

VERGENNES PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES (PEL) STUDY

Public Involvement Plan

Approved by Vergennes PEL Technical Committee on August 5, 2021

Updated February 2024



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Acronyms

ACP	Agency Coordination Plan
ACRPC	Addison County Regional Planning Commission
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
OML	Vermont Open Meeting Law
PEL	Planning and Environment Linkages
PIP	Public Involvement Plan
VTrans	Vermont Agency of Transportation

1. Introduction

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is preparing a Planning and Environment Linkages Study (Vergennes PEL Study) to evaluate transportation alternatives to reduce the impacts of large trucks on VT Route 22A in Downtown Vergennes, while also enhancing the quality of life and economic vitality for residents in the City and surrounding towns. The PEL Study will build off previous planning efforts completed over the last twenty-five years that considered alternatives at different levels of detail. Two of the primary outcomes will be the preparation of a statement of purpose and need and the identification of a list of reasonable transportation alternatives that may move forward for evaluation in a future environmental review as required in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Another important outcome will be coordination of a short list of transportation alternatives with local land use visioning; the result of which would be advanced through separate environmental reviews. The Vergennes PEL Study will also include an implementation plan.

The environmental provisions in 23 U.S.C §139 require that lead agencies establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation and comment on the environmental review process for a project. Accordingly, the FHWA and VTrans have prepared this Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the PEL Study to describe the process and communication methods for disseminating information about the Study and for soliciting input from the public and agencies. The PIP complies with the current federal surface transportation law, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58, also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law”).

The PIP is a flexible, “living” document that can be amended as needed during the process. Changes to the PIP are documented in Section 10: Revision History.

1.2 STUDY OVERVIEW

In May 2019, the VT 22A Truck Route Study was completed by the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) in partnership with VTrans in response to renewed interest in addressing the impact of trucks passing through VT 22A in Downtown Vergennes. It is the most recent study which evaluated several alternatives and recommends moving forward with a new bypass road on the west side of Vergennes with connections to VT 22A north and south of Downtown.

As the study evolved, the City of Vergennes recognized the potential opportunities a new road could provide and reframed the truck route alternative as the Vergennes Economic Corridor. VTrans recommended that a PEL Study be conducted to consider how transportation alternatives would support the land use and economic development visions of Vergennes and surrounding communities and evaluate alternatives including those explored in previous planning efforts and others that may emerge through a comprehensive planning process. The recommendation was supported by Vergennes and the six proximate municipalities.

PEL provides a collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision making that considers benefits and impacts of proposed transportation system improvements to the environment, community, and economy during the transportation planning process. The Vergennes PEL Study includes robust public engagement to help inform the planning decisions made during the study. When completed, the PEL Study will improve the efficiency of the NEPA environmental review process by supporting the adoption of purpose and need and a preliminary range of reasonable alternatives. The PEL Study will also support a more efficient environmental review by identifying potential environmental impacts that require detailed analyses in a future environmental review.

2. Goals & Objectives of the Public Involvement Plan

The purpose of this PIP is to establish a process for soliciting early and frequent feedback from the public and stakeholders; encouraging open discussion of study details and issues of concern; and providing opportunities for public comments and questions related to the Vergennes PEL Study throughout the study development process. The PIP will be updated during the study development process to incorporate new information, methods, and mechanisms employed during public outreach, as needed.

Specific goals of the public and stakeholder involvement process include:

- Provide clear and timely information to promote public understanding and dialogue on the purpose, benefits, and outcomes of the study process
- Seek ideas and insight from the public related to identifying potential issues, developing a Purpose and Need Statement, a reasonable range of alternatives, and community land use visions to be considered in the PEL Study
- Gather public feedback on draft concepts and materials at well-defined stages of the process
- Provide transparency throughout the study process

Since embarking on the study in 2021, two additional goals have been added:

- Foster relationships of trust with stakeholders and the general public in the seven study communities
- Seek consensus on how to move forward with the study from a regional perspective

Means to help meet these goals include:

- Identify community and industry organizations who can aid in the dissemination of information pertaining to public outreach efforts and opportunities
- Provide forums and venues where members of the community can participate in the public involvement process
- Provide timely notice of public meetings and the release of study documents
- Endeavor to provide stakeholders with meaningful and equitable access to study information and the opportunity to provide comments, as described in Section 3

Since embarking on the study in 2021, these additional means are being employed to help meet these goals:

- Hire a community liaison to meet with community representatives, businesses, and local residents

- Attend existing local meetings and events to share information about the study and seek input, including Selectboard meetings and community events
- Carry out a survey to collect feedback on route options from a wide cross section of the population that represents the seven communities

3. Equitable Engagement Guidelines

3.1 LANGUAGE ACCESSIBILITY

The Vergennes PEL Study will take steps to provide meaningful access to information for individuals in the study area who may not speak English as their primary language and/or who may have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. Individuals will have the ability to request that the Agency of Transportation provide both written and oral interpretation services at public meetings or workshops (virtual or in-person) upon advance request of at least 5 business days prior to the meeting.

3.2 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

Public workshops that take place in -person will be held in locations that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to assure that stakeholders who are people with disabilities or elders may have convenient access to meetings. Sign language interpreters will be available at public workshops, and other meetings, if requested. See 3.1 for additional information on translation services. Public notices announcing public workshops will provide instructions for requesting special accommodations. The Vergennes PEL Study website will be designed to accommodate people with visual impairments (i.e., the platform will be compatible with third-party web browser or application features such that direct website content is convertible to screen readers and text size adjustable).

3.3 MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

The Vergennes PEL Study will ensure access to equal opportunities for participation among all stakeholder communities, with focused attention to the categories defined below:

Title VI Communities: As stated in the “Federal Highway Administration Title VI Program Implementation Plan 2024” ([vermont.gov](https://www.vermont.gov)), the Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) is a recipient of federal funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation modal agencies, including the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). All recipients of federal funding must comply with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other nondiscrimination statutes, regulations, and authorities. VTrans requires that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any federally assisted program or activity. The VTrans Title VI Nondiscrimination Statement issued September 4th, 2020 by Joe Flynn (Secretary, Agency of Transportation) can be found here: [TitleVINondiscrimStatement.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#).

Environmental Justice Communities: Executive Order (EO) 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, dated February 11, 1994, requires consideration of whether a proposed action would disproportionately affect minority or low-income groups (59 Fed Reg. 7629 [1994]).

Traditionally Underserved Communities: The Federal Register defines underserved communities as populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as exemplified by the list in the preceding definition of "equity." (<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-09109/p-27>).

Per the definitions above, the following communities may be impacted by work in the Vergennes area:

- Migrant farmworkers
- People with low incomes and/or experiencing poverty
 - Tenants
 - Families with children, particularly single parents
 - People living with disabilities
- People experiencing housing instability/homelessness
- Mobile Home Park residents
- New Americans

The study team will identify marginalized populations and engage these populations in public outreach efforts throughout the PEL Study. The following principles will be adopted to support involvement of local Title VI, Environmental Justice and Traditionally Underserved communities in the Vergennes PEL Study area:

- Documents, notices, and meetings will be made concise, understandable, and readily accessible to the public
- When appropriate, notices and meeting materials will be provided in languages other than English as requested
- The study website will be developed in English and the platform will be compatible with third-party web browser or application features to translate direct website contact based on user language preference
- Public events will be scheduled at convenient and accessible locations and times
- The study team will collaborate with local groups to attend and participate in regularly held local meetings/events to share study information and garner feedback as appropriate
- The study team will collaborate with key community leaders, stakeholders and local organizations on the development and dissemination of messaging and notification pertaining to public events and encouraging community participation
- Study materials will be provided digitally and in paper-based form upon request to increase accessibility to persons who may not have internet access.

4. Vermont Open Meeting Law

Vermont's Open Meeting Law (OML) ([1 V.S.A. §§ 312](#)) requires all meetings of public bodies to be open to the public at all times, unless a specific exception applies.

Some of the engagement activities performed as part of the Vergennes PEL study are subject to the OML:

- Technical Committee and Agency Coordination meetings are not subject to OML
- Policy Committee meetings are subject to OML
- Public meetings and workshops are not subject to OML
- When study team members attend Selectboard or City Council meetings, they are facilitated by the municipality according to OML

The following is a summary of key elements of the Open Meeting Law which are pertinent to this study:

- Agendas are published online at least 48 hours ahead of the meeting. The Vermont Department of Libraries Public Meetings Calendar webpage is considered the official VTrans website for this posting. https://libraries.vermont.gov/public_meetings_request.
 - Outside OML, but good practice followed in this study - agendas will also be available on the study website at <https://vergennespel.com/>
- The first action within the agenda is changes to the agenda.
- Minutes will be available on the study website within 5 calendar days of the meeting. These minutes focus on who attended the meeting and any important decisions.
 - Outside OML, but good practice followed in this study – full meeting notes will be available within a few weeks of the meeting
- Meetings are open to the public, including with a physical location where people can join the meeting.
 - Note: In 2019, during the state of emergency declared in Vermont as a response to Covid-19, a memorandum was issued by Secretary of State Jim Condos that allowed public meetings to occur online only without a physical location. This memorandum has been extended several times, with the current extension signed in 1/25/2023 as part of H42, extending this provision to 7/1/2024.
 - Outside current OML rules, but good practice followed in this study – where possible a physical location is provided for meetings.

The Vergennes PEL Study will arrange physical meeting locations for public information meetings, public workshops, and Land Use Community Visioning Meetings, with an opportunity to attend virtually. Presentations, handouts, notes, and recordings as available will be made available to the public.

Policy Committee meetings will be held online and presentations, notes, and recordings from those meetings will be made available to the public. Technical Committee and Agency Coordination meetings will be held online and presentations and notes from those meetings will be made available to the public.

The study team will remain attentive to any changes to the Vermont Open Meeting Law requirements and adjust accordingly.

5. Committee Oversight and Agency Coordination

Throughout the PEL Study, the Vergennes PEL Study team will consult with specialized committees/working groups that will provide topic-specific input and play a role in guiding the direction of the study. Members of the committees will include but not be limited to representatives from regional, state agencies and local businesses and organizations. Committees will be notified of the availability of study results and will be given opportunities to provide comments and consultation at various stages throughout the planning process. Technical Committee, Policy Committee, and Interagency Coordination efforts are outlined below.

5.1 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Technical Committee consists of subject matter experts that review and verify the scope of work, methods and assumptions used by the consultants to carry out the study and any resulting recommendations. The Technical Committee's role is to ensure that the Policy Committee has reliable information on which to base its findings and decisions. Membership includes VTrans planning, highway design, structures, bicycle and pedestrian, and environmental staff, ACRPC and municipal land use planners, FHWA staff, municipal public works and road foreman, and economic development specialists. The Technical Committee will meet approximately three to four times a year, with their meetings aligned to provide feedback on key technical element at notable decision points.

Starting in November 2022, the Technical Committee and Coordinating Agencies elected to have future meetings jointly to promote dialogue between the two groups.

5.2 POLICY COMMITTEE

The Policy Committee is charged with endorsing the findings in the PEL and making recommendations to VTrans on study planning decisions (i.e., Statement of Purpose and Need, Initial Short-list of Alternatives) which would be carried forward into a future environmental review. It will function as a body with wide knowledge that can speak on behalf of many communities impacted by this study and will take into consideration recommendations from the Technical Committee in its decision-making process. It consists of representatives from the seven municipalities potentially affected by the alternatives (Addison, Ferrisburgh, Panton, New Haven, Vergennes, Waltham, and Weybridge), VTrans, and other stakeholders representing the region, environment, and economy. The Policy Committee will meet approximately two to three times a year, with their meetings aligned to provide feedback at notable decision points.

5.3 AGENCY COORDINATION

In addition to this PIP, an Agency Coordination Plan (ACP) has been prepared to identify likely cooperating and likely participating agencies and the roles and responsibilities of each agency in the study process consistent with 23 U.S.C 139. In anticipation of initiating future NEPA environmental reviews for projects in the Vergennes PEL Study corridor, VTrans, in cooperation with FHWA, will collaborate with likely cooperating and participating agencies in reviewing and refining the Vergennes PEL Study purpose and need, preliminary range of alternatives, and methodologies for documenting environmental conditions, and assessing impacts. While consensus is not required in the development of impact assessment methodologies, VTrans, in cooperation with FHWA, will consider the views of the agencies with relevant interests before making a decision on a particular methodology. After collaboration has taken place, VTrans, in cooperation with FHWA, will make the decision on the methodology and level of detail to be used. Likely cooperating and likely participating agencies will meet approximately every four to six months while the study is underway. Starting in November 2022, the Technical Committee and likely cooperating and likely participating agencies elected to have future meetings jointly. See the [Agency Coordination Plan](#) for more information.

6. Public and Stakeholder Meetings / Events

For more details on the schedule of outreach activities, see Section 9, Public Involvement Schedule and Key Milestones including Table 9-1 Schedule of Outreach Activities Completed to Date (January 2024) and Table 9-2 Expected Schedule of Outreach Activities to be Completed.

6.1 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings will be scheduled to gather input in support of and coincide with the completion of major Vergennes PEL Study milestones. In some cases workshops or other events will be used at major milestones, depending on what kind of engagement. Notice for public meetings will be advertised at least two weeks in advance, and public meetings will be offered with both a physical location and virtual option offered for participation. Meetings will also be recorded and posted to the study website to allow for viewing later and additional public comment.

Public meetings will be accessible to persons with disabilities and persons who speak a primary language other than English. Special services, such as an interpreter or sign language services, will also be available upon advance request of at least five business days prior to the meeting. Public notices announcing these meetings will provide instructions for requesting these services.

Physical venues that will be considered for public meetings include the Vergennes Opera House, the Bixby Memorial Free Library, the Vergennes Volunteer Fire Department station, and venues in neighboring towns impacted by the study (Ferrisburgh, Panton, Addison, Waltham, New Haven and Weybridge).

The study website, meeting flyers, media releases, direct mailers, and VTrans social media will be used to publicize all public workshops. WSP, in cooperation with VTrans, will seek out the involvement of community leaders, elected officials, and other stakeholders in the Vergennes PEL Study area. It is anticipated that these individuals and organizations will assist in understanding and addressing local concerns, including those of the environmental justice communities that could be affected by the study.

6.2 WORKSHOPS

Public workshops will be scheduled to gather input in support of and coincide with the completion of major Vergennes PEL Study milestones. Each workshop series will share the same information, but will be conducted separately to accommodate area communities, area businesses and residents to provide ample opportunity for stakeholder input. Workshops will be held to support the following task:

- Task 3, Transportation Alternatives Initial Screening
These workshops will be designed to obtain input on alternatives that will be considered in initial screening, as well as feedback on the proposed initial screening criteria. Feedback will be collected through live comments, online comment forms, and in-meeting polls.

6.3 SURVEY

In 2021, the study team used a survey to collect input from people who drive trucks on VT-22A. It was distributed using the contacts of 335 Vermont Truck and Bus Association. The survey content was used to inform Task 2 (Purpose and Need Statement) and Task 3 (Initial Screening) by providing information about how drivers travel the area and how they perceive potential changes. The survey received a total of 36 responses from across the industry, including details about their cargo, travel habits, and experiences along the corridor.

In 2023 as the study team prepared for the Task 4 (Alternatives Refinement) engagement it was decided that hosting a public survey would achievement better engagement than the three workshops. Surveys allow a far greater number and range of people to provide input.

The Summer 2023 survey was built in MetroQuest with sections that focused on information sharing about the project, opportunities to provide input on specific locations related to conceptual alignments (Task 4), as well as asking people to help the team understand preferences for various preferences related to Task 5 (Land Use Visioning). An accessible version of the survey is available upon request.

An additional survey may be used in Task 6 (Alternatives Evaluation and Recommendations) pending the results of the Task 4 survey and evaluation of which strategy would achieve better engagement.

Public facing surveys will be available for a minimum of 4 weeks. They will be advertised in the same way as public meetings and workshops. The Summer 2023 survey also used various local community events, including the Addison County Fair and Vergennes Day, to share information about the survey with a broad range of the population.

6.4 LAND USE VISIONING

Land use visioning will be conducted as part of Task 5 (Develop Integrated Transportation and Land Use Alternatives). Kick off meetings will be held with Planning Commissions in the all stakeholder communities to begin the process of developing a vision within each community. As part of this process, the team will conduct a brief discovery process that will allow for the identification of any key stakeholder groups that should be directly involved.

Visioning sessions will be held by route and include stakeholder municipalities to introduce the broader community to the study and provide an opportunity for them to communicate their vision for the future of the VEC. The format of these visioning sessions will be determined with input from the stakeholder municipalities and are anticipated to include both a group and breakout component to tackle key questions related to the development of a vision. The input gleaned from these sessions will be used to inform the development of each community's preferred land use scenario. The draft land use scenarios will be shared with each local planning commission to review and provide feedback. This feedback will be used to create a final land use scenario for each of the proposed route options.

6.5 STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS AND ONE ON ONE INTERVIEWS/ DISCUSSIONS:

Focus group meetings will be held to discuss specific Vergennes PEL Study considerations with affected and interested groups. Focus group meetings will be held in person, or in a hybrid format depending on

preferences of invitees. Residents, business, agricultural and environmental organizations and community-based groups will be targeted to provide specific insight to community concerns that may provide guidance on public involvement and study approaches. One-on-one interviews may be carried out to supplement input from focus groups for key stakeholders who were not able to participate.

An initial list of groups to approach for targeted outreach includes:

- Mobile home park residents on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd streets in Vergennes
- The Vergennes Partnership
- The Addison Chamber of Commerce
- The Addison County Economic Development Corporation
- Conservation Law Foundation (CLF)
- Vermont Natural Resource Council
- Vermont Public Interest Group (VPIRG)
- Vermont Chapter of AARP
- ACRPC Transportation Advisory Committee
- Local Motion
- Vermont Truck and Bus Association and other freight users within the area
- Addison County Farm Bureau
- Champlain Valley Farmer's Watershed Alliance
- Champlain Valley Crop & Soil Pasture Team
- Addison County Walk-Bike Council
- Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity
- John Graham Housing and Services
- Addison County Community Trust (ACCT)
- The Open Door Clinic
- Addison County Parent Child Center

As part of the work of the Community Liaison, many one-on-one meetings with various community leaders and business owners will occur to help inform the project, build trust and seek consensus.

6.6 MUNICIPAL MEETINGS

Individual meetings with each of the seven communities in the study area will also be conducted through the following City Council and Selectboard meetings:

Meeting Type	Meeting Date
Vergennes City Council	2 nd and 4 th Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm
Panton Selectboard	2 nd and 4 th Tuesday of each month at 5:30pm
Ferrisburgh Selectboard	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm
Addison Selectboard	1 st or 2 nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm
Weybridge Selectboard	1 st Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm
New Haven Selectboard	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm
Waltham Selectboard	1 st Monday of each month at 7:00pm

To date, Selectboards/ City Councils were visited in Fall 2021 and Fall 2022. The study team encouraged Selectboards/ City Councils to reach out if they would like additional visits.

Task 4 (Land Use Visioning) involves engagement with municipal Planning Commissions.

6.7 EXISTING LOCAL EVENTS

Additional opportunities for outreach will be identified that may arise throughout the study, such as having kiosks at local gatherings (i.e.: Addison County Field Days), coordinating to provide materials for use at other community events (i.e.: Vergennes Day), and partnering with community-based organizations to share information and feedback opportunities. The Community Liaison plays a key role with staffing these events and seeking opportunities to attend existing events.

Local events provide a unique opportunity to reach different segments of the population, often those who would not attend public meetings or workshops, for example:

- Addison County Field Days/ Fair – people who work in agriculture, young families, young adults, low income, rural residents, longtime residents of the region
- Vergennes Day – wide cross-section of Vergennes residents and businesses

6.8 COMMUNITY LIAISON

In 2022, the study team identified a need for a community liaison to work directly within the community. In May 2023, VTrans brought on a consultant to serve this role. The role is intended to provide outreach to businesses, municipalities, and community members to answer study questions, attend study events

and other planned outreach events (such as Vergennes Day and Addison County Fair Days). The Community Liaison will also create a periodic blog that will be published on the study website and distributed to the study's stakeholder distribution list.

7. Communication Tools

Public engagement is a powerful tool in the identification of study priorities and developing transportation strategies that are specific to the needs and realities of the seven communities and their residents and businesses. The following methods of outreach and information sharing will be employed to facilitate a robust approach to sharing information with and receiving input from the public and stakeholders on the Vergennes PEL Study.

- **Website:** A website will be developed for the Vergennes PEL Study, <https://www.vergennespel.com/>. This website will include information on the PEL process, study activities and progress, public participation opportunities, study documents, the Community Liaison blog post, and contact information. Study documents and videos will be available for download and review. The website will be kept up to date with information on the study and will provide a link to allow people to sign up for the mailing list and submit comments electronically.
- **Surveys:** Surveys will be developed and deployed when the study team identifies a need throughout the study process. Surveys will be used to elevate study awareness and to better understand views on transportation strategies and route preferences from the perspective of both community members and local businesses and organizations. The results will guide development of the study's proposed recommendations. The surveys will be web-based, and formatted paper versions of the survey will be available upon request.
- **Mailed and Emailed Information:** A stakeholder email list will be developed that includes elected officials, public agency contacts, stakeholders and community groups, and members of the public with an interest in the Vergennes PEL Study. The email list will be used to distribute meeting announcements and information about the study. Direct mailers (mass mailers) will be used to distribute public meetings, workshops and public survey information to residents, businesses and P.O. boxes. The email list will be updated throughout the life of the study to include new contacts obtained from meetings and the study website.
- **Additional Outreach Materials & Communication Tools:** User-friendly informational materials on technical elements of the study and notice of opportunities for input will also be utilized and made widely available to the general public. These materials will be developed on an as-needed basis in coordination with the VTrans for posting on the study website and/or for use in stakeholder/public meetings. The outreach materials could include a 1-2-page quarterly project newsletter focused on a different "item of interest" for each edition, presentations, fact sheets, press releases, door hangers, graphics, infographics, and poster/display boards. The study team will also look for opportunities to share study information through established methods of communication such as the ACRPC newsletter, and articles in the Addison County Independence newspaper.
- **Social Media Posting & Monitoring:** The study team will coordinate with VTrans to push study information to [Facebook](#) and [Twitter \(VTrans\)](#) and with municipalities to push to their social media accounts (as available). These social media posts will include basic information on the Vergennes PEL

Study, provide links to the study website, as well as information about public participation opportunities, study contact information, and how people can submit comments or sign up for the study mailing list. Study information will also be pushed to other local resources such as town listservs and Front Porch Forum where possible.

A media log will be maintained by the WSP Team over the course of the study as an archive of news media articles about the Vergennes PEL Study. The media log will be shared quarterly with VTrans.

- Local Media Usage: The study team will coordinate with local media to communicate notices of opportunities for public input.

8. Reporting

8.1 DOCUMENTATION OF PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMENTS

As part of PEL Study process, public outreach efforts for the study will be tracked and included the PEL Report. Efforts to engage the public will be documented, including a list of public and stakeholder meetings, a summary of notices, flyers, media releases and other study information distributed to the public, and any other outreach efforts that occur. Attendance lists at meetings and workshops will be tracked and documented. Formal comments received will be cataloged in a comment log, which will be updated throughout the study and included in the PEL Report.

9. Public Involvement Schedule and Key Milestones

A schedule of outreach activities has been developed (Table 9-1 and Table 9-2) and will be considered a living document to be updated as appropriate throughout the duration of the study. The schedule outlines components of the outreach program for Tasks 1-8, along with associated timelines and responsibilities, and reflects the overarching strategy for broad engagement early and often throughout the study.

Table 9-1 Schedule of Outreach Activities Completed to Date (January 2024)

TASK	OUTREACH DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
TASK 2A: Public and Stakeholder Engagement Plan	Study website live	August 2021
	Technical Committee Meeting	August 2021
	Policy Committee Meeting	August 2021
	Cooperating/Participating Agency Meeting	August 2021
	PIP/ACP approved	August 2021
	Informational mass-mailer developed and sent to study area communities	September 2021
TASK 2B: Purpose and Need Statement	Engagement with Vermont Truck and Bus Association (meeting and survey)	July/August 2021
	Initiate Cooperating/Participating Agency Coordination	October 2021
	Presentation at 6 municipal selectboard meetings (Ferrisburgh, Addison, Panton, Weybridge, New Haven, Waltham) and 1 city council meeting (Vergennes)	September/October 2021
	Focus group meetings (Economic, Environment, Mobility, Equity) with Vergennes mobile home park residents	October/November 2021
	Introductory Public Meeting	November 2021
	Technical Committee Meeting	February 2022
	Cooperating/Participating Agency Meeting	February 2022
	Policy Committee Meeting	March 2022
	Public Meeting	November 2022

TASK 3: Transportation Alternatives Initial Screening	Public Workshop Series	May 2022
	Technical Committee Meeting	July 2022
	Cooperating/Participating Agency Meeting	August 2022
	Presentation at 4 municipal selectboard meetings (Ferrisburgh, Addison, Panton, Waltham) and 1 city council meeting (Vergennes)	October/November 2022
	Technical Committee Meeting	October 2022
	Public Meeting	November 2022
	Technical Committee / Agency Partners Meeting	December 2022
TASK 4: Alternatives Refinement	Technical Committee / Agency Partners Meeting	June 2023
	Technical Committee / Agency Partners Meeting	December 2023
	Technical Committee / Agency Partners Meeting	December 2023
	Policy Committee	January 2024
TASK 5: Develop Integrated Transportation and Land Use Alternatives for the VEC	Kick off meetings with Planning Commissions	September/October/November 2023
	Land Use Visioning Workshops (in-person and virtual)	December 2023/January 2024
Items Common to TASK 4 and 5	Addison County Fair & Field Days	August 2023
	Vergennes Day	August 2023
	Public Survey	August/September 2023

Table 9-2 Expected Schedule of Outreach Activities to be Completed

Note: Schedule is preliminary and subject to change as the study progresses

TASK	OUTREACH DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
TASK 5: Develop Integrated Transportation and Land Use Alternatives for the VEC	Vision presentations to Planning Commissions	Spring 2024
	Technical Committee / Agency Partners Meeting	June 2024
TASK 6: Alternatives Evaluation and Recommendations	Technical Committee Meeting / Agency Partners Meeting	March 2024
	Technical Committee / Agency Partners Meeting	June 2024
	Public Outreach	Summer 2024
	Policy Committee Meeting	September 2024
TASK 7: Implementation Plan	Technical Committee / Agency Partners Meeting	January 2025
TASK 8: Draft and Final Reports	Technical Committee / Agency Partners Meeting	April 2025
	Policy Committee Meeting	May 2025

10. Revision History

The PEL Public Involvement Plan is a “living document” in which revisions and updates will be issued, as determined by VTrans, throughout the PEL Study. Table 10-1 presents the revision history.

Table 10-1 Revision History

VERSION	DATE	NAME	DESCRIPTION
1	August 2021	WSP	Draft Public Involvement Plan for Technical Committee review
2	February 2024	WSP and VTrans	Updated to reflect new activities (public survey), addition of community liaison and revised schedule