverting truck traffic from the downtown area, the proposed bypass will help preserve some of these historical buildings. Three historical areas are of particular concern with the construction of a bypass around the west side of the City.; Prospect Cemetery on Route 22A, the state-owned complex of brick buildings of the former Weeks

School, now used by the Northlands Job Corps Center, and a farm house near the bend of Comfort Hill Road. Ideally these sites will not be impacted, but will favorably add scenic character to a future road in this vicinity.

2.3 Evaluation of Corridor Alternatives

A. Description of Route Corridor Alternatives

In order to narrow down the potential route alternatives, three broad corridors through which a roadway could be constructed were identified for further study. These corridors are illustrated on Figure 13. They are described generally from south to north.

Corridor A: This corridor may be called the "far west" alternative. It extends from a point west of Route 22A about one mile from the Vergennes-Panton line almost due north, crossing Otter Creek and meeting Walker Road north of Sand Road in Panton. The route could then follow the existing right-of-way of Walker Road in Ferrisburg. North of Little Chicago Road a new right-of-way would need to be constructed. to meet Route 7 Alternatively the route could follow Little Chicago Road into Ferrisburg Village. Much of this route is agricultural. Significant wetland exists north of Little Chicago Road.

Corridor B: This corridor, which could be called the "near West" alternative, picks up from Corridor A at about the same location on Route 22A. Alternatively, a route could be explored totally within the City limits extending from Route 22A just north of Prospect Cemetery The route would then wrap around the north edge of the Cemetery, then assume a northern course crossing Panton Road and Otter Creek somewhere near the Panton-Vergennes boundary. From Otter Creek, the route would use vacant land owned by the State, and farmland owned by Chapel and meet the existing Route 22A in the vicinity of the new underpass of Route 22A at the Vermont Railroad which is currently being constructed. Some taking of property and buildings will be required along Panton Road and, possibly along Route 22A. North of Otter Creek, the land tracts are large, and much of the land is owned by the State of Vermont, which reduces the need to negotiate with multiple landowners. There are several route options within this corridor which need to be examined further.

Corridor C: This corridor extends south and east of the City and connects with the turn on New Haven Road where it joins Route 7. A route in this corridor would cross Otter Creek between two wetlands and skirt steep slopes east of the City in the vicinity of the City water storage tank. There are few existing buildings to be taken, but significant land acquisition would be needed because of the small lot parcelization. This corridor is primarily rural and residential in land use. It appears the impacts on agricultural land can be minimized.

Figure 10

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Community Planning & Design

N

0 0.5 1 M.
0 1000 YARDS
0 1 KILOMETER

Source: ACRPC-GIS

Future Land Use

- US or State Highway
- Class 1 Town Road
- Class 2 Town Road
- Class 3 Town Road
- Trail
- Railroad Track
- Town Boundary
- Major Rivers
- Parcel Lines

- Commercial/Industrial/Public Use (inc.Villages)
- Residential Uses on Lots, < 10 acres
- Rural Residential/Agricultural Uses on Lots
- Forest/Agricultural (Conservation Areas)

Figure 9

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Community Planning & Design

N

0 0.5 1 MI.
0 1000 YARDS
0 1 KILOMETER

Source: ACRPC-GIS

Tax Lots

- US or State Highway
- Class 1 Town Road
- Class 2 Town Road
- Class 3 Town Road
- Trail
- Railroad Track
- Town Boundary
- Major Rivers

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Community Planning & Design

Figure 8
Land Cover

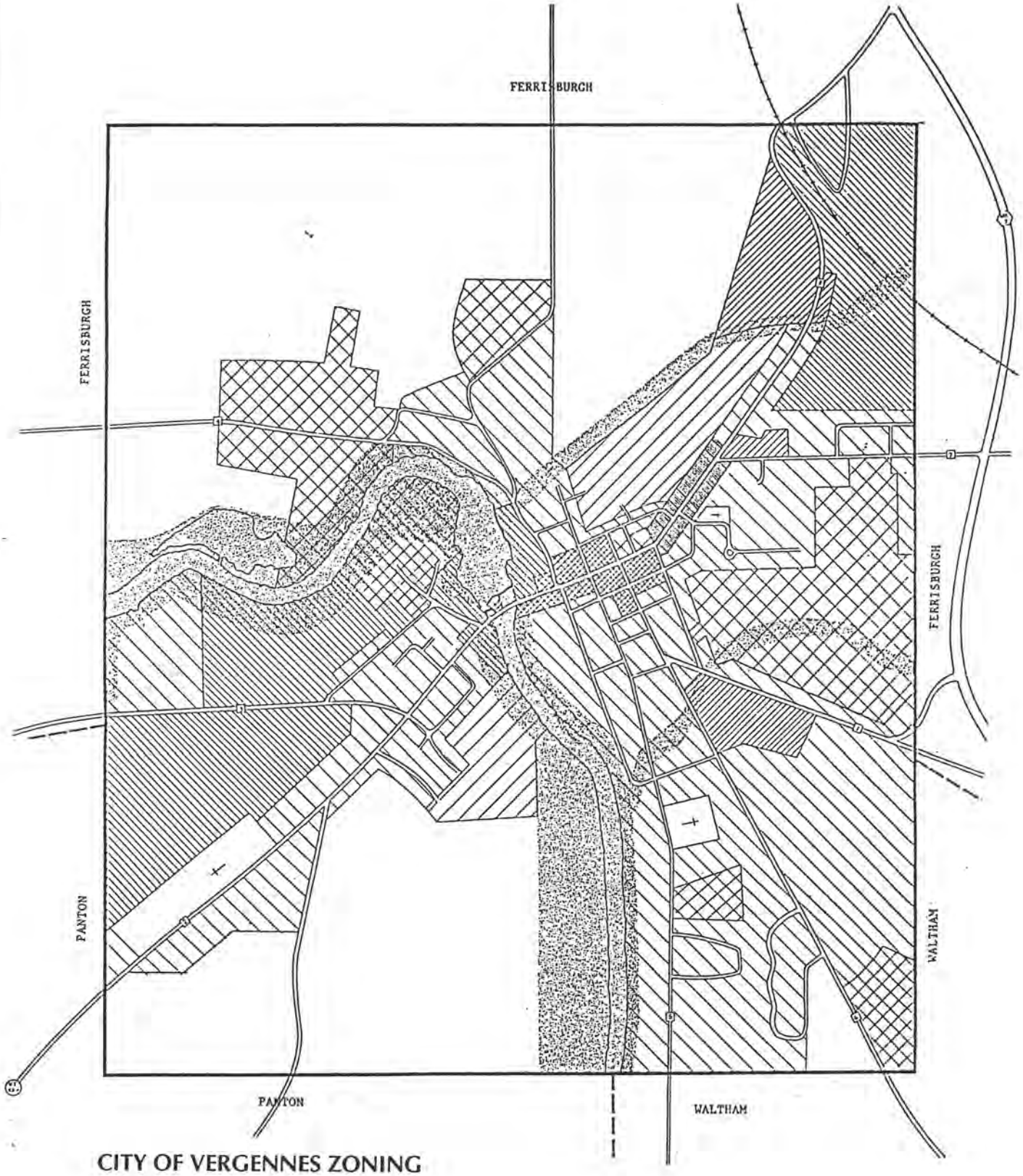
N

0 0.5 1 Mi.
0 1000 YARDS
0 1 KILOMETER

Source: ACRPC - GIS

US or State Highway
Class 1 Town Road
Class 2 Town Road
Class 3 Town Road
Trail
Railroad Track
Town Boundary
Rivers & Streams

LAND USE/COVER
Urban/Built-up
Residential
Campground
Park/Rec. Area
Cemetery
Ag. Lands
Open/Brush
Forest Cover
Water
Swampy



CITY OF VERGENNES ZONING

LEGEND

- FLOOD PLAIN
- AGRICULTURE & RURAL RESIDENTIAL
- PUBLIC
- R 1
- R-2
- CENTRAL BUSINESS
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- RESIDENTIAL/LIMITED COMMERCIAL

VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 11

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Figure 12

Community Planning & Design

Topography

Source: USGS

B. Evaluation of Alternatives

Each of these corridors was evaluated based on the following five criteria. This evaluation is illustrated on Table 3. Comments received during the Vergennes TAC meetings and the public workshop were considered in this evaluation. The impact on each criteria was judged to be negative, positive or neutral.

Traffic Demand Impacts - Does the corridor satisfy the basic north-south movement patterns? Is a shift in through traffic likely?

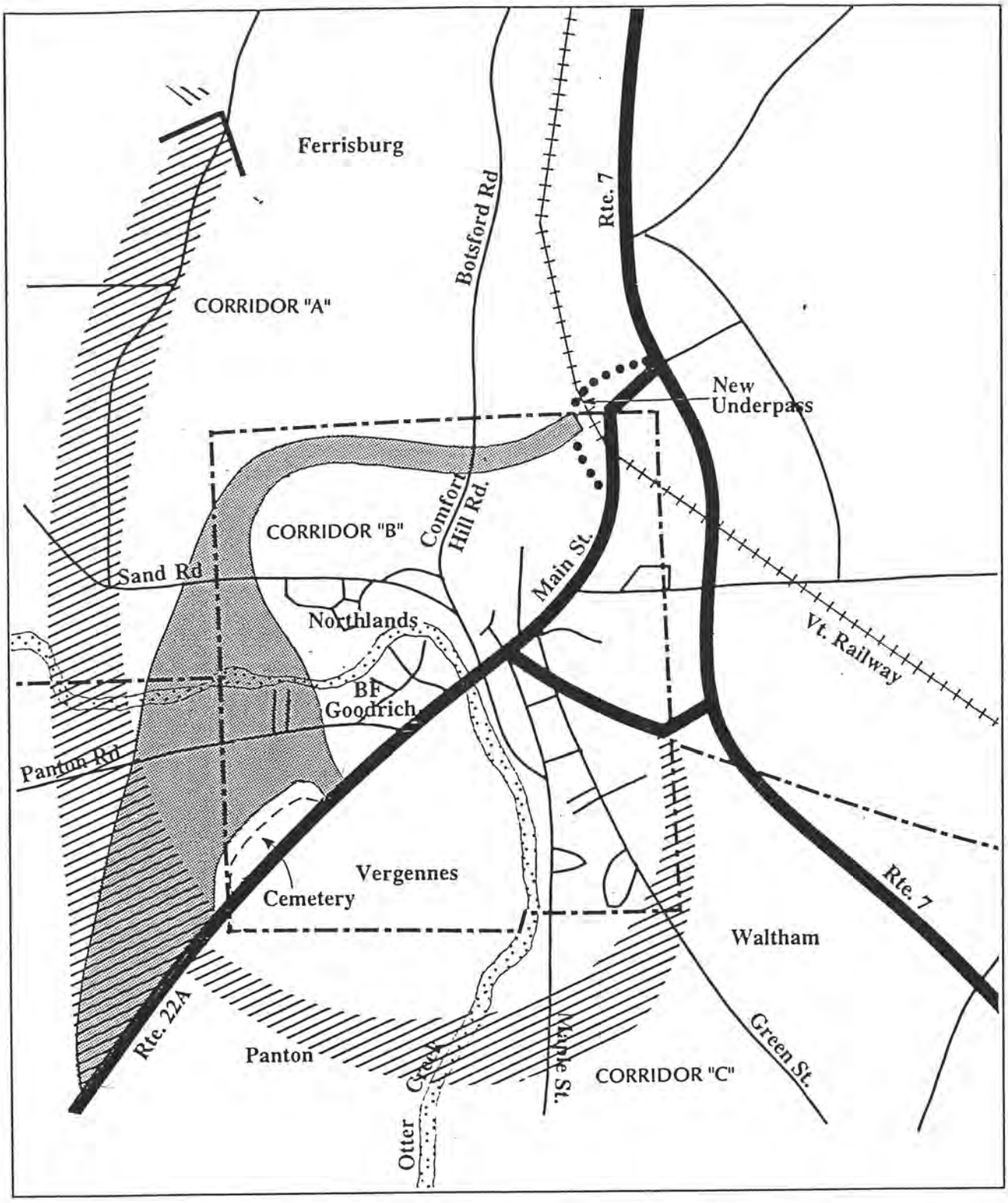
Land Use and Plans - Does the roadway complement present or future land use patterns? Could the route support city and town development goals

Natural Features - Does the route minimize disruption to such significant natural features as wetlands, slopes, agricultural land, forests? Are there significant natural obstacles which must be overcome for roadway construction?

Infrastructure - What are the relative infrastructure demands for the new route such as new roads, bridges, intersections, retaining features, or supplementary roadway improvements?

Character and Scenic Quality - What are the potential impacts on the community character, historic structures or scenic values? Can the roadway be easily integrated in present and future development? Can impacts on vistas and other scenic characteristics be minimized?

As can be seen Corridor B has no negative values and two values that could be considered neutral. In every respect, Corridor A has negative values. While Corridor C can be considered neutral with a negative value on the key feature of meeting traffic objectives. From this analysis we can deduct that Corridor B is the preferable route to investigate further.



ROUTE CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES

VERGENNES ROUTE 22A BYPASS STUDY
Figure 13 July 1995

Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart Inc.
Community Planning & Design

Not to Scale

Table 3
Evaluation of Corridor Alternatives

	Corridor A	Corridor B	Corridor C
Approx. Miles	4.6 to 5.4, including existing R.O.W.	2.9	2.4
Jurisdictions	Panton, Ferrisburg	Panton, Vergennes, corridor could be contained within Vergennes	Panton, Waltham, Vergennes
1. Traffic Demand Impacts	**Neutral**; satisfies basic N-S movement patterns; not likely suitable for vehicles seeking quick entry to Rt. 7, such as trucks.	**Positive**; satisfies basic movement patterns; offers downtown route as alternative; suitable for all through vehicles.	**Negative**; favors unpopular movements south of City; channels traffic into at-grade RR crossing on Rt. 7; potential delay for trucks with hazardous materials.
2. Land Use and Plans	**Negative**; cross cuts agricultural land, terminates in developed area; potential impacts on historic village; may encourage sprawl.	**Neutral**; complements City development plans; potentially conflicts with residential and non-residential development along Panton Rd. and agricultural uses along 22A in Panton, remaining corridor undeveloped; may assist downtown upgrade; avoids sprawl.	**Neutral**; potential conflict with residential area.
3. Natural Features	**Negative**; disturbs some wetland; Otter Creek bridge at low, wide point; questionable soils.	**Positive;** significant vacant land; narrow Otter Creek crossing; may be some slope challenges along Otter Creek; appear to be good soils.	**Neutral;** Otter Creek crossing at low point; some wetlands; slope challenges; apparently some unsatisfactory soils.
4. Infrastructure	**Negative**; long route, reconstruction of Walker Road with 3 bridges; new bridge at Otter Creek and possibly at Little Otter Creek; may need railroad pass in Ferrisburg	**Positive**; bridge over Otter Creek; feeds into new RR underpass; new road construction	**Positive**; smaller bridge south of City over Otter Creek; some retaining structures may be needed; improve Rt. 7 intersection; new road construction.
5. Character and Scenic Quality	**Negative;** Significant disruption of natural and agricultural landscape.	**Neutral**; Adds new landscape element; potential building removal; possible integration with urban area; defines urban-rural edge.	**Neutral**; disruption of residential character.

3.0 Potential Roadway Alignment and Design

3.1 Conceptual Alignment

Within the Corridor B described above, there are several potential alignments for a bypass route. Both areas north of Otter Creek and at the Route 22A intersection in the south adequate space exists to site any number of specific alternatives. The most seriously constrained portion of the right-of-way is the Panton Road-Otter Creek crossing. In this location at least three options are possible. Each of these options has land use and economic implications. This section describes a potential roadway alignment and three options which were examined at the Panton Road/Otter Creek crossing. The overall site plan for this roadway is shown on Figure 14.

The new alignment that would begin at the newly reconstructed railroad overpass on Route 22A, (north of the City), and continue westerly intersecting with Comfort Hill Road, MacDonough Drive, a new bridge crossing of Otter Creek, Panton Road, and terminating at Route 22A south of the City. Total length of this new roadway is estimated to be approximately 2.6 miles.

The typical section being considered for this new roadway would include, at a minimum:

- 100 foot right of way
- two 12 foot travel lanes
- 4 to 6 foot shoulders

Beginning at the intersection with Route 22A north of the City, the proposed alignment would generally proceed west and south. A modern roundabout could be utilized to connect this new roadway to the existing Route 22A. This form of intersection treatment would help to reduce delays, increase vehicle capacity and safety, reduce operating costs over a signalized intersection, and serve as a gateway entrance to the City. A modern roundabout in this location will also increase the safety aspects for both pedestrians and bicyclists.

The roadway continues westerly, through mostly open fields to the intersection with Comfort Hill Road, (approximately 2500 feet). This segment begins with crossing over several seasonal drainage swales and begins a gradual climb up to Comfort Hill Road. It is not anticipated that grades on this segment would exceed 5%. At this point of the conceptual analysis, the intersection with Comfort Hill may be in the form of a stop condition for the north and south legs of Comfort Hill.

The next segment begins at Comfort Hill Road and continues westerly approximately 3,000 feet and then turns southerly to the intersection with MacDonough Drive. The total length of this segment is approximately 5,300 feet. This segment crosses through predominately active agricultural (corn) fields. It should be noted that a Class II wetlands is mapped on this segment, north of where the proposed alignment would be located.

Grades along this segment appear to be reasonable with relatively flat or gently sloping topography. There is also a possible new intersection approximately 2,500 feet from Comfort Hill Road that will provide access to future development north and south of the proposed bypass. The intersection with MacDonough Drive would be similar to the treatment with Comfort Hill Road.

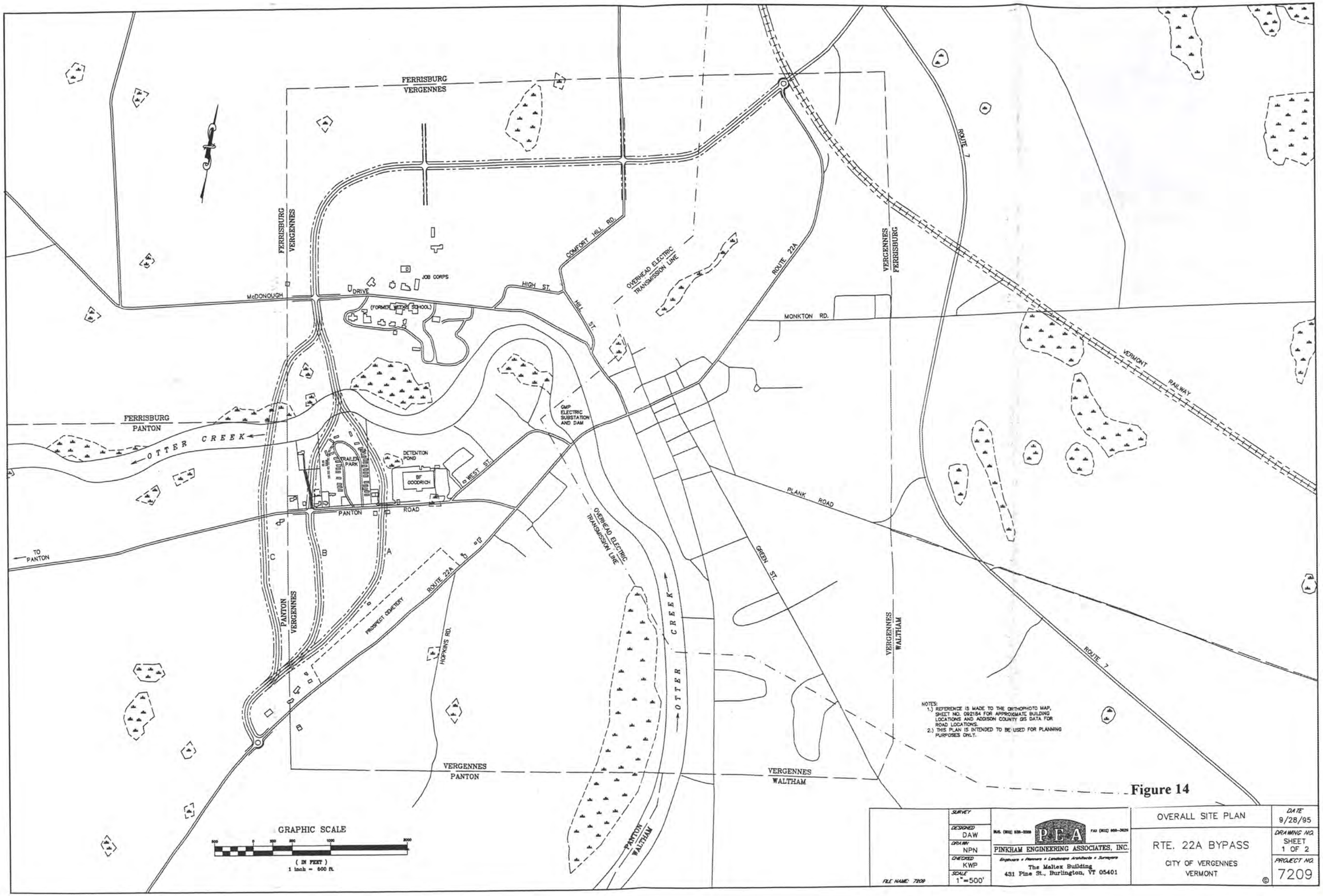
The next segment begins at MacDonough Drive and continues southerly across Otter Creek to Panton Road. It should be noted that three separate alignments have been considered and discussed for this segment, it should also be noted that Alignments A & B both cross Otter Creek in the same location, (see Figure 14). Preliminary investigations and discussions with the U.S. Coast Guard indicate that a minimum separation distance between the bottom chord of the bridge and ordinary high water must be a minimum of 55 feet. A general description of the three options are as follows:

Option A

This option begins at MacDonough Drive and proceeds southerly approximately 1300 feet to Otter Creek. The proposed crossing of Otter Creek would require an elevated structure approximately 900 feet long. This crossing location was chosen to take advantage of the existing topography on both sides of the river, lessen the length of the crossing, and to limit potential impacts to wetlands and agricultural lands. On the south side of the river, the alignment would swing easterly and cross through a portion of the trailer park onto B.F. Goodrich property. It would then follow an existing drainage swell, west of the Goodrich detention basin, and cross through a gravel parking area to Panton Road. At this intersection the proposed bypass legs, both north and south, would have a through condition and Panton Road would be a stop condition. Alternatively, a roundabout could be considered at this location. After crossing Panton Road the alignment would generally continue southerly to a point below the embankment north of Prospect Cemetery. At this point it would turn westerly and begin contouring the slope up to the intersection with Route 22A. Existing grades on this segment range from 2% to 7%. Total length of this section is approximately 6,700 feet.

Option B

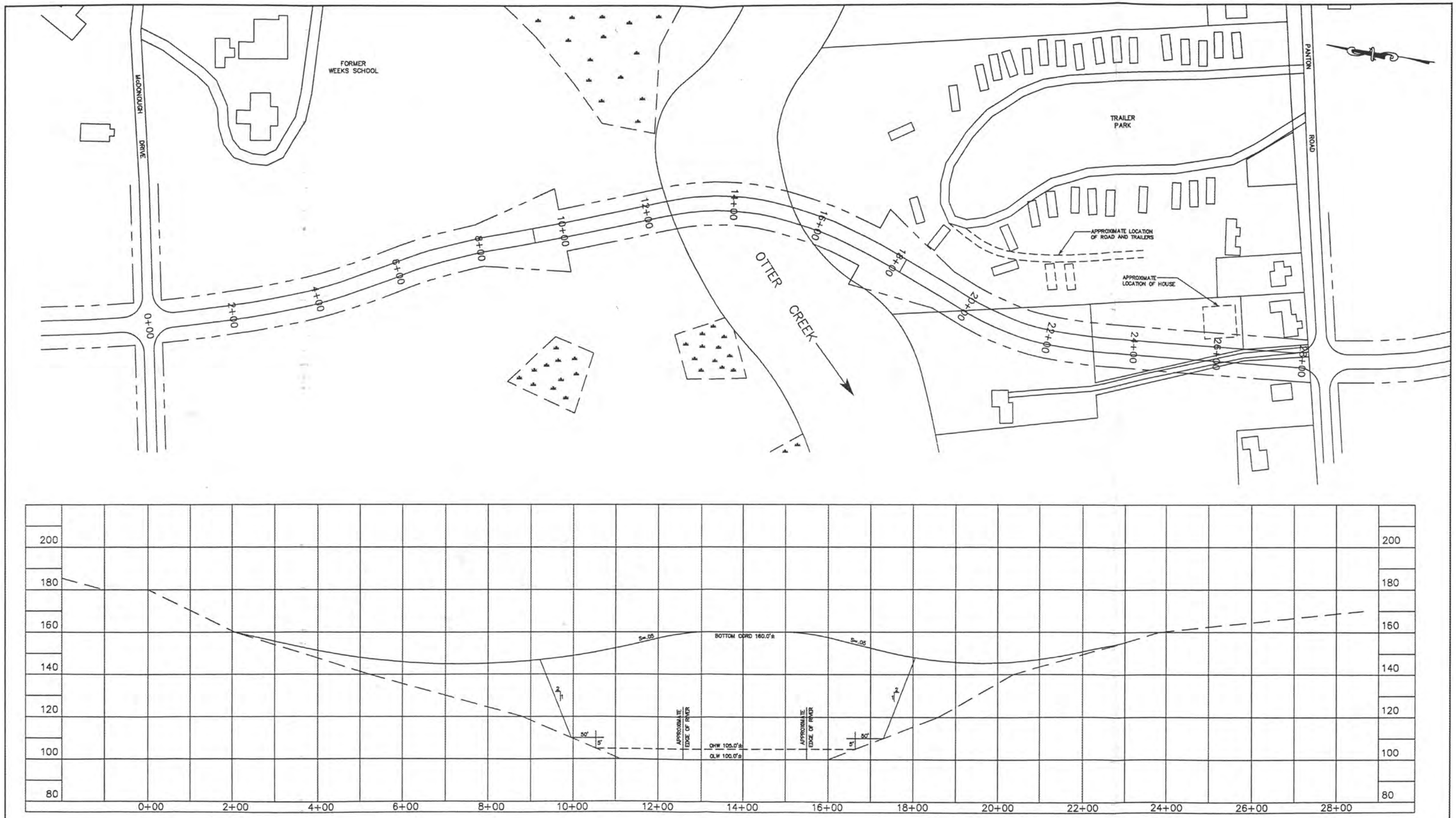
This segment is identical to Option A, north of and crossing over Otter Creek. On the south side of the river Option B turns westerly and crosses on the western side of Otter Creek Park impacting several properties until it intersects with Panton Road. A profile of this option which illustrates the river crossing and potential property impacts is attached as Figure 15. The type of intersection treatment at Panton Road would be identical to Option B, condition for Panton Road. The alignment continues southerly to a point where it would tie into the Option A alignment prior to intersecting with Route 22A. Existing grades on this segment also range from 2 to 7%. Total length of this segment is approximately 6,200 feet.



NOTES:
1.) REFERENCE IS MADE TO THE ORTHOPHOTO MAP, SHEET NO. 09/2184 FOR APPROXIMATE BUILDING LOCATIONS AND ADDISON COUNTY GIS DATA FOR ROAD LOCATIONS.
2.) THIS PLAN IS INTENDED TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.

Figure 14

FILE NAME: 7209	SURVEY	PINKHAM ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, INC.	OVERALL SITE PLAN	DATE 9/28/95
	DESIGNED DAW	BUS. (802) 658-3508 FAX (802) 658-3629	RTE. 22A BYPASS	DRAWING NO. SHEET 1 OF 2
	DRAWN NPN	Engineers • Planners • Landscape Architects • Surveyors	CITY OF VERGENNES VERMONT ©	PROJECT NO. 7209
	CHECKED KWP	The Maltex Building 431 Pine St., Burlington, VT 05401		
	SCALE 1"=500'			



NOTES:
1.) REFERENCE IS MADE TO USGS PORT HENRY QUADRANGLE FOR TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, ORTHOPHOTO MAP, SHEET NO. 092184 FOR APPROXIMATE BUILDING LOCATIONS, AND ADDISON COUNTY GIS DATA FOR ROADWAY LOCATIONS.
2.) THIS CONCEPTUAL PROFILE IS INTENDED TO SHOW THE APPROXIMATE LIMITS AND IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ROAD ALIGNMENT. IT IS FURTHER INTENDED TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY.

Figure 15

SCALES:
1" = 100' HOR
1" = 20' VER

SURVEY	PINKHAM ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, INC.	OPTION B – PROFILE McDONOUGH DR. TO PANTON RD.	DATE 9/28/95
DESIGNED DAW	BUS. (802) 658-0626 FAX (802) 658-3629	RTE. 22A BYPASS	DRAWING NO. SHEET 2 OF 2
DRAWN NPN	Engineers • Planners • Landscape Architects • Surveyors	CITY OF VERGENNES VERMONT	PROJECT NO. 7209
CHECKED KWP	The Maltex Building 431 Pine St., Burlington, VT 05401	©	
SCALE AS SHOWN			
FILE NAME: 7209-PRO			

Option C

This segment begins in the same location as Options A and B, (on MacDonough Drive), and continues southerly approximately 400 feet where it turns westerly and crosses Otter Creek approximately 900 feet downstream from Options A & B. This alignment option was selected to utilize more open space and limit impacts to existing structures. It should be noted, and is shown on Figure 14, that this alignment is mostly in the Town of Panton, outside of the City limits. It will also impact a Class II wetland. Due to the existing topography of the river bank and width of the river, the elevated structure for this crossing may need to be at least 1,200 feet long and possibly longer. This option would cross Panton Road approximately 600 feet west of Option B, with the same type of intersection treatment. It would then continue south and match the alignments of both Options A & B. Total length of this segment is approximately 6,200 feet.

The intersection with Route 22A south of the City may have the same type of intersection treatment as the northern intersection, a modern roundabout. In this location the roundabout would also serve as a gateway to the City and help to reduce speeds as north bound vehicles entered the urban area. A roundabout at this location would offer the traveler a clear choice between a journey through the City and the bypass alternative. Signs and roadway design could reinforce this choice.

Table 4 summarizes the impacts of the three roadway options described above.

The bridge crossing at the Otter Creek is particularly important to the visual impression of the alignment. Figures 16 A and B illustrate the potential before and after condition from a viewpoint on MacDonough Drive west of the Northlands Job Corps Center. The intent of these images is to indicate the visual impact of a bridge at that location.

Table 4
Roadway Options and Impacts

Impact Categories	Option A	Option B	Option C
Approx. Total Roadway Length	14,800 feet	13,400 feet	13,900 feet
Approx. Bridge Span	300-800 feet, depending on type of span	same	600-1200 feet, depending on how wetlands are bridged.
Approx. Approaches	N. est. 600-700 feet S. est. 400-425 feet	N. est. 400-600 feet S. est. 200-250 feet	N. est. 400-600 S. est. 150-200 feet
Existing Development	Major impact and possible rearrangement of mobile home park; impinge on Goodrich storm water retention; commercial businesses on s/s of Panton Road; farm on 22A: rescue squad; Goodrich parking area.	Removal of 2 homes, possible impact to 2 others; potential adjustment to 3 or 4 mobile homes; farm on 22A.	May impact existing residences on s/s; farm on 22A.
Natural Features and Visual Intrusion	Farmland; wetland & buffer area n/s Otter Creek; riverbank slopes; open fields; infill of swale; strong visual impact on cemetery slope; Migratory geese have been spotted on riverbank.	Farmland; wetland & buffer area; open fields; migratory geese.	Severe impact on n/s of river wetland and buffer area; farmland; less visual intrusion due to flat terrain; migratory geese.
Intersections	Probable intersection (s) in NW quadrant; Comfort Hill Road MacDonough Drive, Pa Road Rte. 22A (2)	Same	22A, Panton Road; Sand Road; Comfort Hill Road; 22A.
Municipalities	Panton, Vergennes	Same	Same. Significant portion in Panton.
Relative Costs**	Roadway $2.8 M Bridge $2 M Total $4.8 M	Roadway $2.5 M Bridge $2 M Total $4.5 M	Roadway $2.6 M Bridge $3.1 Total $5.7 M

Note: All figures on this chart are merely order of magnitude estimates for comparative purposes only.

** Cost estimates are relative, order of magnitude, for comparison only. Does not include land acquisition and or necessary appurtenances.

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Juli Campoli, Landscape Architect

Figure 16A

Current Condition
View South from MacDonough Drive to Panton Road

Figure 16B

Possible Future Condition
View South from MacDonough Drive to Panton Road with Bypass and Bridge

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Juli Campoli, Landscape Architect

3.2 Land Use and Zoning Considerations

A new roadway may impact not only traffic patterns, it also may affect the future land use and character of surrounding areas. By considering the relationship between roads and development patterns, affected communities can plan future transportation needs and future growth and zoning changes concurrently. By drawing the connection between a new transportation route and land use, the bypass can influence positive growth patterns and create the kind of community envisioned by the municipality.

The purpose of the Route 22A bypass is to divert a portion of the through traffic, especially heavy trucks, that now passes through the center of Vergennes and to relieve increased traffic that is predicted to negatively impact the City streets in the future. The City Council of Vergennes has recognized that diverting traffic from the center could potentially cause an out-migration of business. The bypass could also create opportunities and pressure for automobile related strip development which could have the potential to negatively impact the character of the landscape along the projected route. The City Council also recognized that if properly designed the road could have "a positive effect on the community". To maximize the positive values of the new roadway the City Council has requested that the bypass be designed with controlled access to avoid strip development. The desire for a controlled access road was voiced many times by citizens participating in the study. The Council also recommended that the bypass be wrapped as tightly as possible to the edge of the City in order that the road become a functional addition to the municipal infrastructure.

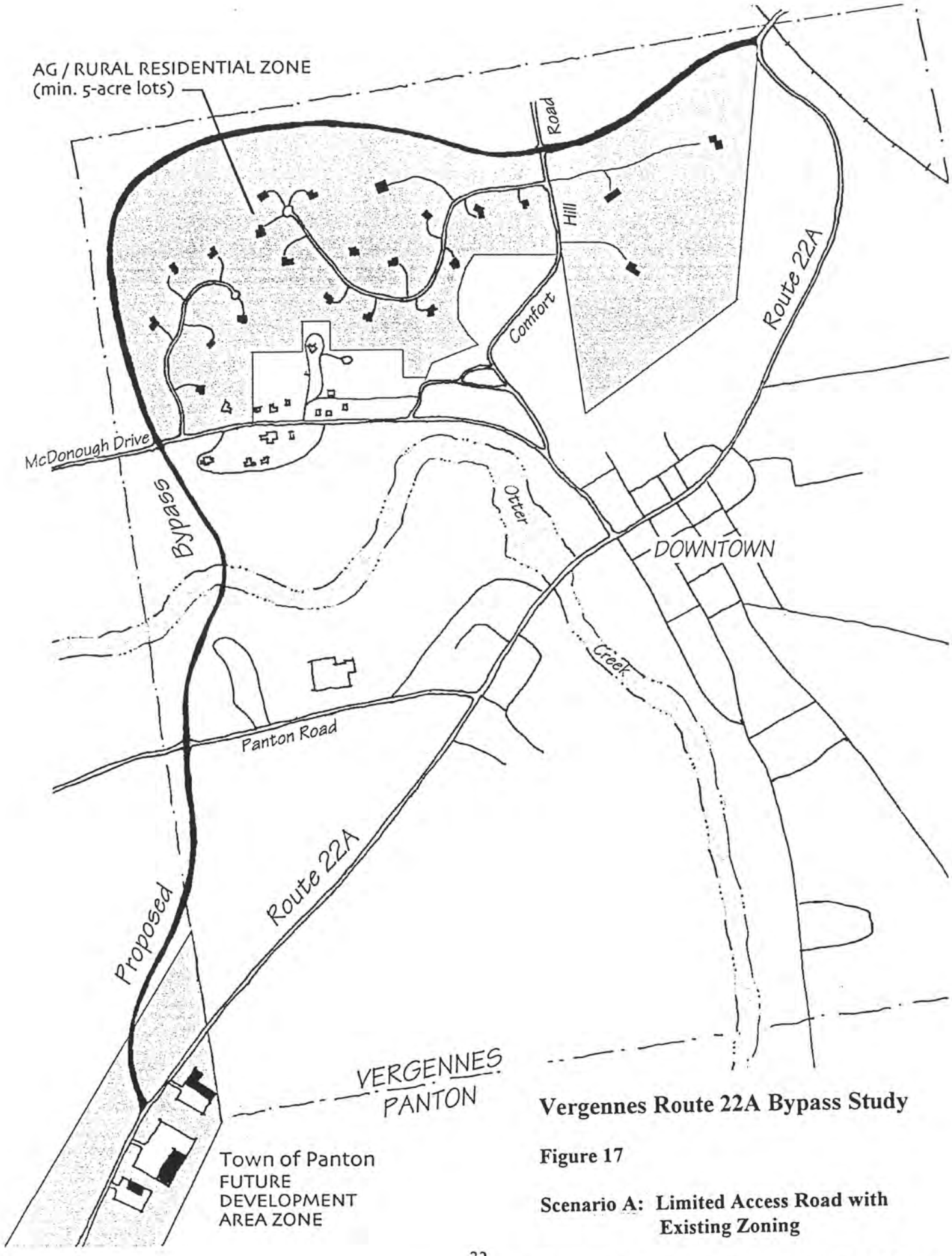
The opportunity to use the roadway to enhance the City of Vergennes is most evident in the largely undeveloped northwest quadrant. Because the area between MacDonough Drive and Comfort Hill Road is the least developed quadrant of the City, flexibility exists as to the exact location of this segment of the bypass. The chosen location, the design of the roadway, and future zoning enacted for this area will shape the character of the northwest quadrant and how well it becomes integrated into the rest of the City. This section presents three scenarios for integrating the new roadway into the City with an emphasis on land use in the northwest quadrant. This is the section of the roadway that is particularly susceptible to land use changes as a result of improved access.

Potential Land Use Scenarios

This part of the study will explore the land use implications of the bypass and alternatives for integrating the future roadway into the city in a way that encourages future growth patterns that meet the City's goals. For purposes of discussion, three scenarios have been developed. Figures 17 - 21 illustrate these conditions

Scenario A - Limited Access Road With Existing Zoning

This plan shows the bypass built close to the Town-City line with no additional intersections between those at MacDonough Drive and Comfort Hill Road. In this scenario the road is isolated at the outskirts of the City. The roadway could be designed



Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Figure 17

Scenario A: Limited Access Road with Existing Zoning

Prepared by Juli Campoli, Landscape Architect

similarly to existing Route 22A, but would likely require six foot shoulders. With no intersections or tight curves along this nearly mile long stretch of road, relatively high vehicle speeds could be anticipated.

The plan in Figure 17 shows a "what if" scenario in which no zoning changes have been enacted. The AG/Residential zone in Vergennes would probably generate large lot development (assuming sewer sites could be found). These developments would likely be accessed by a series of cul-de-sac roads off of the existing roads in this neighborhood or newly constructed service roads. Development patterns at the intersection of Route 22A and the bypass in Panton, currently zoned Future Development Area may become commercial (if adequate sewer is available).

The following are the positive and negative features of this scenario:

Positive features:

- Through truck traffic and trucks from Panton Road are funneled out of the downtown.
- Strip commercial development is discouraged through limited access and zoning.
- Town of Panton may wish to consider impact of current zoning at the intersection of the bypass and Route 22a (" Future Development Area Zone") Likely site for roadway commercial if sewer is available.

Negative features:

- Roadway used for only one purpose, for vehicular travel, and not put to full potential as a land use asset.
- Roadway connects minimally to City street network, the northwest quadrant remains isolated.
- All traffic in northwest quadrant may be funneled on to Comfort Hill and MacDonough Drive.

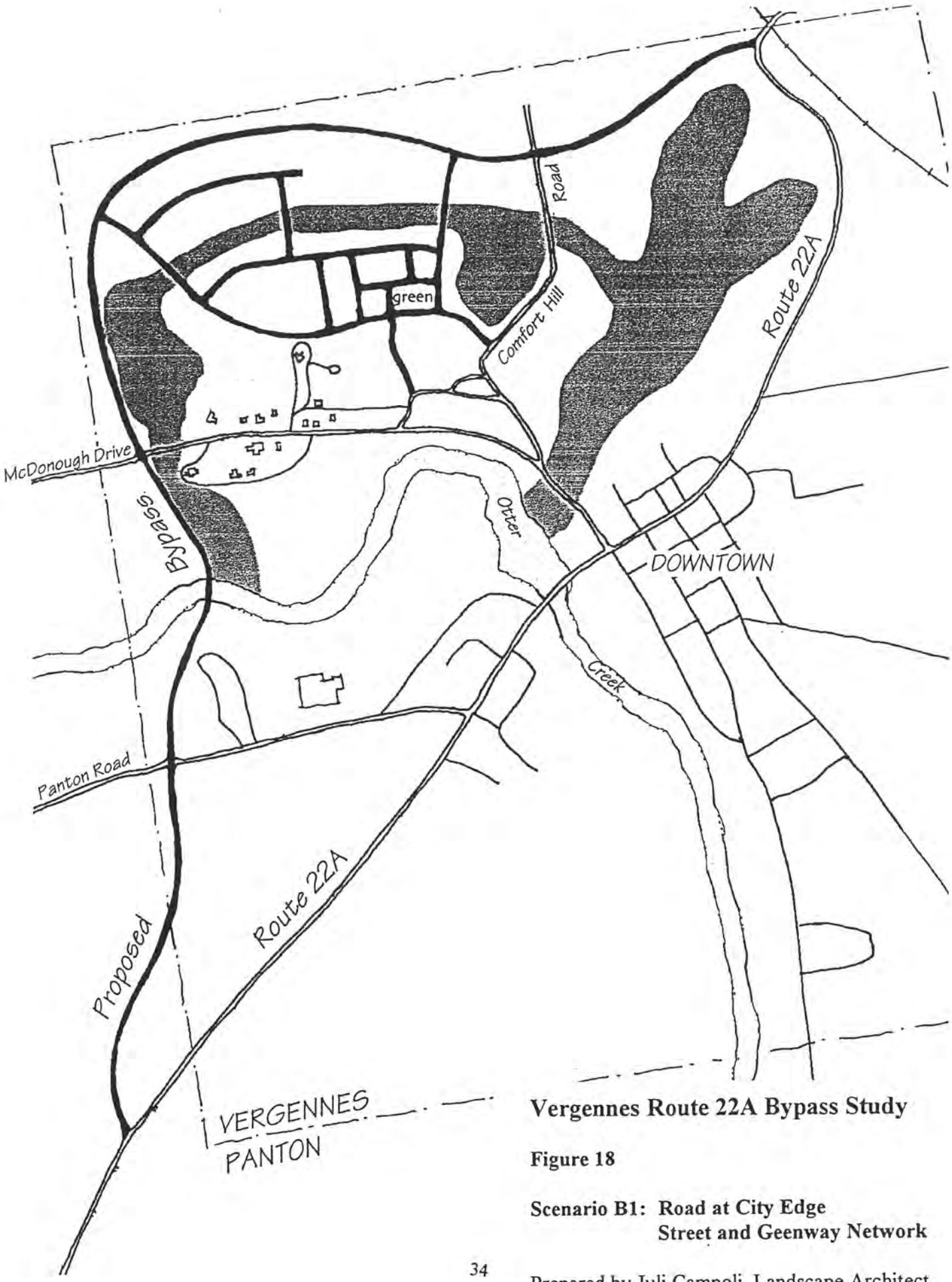
Scenario B - Road At City Edge

B-1 Street and Greenway Network:

The bypass in this scenario is also located close to the City line, but one or possibly two access or arterial roads connect the through-way to a network of streets within the northwest quadrant and to the center of the City. The arterial road shown does not cross over the bypass and extend into the Town of Ferrisburg but forms a "T" intersection. This intersection would have some potential for slowing traffic.

In this scenario the bypass acts as a river would in forming a boundary at the edge of the City. Creating this dividing line encourages a compact growth pattern and a sharp distinction between urban and rural agricultural land use.

The plan shows a greenway network that connects two knolls and a drainage way to form a continuous natural area that weaves through the street network. This greenway could serve as a unifying characteristic for the City.

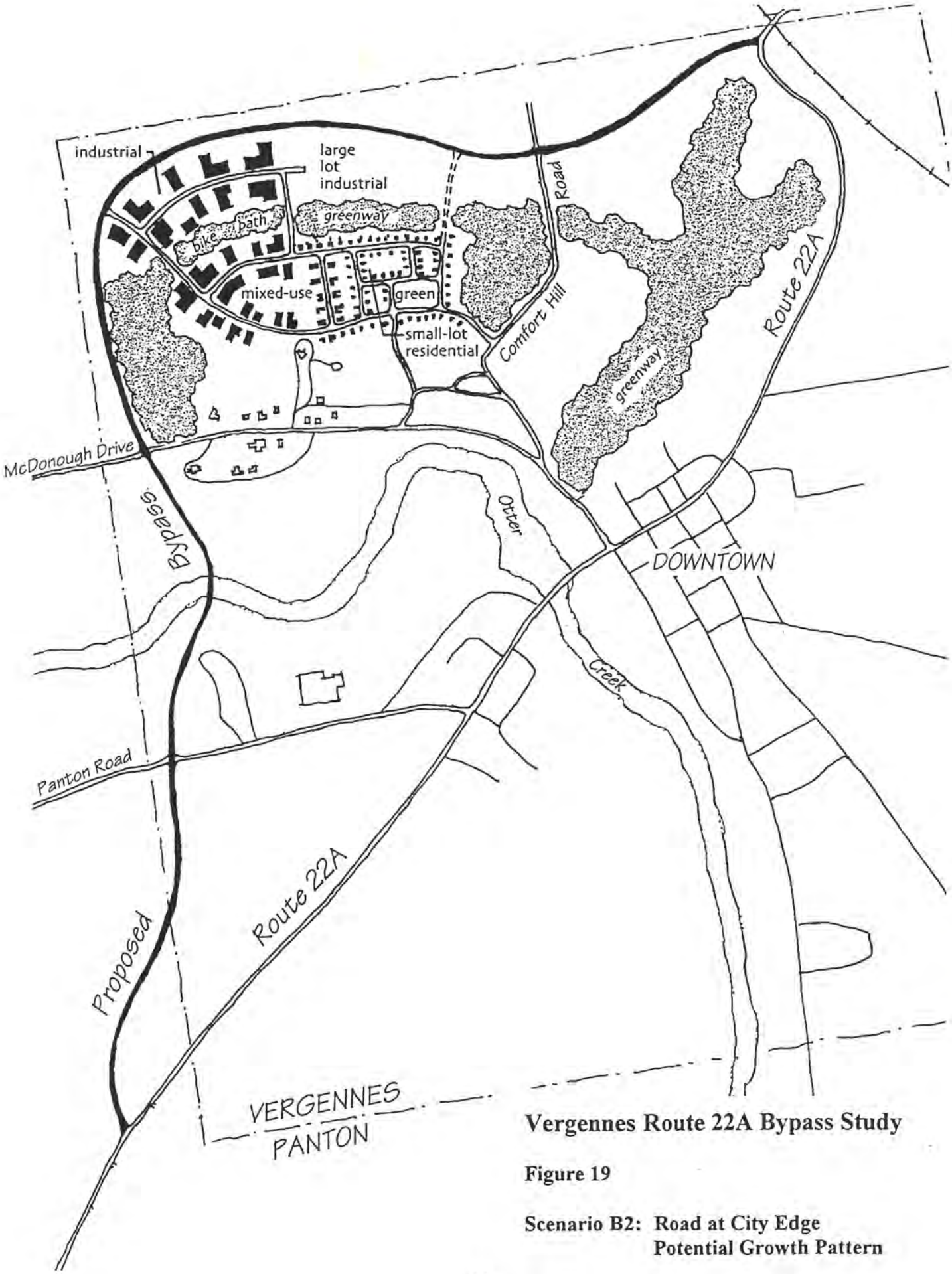


Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Figure 18

Scenario B1: Road at City Edge
Street and Geenway Network

Prepared by Juli Campoli, Landscape Architect



Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Figure 19

Scenario B2: Road at City Edge
Potential Growth Pattern

Prepared by Juli Campoli, Landscape Architect

B-2 Growth Pattern:
The street and greenway plan shown on B-1 presents opportunities for a variety of land uses. Property next to the bypass where traffic truck access is easy but the environment may be noisy has potential as an industrial zone. The greenway could act as a buffer between industrial uses and a mixed use area of offices, incubator businesses and small retail such as bike shops or a corner store. The greenway could also become the site for a recreation route that provides for alternate means of traveling cross town. A residential area at the southeast side of the street network could emerge from the existing neighborhood of single family homes.

Positive features:

- Through truck traffic and trucks from Panton Road are funneled out of the downtown.
- Strip commercial development is discouraged through limited access and zoning.
- Bypass defines edge of growth area and helps control development sprawl.
- Bypass may open to views of rural landscape to the northwest which remains agricultural in zoning and use.
- Industrial zone southeast of the bypass can be compatible with road side environment.
- Trucks have access to industrial zone and avoid residential areas.
- Town of Panton has option to encourage commercial development at the "Development Area Zone" at intersection of the bypass and 22A as commercial (if sewer is available) or restrict use through zoning.

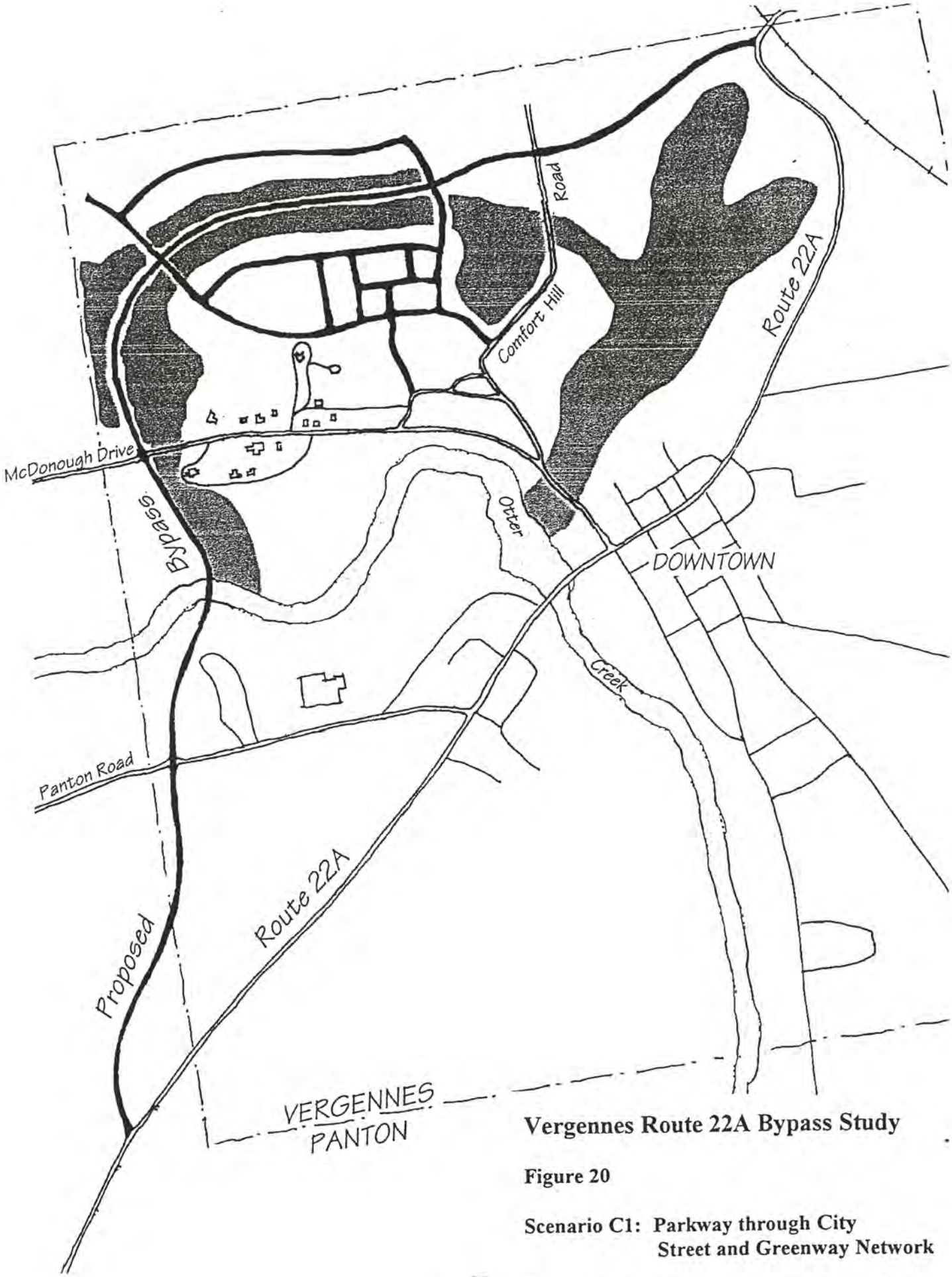
Negative features:

- Industrial zone may exceed needs of City
- Traffic speeds on bypass may remain fairly high.
- Only one side of the bypass used for future growth

Scenario C - Parkway Through City

C-1 - Street And Greenway Network:
The street network in scenario C is similar to that in scenario B except that the bypass is located closer in to the center of the City. The new roadway could be designed as a Parkway running through a portion of the greenway. It could include a recreation path running parallel through the greenway or a bikeway which shares the road. Two roadways cross the bypass to access properties on the north-west side of the road and potentially properties in the Town of Ferrisburg beyond. The two intersections in addition to those at MacDonough Drive and Comfort Hill Road would serve to reduce traffic speeds. The complex of roads created would allow future increased traffic to filter through a network of City streets rather than overload one or two roadways.

C-2 Growth Pattern:
As in scenario B, this plan presents opportunities for a variety of land uses. Industrial uses shown on the northwest side of the bypass are accessible to the bypass and from the City via two local roads. A greenway buffer separates the bypass and the

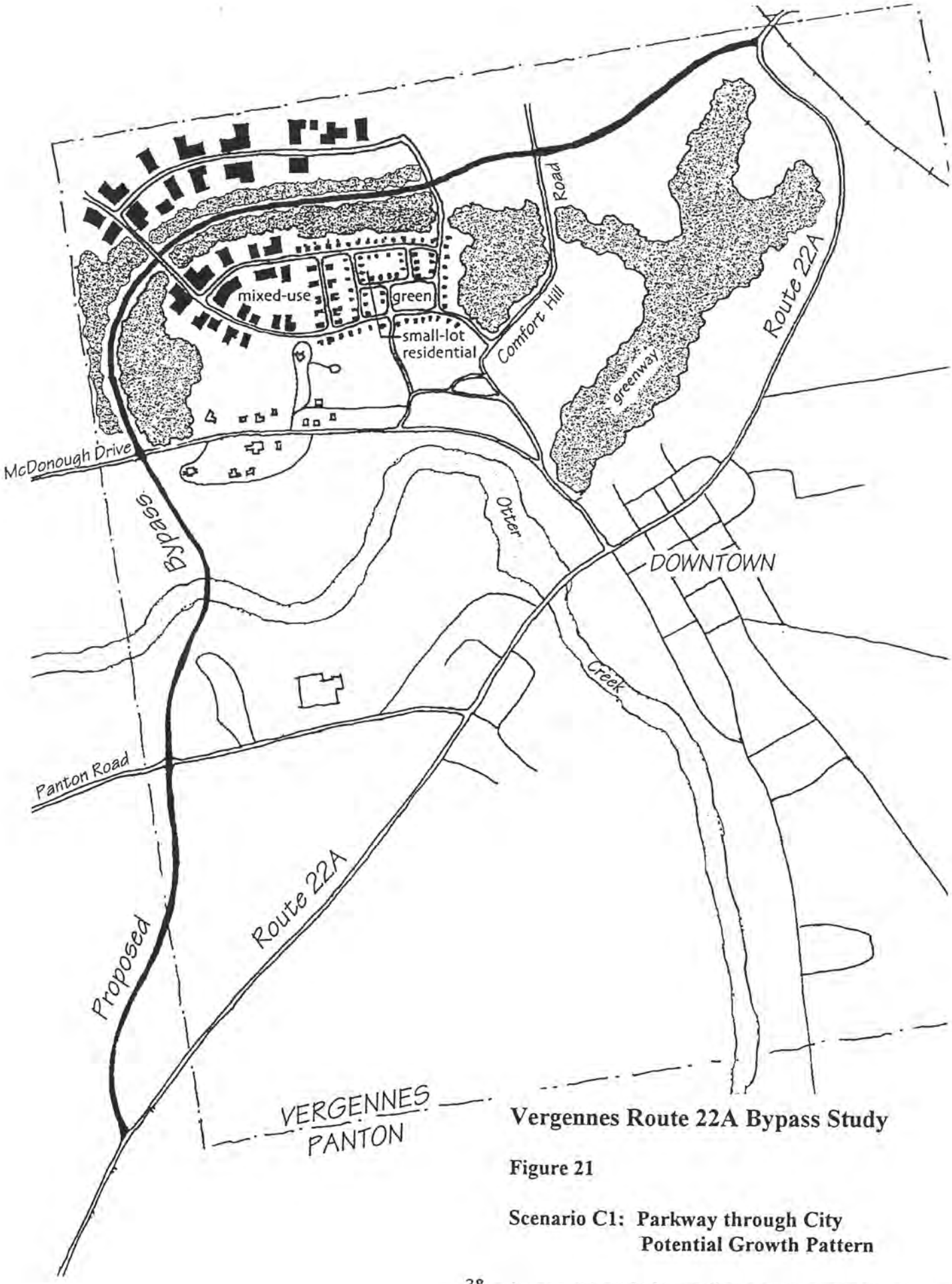


Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Figure 20

Scenario C1: Parkway through City Street and Greenway Network

Prepared by Juli Campoli, Landscape Architect



Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Figure 21

Scenario C1: Parkway through City
Potential Growth Pattern

Prepared by Juli Campoli, Landscape Architect

industrial area from small scale, compatible mixed uses and new residential uses on southeast side of the roadway.

Positive features:

- Through truck traffic and trucks from Panton Road are channeled away from the downtown.
- Strip commercial development is discouraged through limited access and zoning.
- Industrial zone separated from rest of City by roadway and Greenery buffer.
- Both sides of the bypass are used for growth and appropriate land uses.
- Bypass becomes a parkway and an integral part of the City.
- Trucks access future industrial zone without entering other neighborhoods.
- Traffic speeds on the bypass somewhat reduced by added intersections.
- Town of Panton has option to encourage commercial development at the "Development Area Zone" at intersection of the bypass and Route 22A (if sewer is available) or to restrict use through zoning.

Negative features:

- Industrial zone may exceed needs of City,
- Arterial link to Ferrisburg could encourage sprawl .
- Fewer views of rural landscape from bypass.

3.3 Roadway Scale And Design

The design and scale of a new roadway contributes to the character of the area in which it is located. This contribution could negatively or positively impact that character depending on the character of the roadway scale and design. Roadway design often dictates the land use and the type of businesses that choose to locate nearby. The design of intersections and approaches to the City can influence the first impression a visitor receives, which direction the driver decides to turn, as well as speeds maintained. The width of the road and shoulders, the presence of vegetation or curbs, people and surrounding buildings all send signals to the driver about the character of the road and the appeal of area.

The design of the Route 22A bypass, which will most likely be funded through the State and Federal Government, will be guided by specifications of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The intent of these guidelines is to improve the uniformity and safety of federally-funded roadway design throughout the country. The proposed bypass design will likely be subject to these guidelines as interpreted by the Vermont Agency of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. The guidelines allow for design variations based on traffic counts, speed limits and urban or rural settings.

In addition a Vermont task force made up of interested citizens and VAOT staff has been working over the past year, reviewing existing guidelines and, in some areas, suggesting modifications that will allow national highway standards to be adapted to Vermont's rural

landscapes and village settings. These new or revised standards may form the basis for final roadway design for the bypass.

The discussion and road cross-section sketches below are not based on existing AASHTO standards or new guidelines or recommendations. They are based on observations of existing roadways in Vermont, some built recently and others a few decades old. They are intended to open discussion about the kind of roadway local citizens feel best meets the needs of the Town of Panton and the City of Vergennes and the character of the roadway they would like to see built.

For the sake of discussion it is assumed that the roadway will be built within a 100 foot right-of-way, allowing width for future expansion and amenities.

1. State Roadway Standard

This cross section design shows a two lane roadway similar to the existing Route 22A but with wider shoulders. Eight foot shoulders that can act as breakdown lanes are often installed on new roadways of this type. Gravel base, side slopes and ditches will raise the roadbed above the surrounding landscape. If maximum speeds of 55 miles per hour are permitted, trees and large shrubs will need to be held 30 feet back from the edge of traveled way.

The character of this type of bypass is similar to the new Circumferencial Highway recently constructed in the Town of Essex.

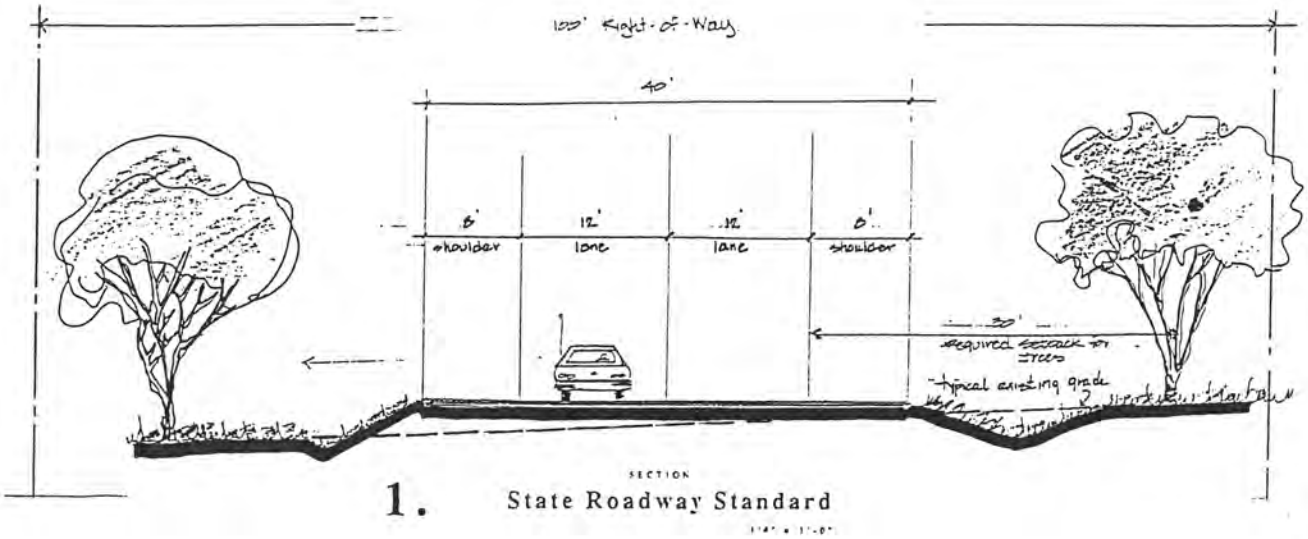
2. Modified Roadway Standard

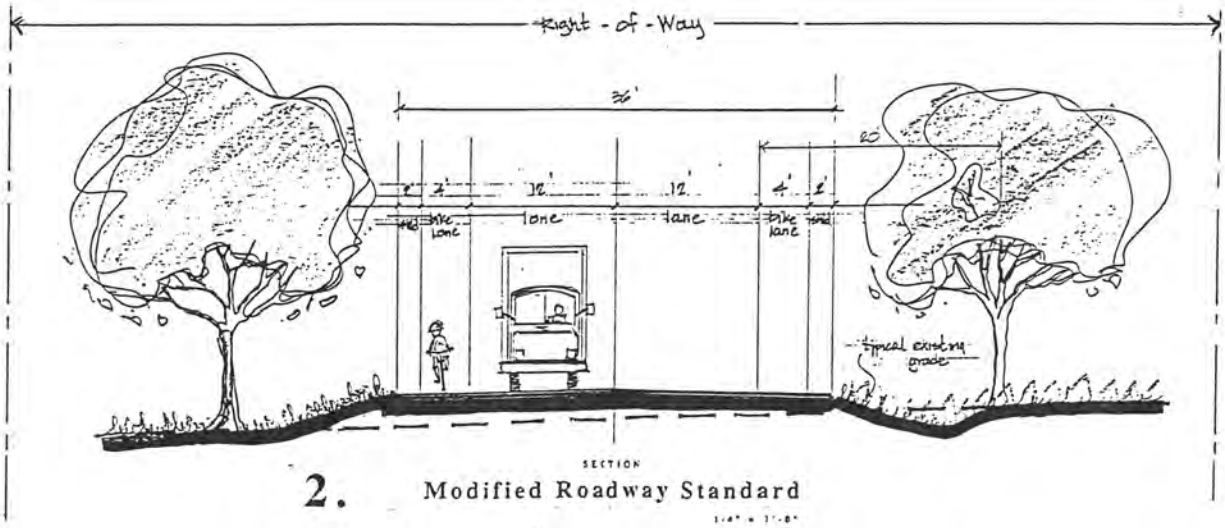
This cross section is typical of older roadways although most do not include bike lanes. Sections of Route 116 have a quality are similar to this cross section. Vegetation is closer to the roadway or existing stone walls and plantings next to the road have not been removed.

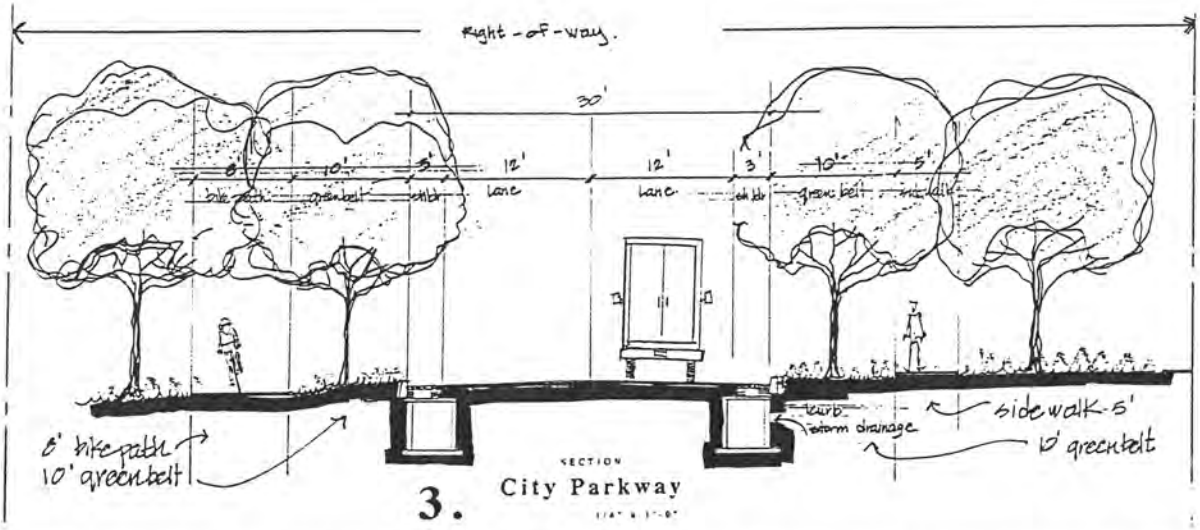
Speed limits would probably need to be lowered for modifications of cross section I to be permitted. Lanes narrower than 12 feet may be considered to slow traffic speeds.

3. City Parkway

This cross section is appropriate where the roadway is to become integrated with a city street system. The curbs installed at both sides will require the added cost of storm drainage but will allow a greenery or greenbelt and street trees be planted close to the edge of the road and providing shade for the traveled way. Sidewalks or bike lanes could be added behind the greenbelt. The presence of street trees and people within the roadway corridor alert drivers that they are entering a developed area.







Kathleen Ryan • Landscape Architect

Figure 22 Roadway Scale and Design Alternatives

Kennedy Drive in South Burlington, although four lanes wide in some places, has the character of an urban parkway.

3.4 Economic Considerations

The proposed bypass is likely to have some economic impacts on downtown Vergennes. The fear is that diverting a significant volume of through traffic from the downtown will reduce the overall customer base. The nature and extent of these impacts depend largely on the design of the intersections on Route 22A which would divert traffic to the bypass. The use of roundabouts forces cars to slow down and make a conscious decision on whether they want to drive through downtown or bypass it. Similarly the design of the intersections along the bypass is important. These intersections can maximize the access opportunities to downtown and at the same time spread traffic impacts. The following points should be emphasized:

- By encouraging heavy trucks to use the bypass route, there is likely to be less deterioration of the downtown infrastructure. This factor translates into reduced roadway maintenance costs for the City.
- A reduction in heavy vehicle movements and related ambient conditions may create a positive climate for a downtown improvement strategy.
- Selecting traffic with downtown destinations may encourage the development of new, more lucrative attractions which are not dependent on diversions of existing traffic flow.

In addition the establishment of high quality access to the northwest quadrant will encourage new economic generators for the City of Vergennes and the region. Improving access to the City's major employer, B. F. Goodrich, may have some impact on the vitality of that industry and its future in the City.

4.0 Conclusions and Next Steps

As a preliminary design report, this document discusses the need for a bypass route and the rationale for selecting a route through the western portion of the City of Vergennes. Conceptual level designs have been developed for a route in this location. Some thought has been given as to the design of this roadway and how it can be integrated in the natural growth and development of the City of Vergennes. This report and its conclusions should form the basis for further actions to make the bypass a reality. The following actions will be needed to move the project forward:

- **Prepare Transportation Improvement Program Element:** Further work on the bypass can only occur if the project enters the VAOT pipeline of projects. To do this the item must be included in the Addison Regional Transportation Improvement Program. This list of projects will form one basis for state-wide project prioritization. The bypass must be included in the state-wide priorities in order to receive further consideration for funding.

- **Initiate VAOT Scoping Procedures:** Once the problem to be addressed is recognized in the statewide Transportation Improvement Program, it may enter into the project scoping process. In this step VAOT conducts a more detailed analysis of the proposed project, and prepares a project scoping document which discusses the physical, social and economic issues surrounding the project.

- **Amend City and Town Master Plans:** Both the Town of Panton and the City of Vergennes should include a discussion of the bypass in their municipal plans. This step is essential to gain local sanction for the roadway and to demonstrate to VAOT that there is local support. Municipal master plans should indicate land use goals for the areas near the bypass.

- **Reserve Rights of Way Through Municipal Mapping Procedures:** An official municipal map illustrates in detail street locations and dimensions, the location of utility lines, and roadway easements and projected rights-of-way. The municipal map is a valuable tool included in state enabling law for reserving a right-of-way, if the roadway is not expected to be constructed for many years. The option of the roadway is preserved for future generations to consider. Mapping procedures should include the bypass alignment and the alignments of connecting roads.

- **Adjust Zoning Ordinances:** Zoning ordinances for the Town of Panton and City of Vergennes should be reviewed to ensure that projected land uses are compatible with the vision of development(or no development) along the bypass route. Zoning ordinances should include site design guidelines to guide not only the location of uses, but the nature of design.

- **Continue Public Participation in Roadway Design:** As the project unfolds in more detail it will be come increasingly important to have public input. Additional public

workshops such as those held for this initial stage should be held by the Regional Commission and VAOT. Frequent information sessions should be held at key points in the development of the project. All documents generated by the project should be publicly available for review.

- **Investigate Rail Freight Options:** Rail freight is a clear option to using roadways for the transport of goods. Rail freight is not expected to reduce the need for the bypass, but can channel a portion of goods movement, particularly local and regional shipments, away from the roadway network. The use of rail freight should be actively promoted by the state and the Vermont Railway.

Appendix A

Vergennes Transportation Advisory Committee

Roger Kayhart	Waltham
Harold Francis	Waltham
Ed Dooly	Panton
Ken Degree	Vergennes
John Emerson IV	Vergennes
Mel Hawley	Vergennes
Luanne Urfer	Panton
Barry Purington	Ferrisburg

Clay Poitras	VAOT
Sandi Young	ACRPC
Peter Hart	CP&D
George Jacquemart	BF&J

Kathleen Ryan, Landscape Architect
Doug Weber, Pinkham Engineering Associates

Appendix B

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass
Property Ownership

Identifier	Owner	Acres	Comments
280125	Robert & Lillian Nuttall	.3	
280104	Sheila Turpan	.6	
280103	Claude & Sandra Bourgeois	1.0	
290112	Prospect Cemetery Corporation	8+/-	
280101	Marcel & Paul Bourgeois	17	
290101	Marcel & Paul Bourgeois	23	
290102	Philip O'Brien	.4	
290103	William & Constance Huston	2.2	
290104	William & Constance Huston	5.18	
250209	Vergennes Rescue Squad	.4	
250208	BF Goodrich	26.4	
240103	Addison County Community Trust	17.23	
240102	Charles & Christine Bradford	3.5	
240104	William Brown	1.3	
240106	Eleanor Tucker	.4	
240108	David & Helen Larrow	.2	
240109	Edward & Cecile Gebo	.4	
240105	Clara Comeau	3.9	
210101	State of Vermont	200*	all state land
210101	State of Vermont	*	"
240101	Sharon & Douglas Carlton		
250101	State of Vermont	*	"
210102	Edward & Ruth Ann Sears	.4	
260101	John Chappel III	90.9	
220102	Vermont Industrial Parks	6.6	
220112	Vermont Industrial Parks	14.4	

Indicates ownership of property along the west side of the City.

Appendix C

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass
Public Workshop
June 19, 1995

Summary

The public workshop was held in the Ferrisburgh Central School. Approximately 7 people participated, exclusive of staff and consultants. The agenda for the meeting is attached..

1. **What would be the function of a bypass route?**

- Route should be designed to serve both cars and trucks.
- It should function primarily to move through traffic, traffic which would not stop in Vergennes anyway. Through car traffic should be diverted to the new route.
- Some investigation should be made of other means of moving goods, including barges on Lake Champlain. Some of the bigger shippers, such as MacIntyre Oil, use rail for goods movement.
- Will we be subsidizing car and truck travel through a new roadway, at the expense of alternative means of shipping?
- Access points should be considered, including access to MacDonough Drive, the job corps site, Panton Road and future industrial property.
- A bypass will be an opportunity to do "traffic calming" in downtown Vergennes.

2. **What could be expected to be the impacts of a bypass?**

- The positive benefits for Panton are not clear.
- There are environmental concerns for the area adjacent to BF Goodrich
- Everyone sees the bypass as a problem for Vergennes which doesn't impact other towns.
- The alternative of constructing the bypass south and east of the City has a problem of connecting to Route 7.
- Route 22A provides access to the scenic character of the area.
- Some shoulders on 22A allow for bike travel. We should look at the potential for a bike route, either on the bypass or through downtown.
- A bypass could increase traffic on Botsford Road.

3. What should the bypass look like?

- Could be a combination of a boulevard and a highway; but the route should have a boulevard "feel."
- The bridge over Otter Creek could be a major drawing card for tourists.
- The route should be designed to accommodate bicycles to the extent practical, but should not be used as a bike route.
- There should be limited at-grade crossings and the use of roundabouts at intersections where appropriate.

4. Who else needs to get involved?

- Should speak to the bike path people. Sandi will supply list of bike people in each of the towns. Bruce Burgess.
- There should be a meeting of property owners.
- The Planning Commissions of each of the towns.
- BF Goodrich should be brought into the dialogue.
- Joanne LaBerge, Vergennes Chamber of Commerce.
- Northlands Job Corps

Conclusion

It was concluded that a tightly constructed route adjacent to the western boundary of the City should be pursued. The bypass should have no, or minimal, intrusion into neighboring towns and should use state property as far possible. It should be designed for limited access, but offer clear options to encourage visitors to Vergennes. It was agreed that this option should be analyzed in further detail, and with additional public input.

Community Planning & Design

C P & D

Peter D. Hart, AICP

Goodwin-Baker Building
P O B o x 5 8 6
Richmond, VT 05477
Tel /Fax: 802 434 5933

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

Community Workshop
June 19, 1995

AGENDA

1. **Introduction** — **Sandi Young, ACRPC**

2. **Traffic Patterns and Demand** — **Georges Jacquemart, BF&J**

3. **Opportunities and Constraints Route Options** — **Peter Hart, CP&D**

4. **Roadway Design Images** — **Kathleen Ryan**

5. **Small Group Discussion**

   The room will be divided to discuss four key questions:

   - What functions should a bypass serve? As a truck route? As an extension of the urban area? Access to property?
   - How much community impact would be tolerated? Impact on existing development? Natural features, agricultural land, homes, business? Are there positive impacts which can be anticipated?
   - What should the roadway look like? Lanes, access points, visual impact, landscaping, bike and pedestrian access?
   - Who else should be involved? Agencies, individuals, businesses?

6. **Summary Statements**

7. **Next Steps**

Appendix D

Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Project
Public Workshop
September 28, 1995

Approximately 50 people representing six communities assembled at the Ferrisburgh Central School cafeteria for the second of two public workshops to discuss the potential Vergennes Route 22A bypass.

The assembly was initiated by Sandi Young, Executive Director of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission who gave an overview of the project and presented the format for the evening meeting. Peter Hart, of Community Planning & Design reviewed the steps in the planning process and the conclusions reached with regard to the selected bypass corridor. Both Kathleen Ryan, Landscape Architect and Doug Weber, Pinkham Engineering Associates, presented detailed ideas for a potential bypass right-of-way.

The right-of-way, as presented would extend for Route 22A south of the city line and cross Panton Road just west of Otter Creek Park. Proceeding north it would cross the Otter Creek and skirt the western edge of Northlands Job Corps Center before bending east to meet Route 22A at the new overpass under construction north of the City. Details were presented for the bridge crossing and a preliminary route description was graphically presented.

Through schematic drawings Kathleen Ryan discussed several alternatives for how the bypass can be integrated, or not integrated, into the City. Various approaches to land use, particularly in the northwestern quadrant of the City were discussed.

Following these presentations, an extended period of questions and answers and of discussion was carried out.

Conclusions

There was general conclusion from the audience discussion that a new bypass was an important component of the regional transportation network which will ease congestion and infrastructure costs in downtown Vergennes and provide improved service for travelers, including truckers, moving north and south through the Routes 22a-7 corridor.

There was some discussion concerning alternative means of shipping goods. Participants suggested reinforcing rail deliveries and possibly explore using Lake Champlain barges. Most agreed, while these were long-term directions, a new bypass was the most immediate solution.

Regional Importance

Peter Hart presented five points as to why the potential bypass is of regional importance.

- The bypass would address the continuous increase in traffic volumes within the Route 22A corridor which extends from Fair Haven through Vergennes.
- The bypass would reinforce the state's improvements to Route 22A as a truck route featuring shipments from New York State to Burlington and the rest of northern New England.
- The bypass would resolving a long-standing bottleneck in through movements through the City of Vergennes and facilitate regional travel.
- The bypass would address the problem of an unsuitable truck route and roadway for high vehicle volumes in the City of Vergennes and preserve the City's historic, cultural and economic importance to the region.
- The bypass would reinforce the status of Vergennes as a regional center.

Criteria for Bypass Right

Peter Hart discussed the following criteria for selecting a right-of-way for the potential bypass. These were:

- The right-of-way should satisfy present and future traffic demand.
- The roadway should complement existing and proposed land uses and the Master Plans of affected communities.
- Impacts on the environment are minimized.
- Safety for vehicles and pedestrians should be improved.
- Costs for infrastructure and maintenance should be minimized.
- Preserve the historic community character and the scenic beauty of the area.
- Support downtown development and improvement.
- Minimize the impact on communities surrounding Vergennes.

There was little discussion of these criteria.

Comments, Questions and Opinions

The following is a list of the questions, comments and opinions voiced at the workshop by the audience:

Major issues mentioned:

Proximity of houses on the southside of Panton Road. Concern for existing homes.
Speed of traffic adjacent to residential areas and the trailer park.
Some concern for process...is Alternative B set in stone? What is the timetable for the project?
Does the potential bridge have a curve? Could it be curved?

Will the project generate additional traffic on Panton Road?
The project will impact on the towns (Panton and Ferrisburg) as well as the City.
What would be the impact on farmland? Is current use of land an issue in decisionmaking.
Why is the State advocating roundabouts?
Are there to be access ramps to the new roadway? Response: This is envisioned to be an at grade controlled access roadway with no access ramps.
Bypasses are proposed in Middlebury, Brandon, etc.
Is the money allocated for this bypass? Response: No funds have been allocated.
Route 22A could be reclassified as a business route.
Route 17 is unsuitable for truck traffic and would have to be completely upgraded.
Should have more serious consideration of rail traffic.
There is a steep embankment on the west side of the Goodrich plant which would encumber a roadway.
Will the area around Goodrich become congested?
What's next in the study?

Comments on consensus:

It is about time something is done!
It is good to remove hazardous materials shipments from the center of the City.
Route may not have an impact on hazardous materials shipments.
Some people mentioned concern for the proposed bridge over Otter Creek and the proximity of residences. They do not want to move!
There is no way to enforce trucks on the new roadway. The only way to attract trucks is to create a fast route.
The new route will need to minimize the number of curb cuts.
In summary, a participant from Panton reiterated that the roadway will be a "win-win" for Vergennes, and a "lose-lose" for Panton.

Please Sign —

Thanks —

Route 22A Bypass mtg - Sept. 28, 1995

Sandi Young ACRPC 79 Court St 388-3141

Mead

Lydia & Ryan Wade Dunmore Rd.

George & Rose Virgennes VT. 05491

To Peter Gleason Co. Dept. Fax # 802-434-5933

From Sandi Young Co. Phone # 388-3141 Fax #

DOUG WEBER PINKHAM ENGINEERING 43 CLUB ST RUTLAND

Kimberly Page - Investment

Mr. Mrs. C

Brian Barker Realty

R01 Rt 1030

Virgennes, VT 05491

Eleanor Wheatley

21 Court St

Virgennes, VT 05491

Bert & Elsie Mitchell

RR-1 Box 750

Ferrisburgh, VT 05456

HAROLD D FRANCIS	877-2466	VERGENNES VT
Cliff Carpenter	877-2753	Sand Rd Ferrisburgh
Charlie Langworthy	877-3217	Sand Rd. Ferrisburgh
[illegible]	[illegible]-2454	RR3 Box 3122 Vergennes VT
Shawn E. Tenney	877-2325	Vergennes 50 New Haven Road
ALAN GEBO	[illegible]	NORTON J.
HENRY GEBO	759-2543	RD1 Box 1019 Panton Vergennes VT 05491
MEL HANLEY	877-3637	VERGENNES
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Valley Voice	
[illegible]	475-2493	Panton
Ray Schneider	475-2307	Panton
* Herb Gee	877-3424	Vergennes
CHRIS BEADFORD	RR3 Box 3091	VERGENNES 877-3417
* Matt Daniels	57 MacDonough Drive	Vergennes 877-3329
JOHN GREGSON	19 N. MAIN ST.	VERGENNES 877-3900
KEN DEGREE	3 ICEHOUSE CT.	VERGENNES 877-6706
Jim Scott	RD 3 Box 3075	Vergennes 877-9238
* WENDELL H. SESSIONS	P.O. Box 5	FERRISBURGH 877-3052
JEAN RICHARDSON	54 East St	VERGENNES 877 3625
* B.F. Richardson	54 East St.	Vergennes 877-3625
Edward R. GEBO	RD 3 Box 3089	VERGENNES 877-2252
* WAYNE WHITE	RD#1 Box 69	759-2278
* Mark Boivin	RD 3 Box 3265	Vergennes Vt 05491 475-2494
* PAUL BOIVIN	" "	" "
Claude D. Bourgeois	RR #1, Box 1611	Vergennes, VT. 877-2496

Community Planning & Design

C P & D

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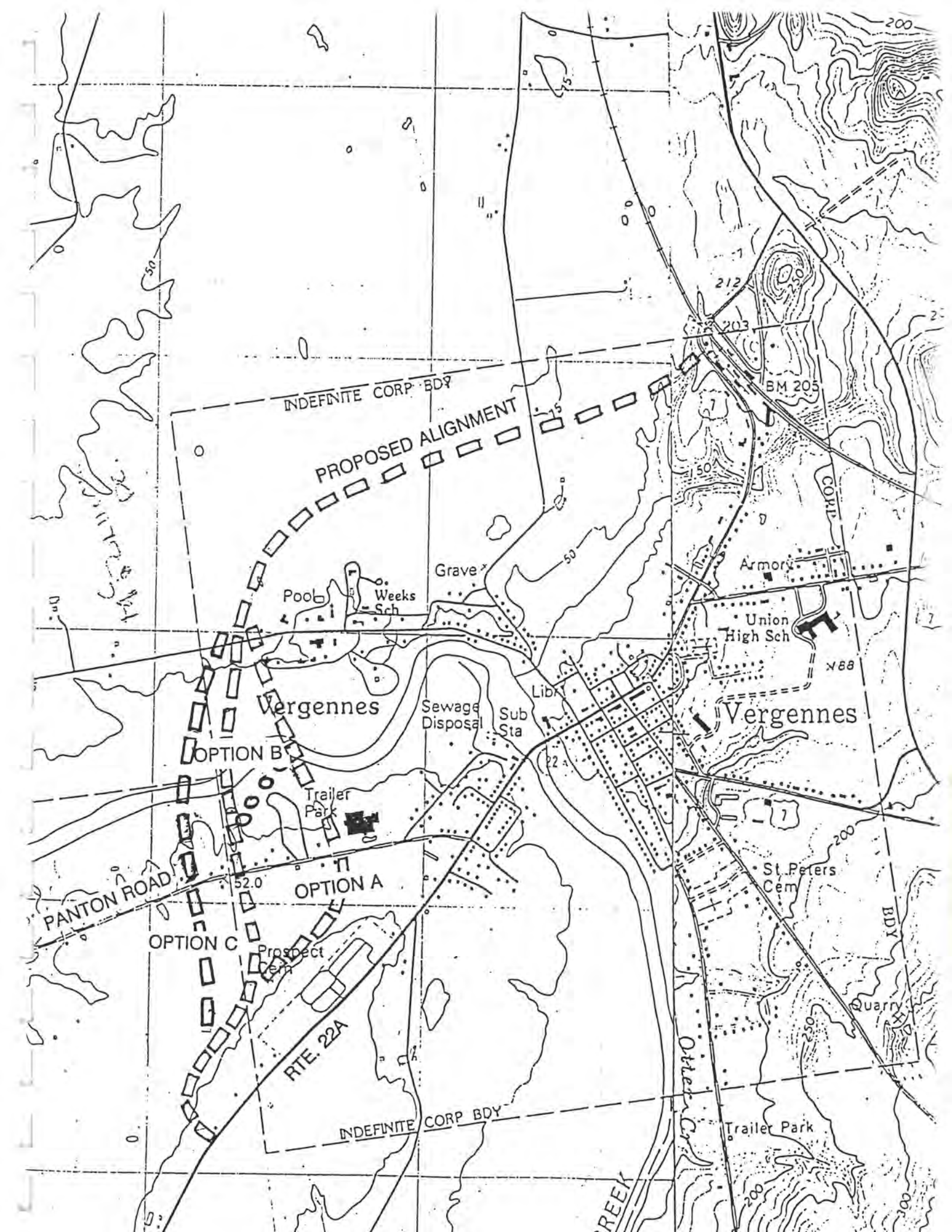
Vergennes, Route 22A, Bypass

Public Workshop
September 28, 1995
7:30 PM

Agenda

1.	**Introduction**	Sandi Young, Addison County Regional Planning Commission
2.	**Study Background and Process**	Peter Hart, CP&D
3.	**Alternatives**	Doug Weber, Pinkham Engineering Associates
4.	**Roadway Design**	Kathleen Ryan, LA
5.	**Open Discussion, Questions and Answers**	
6.	**Conclusion**	Sandi Young, ACRPC


INDEFINITE CORP BDY
PROPOSED ALIGNMENT
BM 205
CORP
Armory
Union High Sch
Grave
Pool
Weeks Sch
Vergennes
Sewage Disposal
Sub Sta
Libry
Vergennes
OPTION B
Trailer Park
PANTON ROAD
52.0
OPTION A
OPTION C
Prospect Cem
RTE. 22A
St Peters Cem
BDY
Quarry
Otter Cr
Trailer Park
INDEFINITE CORP BDY
CREEK

Appendix E

Project Scoping Information Sheet

Project: Vergennes Route 22A Bypass
District: 5
County: Addison
City/Town: City of Vergennes
Route(s): Route 22A
Limits: **Length:** approximately 2.6 miles
Proposed Project:

This project involves the conceptual analysis of a new limited access bypass of Route 22A through the City of Vergennes. The intent is to eliminate through traffic on Main Street, especially the high volumes of heavy truck traffic and create safer pedestrian and vehicle circulation along Main Street.

Existing Facility:

The existing facility consists of two lane roadway through the center of Vergennes, (Route 22A). Due to heavy vehicle volumes, especially through traffic, pedestrian circulation and safety is compromised.

Proposed Facility

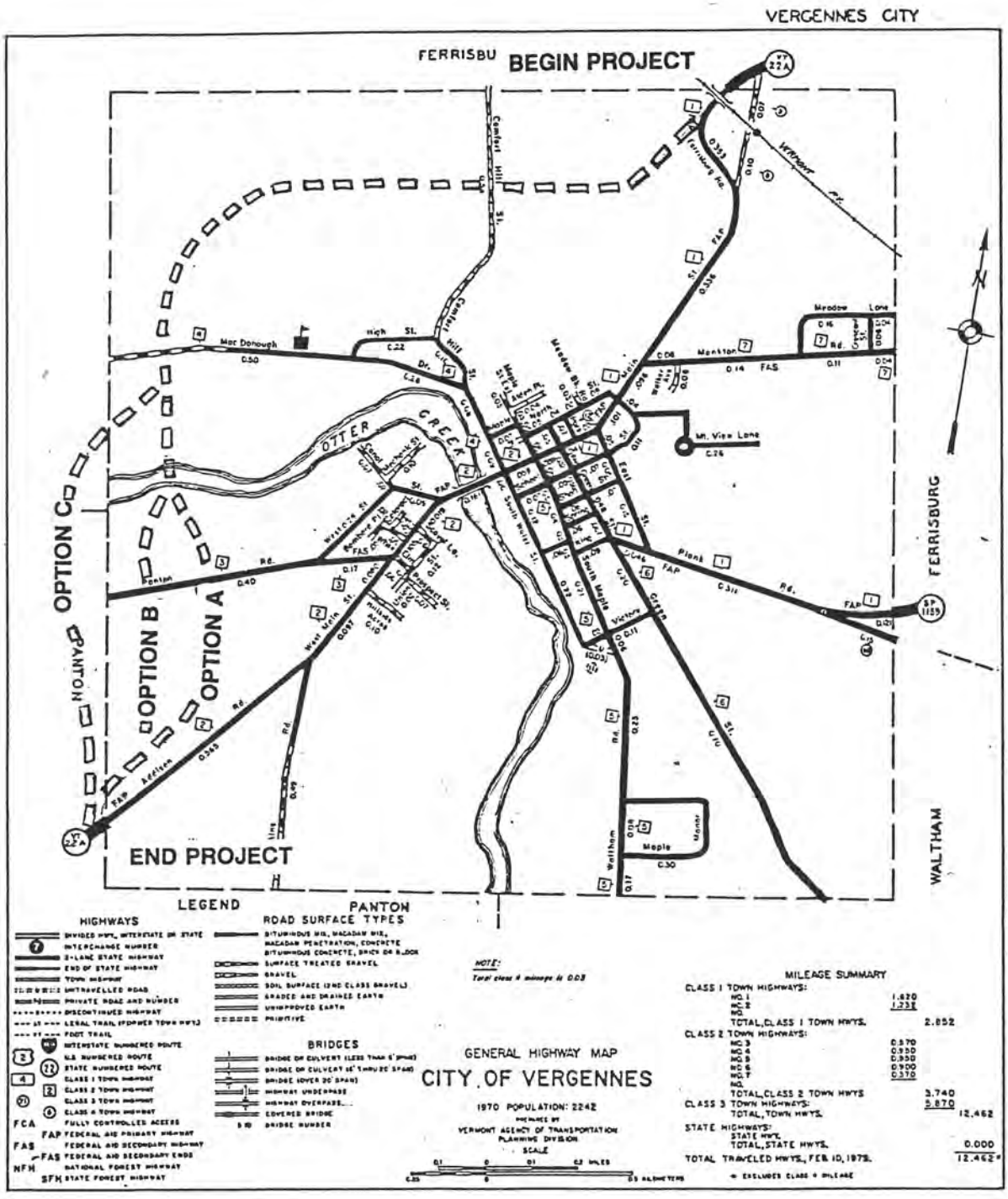
Design Speed(s) suggested 35 - 40 m.p.h.
Typical Section: minimum 32 feet wide
Maximum Grade: .05 ft/ft
Maximum Curve (radius): none determined
Capacity/ V"/C"/LOS (Design Year): 10 years, estimated

Project Scoping Information *con'td*

FEATURES/ISSUES	YES	POSSIBLE	NO	FEATURES/ISSUES	YES	POSSIBLE	NO
Access Control	X			Prime Agricultural Soils	X		
Pedestrian Path		X		Productive Ag Soils	X		
Railroad Crossing(s)	X			Forested Lands			X
Wildlife Habitat		X		Hazardous Waste		X	
Endangered Species		X		4(f) Public Property	X		
Stream Crossing	X			6(f) LWCF		X	
Flood Plain Location(s)	X			EIS/EA	X		
Wetlands	X			Act 250 Permit		X	
Historic Sites	X			Coast Guard Permit	X		
Archeological Investigation	X			Corps of Engineers	X		
Conditional Use Determination	X			Other Permits		X	
Significant Change to Area's General Character	X			Reduction in General Environmental Character			X
Reduction in Recreational Opportunities			X	Reduction in Aesthetic Quality		X	
Improvement Compatible with Growth Rates of Facilities/Services	X			Improvement Compatible with Regional Plans	X		
Improvement Compatible with Local Plans	X						

Remarks: The Feature/Issues items above are based on information available from limited site investigations.

LOCATION MAP



Appendix F

Correspondence

The following correspondence related to this project has been received and is included on the following pages:

1. Vergennes City Council to Harry Strate, Wilbur Smith Associates, February 16, 1995

2. Panton Planning Commission to Sandi Young, ACRPC, September 7, 1995

3. Elizabeth Ready, Addison County Community Trust to Sandi Young, ACRPC, September 27, 1995

4. Charlie Langworthy to Sandi Young, ACRPC, September 29, 1995

City of Vergennes, Vermont OLDEST CITY IN VERMONT

INCORPORATED IN 1788

AREA CODE 802 877-3637 / 877-2841 POST OFFICE BOX 35 / ZIP CODE 05491

February 16, 1994

Mr. Harry Strate
Wilbur Smith Associates
135 College Street
P. O. Box 9412
New Haven, CT 06534

Dear Harry:

On behalf of the citizens and businesses of the City of Vergennes, we sincerely appreciate all the effort that you and others have put into the U.S. Route 7 Transportation Management Study.

We are very pleased that recognition is finally being given to the sincere concerns over the movement of hazardous materials and negative impacts caused by high volumes of through truck traffic. As is mentioned in the study, the City of Vergennes suffers from being the truck route for trucks moving from New York/Albany to the Burlington Metropolitan area and destinations north and east of Burlington.

Over the past decade, Vergennes officials believed that an upgrade of Route 17 was the solution for diverting the hazardous materials shipments and heavy trucks off Route 22A before arriving to the City of Vergennes. It is our understanding that an upgrade of Route 17 is not favorably looked upon as a solution because of costs and the fact that is an indirect route. The City Council accepts this finding and recognizes that a Route 22A bypass provides a more effective long-term solution. However, this acceptance is not without concern.

As was mentioned by Vergennes officials at the public meetings that were held, the effect on the downtown is of serious concern but the Board believes that the location of the bypass, if planned properly, can not only neutralize potential adverse effects on the community but could have a positive effect. At an earlier hearing, the economist assigned to the project provided a fairly detailed report on the effects of bypasses on downtown business. The business adjustments were expressed in ranges. The report may have attempted to convince the listener and reader that there was little risk. Since there is a possibility of maximum out-migration of downtown business and minimum in-migration, due caution is appropriate. Below is a series of preliminary comments regarding design.

1. The highest design criteria of the City Council is that the bypass be as tightly wrapped around the City with connection points as close to the City's boundary as possible. With knowledge of the dense population in the southeast quadrant, significant topographical problems, and wetland protection area nearby, an easterly bypass is not favored. A westerly route that would disconnect within a mile of the City limits, entering the City along our northern boundary and connect to Route 22A south of the underpass is the preferred route. This route will not require an additional access to U.S. 7. A second bridge over Otter Creek in close proximity to the City will benefit the emergency services to the area.

2. Although further study will be in order, the bypass should be limited access with intersections at Panton Road, Comfort Hill, and Main Street. The Panton Road intersection will serve Basin Harbor, Button Bay State Park, and other developments on Lake Champlain. No connection at MacDonough Drive is considered as traffic should be limited through the campus of Northlands Job Corps Center. The Comfort Hill access would serve travelers seeking Kingsland Bay State Park. Main Street would connect in the vicinity of the new underpass.

3. The bypass should be bicycle and pedestrian friendly. A significant number of residents regularly walk and jog along the Route 7 bypass. Fortunately, this design includes wide shoulders that provide a safe path. It would seem logical that a similar design would be incorporated in a Route 22A realignment project. Separated lanes for bicycles and pedestrian may need to be incorporated.

4. The bypass should be designed and landscaped as a scenic highway or parkway so that Vergennes is seen as an attractive city and an appealing place to visit, live, or do business in. Trees should be planted along sections of the parkway to enhance the scenic quality of the route and to provide future sound screens and windbreaks.

5. The bridge over the Otter Creek should be high enough to allow sail and power boats access to our Otter Creek Basin. The design of the bridge should be a graceful and pleasing visual gateway into the city for the hundreds of river bound visitors to Vergennes. The bridge must complement our Otter Creek Basin development efforts rather than neutralize them. This might include a scenic pull-off near the bridge for motorists to stop and photograph our city with the river in the foreground and the City in the background.

6. The bypass should be seen as part of our downtown revitalization efforts and coordinated with other city plans and improvements.

We are anxious to see the next steps in the planning process begin and look forward to the opportunity to participate.

Sincerely,

Vergennes City Council

Richard K. Adams
MAYOR

ALDERMAN

John Emerson IV
ALDERMAN

Jacob J. Spalsbury
ALDERMAN

Steven A. Bushey
ALDERMAN

Sue G. Clark
ALDERMAN

William L. Rose
ALDERMAN

Town of Panton Planning Commission
Box 174 Vergennes, VT 05491

September 7,1995

Ms. Sandi Young
Executive Director
Addison County Regional Planning Commission
Court Street
Middlebury, Vermont 05753

RE: Route 22A Bypass

Dear Sandi;

On behalf of the Town of Panton Planning Commission I am writing you to express our concerns regarding the proposed Route 22A Bypass. As you may know, the Planning Commission is on record as opposing this project, and that has position has been incorporated into our 1994 Town Plan. Based on the information we have received to date regarding the proposed route of the bypass, our position remains one of opposition.

After much discussion, we do not see the benefits of this project to our town. While it may be possible that an exit or intersection at Panton Road might provide an opportunity for some commercial or light industrial development, we have no means to service such development, and Vergennes has reiterated its position of not allowing any hook-ups to their sewage plant beyond the town borders. It seems increasingly clear that this is a Vergennes project that will benefit Vergennes only. The only other possible opportunity with this road is some provisions for alternative transportation systems to be built along side or near the right-of-way.

Regardless of how pretty or sensitively designed this future roadway might be, it will still be a new road, with miles of blacktop over scenic and environmentally sensitive lands and open space in our town as well as a "dividing line" cutting our community in two. We urge the Regional Planning Commission, the AOT and the City of Vergennes to actively explore 1) keeping the road wholly within the city 2) alternative ways to move services and goods effectively within this corridor (Route 7 and Route 17 upgrades might be effectively accomplished with the millions of dollars that will go into building this project or 3) alternative means of transporting these goods and service the region (i.e. rail) and 4) Vergennes needs to further articulate the cost-benefit rationale for this road.

We, as a Commission would be happy to meet with you, your consultant team and representatives from the City of Vergennes to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Town of Panton Planning Commission

cc: Mr. Ed Dooley
Mr. Peter Hart
Mr. Mel Hawley

Addison County Community Trust
P.O. Box 256 • Municipal Building • Middlebury, VT 05753

September 27, 1995

Sandi Young, Executive Director
Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Dear Sandi,

Thank you for speaking with me by phone on Tuesday and for faxing me the copy of the proposed map. As a non-profit owner of the Otter Creek Park on behalf of the 72 families who live there, we have grave concerns about the direction in which this project is headed. I am writing to ask that the proposal as it now stands be formally tabled until such time as the Trust and the representatives of the Otter Creek Residents Association are included in the planning process.

The proposed project is of concern to the families and elders who own homes in Otter Creek Park. The Trust shares their concerns for the safety and quality of life in the neighborhood where they have invested their life savings and are raising their families.

Otter Creek Park was purchased by the Trust at the request of the residents whose Association is an active partner in managing the Park and planning for its future well being. The Park is an important affordable housing resource for the Vergennes area and for Addison County. Among its outstanding attributes are the safety, beauty and quiet of the neighborhood, home to many children and seniors.

We strongly urge you to include members of the Park Association on the planning committee for this proposed project and to invite Park residents to attend hearings and informational meetings at times and in places where they will be able to attend.

It was unsettling and frightening for families to learn of the proposed routes near the Park in a Newsbrief in Monday's Addison Independent. Unfortunately due to short notice and prior commitments, I'm not sure we will be able to attend Thursday's meeting in the strength that our concern warrants. Therefore, I hope that you might share the contents of this letter with those in attendance.

Thank your for your consideration. Please keep in touch and let me know of any request you may have.

Sincere regards,

Elizabeth Ready

Charlie Langworthy
RR#1, Box 700
Ferrisburgh, VT 05456

Sandi Young
ACRPC
79 Court St.
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dear Ms. Young:

Thank you very much for conducting the public workshop on the proposed Route 22A bypass around Vergennes. Your efforts to shed light on the workings of the planning process were very helpful and much appreciated.

I would like to go on record as opposing this bypass as it is presently proposed. I will attempt to list all of my concerns and then offer some suggestions relating to the heavy truck traffic that Vergennes currently endures.

One of my biggest concerns is safety on the roads. One thing I have noticed is that as speeds increase on our highways accidents become much more catastrophic in nature. This bypass would increase the average speed of heavy trucks through the Vergennes area, through several intersections, and there are going to be serious accidents resulting. At present, these trucks crawl through downtown Vergennes at 15-20 mph. Anything that can slow these behemoths down is a good thing as far

as my family is concerned. I can assure you I will not be looking forward to crossing this road as I come in from my Sand Rd. home to Vergennes. I would be interested in learning whether the planning commission has investigated accident data for downtown Vergennes and then compared it to higher speed roads similar to the proposed bypass. Increase the speeds and end up with more serious accidents. Another safety issue cited was the need to keep hazardous materials out of the downtown district. Just don't ask another group of people to take them with open arms.

Another concern I have is the potential damage to the historic character of Vergennes. It is a very compact city currently embraced by nearby farms and pastoral scenery. Being embraced by a circumferential highway belching forth noise and pollution is going to be hard to take. Historic Otter Creek, site of the construction of the American Fleet in the War of 1812 would be despoiled by the addition of a large highway bridge. Philomena Daniels, first woman steamboat pilot in the United States operated boats from this location on Otter Creek and it saddens me to imagine her

reaction to a modern highway bridge with tractor trailers hurtling over the once placid waters. By invoking historical fact I just want to make the point that what we do now is going to affect generations yet to come. When I think of this type of highway and the changes it will inspire I don't think we will be leaving future generations much of a legacy.

Consideration needs to be given to the cost of a bypass. As discussed at last nights meeting the proposed figures are for comparative magnitude purposes only but I feel they lulled people into believing that the cost would not be excessive. Bridges the size of the one proposed for the Creek crossing are not cheap. I would not be surprised to see the cost run to $15-20 million. I would rather see money like that put into maintaining existing rail beds. When you think of projects of this type occuring all over the U.S. it comes as no surprise that we will be leaving the next generation with trillions in debt.

for the entire bypass →

The impact on a number of local residents is going to be very heavy indeed. Residents living immediately west of the Simmonds plant will have their neighborhood torn asunder.

It must be hard to see a home where one has lived and raised a family bulldozed into oblivion so that the sacred automobile and truck may hurtle mindlessly on, in quest of that 2 savings of an additional 2 or 3 minutes. Another group that I have not seen mentioned as being impacted are the students at the Northlands Job Corps. These students, many of whom hail from the inner city, enjoy a peaceful rural setting far from the noise and confusion of the city. According to the map they would feel the close embrace of this bypass and experience a decline in the quality of their experience at the J.C. Corps.

It appears that the economic boom in Chittenden County of the past several decades has increased the demand for goods which pass through Vergennes on their way from points west. This is one of the reasons why this ~~eighth~~ eighth generation Vermonter is leary of growth. I guess building more highways is one way to accomodate this growth but if that were the answer then I guess Los Angeles would be Nirvana. My feeling is that new highways should not be built, period. Which leads me to offer some ideas to help solve some of the traffic problems.

Has there been a study to determine the origins, destinations, and the type of freight being hauled on trucks going through Vergennes? Is there any way some of this freight could be moved by alternative means? Rail is an unbelievably efficient way to move large quantities of material. Perhaps this is an area that needs serious consideration by state transportation officials as something that could have statewide ramifications. This country has squandered an asset in allowing the ascendency of heavy trucks to displace the rail systems. Another option, similarly neglected is water borne transportation. A perfectly good canal system & Lake Champlain parallel the 22A/Rt.7 corridor and lie unused except by pleasure craft. At one time I personally worked on board a tugboat and two of us (2 persons) were able to move 7200 tons of material per trip. This is the equivalent of approx. 150 fully loaded tractor trailers. This was not on Vermont waters but will give you the idea of the possibilities of moving large amounts of material. To sum up, research cargos, seek alternatives.

Secondly, I think more consideration should

be given to utilizing the existing Route 17 from Addison 4-corners to New Haven Jct. I would much rather see an existing road upgraded than a new one built. The biggest problem there would be the impact on the people living along the road and it might not be the best solution.

I feel perhaps the best way to go would be to pursue alternative means of moving the freight (ie. rail) and then to leave things as they are. I don't think the truck traffic is all that bad in Vergennes as it is. It is noisy but thats the way it is in every town in the country. If speed is an issue within city limits, simply take $1.5 million which would be a fraction of what the bypass would cost, invest it, and use the interest to hire 3 policeman to patrol the Vergennes portion of 22A, 24 hrs. a day. Slow the trucks down to a crawl through the city. They already move slowly through the downtown, just be more aggressive at the entrances to Vergennes proper.

I guess thats about all for now and I want to thank you for your patience. I'll be in touch with my local planners to express my views directly to them. Thanks again

for giving us the opportunity to voice our opinions on this issue.

Sincerely yours,