



Public Transit Policy Plan

October 16, 2019

Addison County Regional Planning Commission- TAC

Jackie Cassino, Project Manager

vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP



Existing Goals: 24 V.S.A. §5089

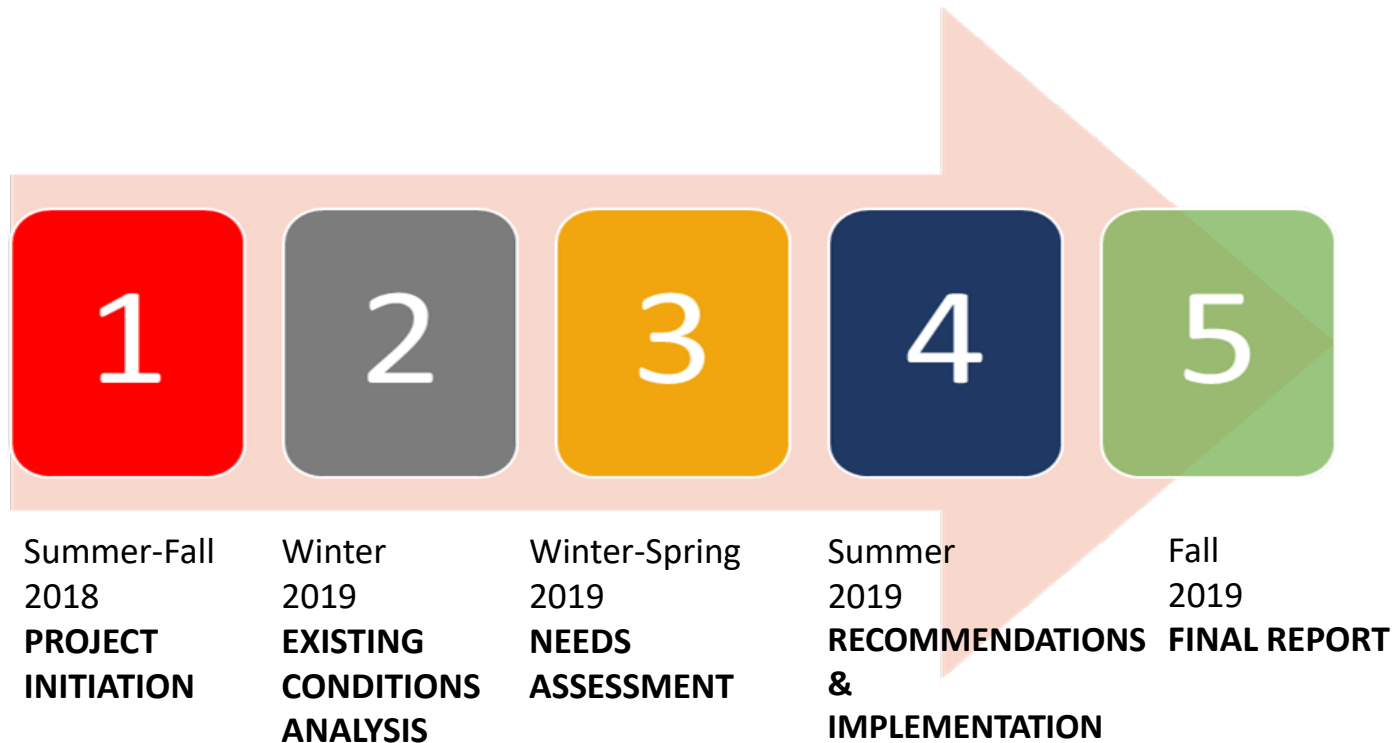
(a) The Agency of Transportation's Public Transit Plan for the State shall be amended no less frequently than every five years. **The development of the State Public Transit Plan shall include consultation with public transit providers, the metropolitan planning organization, and the regional planning commissions and their transportation advisory committees to ensure the integration of transit planning with the transportation planning initiative as well as conformance with chapter 117 of this title (municipal and regional planning and development).** Regional plans, together with the Agency of Transportation's Public Transit Plan shall function to coordinate the provision of public, private nonprofit, and private for-profit regional public transit services, in order to ensure effective local, regional, and statewide delivery of services.



Goals of the Project

- Develop a 10-year vision for improved transit in Vermont
- Update state policies, goals, and objectives for public transportation
- Incorporate Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan into the PTPP
- Identify components of an enhanced statewide transit system in Vermont
- Engage the public and key stakeholders

Project Tasks



PUBLIC/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

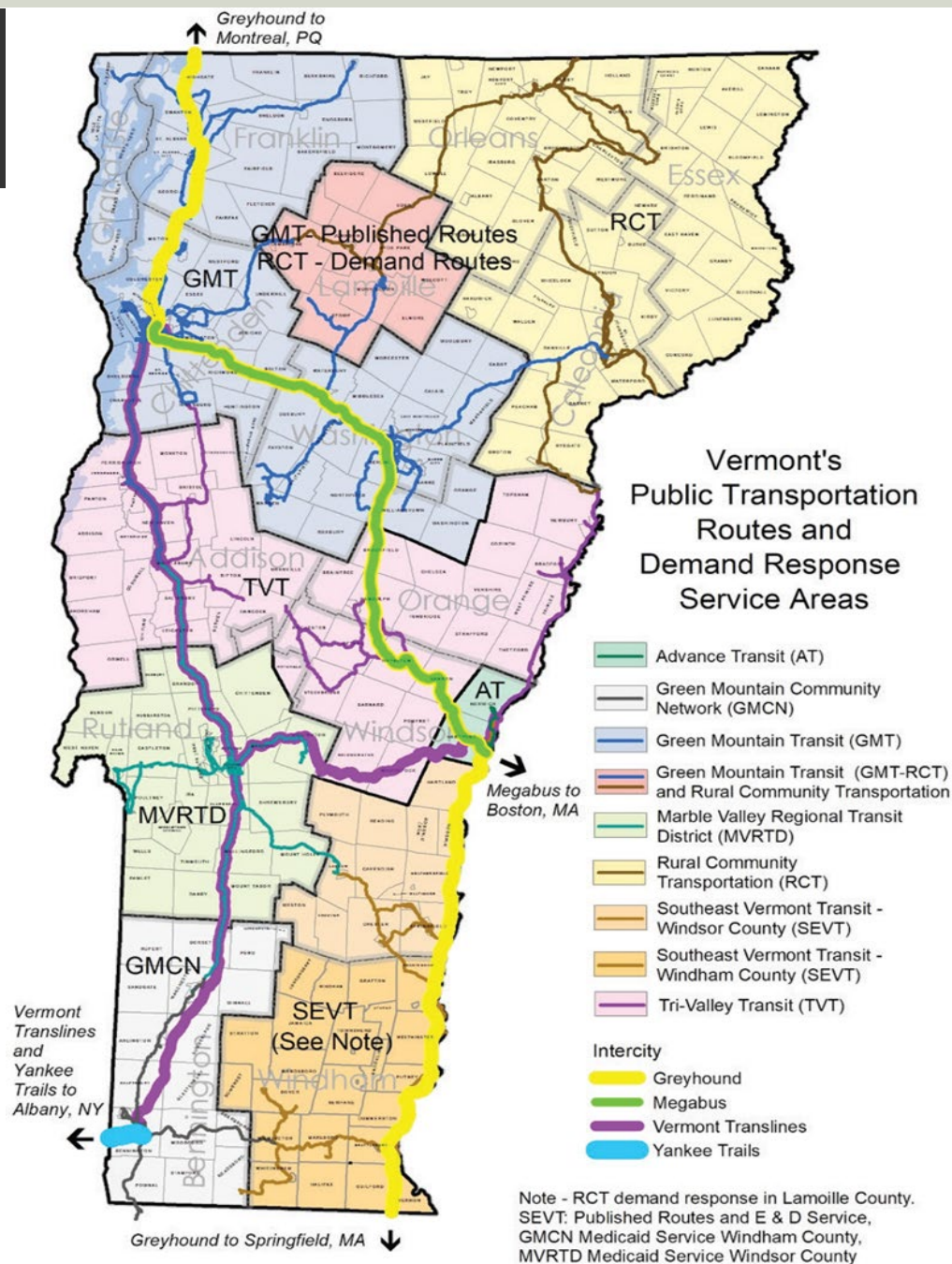


Outreach Activities

- 11 Regional Forums (Fall 2018)
- MetroQuest survey (Fall 2018) + (Summer 2019)
- 9 Stakeholder interviews (Winter 2019)
- 9 E&D Committee assessments (Spring 2019)
- 3 Study Advisory Committee meetings (Feb + April + October)
- Appearance on VPR's Vermont Edition (July 2019)
- TPI, PTAC, DAIL, VPTA presentations
- Project website <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP>

Transit Service

- Local circulators and shuttles, commuter routes, seasonal fixed routes
- Mobility management-Go Vermont, vanpools, carpools, and travel information. Park & Rides
- ADA complementary paratransit services in urbanized areas, deviated fixed route services elsewhere
- Elders & Persons with Disabilities transportation program
- Services provided to clients of human service agencies
- Intercity and intercity feeder service





Regional Existing Conditions

- Current transit services (local, regional, intercity)
- Land use patterns – challenge for transit in rural areas
- Important trip generators
 - Employment and retail
 - Medical, educational and human services
- Demographic analysis of region
 - Population density
 - Employment
 - Transit propensity (composite index)
 - Characteristics (age, disability, auto ownership, income)
 - Commuting to key job centers

Local Transit

ACTR Local Shuttles

Middlebury (5 routes)

Tri-Town

Snow Bowl (seasonal)

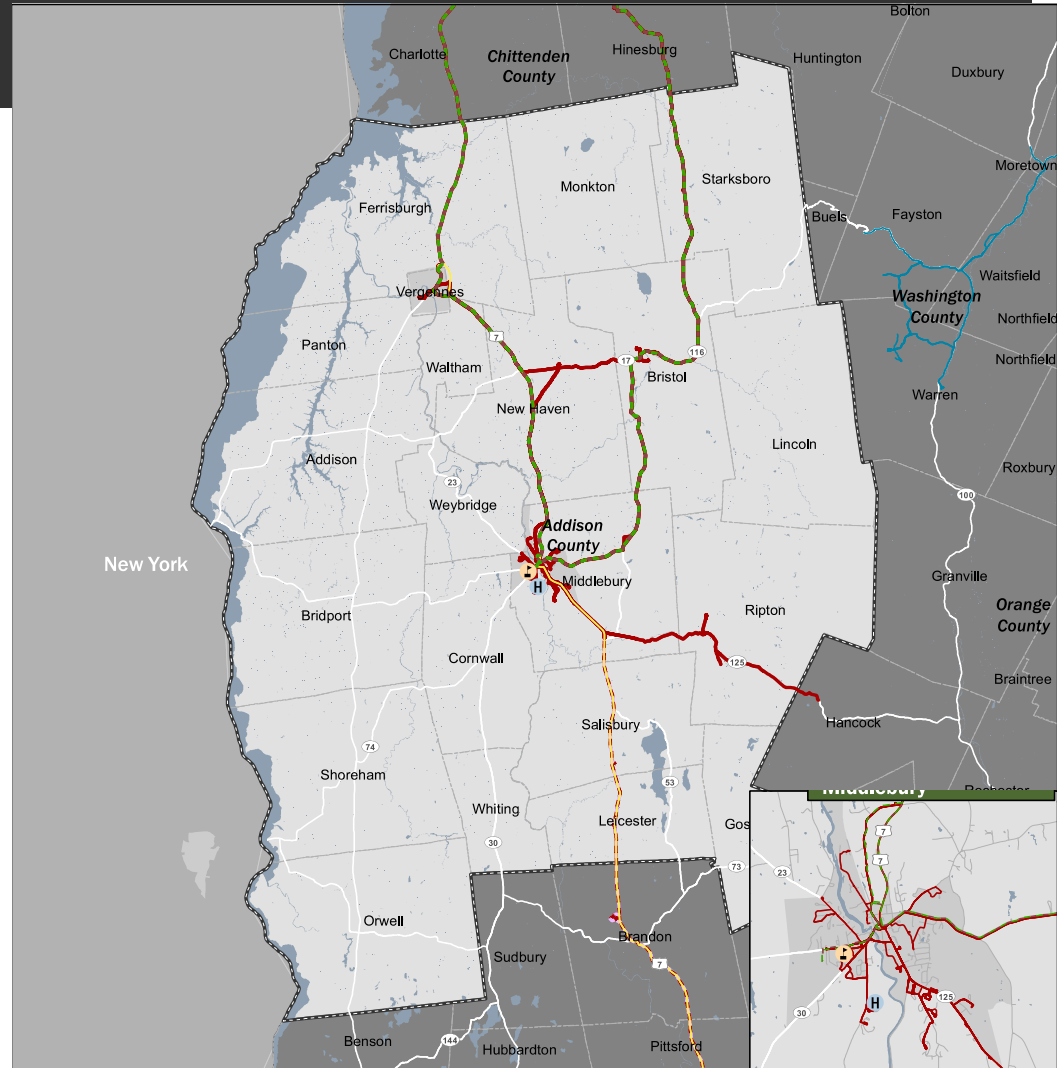
ACTR Commuter Routes

116 to Burlington via
Hinesburg (with GMT)

Rutland Connector (with
MVRTD)

LINK to Burlington (GMT
weekday/ACTR
Saturday)

Vermont Translines

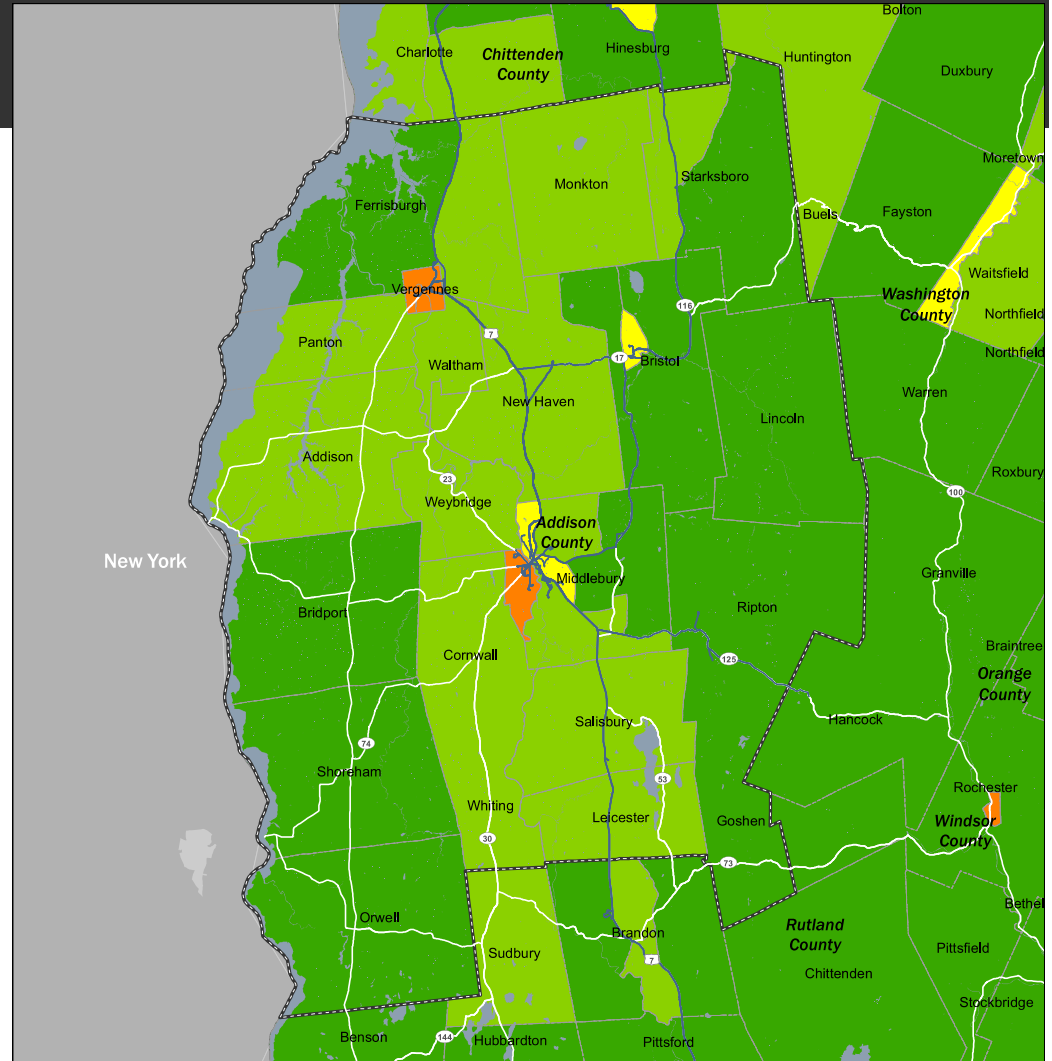


Population Density

Moderate density in Vergennes and Middlebury

Low density in Bristol and East Middlebury

Rural density in the rest of the region

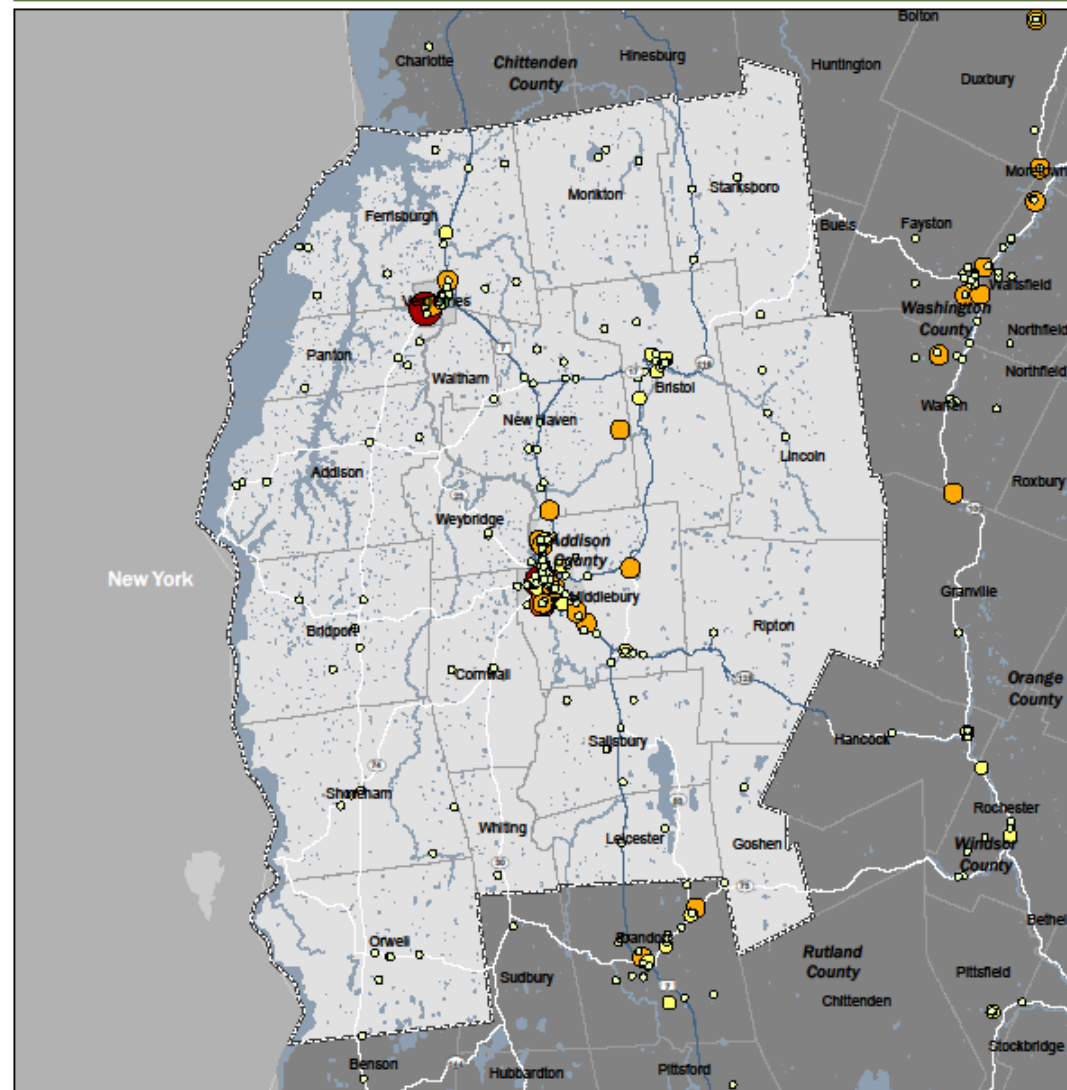


Employment

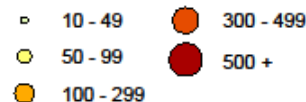
Larger employers
(100+ employees)
mainly in
Vergennes,
Middlebury

Smaller
employers(<100
employees)
scattered
throughout county

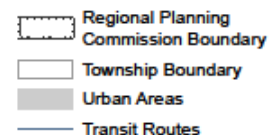
Addison County Region



Employers by Number of Employees



Source: Dun & Bradstreet, 2005



Commuting

Most commuters to Middlebury are from Addison County communities

Significant numbers also from

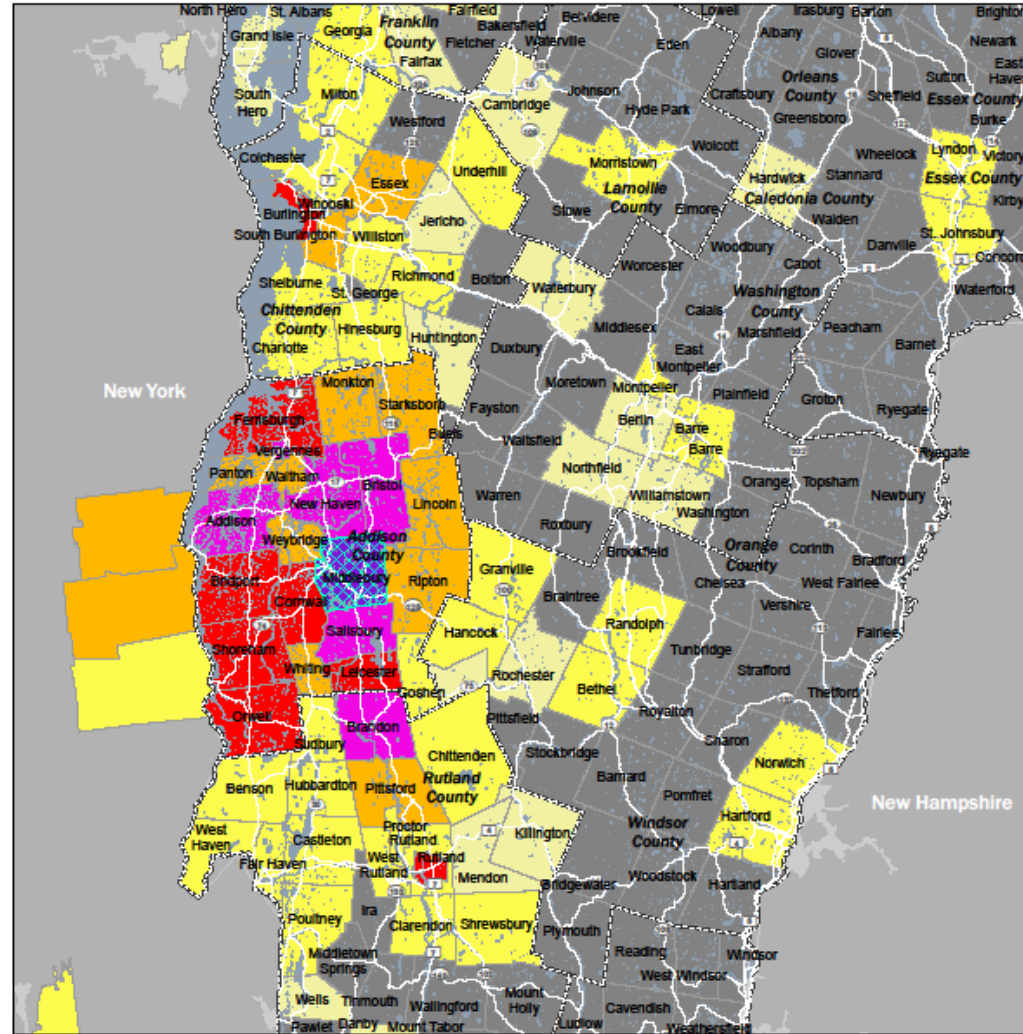
Burlington area

New York State

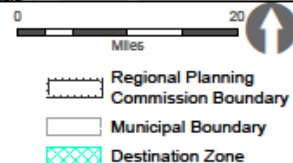
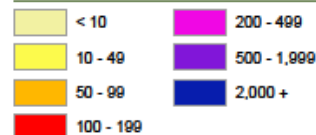
Rutland County

Commuters from many other towns, but in smaller numbers

Addison County Region



Commuters to Middlebury



Commuting

Most commuters to Burlington area from Addison County come from Middlebury and northern communities

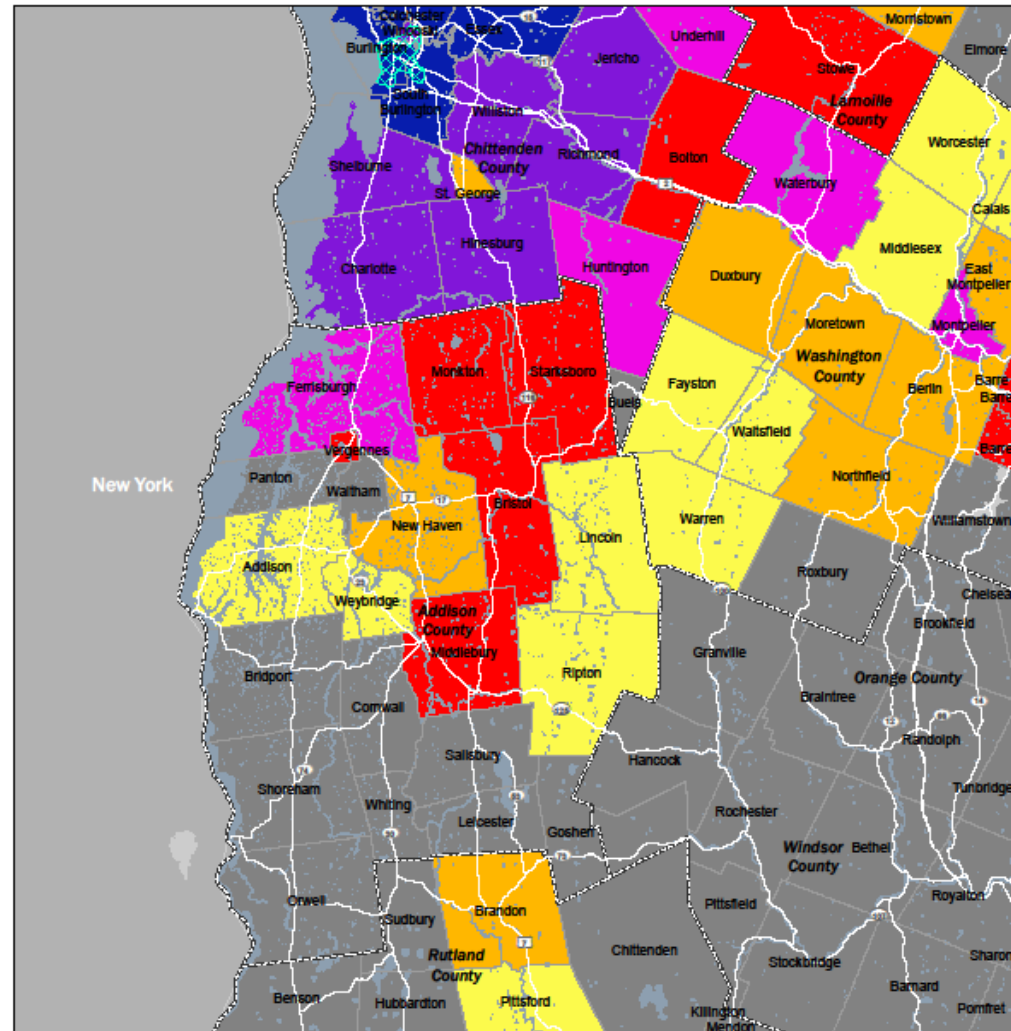
Ferrisburgh

Monkton

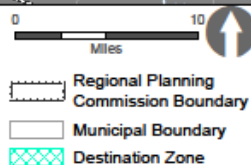
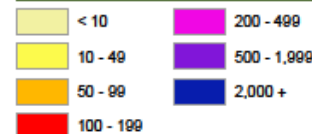
Starksboro

Bristol

Addison County Region



Commuters to Chittenden County Core



Transit Propensity

Youth

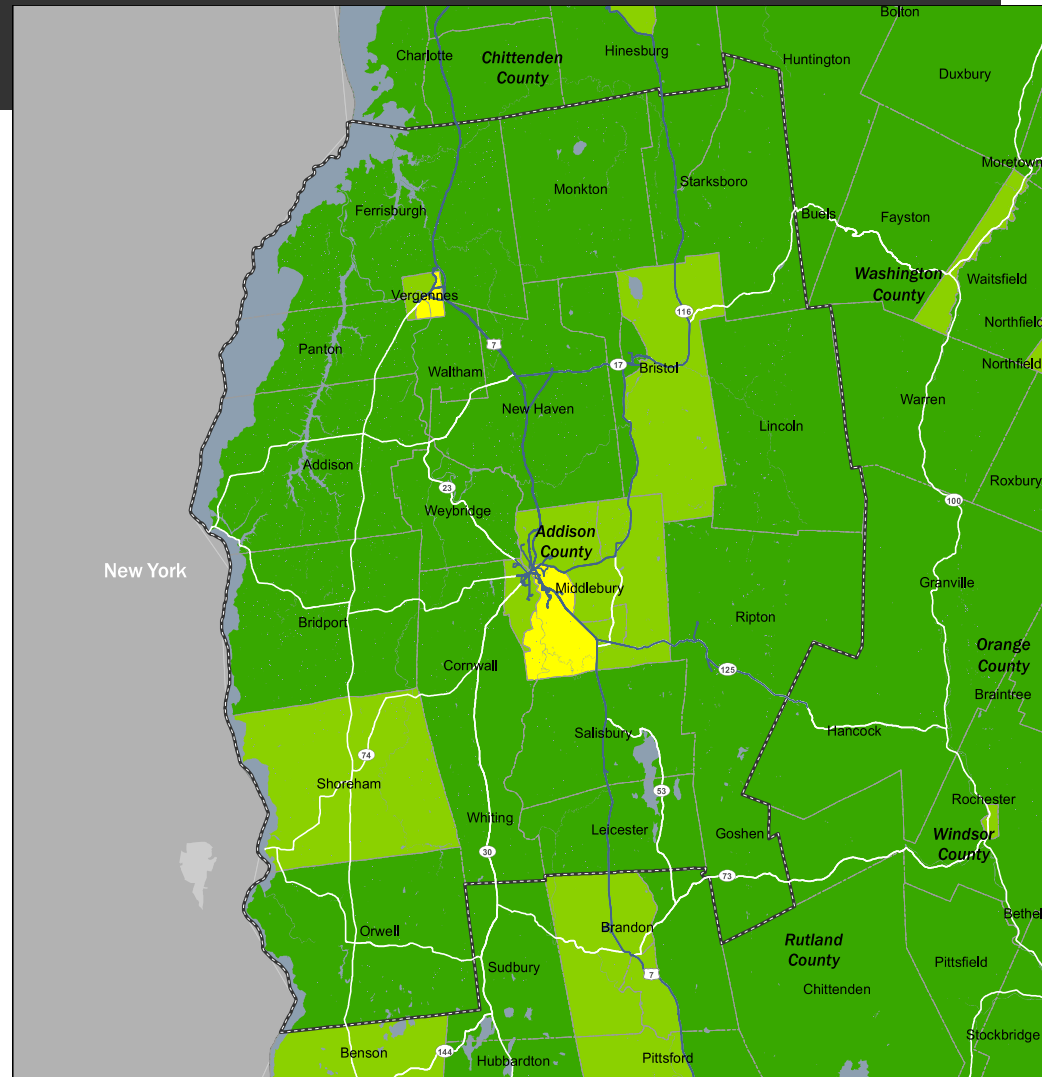
Older adults

Persons with disabilities

Households with 0-1 cars

Low-income persons

Portions of Vergennes
and Middlebury areas
with moderate transit
propensity

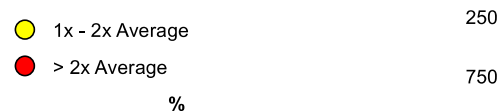
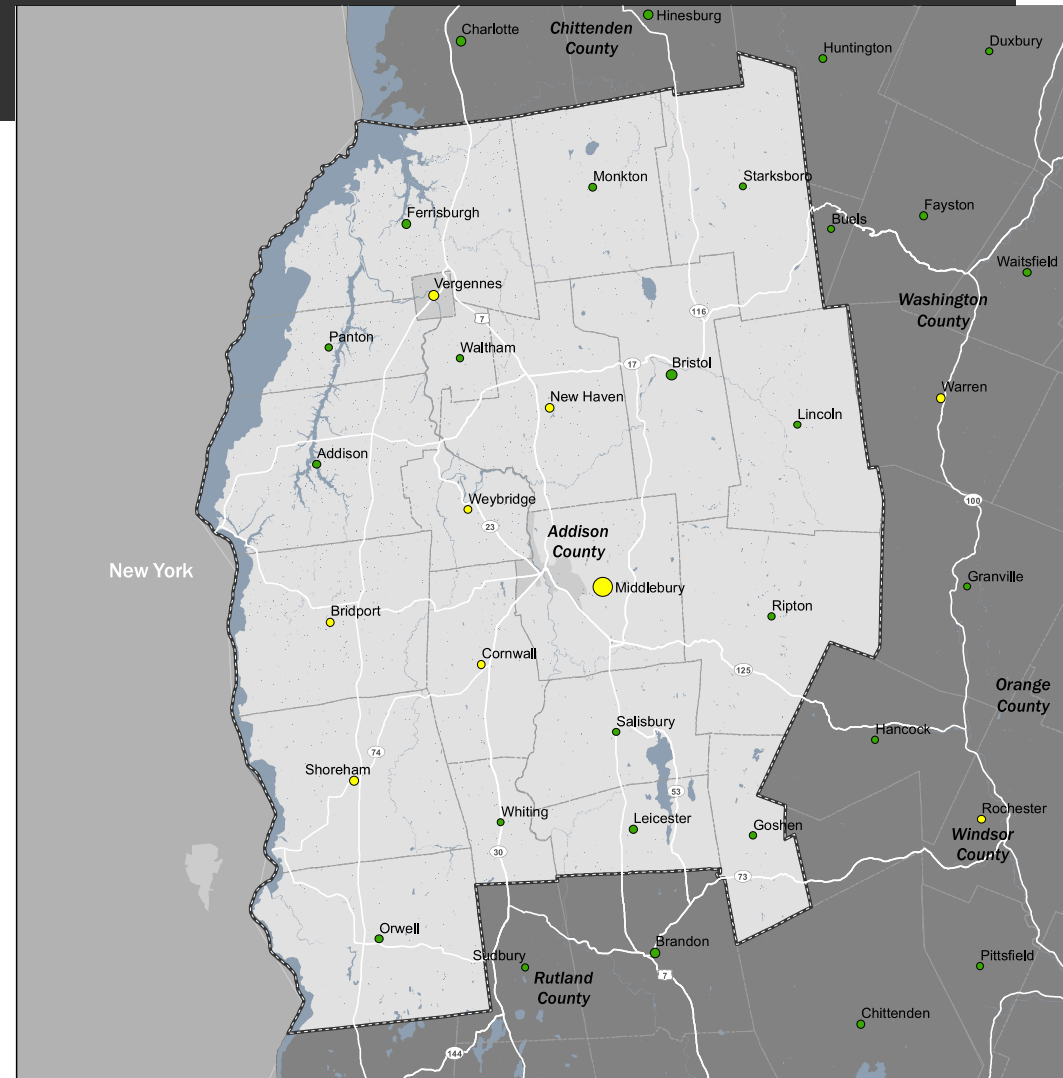


Older Adults

Focus on people over age 80 as younger seniors overwhelmingly continue to drive

Concentrations seen in Middlebury and Vergennes; very small numbers elsewhere

Significant rise in the over-80 population expected in next 10-20 years



People with Disabilities

Includes four types of disabilities

Hearing

Vision

Cognition

Walking

Concentrations

Middlebury

Bristol

Vergennes



age

1x - 2x Average

2x - 3x Average

VT Average = 14.0%

750

2,250

Auto Ownership

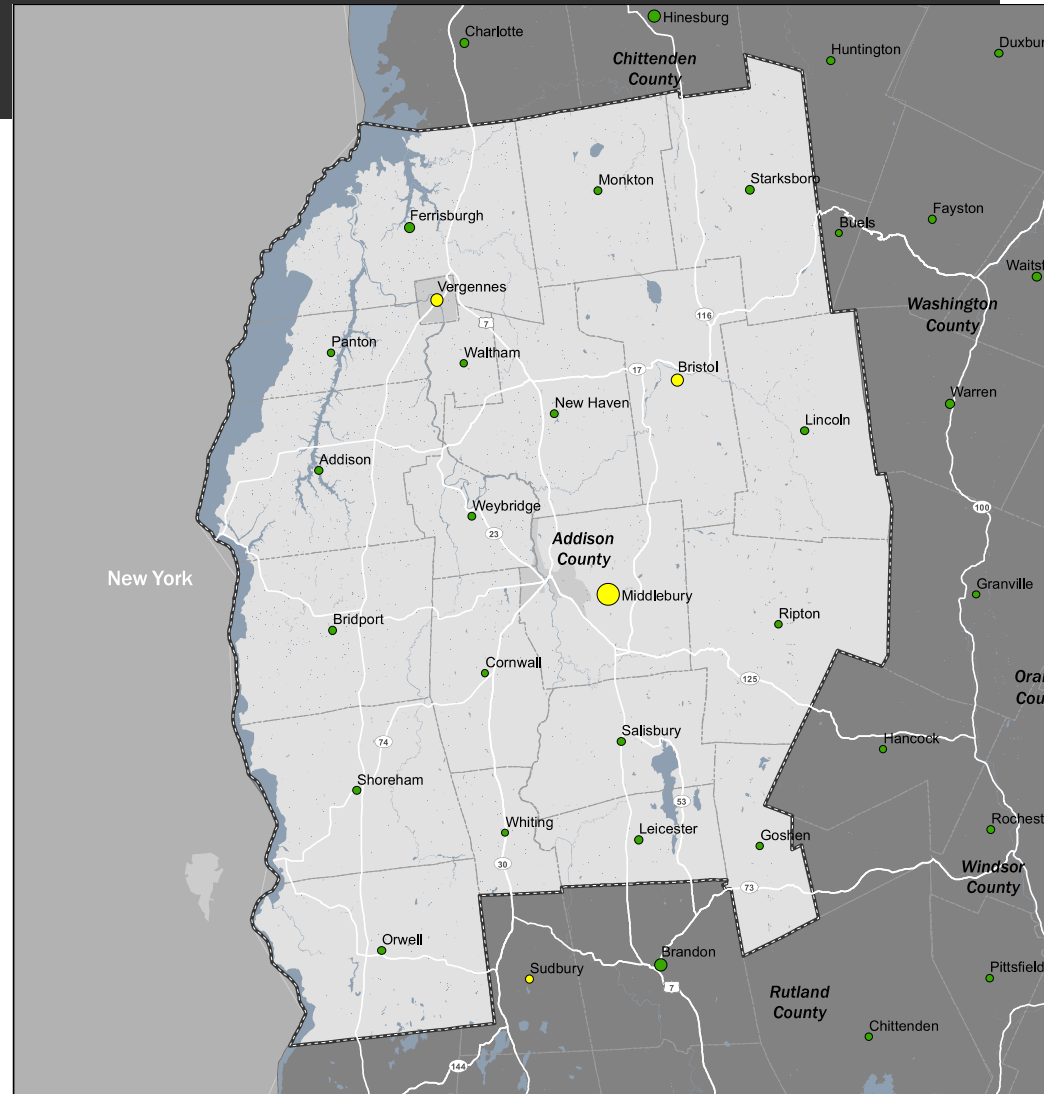
Considered households
with no vehicles and
those with two or more
members with only one
vehicle

Concentrations

Middlebury

Bristol

Vergennes



**Total Households with
1 Person & 0 Cars or
2+ People & 0-1 Cars**

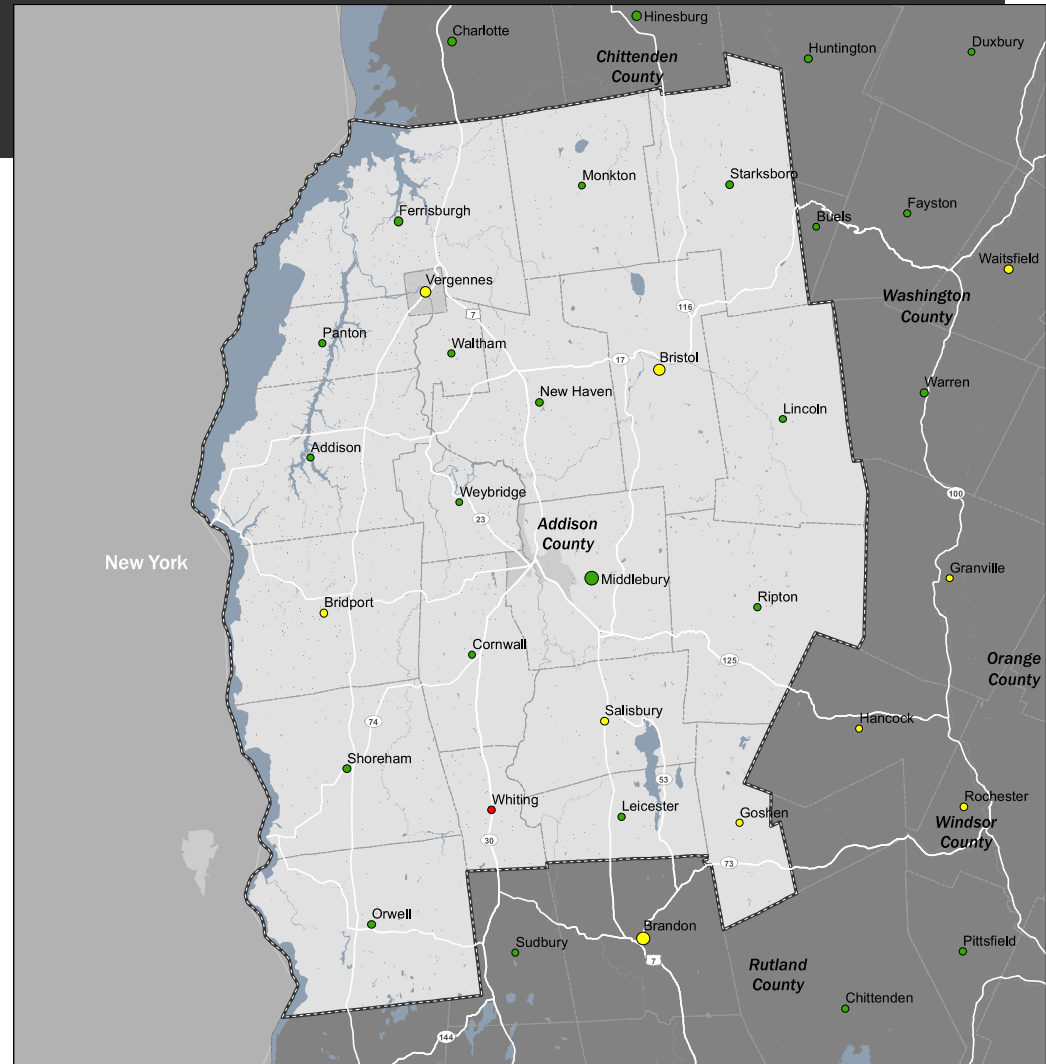
● 1x - 2x Average
● > 2x Average
VT Average = 20.6%

500 1,500

Medicaid Recipients

Significantly above state average in Whiting, though small population

Vergennes and Bristol have moderate concentrations



- Below Average
- 1x - 2x Average
- > 2x Average

VT Average = 27.2%

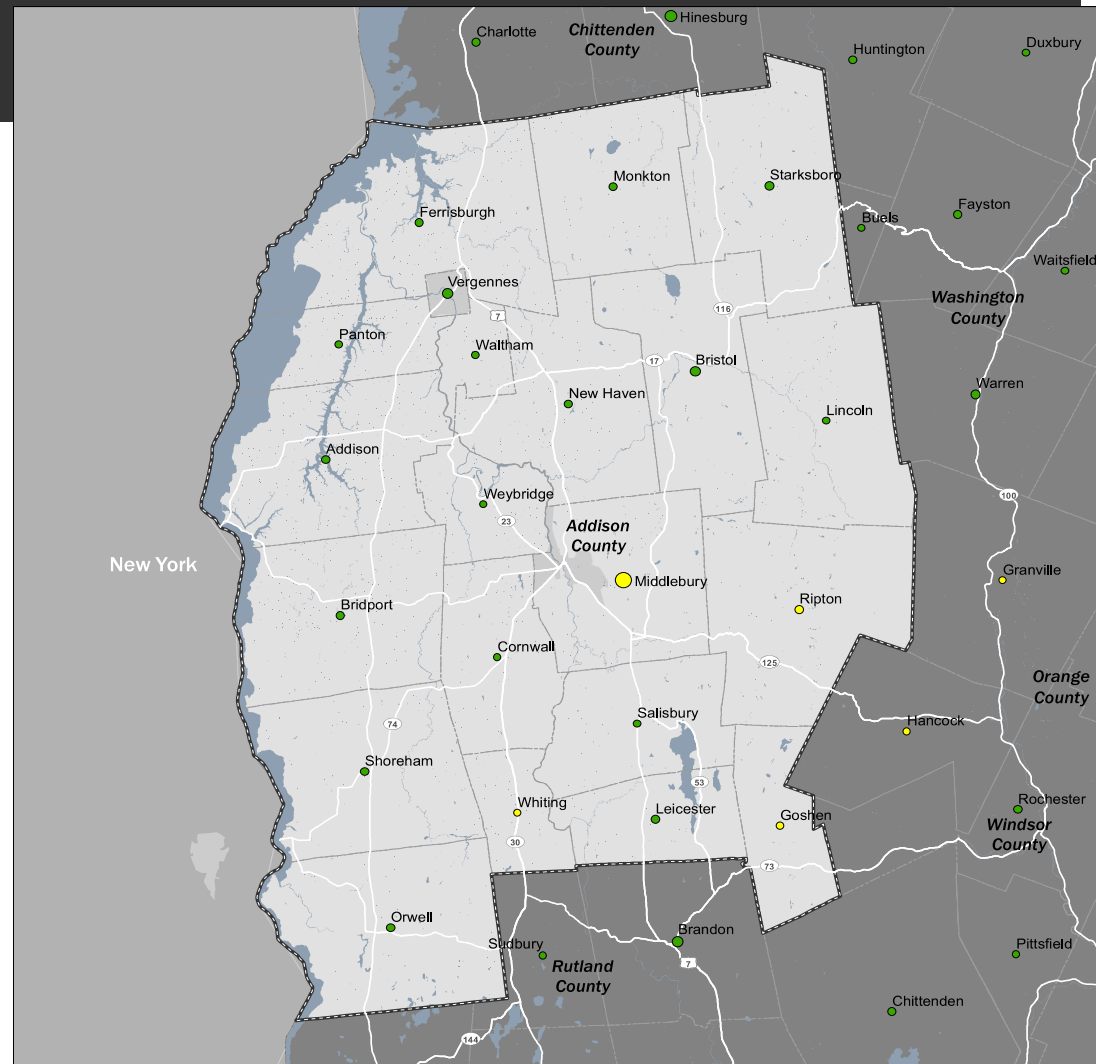
1,750
3,500
5,250



Poverty Level

Used federal definition of poverty

Relatively low poverty in Addison County overall; only Middlebury shows a significant number-density wise



age	
● 1x - 2x Average	625
● > 2x Average	1,875
VT Average = 11.6%	



Themes Across Regions

- Workforce development/access to jobs are transportation priorities
- Rural areas need options
- More integrated walk/bike/transit/driving networks would encourage transit use
- “First mile/last mile” needs
- Existing services and resources may not be well known



Themes from E&D Committees

- Trip limits in some regions not compatible with needs
 - Critical medical care and adult day health
 - Shopping and congregate meals
 - Wellness trips
- Financial resources to bring other human service partners into the program are not available
- Volunteer driver programs are crucial and need strengthening



Needs Assessment

- ❑ Current services – strengths and weaknesses
- ❑ Geographic service gaps
- ❑ Temporal service gaps
- ❑ Trip type gaps
- ❑ Accessibility needs
- ❑ Technology challenges
- ❑ Information gaps
- ❑ Affordability gaps



Statewide Primary Needs Identified

- Lack of transit access in rural areas
- Lack of resources to meet the needs of vulnerable populations both today and in the future
- Lack of transportation for access to jobs
- In areas that have bus routes, improved service levels and connections are needed



Recommendation Themes

- Addressing aging Vermont
- Expansion of transit access
- Effective outreach and raising awareness
- Using technology to move to next generation of ride scheduling
- Long-term investments



Addressing Aging Vermont

Establish Working Committee with the Agency of Human Services to focus on the issue of mobility for vulnerable Vermonters. The working committee would be led jointly by VTrans and DAHL and include representatives from other state and regional organizations with a stake in issues of aging.

More Comprehensive Planning for E&D by providing a statewide E&D meeting and developing a work plan that would be carried out by all the E&D regions. The goal would be to begin to replicate in all regions of Vermont the data collection process that has been undertaken in Chittenden County and to share best practices having to do with coordination, low-cost trips and volunteer management, etc.

Establish Personal Mobility Accounts to allow individuals to make use of demand response transit services for whatever trip purposes they desired. For this program to function, all Vermont transit providers would need to allow for a “client-pay” billing procedure, as private funds would supplement those available from the E&D program.



Expansion of Transit Access

Spur Growth of Volunteer Driver Programs

1. Create a check box on Vermont vehicle registration forms to sign up as a volunteer driver
2. Streamline the background check process
3. Establish non-monetary incentives for volunteer drivers
4. Increase marketing budget and collaborate with partner organizations
5. Share best practices

Expand Access to Healthcare by partnering with hospitals and health centers to expand Rides to Wellness program statewide, incorporating funding from the healthcare sector to make the program sustainable, once it is established that there is a positive return on investment.



Expansion of Transit Access

Expand Access to Employment

1. Increase awareness of ridesharing options through Go Vermont
2. Engage employers in helping to fund job access transportation
3. Create the “late bus” for shift workers
4. Create partnerships with TNCs where available

Expand Local Connections by exploring the feasibility of expanding local connections such as bike share, scooters, microtransit and other types of feeder service where appropriate.



Expansion of Transit Access

Expand Access to Available Seats in Transit Vehicles by working with transit providers to develop a policy that if a non-eligible rider has origin and destination locations within a short distance, say a tenth of mile, of where eligible riders on a van/volunteer trip are already scheduled to go, that non-eligible rider should be allowed to ride in the vehicle.

Expand Funding Pool Overall by increasing funding for public transit from federal, state, local, private and institutional partner sources.



Outreach and Raising Awareness

Continue Investment in Go Vermont

1. Increase marketing and promote links from others
2. Create interactive map of bus routes
3. Explore new program models and staffing structures for Go Vermont

Document Stories of the Value of Public Transit by producing a series of short videos in each of the regions of Vermont with current users of public transit explaining how it makes a difference in their lives. These videos could be incorporated into the Go Vermont website and shown at Town Meetings when local funding proposals are being discussed.

Encourage All Transit Providers to Establish an “Ambassadors” Program that would be an ongoing initiative for all transit providers.



Outreach and Raising Awareness

Continue and Expand Partnerships and Activities to Raise Awareness by targeting reciprocal relationships with partner organizations.

Create Informational Brochure: “How Transit Works in Vermont” to be available in print form and online, this would explain the basics of public transit, including the types of services available, the roles of VTrans and the public and private transit operators, as well as partnerships with human service agencies and other non-profits.

Engage with Public Media to Spur Discussion and Raise Awareness



Next Generation Ride Scheduling

Using Technology to Move to Next Generation of Ride Scheduling by exploring and piloting a demand response microtransit model that can be expanded to cover all modes of public transit and to handle all funding programs.

1. Multi-program integration (Medicaid, E&D, client-pay, etc.)
2. Multi-resource integration (vans, taxis, volunteer drivers, bus routes, TNCs)



Long-term Concepts

Work with State, Regional and Local Entities toward Transit-Supportive Land Use by continuing to support two objectives in the LRTP:

1. Maintain and strengthen the vitality of Vermont's villages and downtowns.
2. Make transportation investments that promote active transportation and reduce social isolation.

Invest in Workforce Development to Maintain Transit Provider Staffing through the establishment of programs to train drivers and mechanics. The Vermont legislature should also consider changes to the law so that people who acquire commercial driver's license (CDL) credentials while serving in the military can easily qualify for a passenger transportation endorsement with an appropriate level of training.

Support Electrification of the Transit Fleet through the procurement of electric transit vehicles.



Thank you

- Draft Final report – November 2019
- Statewide presentations- late October-December 2019
- Public Comment period- November- December 2019
- Relevant reports, this presentation, and more, posted at:
vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP
- Please forward comments and questions to Jackie Cassino at: jackie.cassino@Vermont.gov