



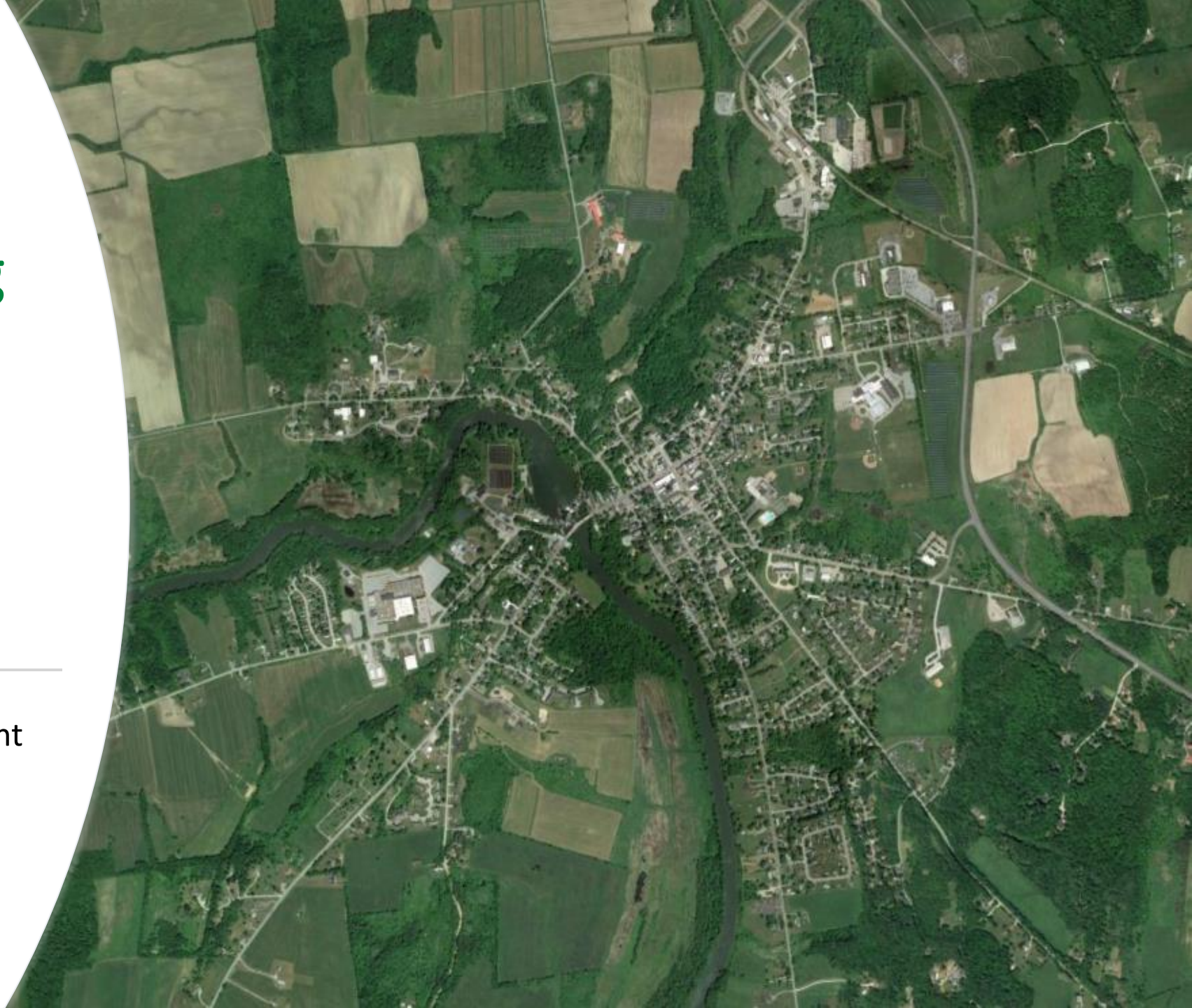
# Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages Study: Draft List of Alternatives and Screening Criteria

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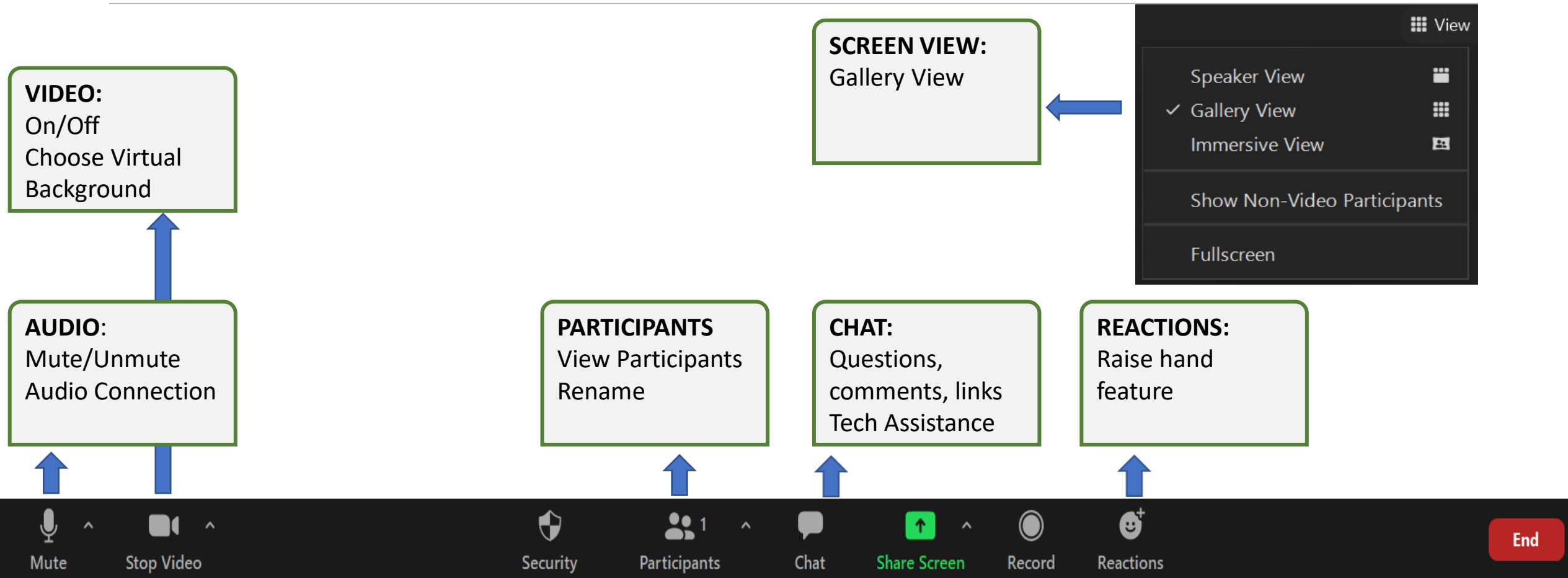
Vergennes Planning and Environment  
Linkages Study:

Technical Committee Meeting

July 20, 2022



# Zoom Orientation



# Agenda

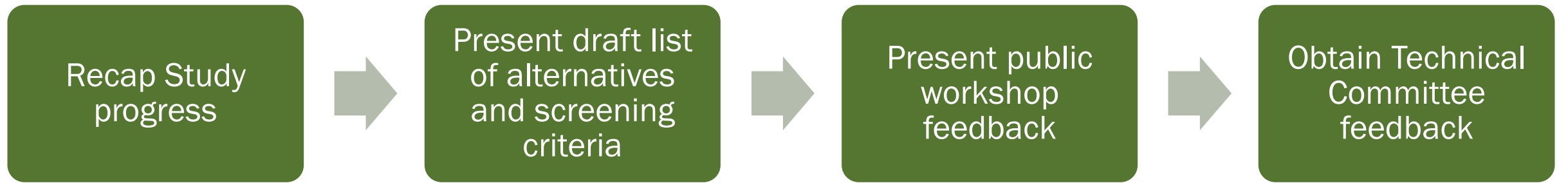
1. Call to Order | Chair Update
2. Roll Call
3. Purpose and Need Recap
4. Presentation: Draft List of Alternatives and Screening Criteria
5. Presentation: Overview of Public Workshops/Feedback
6. Discussion/Questions/Comments
7. Next Steps
  - a) Next steps for consultants and management team
  - b) Next committee meeting date and time
8. Member Updates/Announcements

V E R G E N N E S

## Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL) Study



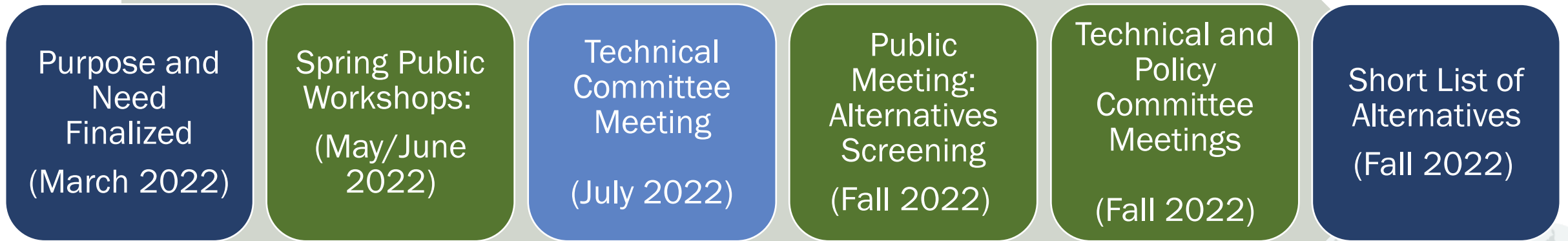
# Goals for Today





# Vergennes PEL Study Schedule (2022)

We are here



The Vergennes PEL Study is a three-year Study that will continue through Spring 2024

An aerial photograph of a town, likely Vergennes, Vermont, showing a grid of streets, buildings, and a river winding through the landscape. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

# Purpose and Need Recap

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Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages Study:

DRAFT List of Alternatives and Screening Criteria: Technical Committee Meeting

July 20, 2022

# Reminder: Why did we establish a Purpose and Need for this Study?

Development of the Purpose and Need Statement

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

Detailed evaluation of the most promising Alternatives and Land Use Visioning

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

# Purpose and Need Statement: Vergennes PEL Study

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

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



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



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



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



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



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





# Draft List of Alternatives and Screening Criteria

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Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages Study:

DRAFT List of Alternatives and Screening Criteria : Technical Committee Meeting

July 20, 2022

# Draft “Long” List of Alternatives and Screening Criteria: Purpose

The purpose of establishing a long list of alternatives is to:

- Consider an exhaustive list of alternatives that may address the Purpose and Need of the Study
- Obtain input from the public on all alternatives being considered *prior* to screening

The purpose of establishing draft screening criteria is to:

- Propose questions under the Purpose and Need Statement that will assist in filtering the long list of alternatives
- Obtain input from the public on the criteria being considered *prior* to screening

The long list of alternatives should contain all potential solutions to address the **Purpose** of the Study, while the screening criteria is how effectively they address the **Needs** identified.



# Draft “Long” List of Alternatives: What is it?



## Draft Long List of Alternatives Types:

- ✓ New Road Alternatives
- ✓ Existing Road Alternatives
- ✓ VT 22A Corridor Alternatives
- ✓ Other Freight Modes



# Draft List of Alternatives: VT 22A Corridor Alternatives



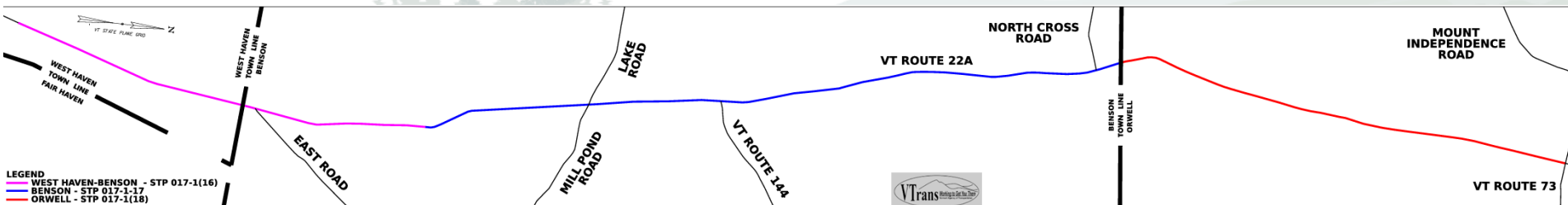
- Continue to permit trucks on VT Route 22A
- Proposes further enhancing recent VT Route 22A improvements such as:
  - Reconstruction and widening of Route 22A outside Vergennes to accommodate truck traffic
  - Traffic calming and multi-modal improvements on Route 22A through downtown Vergennes
- Includes a “No-Build” Alternative which includes:
  - Planned projects on Route 22A through 2045



Above: Pedestrian flashing beacons in downtown Vergennes



Curb bulb-out and new pedestrian signal in downtown Vergennes  
Src: ACRPC



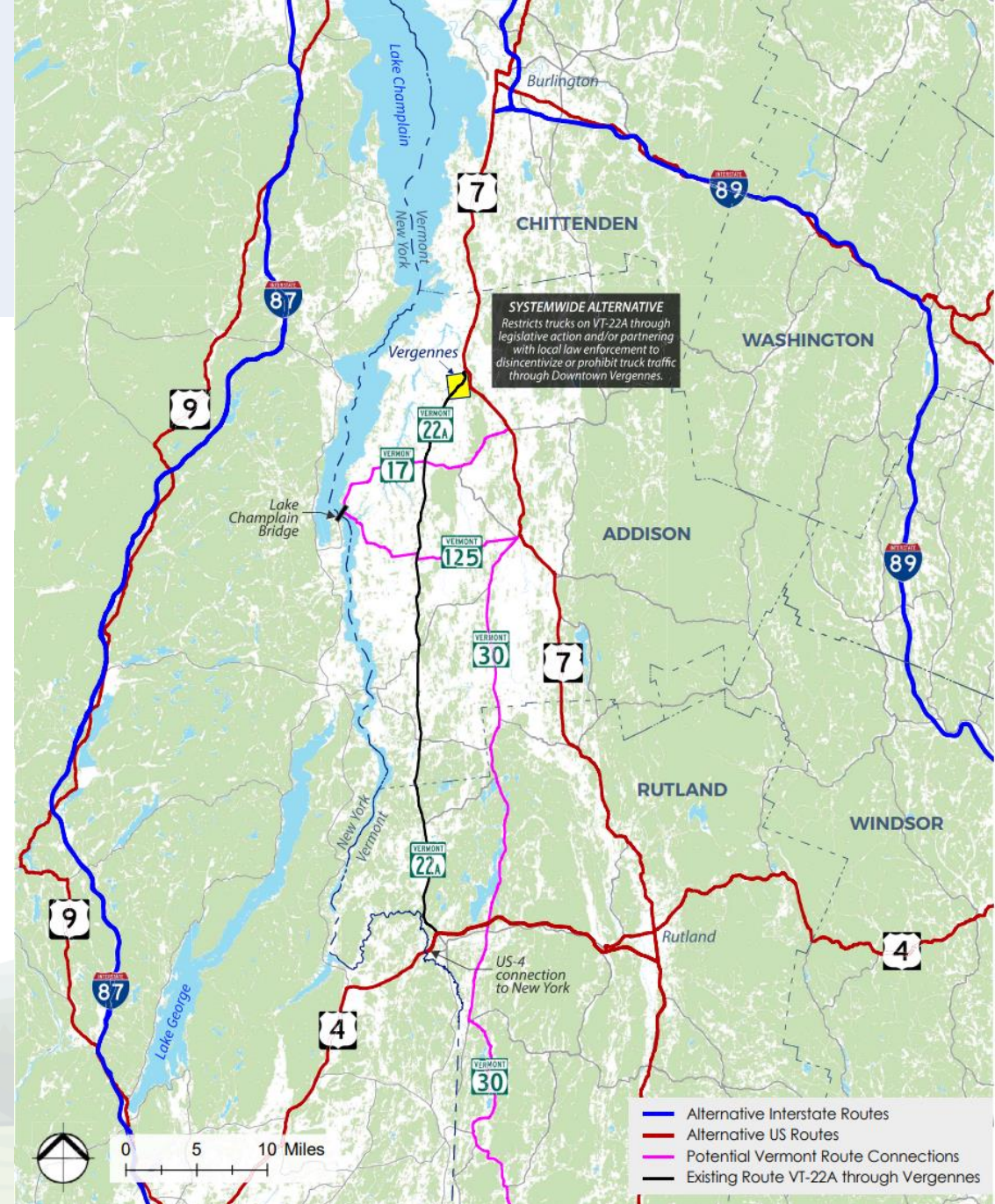
Shown to left: West Haven to Benson partial reconstruction, roadway reclaim, and shoulder reconstruction and widening. (Construction: 2025/2026)



# Draft List of Alternatives: Existing Road Alternatives



- Includes utilizing a network of existing roads to encourage or require trucks to use other state highways for freight traffic.
  - VT Routes 17, 30, and 125
  - US Routes 4, 7 and 9
  - Interstates I-87 and I-89
- May include:
  - Physical improvements to existing roadways to accommodate truck traffic
  - Restricting and/or prohibiting trucks on Rte. 22A though legislation and increased enforcement
  - Truck wayfinding/routing

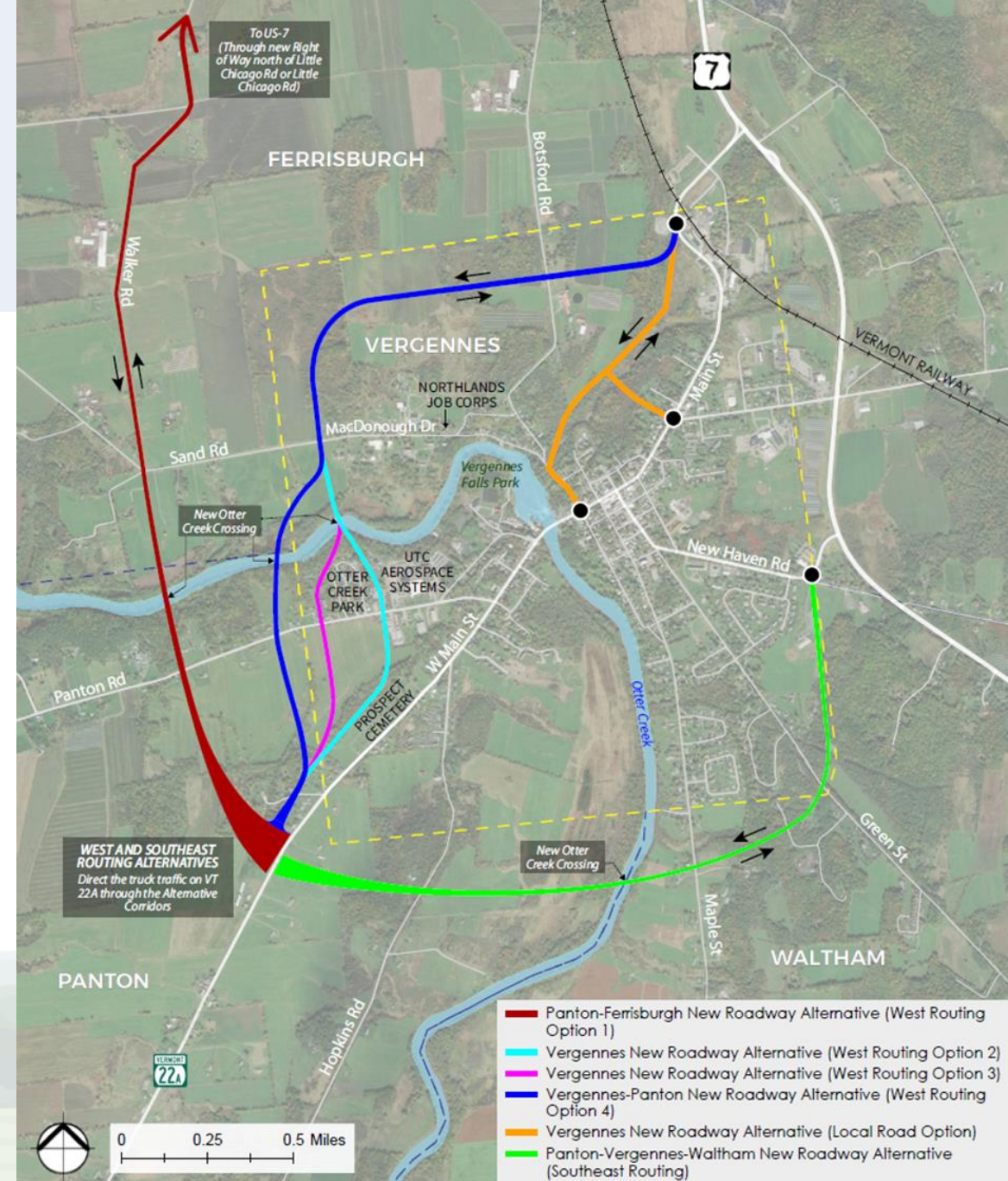




# Draft List of Alternatives: New Road Alternatives

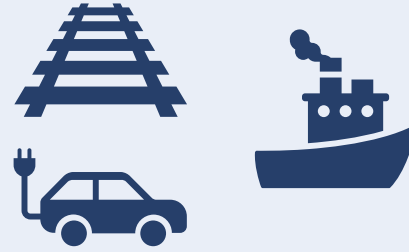


- Includes all New Road Alternatives considered under previous studies (1995, 2002, 2019)
- New Road Alternatives consider diverting trucks away from downtown Vergennes as a potential solution to reduce their impacts
- New Road Alternatives are conceptual ideas and - exact locations are to be determined





# Draft List of Alternatives: Other Freight Modes



- Includes transitioning truck freight cargo to rail and water transportation modes
- Includes considerations for “Smart Freight” alternatives such as electric vehicles (EVs) and Connected and Autonomous vehicles (CAVs)



Source: Shutterstock



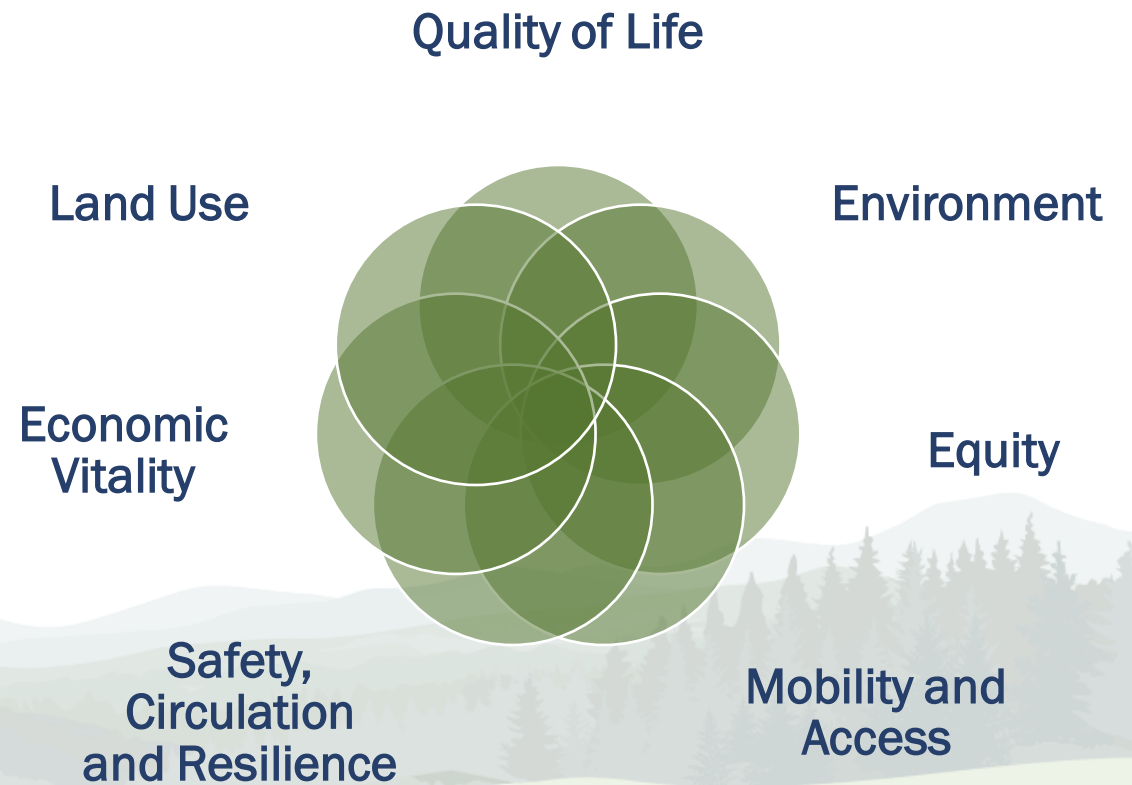
Source: VTrans



# Draft Screening Criteria: Needs

- Upon establishing the long list of alternatives, each alternative will be subject to “screening” based on the Study’s needs.
- Each need has a set of criteria which will be used to screen the alternatives being considered.
- The “screening” process will assess the effectiveness of each alternative to meet the Purpose of the Study.

Does the alternative meet the Study’s Purpose and Need?





# Draft Screening Criteria

## Quality of Life and Environment

- Reduces truck noise and emissions
- Avoids known environmental resources
- Maintains/supports community character

## Equity

- Balances distribution of transportation resources
- Avoids burdens to historically disadvantaged and environmental justice populations

## Mobility and Access

- Maintains freight mobility throughout the region
- Creates opportunities for multimodal travel throughout the region
- Promotes greater destination access to downtown Vergennes to for all modes

## Economic Vitality

- Promotes economic vitality in downtown Vergennes
- Promotes regional economic vitality

## Safety, Circulation and Resilience

- Creates redundancies to improve resilience of road network
- Improves motorized circulation throughout the region
- Improves non-motorized circulation throughout the region
- Improves motorized and non-motorized safety on Route 22A through downtown Vergennes

## Land Use

- Consistent with existing regional land uses
- Aligns with future and projected regional land uses and statewide goals

# Draft Screening Criteria: Applying to Alternatives

Alternatives will be screened using a “rating” system under each criteria:

Substantial Positive Effect **++**

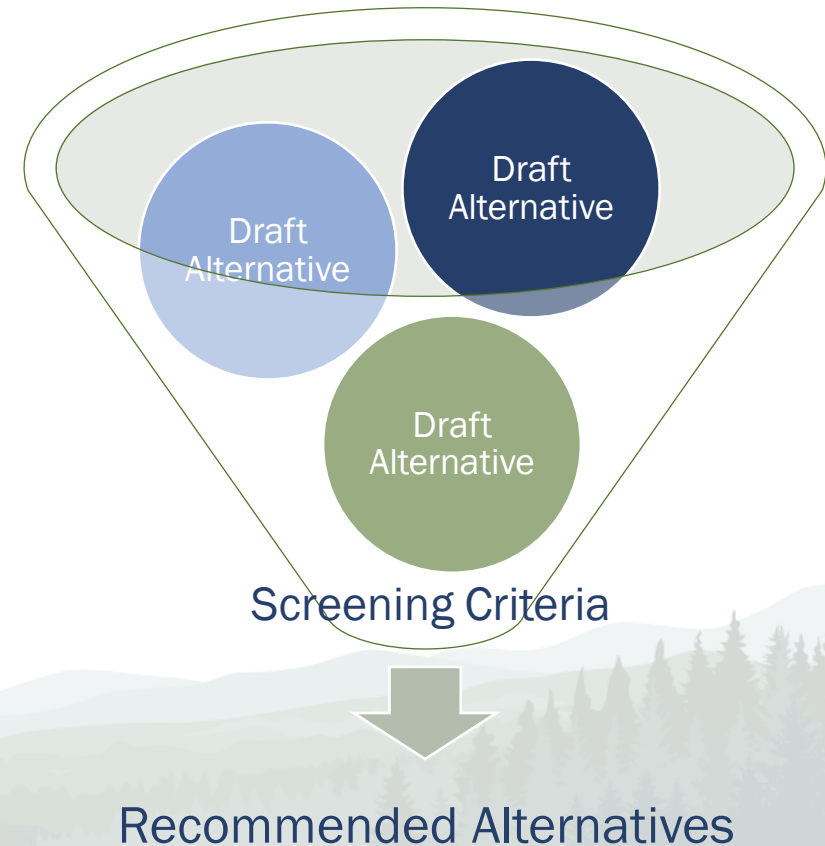
Some Positive Effect **+**

Neutral **○**

Some Negative Effect **—**

Substantial Negative Effect **---**

*Alternatives that do not satisfy the Purpose and Need, or have less than a “Net Positive” will be screened out from further evaluation*





An aerial photograph of a town, likely Vergennes, Vermont, showing a river winding through the center, a grid of streets, and surrounding green fields and forests. The image is semi-transparent, serving as a background for the text.

# Public Workshop Recap

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Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages Study:

DRAFT List of Alternatives and Screening Criteria: Technical Committee Meeting

July 20, 2022

# Public Workshops (May and June, 2022)

- **Three (3) Public Workshops were held in May and June**
  - Advertised through: PEL Study email, Vergennes Open Forum, direct mailers, door hangers and on social media
  - May 24, 2022: In-person public workshop at the Otter Creek Park (Open-house format)
  - May 26, 2022: In-person public workshop at the Vergennes Opera House
  - June 1, 2022: Virtual public workshop
- **Workshop Overview**
  - Facilitators gave a brief overview of the four alternative types
  - Participants were encouraged to provide feedback through discussion and interaction with the boards (or through the chatbox online)
  - Each facilitator provided highlights of the feedback “themes” at the end of the workshop to all participants for further discussion



# Public Workshops: What We've Heard

## General Participant Feedback:

- ❖ Appreciated the opportunity to see a variety of options and give input
- ❖ Concern with how potential new road alternatives would impact Otter Creek Park
- ❖ Mixed opinions about whether truck traffic in downtown Vergennes is a problem
- ❖ Highlighted the importance of coordinating and planning with neighboring towns
- ❖ General support for grouping alternatives or elements of alternatives together
- ❖ Cost needs to be considered when evaluating alternatives

## Frequently Asked Questions

- ❖ Who will screen the alternatives and who makes the final decision?
- ❖ When will the final decision be made?
- ❖ Will cost be a part of the decision-making process?
- ❖ Can alternatives be combined?
- ❖ When would an alternative be constructed?
- ❖ How would truck restrictions be enforced?
- ❖ Estimated cost of each alternative?



# Public Workshops: What We've Heard

## Otter Creek Park Public Workshop

May 24, 2022

Public input focused on the four alternative types considered in the Study:



Vergennes PEL Study Public Workshop, May 2022



# Public Workshops: What We've Heard

## Vergennes Opera House Workshop

May 26, 2022

Public input focused on the four alternative types considered in the Study:



Vergennes PEL Study Public Workshop, May 2022



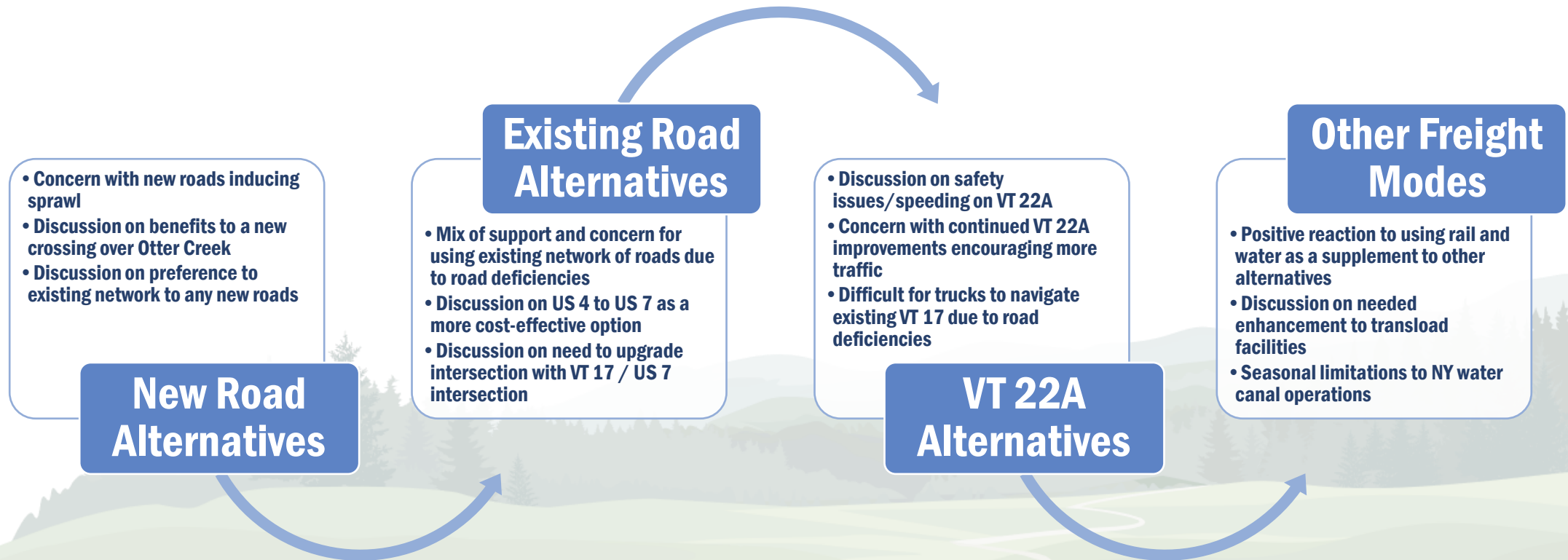


# Public Workshops: What We've Heard

## Virtual Public Workshop

*June 1, 2022*

Public input focused on the four alternative types considered in the study, listed below



# Discussion / Questions

## Questions:

As technical subject matter experts and community representatives, what do you like / dislike about the alternatives being considered?

Is the list of screening criteria being considered thorough for this stage of the Study? Are there any criteria that is missing?

Does any of the workshop feedback we've received surprise you?



# Discussion / Questions

Technical Committee Member Poll:

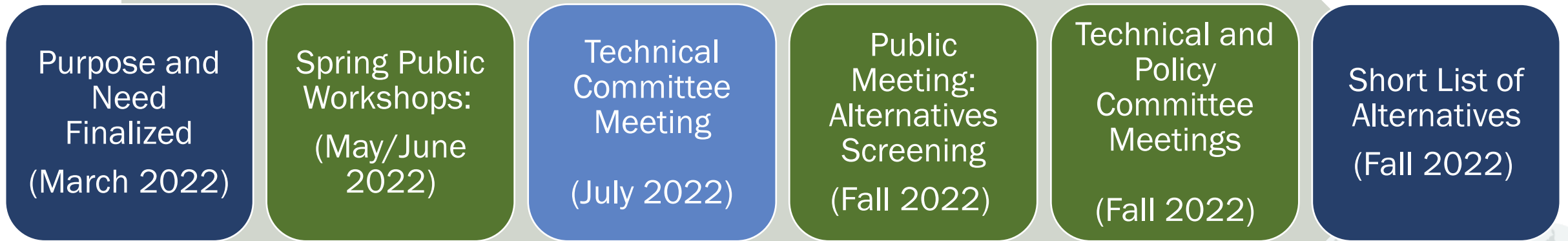
Is the long list of alternatives being considered for the subsequent screening process thorough enough?





# Next Steps

We are here



The Vergennes PEL Study is a three-year Study that will continue through Spring 2024

# Thank You!



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

Please visit email us at [vergennespel@gmail.com](mailto:vergennespel@gmail.com) for further information, to submit comments or to contact the Study team.