



Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages Study: Secondary Screening

Policy Committee

April 3, 2023



Agenda

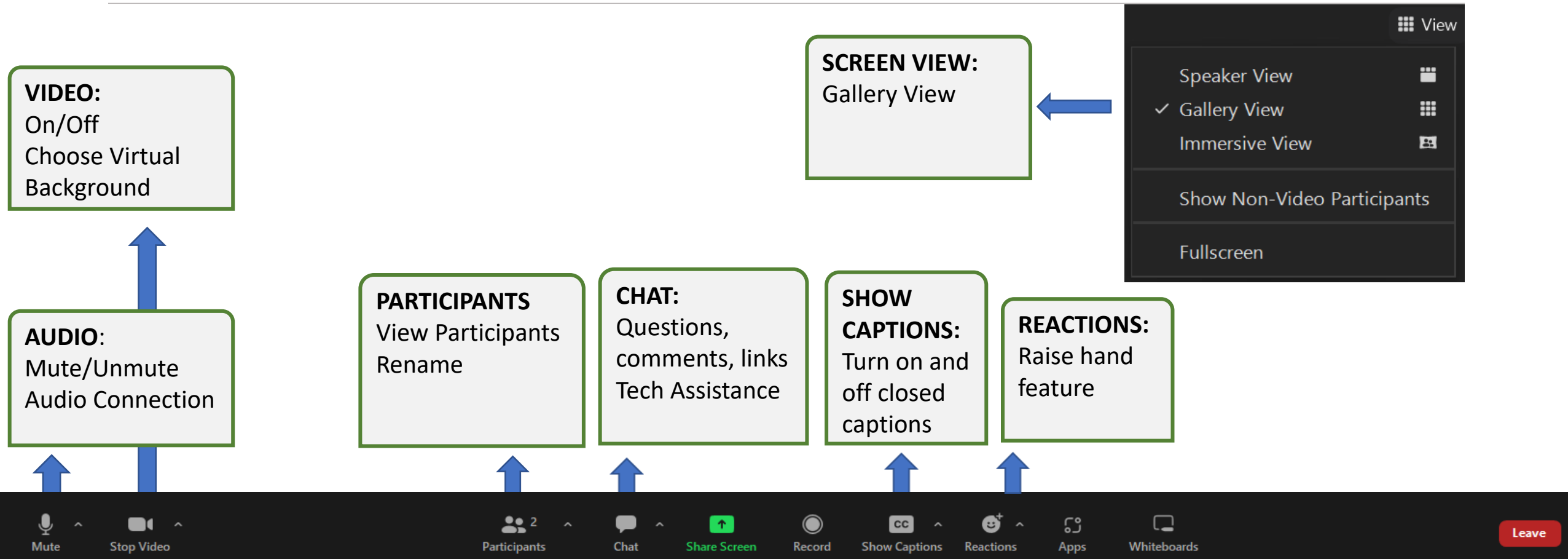
1. Call to Order and Roll Call (10:00am)
2. Changes to the Agenda (10:09am)
3. Study Overview (10:10am)
4. Public Comment (10:20am)
5. Initial Screening (10:30am)
6. Secondary Screening Methodology and Results (10:35am)
7. Committee Discussion and Consensus Points (11:15am)
8. Other Questions from the Committee (11:45am)
9. Public Comment (11:55am)
10. Close Meeting (12:00 Noon)

V E R G E N N E S

Planning & Environment Linkages (PEL) Study



Zoom Orientation



Roll Call

VOTING Members

- Chair: Adam Lougee, ACRPC
- Bill Smith, Vermont Truck and Bus Association
- Brian Shupe, VNRC
- Brent Rakowski, ACRPC TAC
- Clark Hinsdale, Town of Ferrisburgh
- Diane Lanpher, State Rep. from Vergennes, Ferrisburg, Waltham, Panton and Addison
- Dickie Austin, City of Vergennes
- Jubilee McGill, State Rep. from New Haven, Weybridge and Bridport
- Ian Huizenga, City of Vergennes
- Jeff Nelson, Town of Addison
- Jesse Devlin, VTrans
- Katharine Otto, VTrans
- Mary Rudd, Town of Panton
- Matt Birong, State Rep. from Vergennes, Ferrisburg, Waltham, Panton and Addison
- Mike Audy, Town of New Haven
- Renny Perry, Vergennes Partnership
- Phil Summers, Addison County Chamber
- Tim Glassberg, Town of Waltham

Roll Call

Non-Voting Members

- Amy Bell, VTrans
- Joel Perrigo, VTrans
- Mike Winslow, ACRPC
- Chris Jolly, FHWA
- Jacqueline DeMent, FHWA
- Elizabeth Shipley, FHWA

Study Team

- Stephanie Camay, WSP
- Ken Robie, Dubois & King
- Laura Toole, WSP
- Annabelle Dally, WSP
- Maya Miller, WSP



Study Overview



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

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



Why are we doing a PEL study in Vergennes?

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

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

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



Summer 2021 – Spring 2022

Task 1: Project Kick-Off and Scope Refinement

Task 2: Purpose and Need Statement



Spring 2022 – Spring 2023

Task 3: Alternatives Development and Concept Screening



2023

Task 4: Alternatives/Concept Refinement

Task 5: Integrated Transportation & Land Use Alternatives

Task 6: Alternatives Evaluation & Recommendations



2024

Task 7: Implementation Plan

Task 8: PEL Report

What Comes Next?

Concept Engineering

- Design constraints including existing ROW and land use, environmental resources, location of adjacent roadways, municipal boundaries

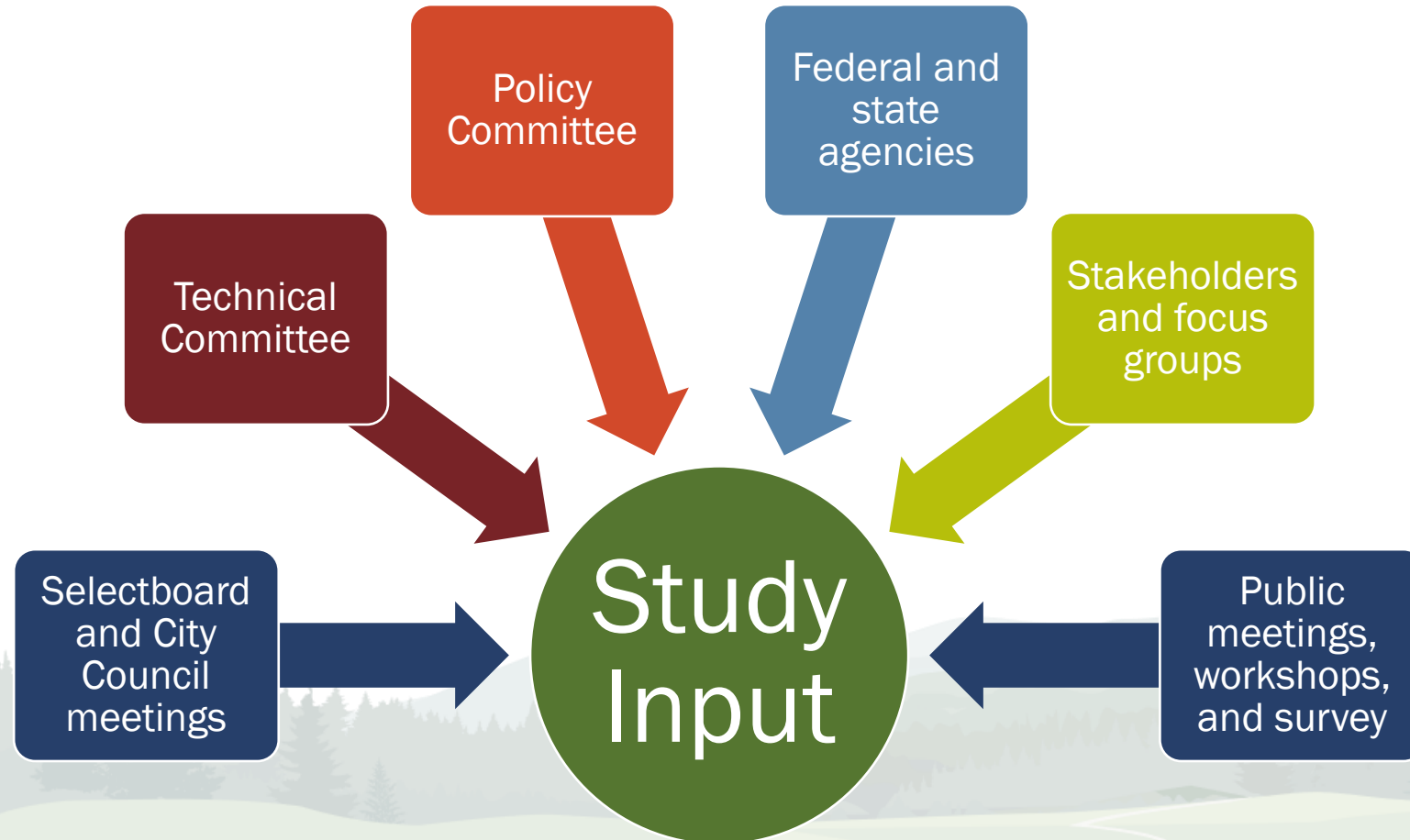
Transportation and Land Use Integration

- Local land use controls/zoning, economic conditions and growth trends, environmental constrains

Evaluation of Concepts

- Traffic impacts, multi-modal considerations
- Environmental impacts – wetlands, floodplains, habitats, noise

Collaborative Approach



Recent and Upcoming Meetings

- 12/21 – Policy Committee meeting
- 3/1 – Technical Committee and Agency Coordination meeting
- March – Policy Committee informal working sessions
- 4/3 – Policy Committee meeting
- April – Federal agency concurrence



What does consensus mean?

Levels of Consensus

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

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

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

This is our goal for everyone

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

5. I loathe it and cannot accept this decision.



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

Overall Process – Planning through Construction

PROJECT INITIATION

- PEL Study – complete in 2024
- Funding Authorization – *unknown timeline*



PROJECT DEFINITION

- Conceptual Design
- Environmental Studies including NEPA

3-5 years



PROJECT DESIGN

- Preliminary Design
- Permitting
- Right-of-Way Acquisitions
- Final Design

4-8 years



CONSTRUCTION

- Pre-Construction Activities
- Active Construction

2-4 years

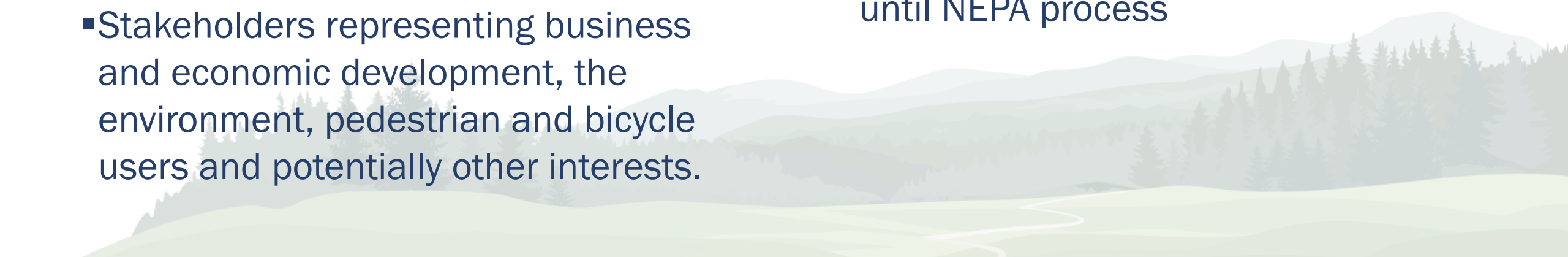
Policy Committee Role

- Endorsement of key assumptions and recommendations to VTrans

Members

- Municipal representatives, VTrans, ACRPC, FHWA
- Stakeholders representing business and economic development, the environment, pedestrian and bicycle users and potentially other interests.

- PEL is a collaborative decision-making **planning** process
- Goal to reduce the number of alternatives and identify potential impacts that will be looked at further during NEPA
- **Recommendations only – not binding** until NEPA process





Public Comment Period





Initial Screening



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.

Screening Criteria

Quality of Life and Environment



- Reduces truck noise and emissions
- Avoids potential impacts to water and natural resources
- Maintains/supports community character of downtown Vergennes

Equity



- Balances distribution of transportation resources
- Avoids impacts to surrounding communities, including disproportionate impacts to environmental justice communities

Mobility and Access



- Maintains freight mobility 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

Concepts Proposed for Further Study - Initial Screening

Concept Screening Results	Systemwide	VT-17 / Route 7	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound (Purple)	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1) (Red)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2) (Turquoise)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3) (Pink)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4) (Blue)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) (Green)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route (Orange)	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions
Total Score	5	1	-3	6	1	5	5	7	0	6	0	-7	5
Meets Purpose and Need and No Fatal Flaws	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No



Secondary Screening Methodology



Secondary Screening Methodology



Human Considerations

- Residential properties
- Nursing homes, hospitals/medical centers
- Government and educational facilities
- Cemeteries
- Historic buildings/structures
- Hazardous sites



Natural and Water Resources

- Rivers and streams
- Vermont defined River Corridors
- Vermont designated significant wetlands class 2 and advisory wetlands
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood hazard areas

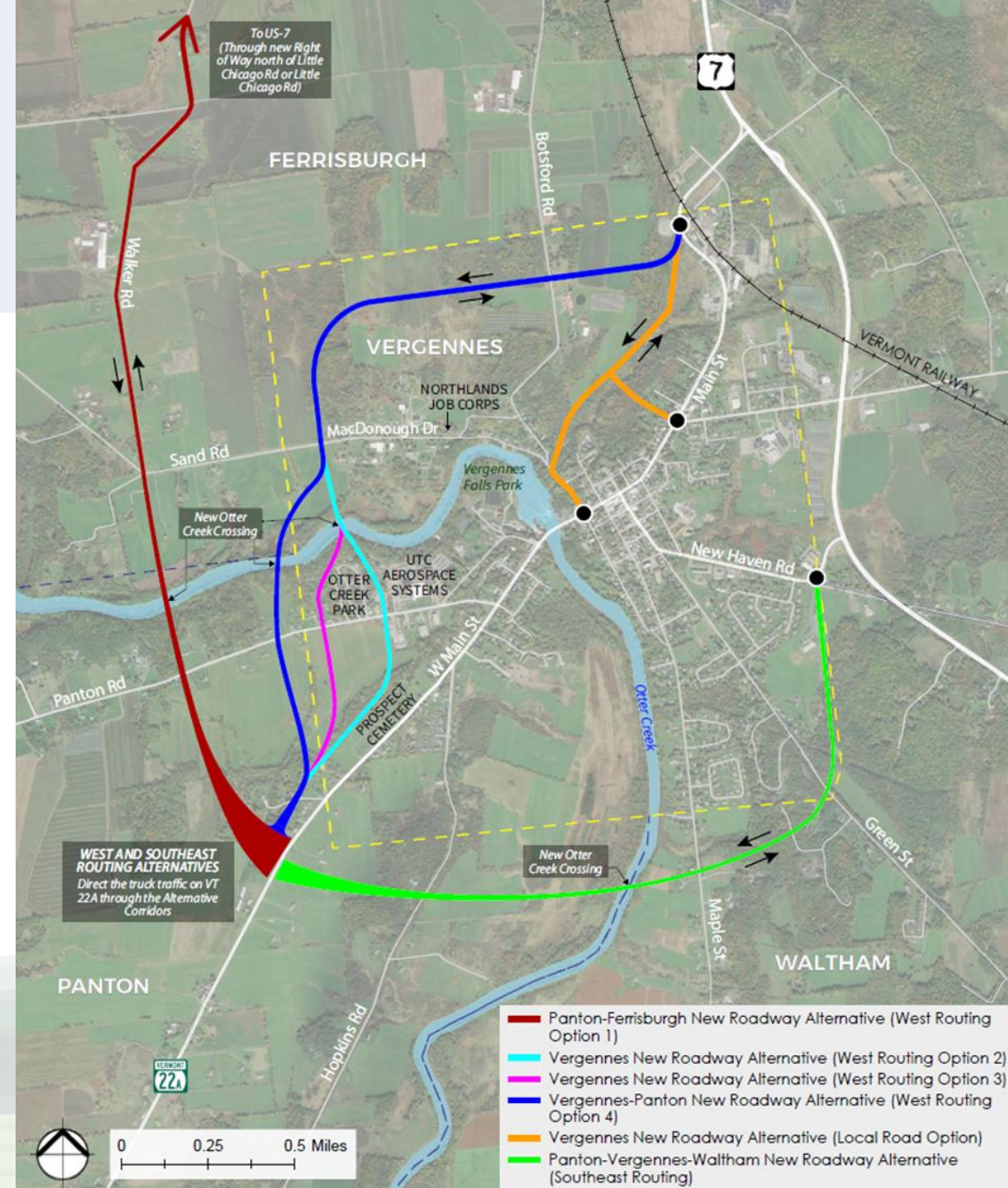


Protected Lands and Agricultural Resources

- Local and state prime agricultural soils
- Conserved land
- Wildlife management area
- State and municipal land

Secondary Screening Methodology

- New roadway concept alignments with a 500-ft buffer as a 1000-ft 'swath'
- Existing roadways with a 150-ft buffer as a 300-ft 'swath'
 - May require widenings and intersection improvements
- Avoid-minimize-mitigate
- Identify potential fatal flaw
- Adjusted buffers where potential resources were unavoidable





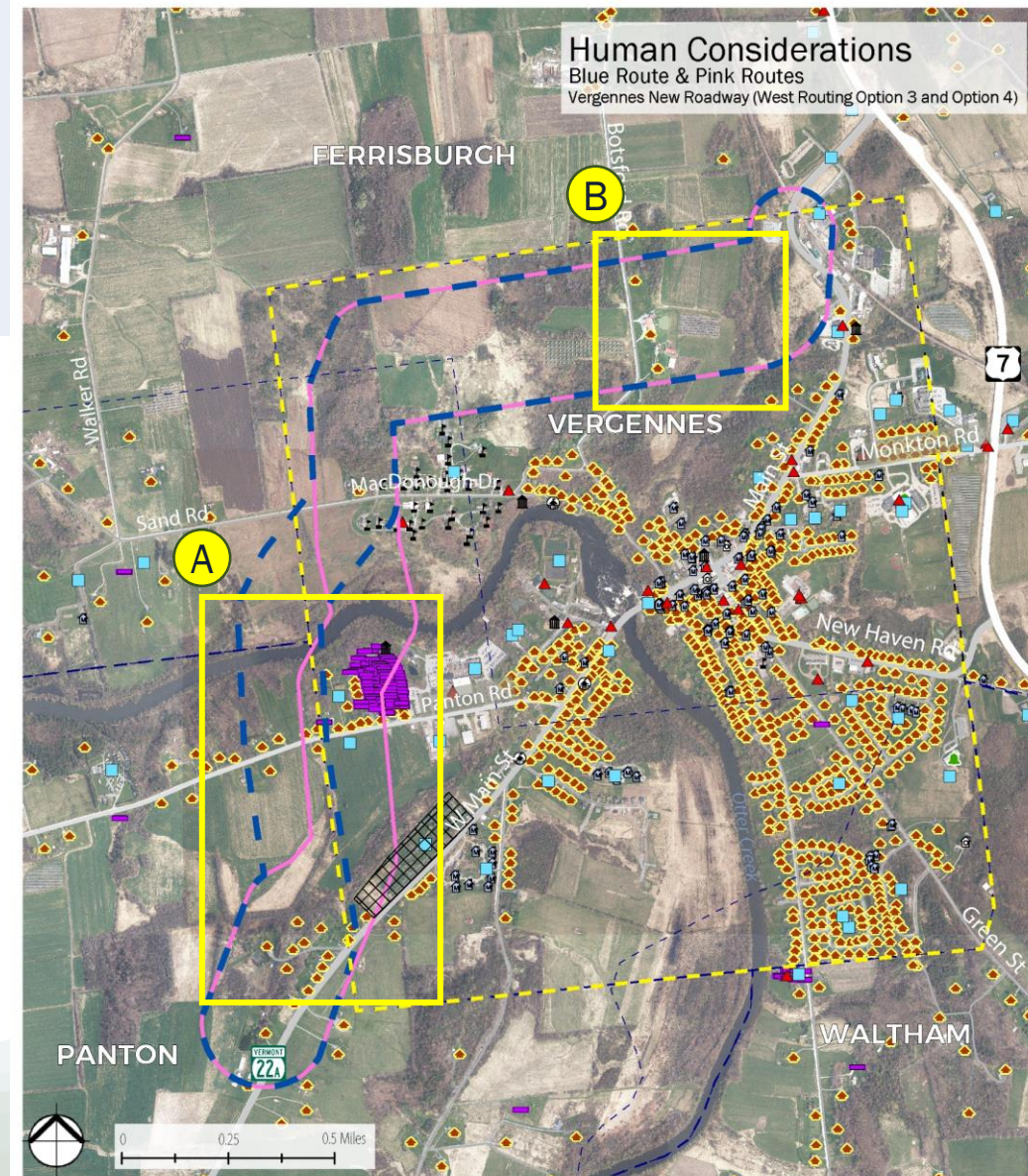
Secondary Screening Results and Discussion



Vergennes-Panton New Roadway [Blue and Pink routes] Results

Residential properties located nearby:

- A. Route 22A and Panton Road
- B. Comfort Hill Road

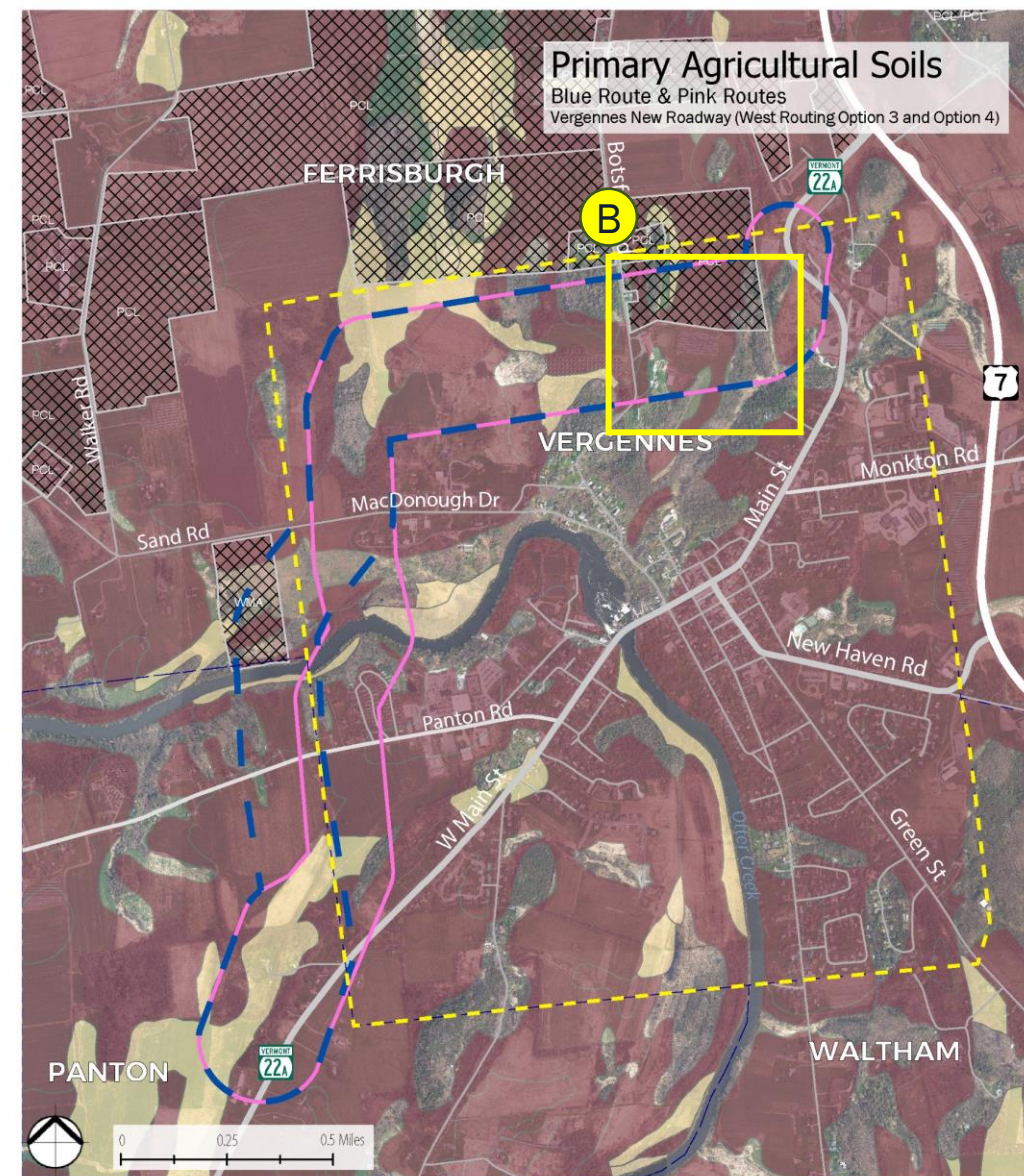


Blue Route	Hazardous Sites	Hospital / Medical Center	Other Residential
Pink Route	Act250 Permits	School K / 12	Seasonal Home
Vergennes	E911 Data Points	Mobile Home	Single Family Dwelling
Municipal Boundaries	Educational	Multi-family Dwelling	Nursing Home / Long Term Care
Historic Structure	Government	Prospect Cemetery	
Historic Building	Cemetery		

Hazardous Sites, (ANR 2016); Act 250 Permits, (ANR 2016); RDSALL (VTans 2016); Town Boundaries (VCGI 2016); Historic Structures (NPS 2012); Historic Building (NPS 2012)

Vergennes-Panton New Roadway [Blue and Pink routes] Results

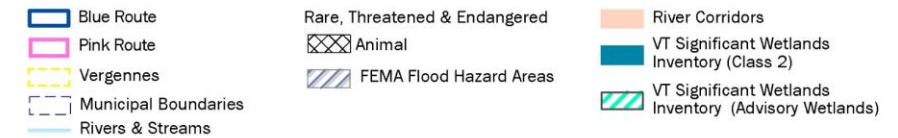
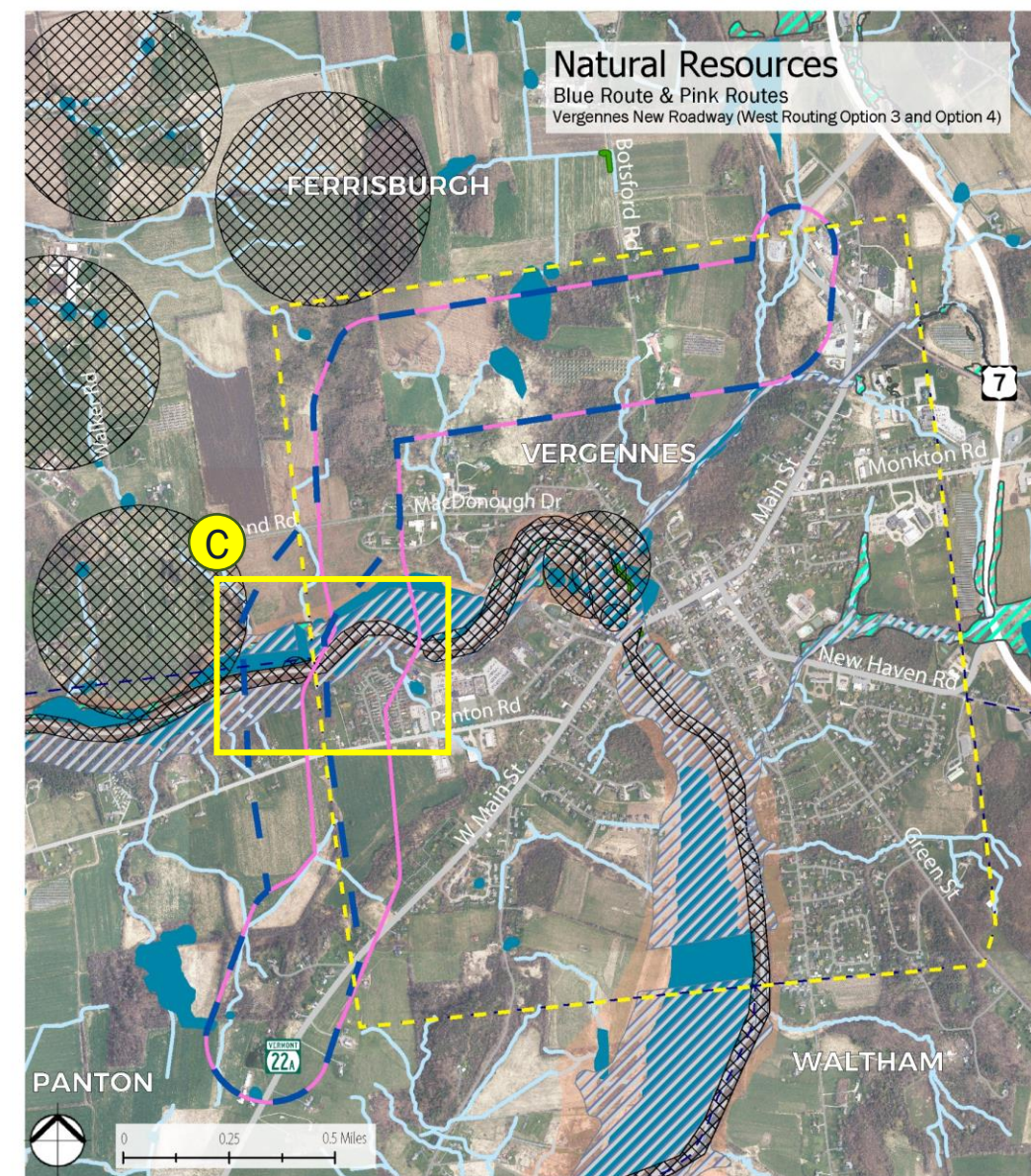
- B. Area east of Comfort Hill Road is protected as private conserved land
- 1000-ft swath was extended to the south to avoid this potential impact.



Vergennes-Panton New Roadway [Blue and Pink routes] Results

- C. Crossing downstream of the falls may be more challenging
 - Meets the Purpose and Need
 - Scored high during the initial screening
 - No fatal flaws identified during the secondary screening

The study team recommends that the Blue and Pink Routes move forward for further study.

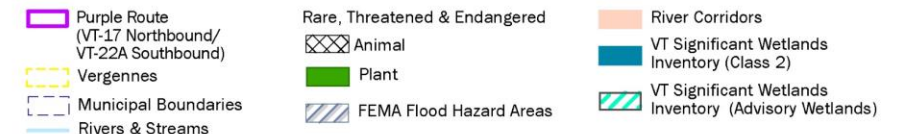
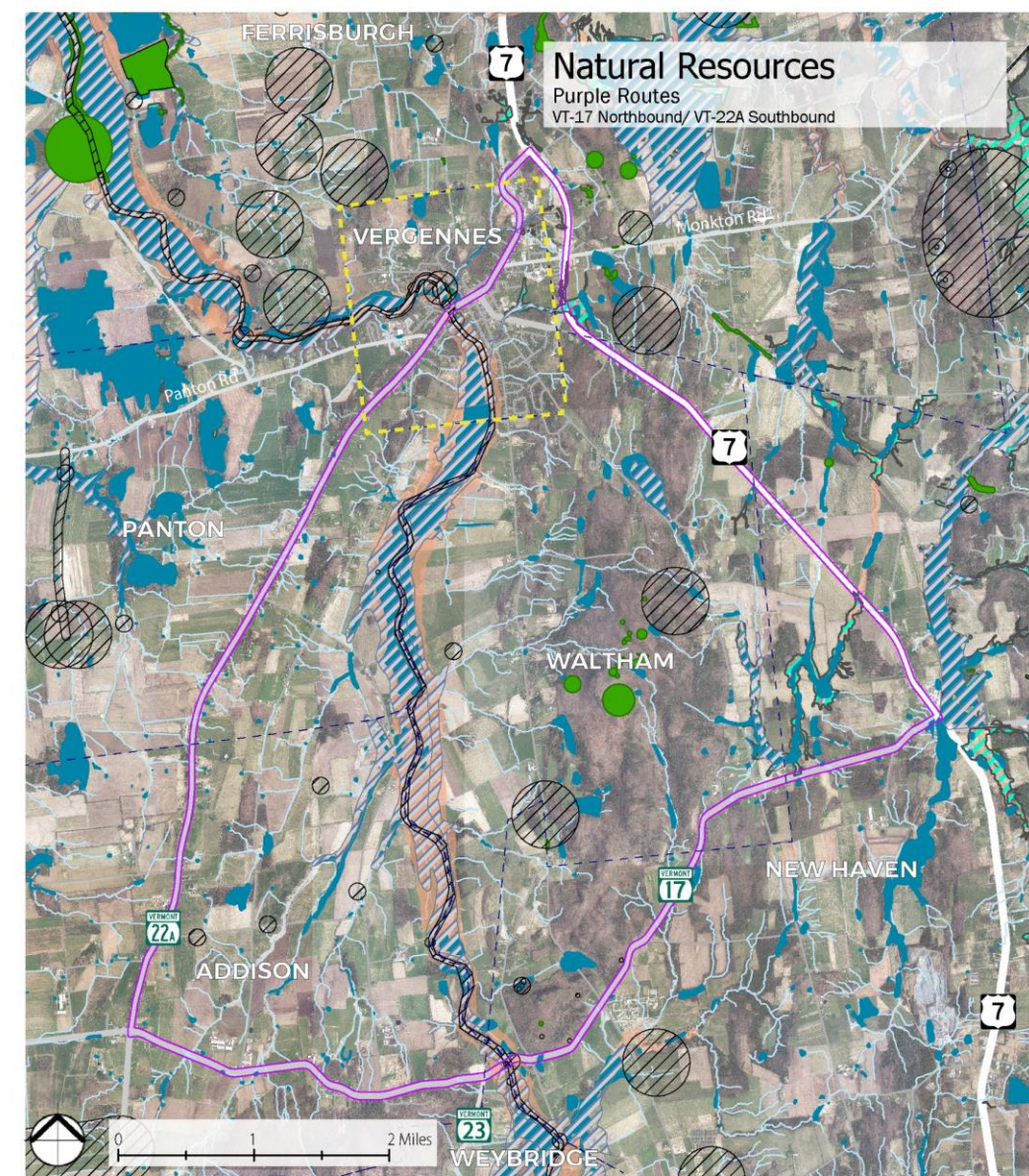


Data Sources: FEMA Flood Hazard Areas (ANR 2022); VT Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species (VNHI 2023); River Corridors, (ANR 2019); Rivers & Streams (USGS 2021); VT VSMI, (VCGI2020); VTORTHO (VCGI 2022)

VT-17 Northbound/VT 22A Southbound [Purple route] Results

- Existing roadways; 150-foot swath on each side
 - Areas surrounding roadway are developed
 - Small sections of state wetlands adjacent to the roadways
- Meets the Purpose and Need
- Scored high during the initial screening
- No fatal flaws were identified during the secondary screening

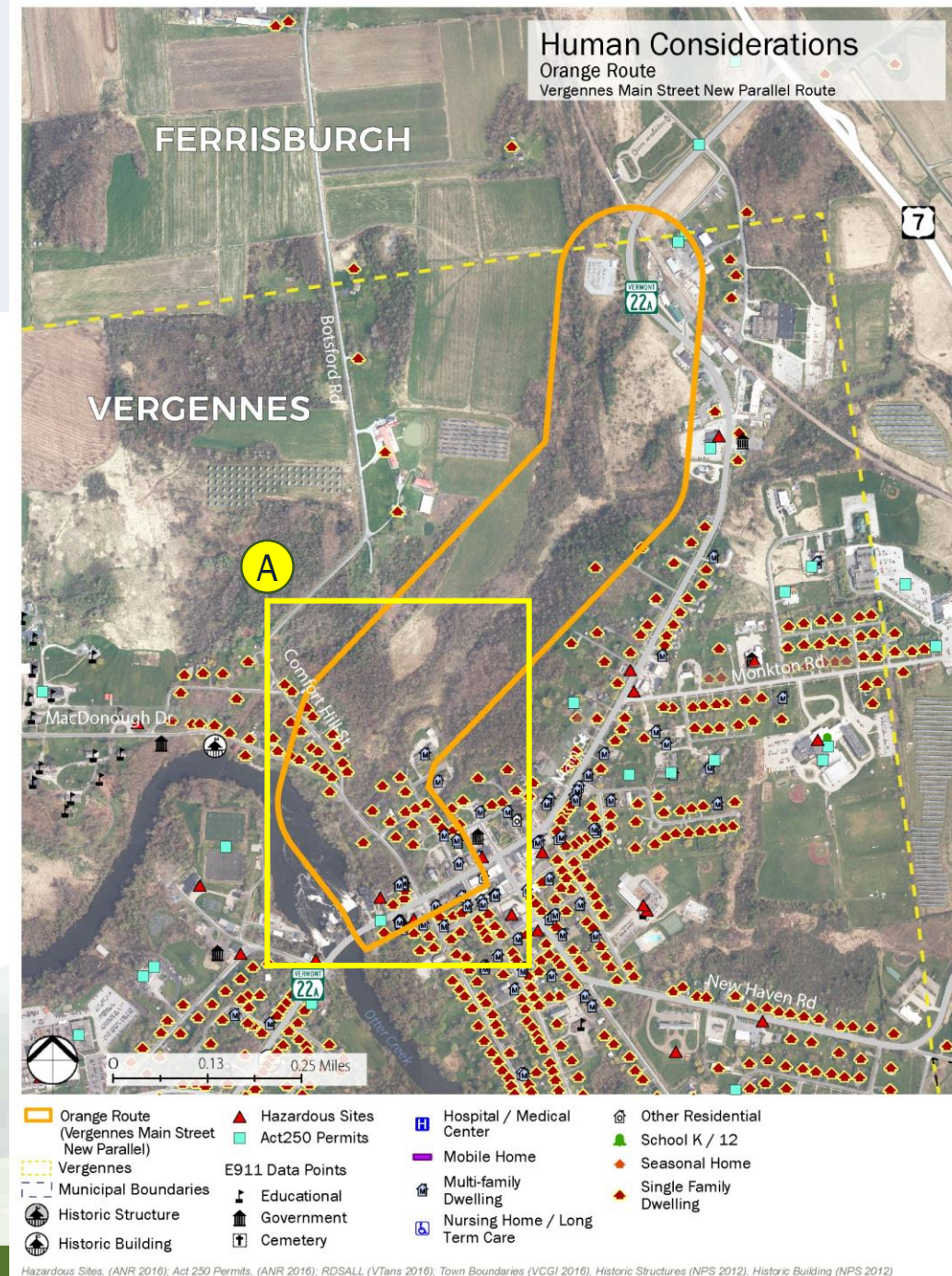
The study team recommends that the Purple Route move forward for further study.



Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route [Orange route] Results

A. Within the City of Vergennes, route is proximate to several single-family residences along:

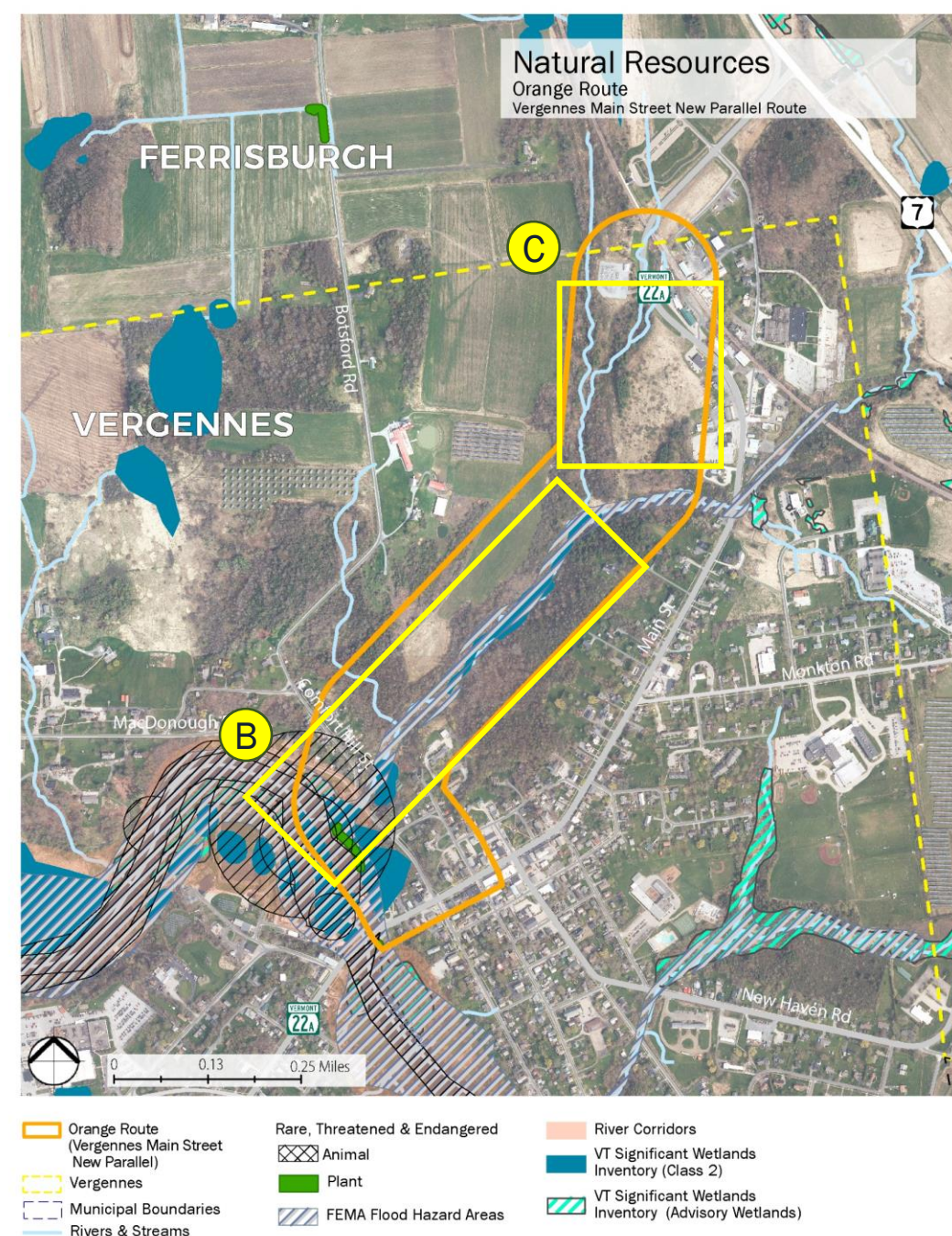
- Main Street
- MacDonough Drive
- Comfort Hill Road



Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route [Orange route] Results

- B. Area southwest of the concept includes portions of Otter Creek, FEMA flood hazard areas, and Vermont significant wetlands (Class 2)
- C. Northeast is a stream and smaller sections of flood hazard area & class 2 wetlands that extend to the southernmost point of a group of streams in the northern area of the concept

Note: There are several sections of prime agricultural soil that surround Route 22A, as well as east of Comfort Hill Road. However, the areas adjacent to Route 22A are residential and commercial uses and the soils were mapped prior to these developments.



Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route [Orange route] Results

- Reviewed existing conditions to determine the feasibility of new roadway construction
 - Utilizing existing roadway and new alignment near MacDonough Drive
- Following state and federal design standards, the route is feasible (no greater than 6%) though challenging
 - Feasibility and traffic engineering will continue to be analyzed throughout the PEL Study

➤ Meets Purpose and Need

➤ Scored high during the initial screening

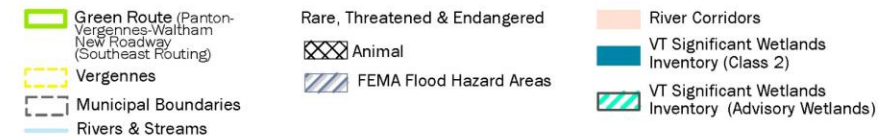
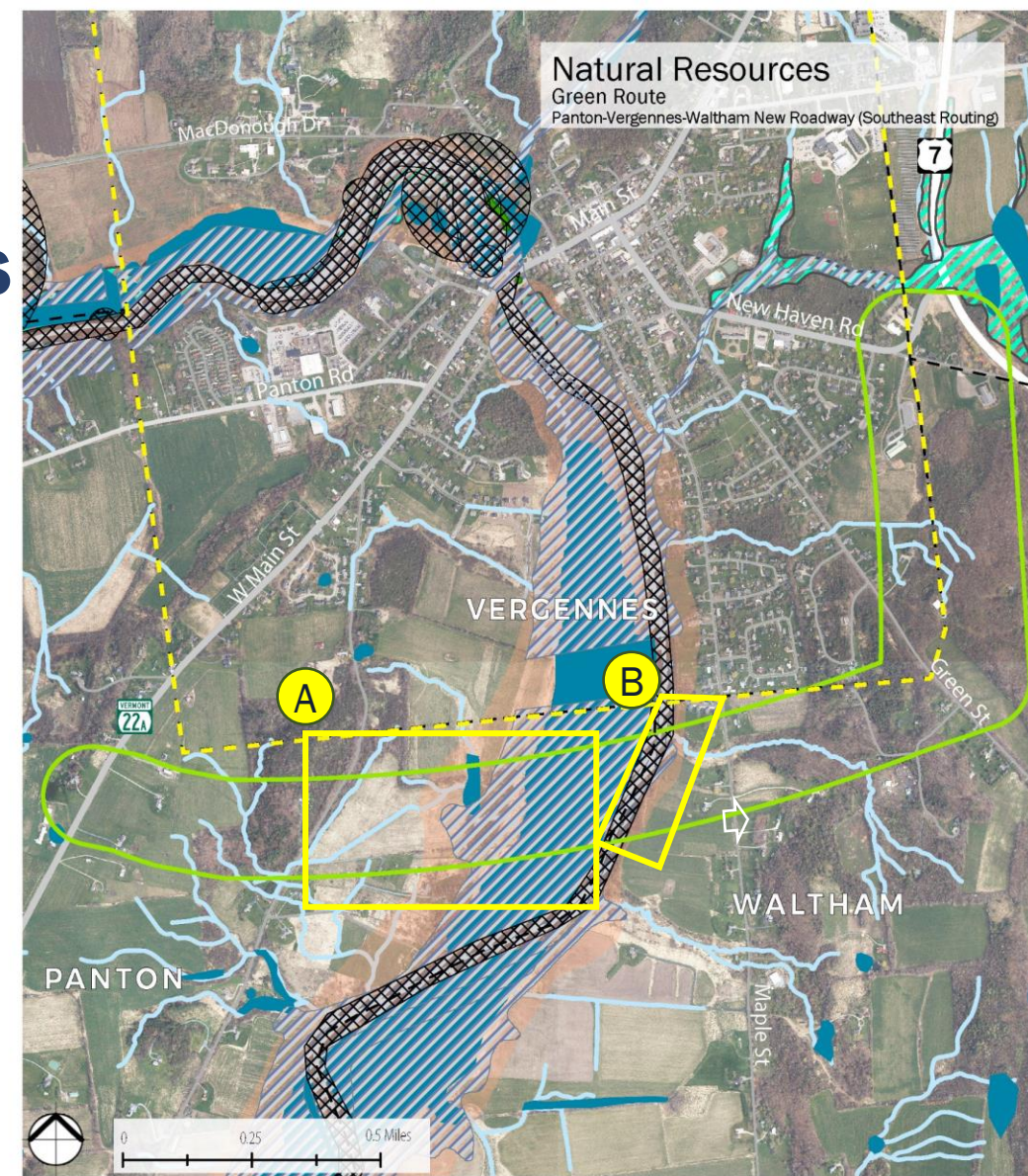
➤ Topographic challenges identified but are not a fatal flaw

The study team recommends that this concept move forward for further study.



Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) [Green route] Results

- A. Throughout the western segment of the concept, there is a concentration of streams and the areas west and east of the proposed new Otter Creek crossing are designated as flood hazard areas as well as state wetlands
- B. East of the wetland area there is a habitat for freshwater mussels

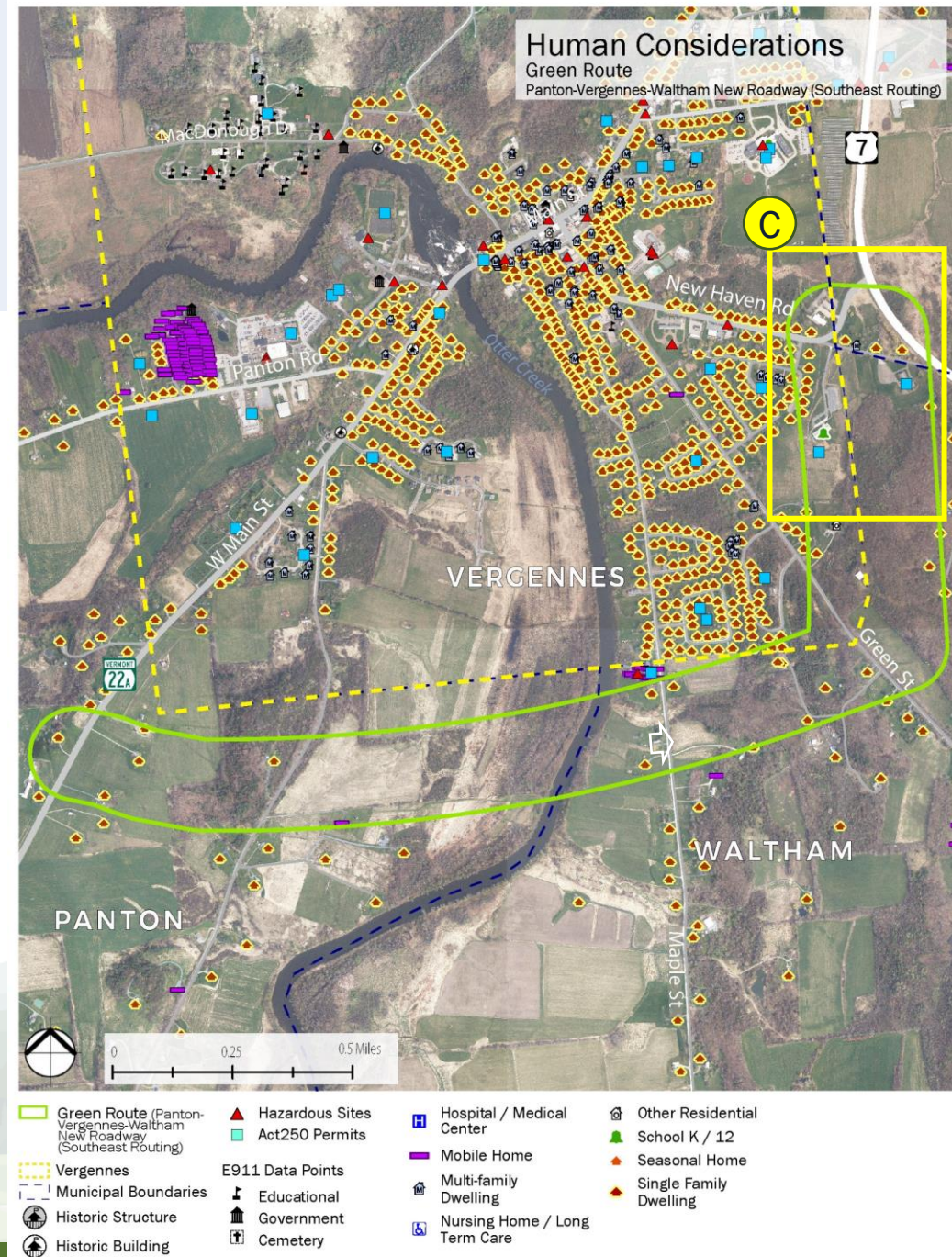


Data Sources: FEMA Flood Hazard Areas (ANR 2022); VT Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species (VNHI 2023); River Corridors, (ANR 2019); Rivers & Streams (USGS 2021); VT VSWI, (VCGI2020); VTORTHO (VCGI 2022)

Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) [Green route] Results

C. There is a school near the intersection of Church Street and Route 7 in Vergennes and a cluster of residential properties

- Outreach and discussions with agency partners indicated that there may be protected land near the school property as part of an Act 250 permit
- 1000-ft swath was extended to the east to avoid this potential impact

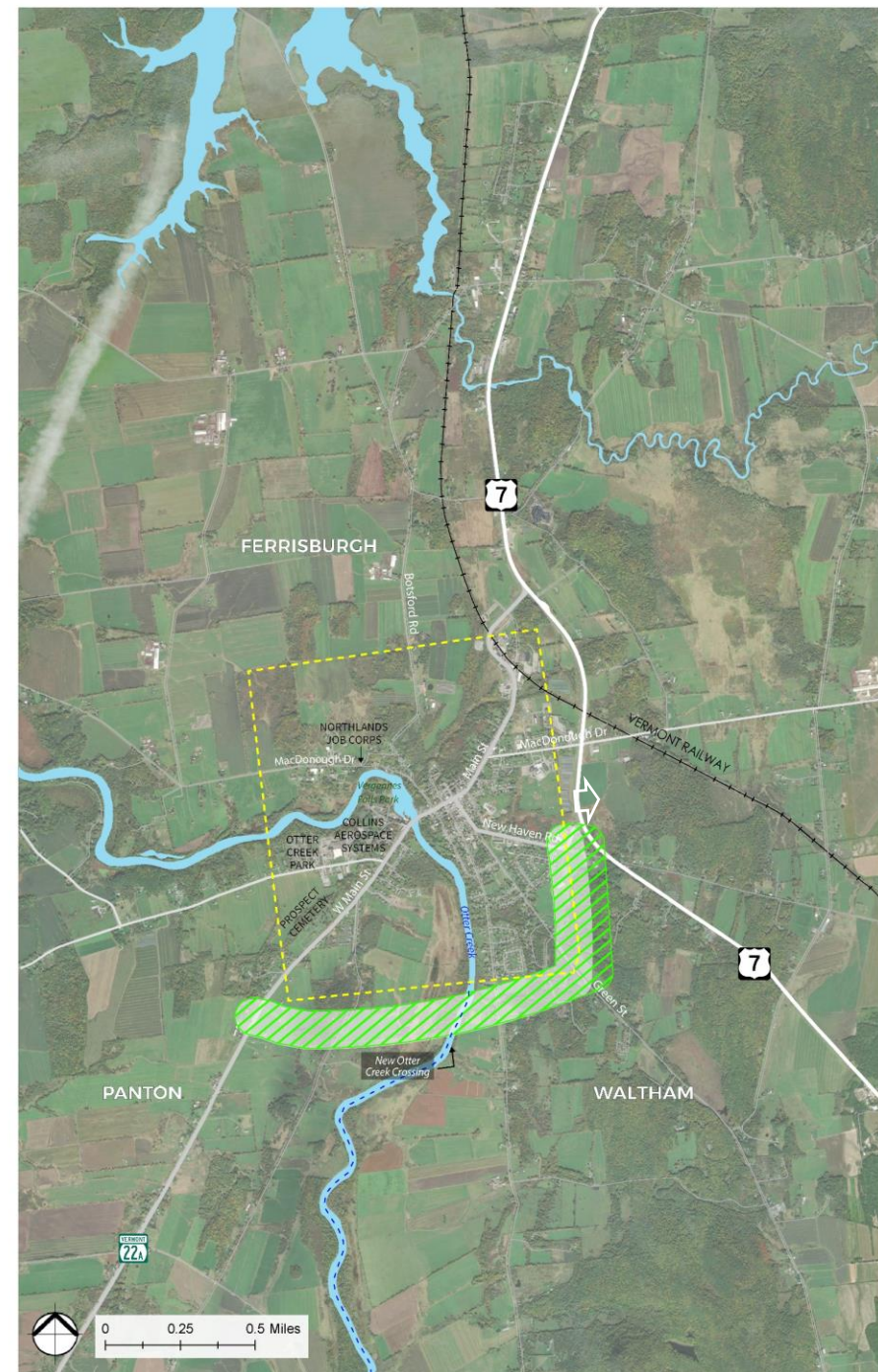


Hazardous Sites, (ANR 2016); Act 250 Permits, (ANR 2016); RDSALL, (VTans 2016); Town Boundaries (VCGI 2016); Historic Structures (NPS 2012); Historic Building (NPS 2012)

Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) [Green route] Results

- Meets the Purpose and Need
- Scored lower during the initial screening.
- During the secondary screening, potential impacts, particularly to wetlands, identified
- The new Otter Creek crossing upstream of the Vergennes Falls may be less challenging than the proposed crossings downstream (Red Route, Blue/Pink Route)

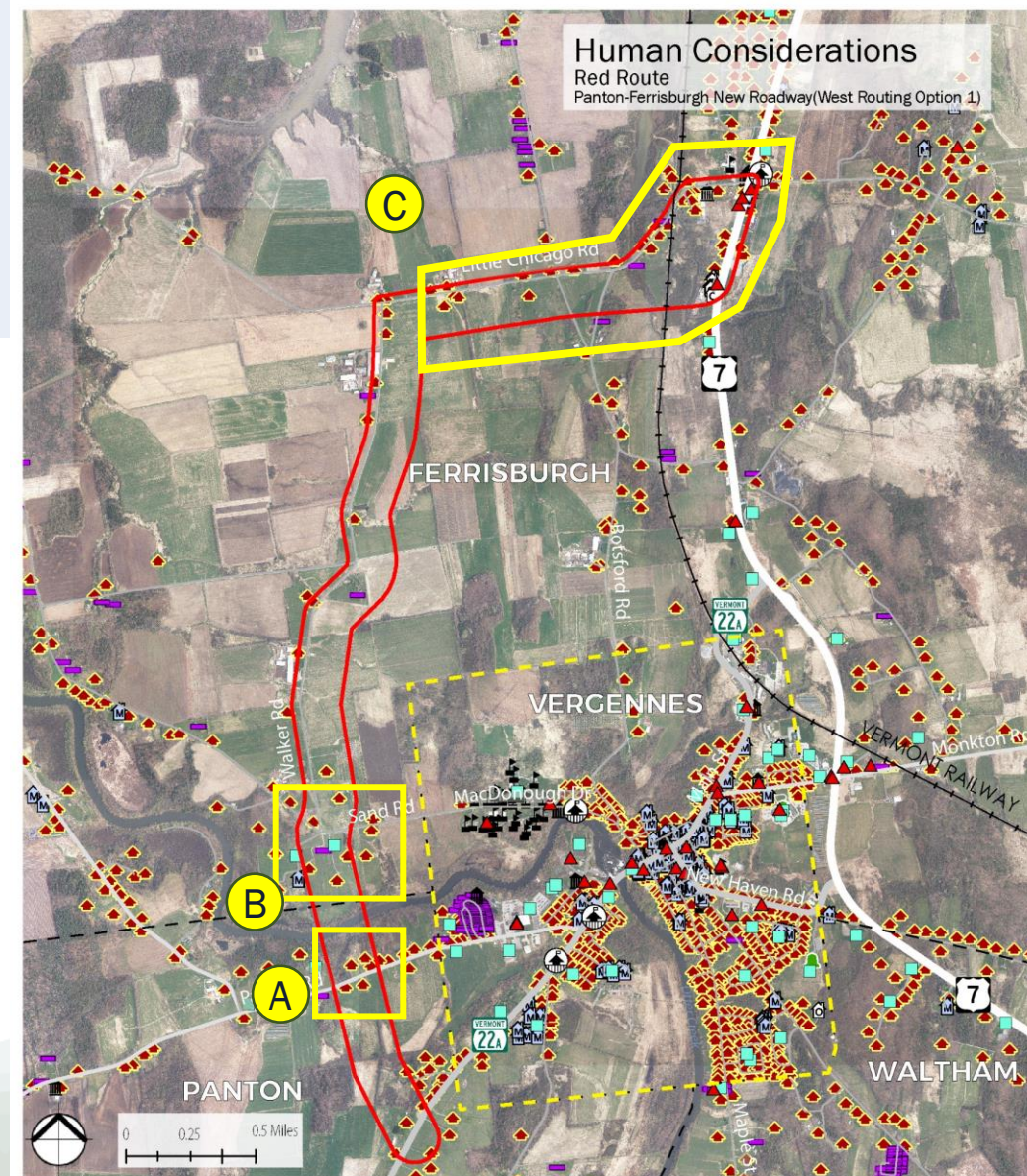
The study team recommends that the Green Route move forward for further study.



Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway Route (West Routing 1) [Red route]

Potential impacts to residential properties and a school along the following roads:

- A. Panton Road (residential)
- B. Walker Road (residential)
- C. Little Chicago Road (residential and school)



Red Route (Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway West Routing Option 1)	Hazardous Sites	Hospital / Medical Center	Other Residential
Vergennes	Act250 Permits	Mobile Home	School K / 12
Municipal Boundaries	E911 Data Points	Multi-family Dwelling	Seasonal Home
Historic Structure	Educational	Nursing Home / Long Term Care	Single Family Dwelling
Historic Building	Government		
	Cemetery		

Hazardous Sites, (ANR 2016); Act 250 Permits, (ANR 2016); RDSALL (VTans 2016); Town Boundaries (VCGI 2016); Historic Structures (NPS 2012); Historic Building (NPS 2012)

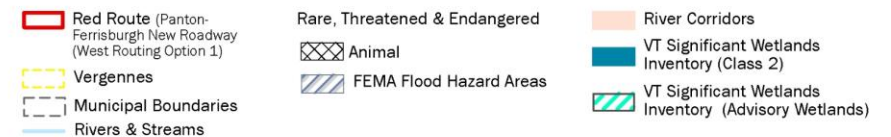
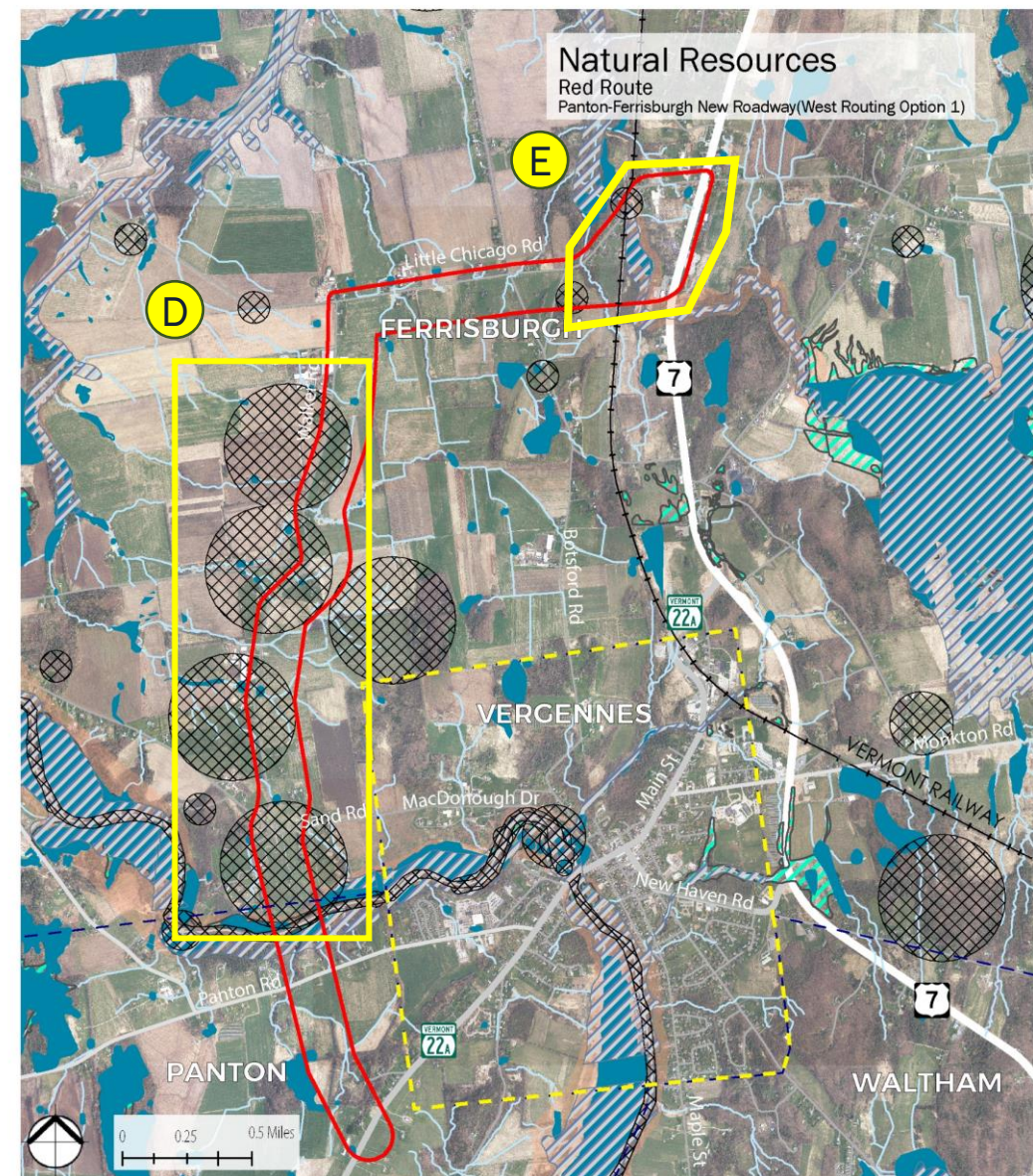
Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway Route (West Routing 1) [Red route]

Several areas identified as a rare, threatened, or endangered species habitat along Walker Road in Ferrisburgh

Federally and state listed threatened & endangered species include the Indiana Bat, Northern Long Eared Bat, Upland Sandpiper, Freshwater Mussels, and Silver Lamprey, among others along:

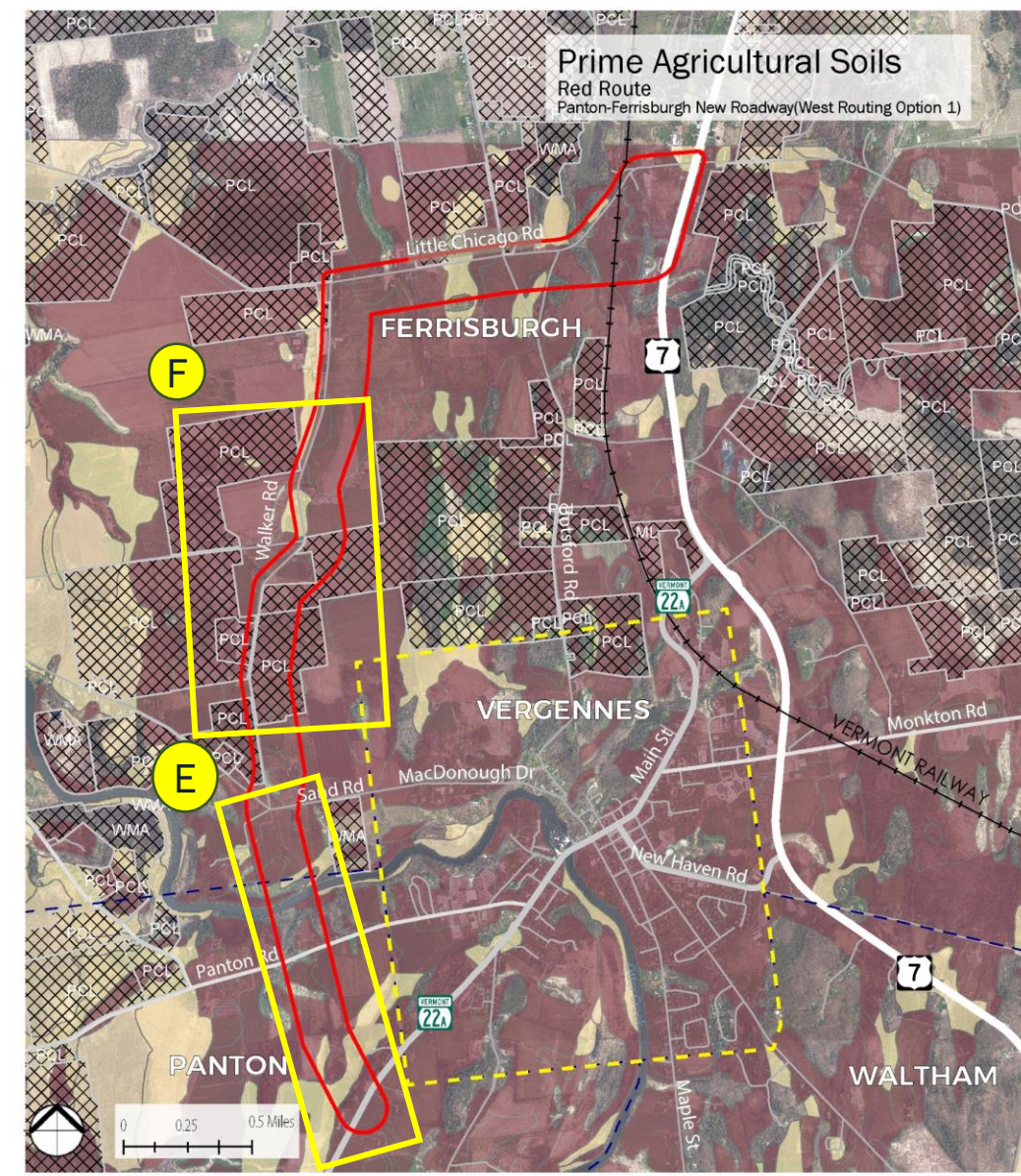
D. Walker Road

E. Little Otter Creek riparian area



Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway Route (West Routing 1) [Red route]

- E. Between Route 22A and the Panton/Ferrisburgh border, there is a mix of statewide prime agricultural soil and prime agricultural soil
- F. Land adjacent to Walker Road and is classified as private conserved land

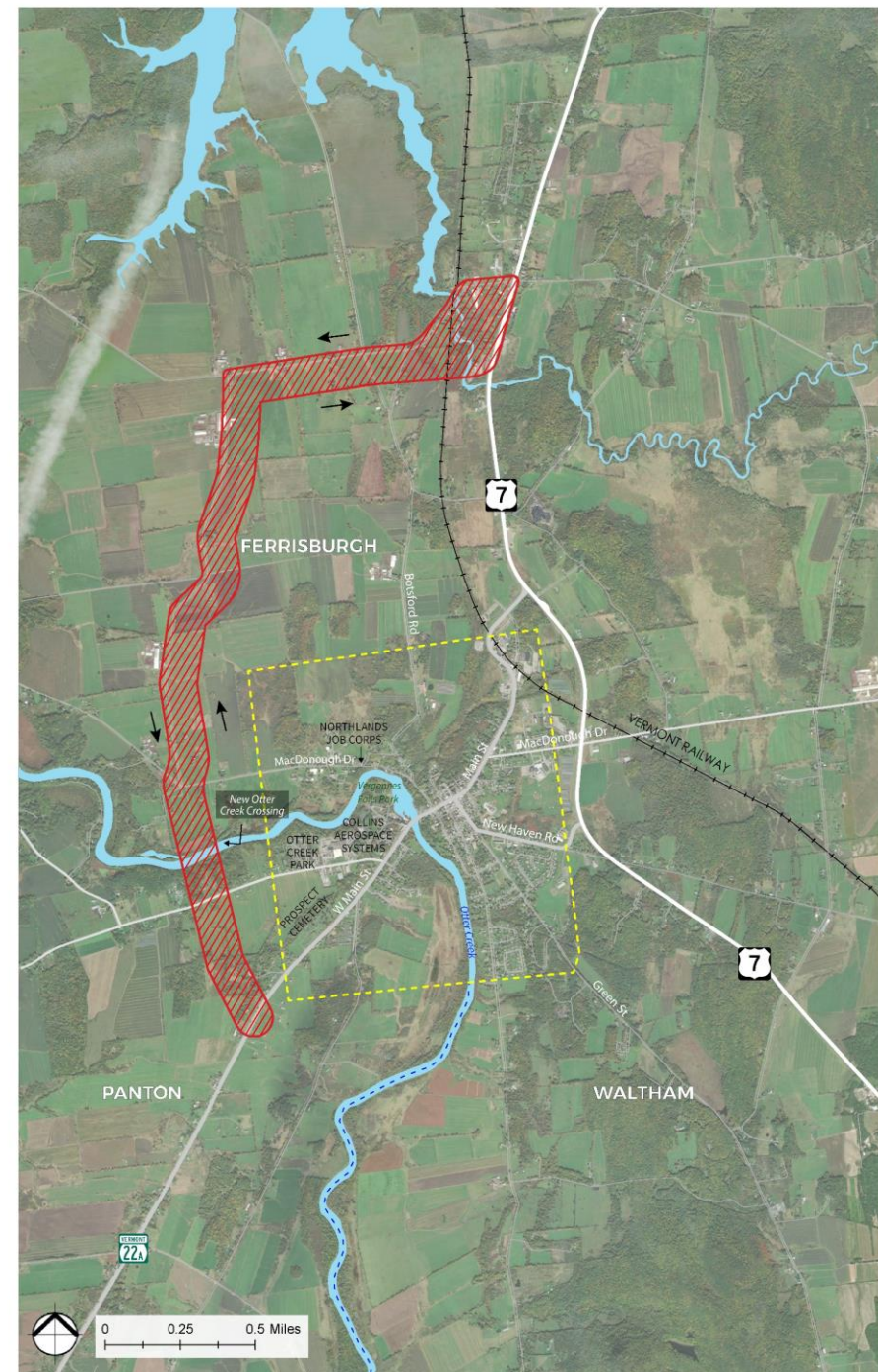


Data Sources: Agriculturally Important Soil Units (VCGI 2021); VT Protected Lands Database (VCGI 2021); VTORTHO (VCGI 2022)

Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway Route (West Routing 1) [Red route]

- Meets the Purpose and Need
- Scored lower during the initial screening
- Secondary screening confirmed the findings of the initial screening and added the presence of federal and state threatened and endangered species along most of the route
- Route has an equal or greater potential for impacts compared to the nearby routes (Blue/Pink Routes)

Considering that it scored much lower than those in the initial screening, the study team recommends that the Red Route be eliminated from further study.





Consensus Points



What does consensus mean?

Levels of Consensus

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

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

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

This is our goal for everyone

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

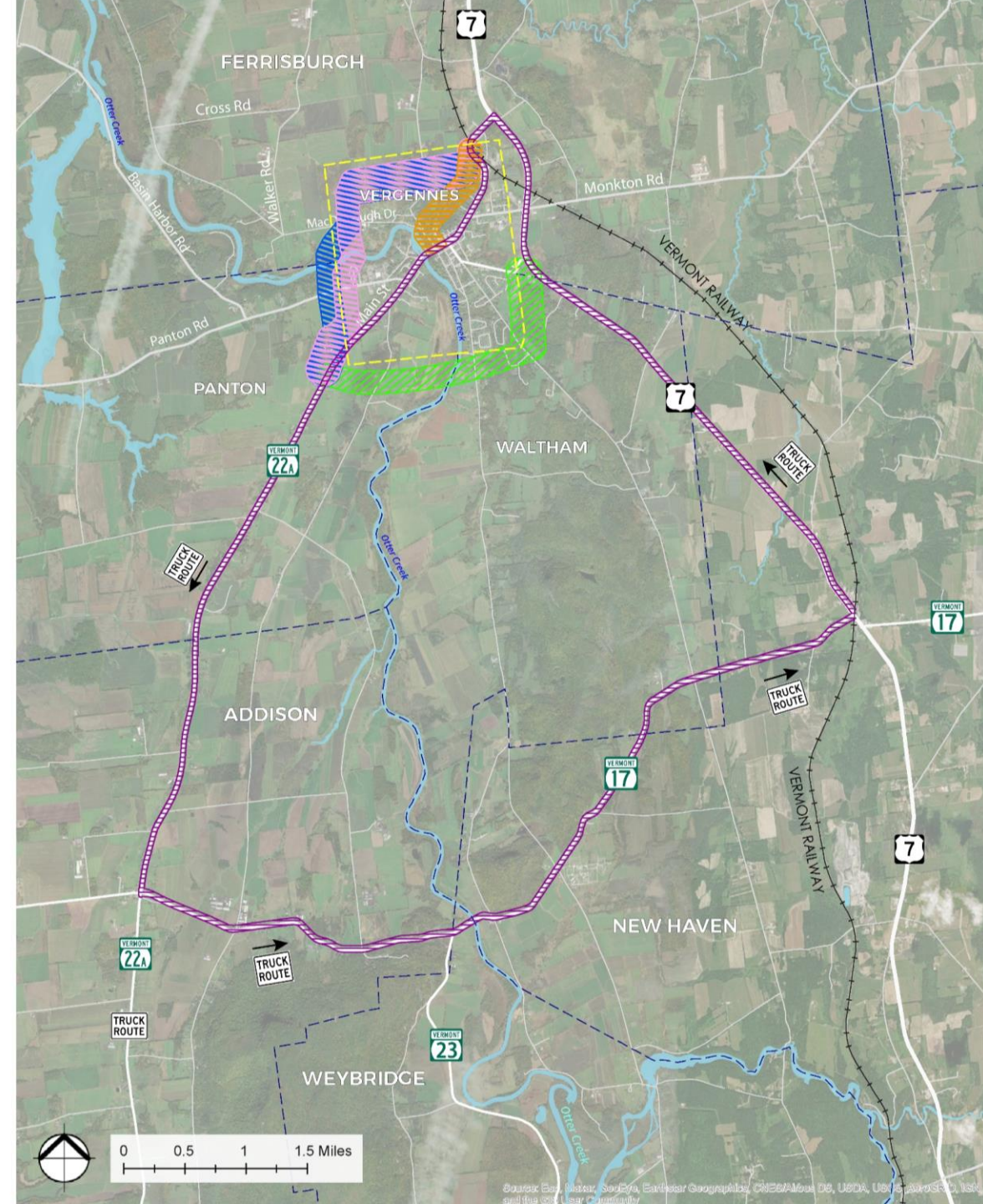
5. I loathe it and cannot accept this decision.



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

Consensus Points

- Move forward for further study
 - Pink/Blue, Orange, Green, Purple
- Dismissed
 - Red and all others included in initial screening
- Summarize changes agreed upon during this meeting
- Consensus point questions:
 - Do you agree with the results of the initial screening?
- Do you agree with the concepts recommended to move forward for further study?



Initial Screening Consensus Point

Concept Screening Results	Systemwide	VT-17 / Route 7	VT-22A Corridor Improvements	VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound (Purple)	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1) (Red)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 2) (Turquoise)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3) (Pink)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4) (Blue)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) (Green)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route (Orange)	Rail Mode Options	Water Mode Options	Smart Freight Solutions
Total Score	5	1	-3	6	1	5	5	7	0	6	0	-7	5
Meets Purpose and Need and No Fatal Flaws	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

Initial Screening Consensus Point

Consensus point question:

Do you agree with the results of the initial screening?

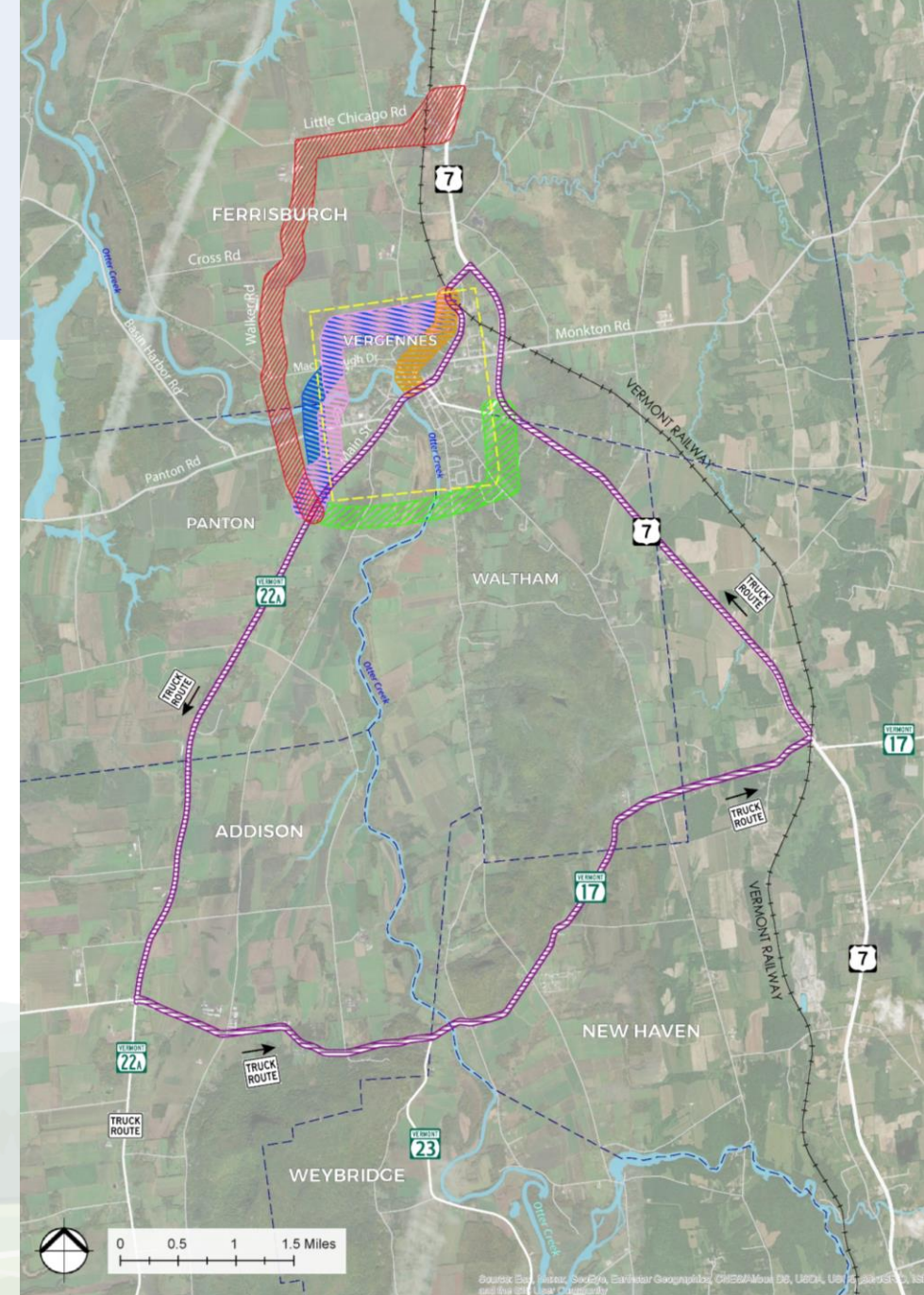
- VOTING members
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- Mike Audy, Town of New Haven
- Renny Perry, Vergennes Partnership
- Phil Summers, Addison County Chamber
- Tim Glassberg, Town of Waltham

Secondary Screening Results

	Pink/Blue Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3 & Option 4)	Green Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Orange Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Purple VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound	Red Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1)
Type of construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New roadway and full depth reconstruction following parts of the existing right-of-way on MacDonough Drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some roadway widenings and intersection improvements along the existing right-of-way on Route 22A, Route 17, and Route 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Roadway and full depth reconstruction following parts of existing right-of-way on Walker Road and Little Chicago Road.
Roadway Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 3 miles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 3 miles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 1 mile 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 20 miles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approx. 5 miles
Property Impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium – less than 50 properties likely impacted Possible impacts to mobile-home park [Pink route] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium – less than 50 properties likely impacted Possible Impacts to school near New Haven Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium - less than 50 properties likely impacted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium – less than 50 properties likely impacted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High - over 50 properties likely impacted
Environmental & Permitting Impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential impacts to agricultural lands and protected lands Potential impacts to wetlands, protected species May require a Section 408 permit for new Otter Creek crossing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential impacts to agricultural lands Potential impacts to wetlands, protected species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential impacts to agricultural lands and protected lands Potential impacts to wetlands, protected species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential impacts to agricultural lands and protected lands Potential impacts to wetlands, protected species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential impacts to agricultural lands and protected lands Potential impacts to wetlands, protected species May require a Section 408 permit for new Otter Creek crossing
Existing Conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No existing roadway Land surrounding potential new roadway is mostly open and agricultural land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No existing roadway Land surrounding potential new roadway is mostly open and agricultural land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No existing roadway Land surrounding potential new roadway and existing road is mostly open land with a section of residential land in southern section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing 2-lane roadway with shoulder on Route 22A, Route 17, and Route 7 Rail Crossing at Route 17 and Route 7' Land surrounding roadway is a mix of residential land and agricultural land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No existing roadway from Walker/Sand Road to VT 22A Unmarked narrow roadway on Walker Road Existing 2-lane roadway on Little Chicago Road Rail crossing near connection to US Route 7 Land surrounding potential new roadway and existing road is mostly open land and agricultural land

Secondary Screening Consensus Point

Concept	VT-17 Northbound/VT-22A Southbound (Purple)	Panton-Ferrisburgh New Roadway (West Routing Option 1) (Red)	Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3) (Pink)	Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4) (Blue)	Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) (Green)	Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route (Orange)
Meets Purpose and Need and No Fatal Flaws	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Recommended to move forward for further study	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



Secondary Screening Consensus Point

Consensus point question:

Do you agree with the concepts recommended to move forward for further study?

- VOTING members
- Chair: Adam Lougee, ACRPC
- Bill Smith, Vermont Truck and Bus Association
- Brian Shupe, VNRC
- Brent Rakowski, ACRPC TAC
- Clark Hinsdale, Town of Ferrisburgh
- Diane Lanpher, State Rep. from Vergennes, Ferrisburg, Waltham, Panton and Addison
- Dickie Austin, City of Vergennes
- Jubilee MGill, State Rep. from New Haven, Weybridge and Bridport
- Ian Huizenga, City of Vergennes
- Jeff Nelson, Town of Addison
- Jesse Devlin, VTrans
- Katharine Otto, VTrans
- Mary Rudd, Town of Panton
- Matt Birong, State Rep. from Vergennes, Ferrisburg, Waltham, Panton and Addison
- Mike Audy, Town of New Haven
- Renny Perry, Vergennes Partnership
- Phil Summers, Addison County Chamber
- Tim Glassberg, Town of Waltham

Other comments and wrapping up



Remaining items on the agenda

- Other comments from Policy Committee
- Public Comment Period
- Close Meeting

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 for further information, to submit comments or to contact the Study team.