

VERGENNES PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES STUDY

Attachment 4: Land Use Visioning Technical Memorandum

October 2024



Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Background Information.....	4
2.1 MUNICIPAL PLANS.....	4
2.1.1 Addison Town Plan.....	4
2.1.2 Ferrisburgh Town Plan.....	5
2.1.3 New Haven Town Plan.....	5
2.1.4 Panton Town Plan	6
2.1.5 Vergennes Municipal Development Plan	6
2.1.6 Waltham Town Plan.....	7
2.1.7 Weybridge Town Plan	7
2.1.8 Addison County Regional Plan	8
2.2 ADDITIONAL ROUTE 22A CORRIDOR PLANNING	8
2.3 OTHER REGIONAL PLANNING INITIATIVES	9
2.3.1 Agricultural Preservation Planning	9
2.3.2 Community Economic Development Planning.....	9
2.4 LAND USE MAPS	9
2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT.....	17
3. Planning Commission Meetings	18
3.1 VERGENNES PLANNING COMMISSION	18
3.2 WALTHAM PLANNING COMMISSION	19
3.3 ADDISON PLANNING COMMISSION.....	19
3.4 FERRISBURGH PLANNING COMMISSION	20
3.5 PANTON PLANNING COMMISSION	20
3.6 NEW HAVEN PLANNING COMMISSION	21
3.7 WEYBRIDGE PLANNING COMMISSION	22
4. Public Survey.....	23
5. Land Use Visioning Workshops.....	25
5.1 ORANGE ROUTE	26
5.2 PINK AND BLUE ROUTES.....	28
5.3 PURPLE ROUTE	30
5.4 GREEN ROUTE.....	32
5.5 ALL ROUTES VIRTUAL WORKSHOP.....	33
6. Land Use Scenarios.....	35
6.1 LAND USES	35
6.2 ORANGE ROUTE	36
6.3 PINK AND BLUE ROUTES.....	38
6.4 GREEN ROUTE.....	40
6.5 PURPLE ROUTE	42
6.6 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	45
6.6.1 Road Use and Safety.....	45
6.6.2 Intersection Design	45
6.6.3 Environmental Considerations.....	45

Tables

Table 1-1	Secondary Screening Results.....	3
Table 4-1	Summary of Land Use Preference Surveys	24

Figures

Figure 1-1	Routes Recommended for Further Study	2
Figure 2-1	Planned Land Use Areas Map, 2014, Addison Town Plan.....	10
Figure 2-2	Planning Areas Map, 2016, Ferrisburgh Town Plan.....	11
Figure 2-3	Land Use Planning Areas Map, 2017, New Haven Town Plan.....	12
Figure 2-4	Future Land Use Map, 2011, Panton Town Plan.....	13
Figure 2-5	Land Use Map and Zoning Map, 2019, Vergennes Municipal Development Plan	14
Figure 2-6	Land Use Planning Regions Map, 2016, Waltham Town Plan	15
Figure 2-7	Zoning Districts Map, 2014, Weybridge Zoning Regulations	16
Figure 5-1	Orange Route Workshop Map	27
Figure 5-2	Pink and Blue Route Workshop Map	29
Figure 5-3	Purple Route Group Maps.....	31
Figure 5-4	Green Route Group Maps.....	33
Figure 5-5	Virtual Workshop Map (Orange Route).....	34
Figure 6-1	Orange Route Land Use Scenario	37
Figure 6-2	Pink and Blue Route Land Use Scenarios	39
Figure 6-3	Green Route Land Use Scenario	41
Figure 6-4	Purple Route Land Use Scenario – West and East Segments.....	43

1. Introduction

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), in cooperation with the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) and 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 (Route 22A) in downtown Vergennes while also enhancing the quality of life and economic vitality for residents in the city and surrounding towns. The Vergennes PEL Study will build upon previous planning efforts completed over the last 25 years that considered alternatives at different levels of detail. Improvements to the transportation system that could be constructed as a result of the Vergennes PEL Study and are federally funded would require FHWA approval under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Additional information and current and future reports can be found on the Vergennes PEL Study website (www.vergennespel.com).

Two of the primary outcomes of the Vergennes PEL Study are a purpose and need statement that receives federal and state resource agency concurrence and a list of reasonable transportation alternatives (concepts¹) that may move forward for evaluation in a future NEPA environmental review. NEPA compliance is required whenever a federal agency proposes an action, grants a permit, or agrees to fund or authorize any other entity to undertake an action that could affect environmental resources. Another important outcome of the PEL Study is the coordination of reasonable transportation concepts with local land use planning. The Vergennes PEL Study will also include an implementation plan, which will include next steps for the future NEPA environmental review, local land use planning recommendations, and an identification of project financing strategies.

Five possible routes have been advanced to a conceptual level of detail. Figure 1-1 presents the five routes, categorized by color, recommended for further study. A summary of the screening results is presented in the Table 1-1.

The screening process included soliciting feedback from local agencies, regional stakeholders, federal and state agencies, and the public. A variety of outreach methods were used including meetings, attending local events, and deploying an online survey.

¹ The term “concept” is used to describe the more conceptual level of the proposed improvement, versus “alternative,” which was used during the spring outreach.

Figure 1-1 Routes Recommended for Further Study

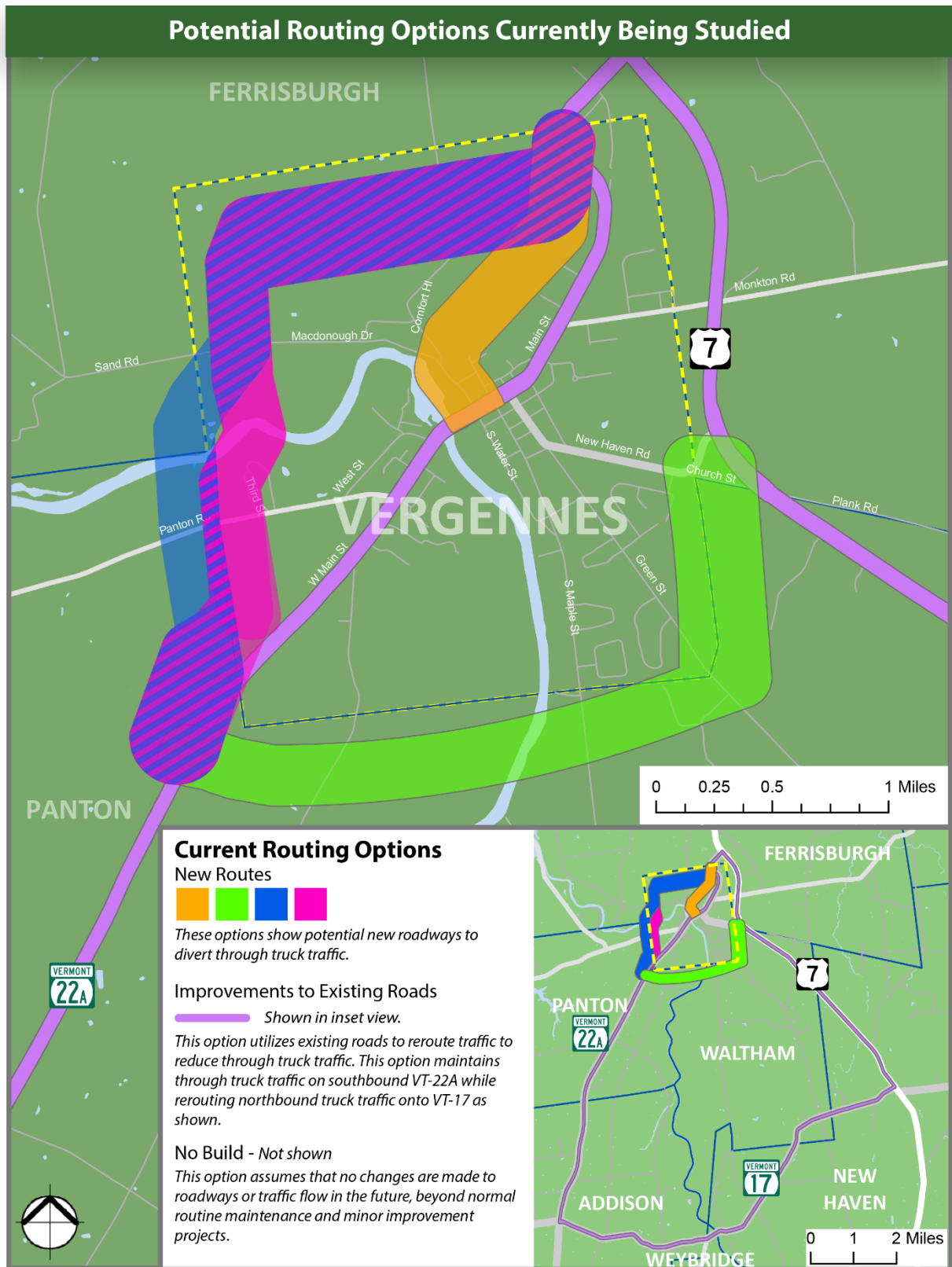


Table 1-1 Secondary Screening Results

ALTERNATIVE / CONCEPT NAME	MEETS PURPOSE AND NEED	SECONDARY SCREENING RESULTS
Purple Route – Route 17 Northbound/Route 22A Southbound	Yes	The Route 17 Northbound/Route 22A Southbound concept (Purple Route) meets the purpose and need and scored high during the initial screening.
Pink Route – Vergennes New Roadway (West Routing Option 3)	Yes	The Vergennes New Roadway West Routing Option 3 (Pink Route) meets the Purpose and Need and scored high during the initial screening. .
Blue Route – Vergennes-Panton New Roadway (West Routing Option 4)	Yes	The Vergennes New Roadway West Routing Option 4 (Blue Route) meets the Purpose and Need and scored high during the initial screening. .
Green Route – Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing)	Yes	The Panton-Vergennes-Waltham New Roadway (Southeast Routing) concept (Green Route) meets the Purpose and Need but scored lower than the Pink, Blue, and Purple Routes during the initial screening. During the secondary screening, potential environmental impacts (particularly to wetlands) were identified. However, a new Otter Creek crossing upstream of the Vergennes Falls may be less challenging than the proposed crossings downstream (Red, Blue, and Pink Routes) due to reduced waterway clearance requirements.
Orange Route – Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route	Yes	The Vergennes Main Street New Parallel Route concept (Orange Route) meets the purpose and need and scored high during the initial screening. The secondary screening identified extensive property impacts in the vicinity of the MacDonough Drive/Comfort Hill intersection.

As previously mentioned, an important outcome of the PEL Study is the coordination of reasonable transportation concepts with local land use planning. Therefore, a land use visioning process that included an organized series of meetings, workshops, and a public survey was conducted to develop land use visions that reflect individual or community goals and priorities. This Land Use Visioning Technical Memorandum describes the land use visioning process. The process afforded residents, business owners, local institutions, municipal planners, and other stakeholders the opportunity to express ideas about the future of their community and how the new routes could affect the surrounding land uses.

2. Background Information

Prior to undertaking the land use visioning public meeting and workshop, the study team reviewed the municipal plans and land use plans for the study area, as well as other regional planning initiatives. Significant planning and visioning work went into the preparation of municipal plans and regulatory bylaws and policies, prior to the initiation of this study. This background information was critical in helping the study team understand local approaches to municipal planning, as well as identifying specific areas for potential development or conservation.

2.1 MUNICIPAL PLANS

Municipal plans, including both individual town plans and the City of Vergennes Municipal Development Plan, were reviewed to understand land use guidelines for each, including how or where preservation and potential growth is prioritized. This review formed the foundation for each of the efforts associated with the land use visioning process, including discussions with each planning commission, the land use visioning workshops, and the preparation of the land use vision scenario maps. Key takeaways from each municipal plan are described below.

2.1.1 Addison Town Plan

The current Addison Town Plan was completed in 2016 and includes two key elements focused on the study area for Planning and Environment Linkages Study (PEL Study):

- Centralize development along Route 22A to defined village center areas to prevent development sprawl.
- Reimagine Route 22A as a corridor because in its current state it is not conducive to creating a “village” feel due to high traffic volumes, high speeds, and significant truck traffic

In addition, the Addison Town Plan includes several key themes highlighting the importance of:

- Agricultural land and farming
- Responsible use of local natural resources for clean industry and recreation
- Efficient community services that support quality of life, particularly public safety, health, and welfare
- Bylaws that support flexible and creative land use in response to site conditions and preservation goals
- Local business vitality that is supported by targeted community investment

- Land use planning that provides development opportunities while preserving agricultural, open, and forest lands, as well as scenic vistas and property values

2.1.2 Ferrisburgh Town Plan

The current Ferrisburgh Town Plan was completed in 2017 and includes one element focused on the study area:

- Within Ferrisburgh, Route 22A (north of Vergennes) is a major truck route.

The Ferrisburgh Town Plan includes several key themes, highlighting the importance of:

- Development that is consistent with the promotion of agriculture, environmental preservation, and recreation
- Safety for motor vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians
- Town history, including buildings, views, land uses, and traditions
- Non-residential uses that are compatible with the town's character
- An economically diverse range of housing options

2.1.3 New Haven Town Plan

The current New Haven Town Plan was completed in 2021 and includes one element focused on the study area:

- U.S. Route 7 (Route 7) and VT Route 17 (Route 17) are primary corridors through New Haven, and any increase of through truck traffic would impact quality of life.

The New Haven Town Plan includes several key themes, highlighting the importance of:

- The town's rural character, based in its traditional land uses, agriculture as the "backbone of the Town," and its "scenic and fragile" views, including the "view from the road"
- Adaptation to change, including new energy-efficient technologies, siting of structures, and conservation in a way that supports maintaining open space, economic vitality, views, and the town's character
- Community-focused housing and business opportunities that support a diverse cross-section of residents
- Balancing the rights of individual property owners with the needs of the community
- At-grade rail crossings that are "properly marked and maintained to limit their dangers."

2.1.4 Panton Town Plan

The current Panton Town Plan was completed in 2019 and includes a summary of past work associated with Route 22A, including:

- Documentation of traffic issues and concerns associated with truck traffic in downtown Vergennes
- A position neither supporting nor opposing previous work and its recommendations, further noting that “given current economics and state transportation policy, it is highly unlikely that a bypass will be considered any time in the near future”

The Panton Town Plan includes several key themes, highlighting the importance of:

- The town's rural character, based on its established land uses and scenic views
- A healthy lakeshore and waterways, supported by wastewater treatment and runoff management strategies
- Adaptation to change, including new energy technologies, in a way that does not alter existing open spaces, views, or the town's character
- A thoughtful planning approach that upholds historic development patterns, clustered in the village center
- Diverse housing and business opportunities that support a healthy community
- Recreation and transportation connectivity within the Town

2.1.5 Vergennes Municipal Development Plan

The current Vergennes Municipal Development Plan was completed in 2020 and highlights several recommendations that are pertinent to the study area, including:

- Supporting and pursuing relationships with neighboring municipalities
- Support for the next planning phases of the Vergennes Economic Corridor
- Improving and expanding pedestrian and bicycle circulation
- Working with the VTrans to re-route truck traffic away from the historic downtown area
- Maintaining or improving current level of service on all roads in Vergennes
- Working to support rail service improvements by state and federal agencies and the private sector

The Vergennes Municipal Development Plan includes several key themes, highlighting the importance of:

- Growth and development that recognizes the natural features of the land
- Access to public parks, trails, bike paths, playgrounds, and other facilities
- A range of housing options, including owner-occupied, rental, affordable, and manufactured units
- Small to mid-size industrial or commercial businesses that are compatible with the city's character
- Accessible public services and facilities

2.1.6 Waltham Town Plan

The current Waltham Town Plan was completed in 2015 and includes two elements focused on the study area:

- Route 7 and Route 17 are primary corridors through Waltham and an increase of through truck traffic would impact quality of life; and
- "Future increases in traffic volumes, the rerouting truck traffic along Route 17 out of Vergennes, or the creation of inefficient land use patterns could negatively impact road conditions within Waltham."

The Waltham Town Plan includes several key themes, highlighting the importance of:

- Planning that addresses multiple public interests together: public facilities, preservation of natural features and scenic character, recreation, housing, energy, etc.
- Safe and efficient transportation systems that support desired land use patterns and economic opportunities
- Protection of views as a feature of community character
- Siting any new development in existing settlement areas
- Accessible public services and facilities

2.1.7 Weybridge Town Plan

The current Weybridge Town Plan was completed in 2019 and includes one element focused on the study area: Roads located in surrounding communities, including Route 17, are vital to the needs of Weybridge residents.

The Weybridge Town Plan includes several key themes, highlighting the importance of:

- The town's rural character
- Preservation of farms and open landscapes

- Promoting a healthy balance between traditional land uses, natural features, and changes in energy, technology, employment, and housing trends
- Bylaws that support flexible land uses in response to site conditions and preservation goals
- Growth that is consistent with the preservation of existing character and the efficient provision of public services

2.1.8 Addison County Regional Plan

The Addison County Regional Plan was updated in 2022 and includes the following guiding principles that will inform the PEL Study:

- Route 22A appears in the VTrans High Crash Location Report (2012–2016), including concerns with increased truck traffic (as noted in Table 4 of the Addison County Regional Plan).
- Route 22A is identified as an important link between New York State Route 4 and Chittenden County, Vermont.
- Previously studied alternatives for a truck bypass would involve high costs and impacts, whereas the county regional plan focuses on existing corridors as a primary alternative.
- Short-term (1 to 3 years) recommendations for Route 22A include traffic calming, intersection improvements, and exploration and creation of “truck routes that address concerns of Vergennes and neighboring communities.”
- Mid-term (4 to 8 years) recommendations for Route 22A include a review of high crash locations along Route 22A.
- Long-term (longer than 8 years) recommendations include a review of needs at the intersection of Route 22A, and Panton Road and the advancement of corridor improvements outlined in the Western Corridor Plan.
- Towns should develop hazard mitigation plans that address potential hazards from materials transported through the community.

2.2 ADDITIONAL ROUTE 22A CORRIDOR PLANNING

VTrans has allocated funds for the following projects to address safety and maintenance deficiencies along Route 22A south of Addison:

- Resurfacing 15 miles from the town of Fair Haven municipal boundary through Orwell to VT Route 73 (Route 73)
- Reconstruction from West Haven heading north to Orwell with widened travel lanes and shoulders

- Reclamation project from Orwell starting at Route 73 heading north to Addison Four Corners to rehabilitate a portion of the subbase and provide longer-term benefits within the existing footprint

More information on these projects can be found at <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/vt22a>

2.3 OTHER REGIONAL PLANNING INITIATIVES

2.3.1 Agricultural Preservation Planning

The State of Vermont is developing maps of Vermont's agricultural land base and production capacity, including geographic data about predicted climate change impacts, aggregation and distribution infrastructure, and regional dietary needs. The intention is to disseminate this information to communities to help inform land use decisions and prioritize use of state funding and incentives. Benefits of this work will accrue to local economies, as well as to soil and watershed health. Along with guidance from the ACRPC, mapping information prepared by the state may inform updates to municipal plans, regulatory documents, and conversations with property owners about farmland preservation.

2.3.2 Community Economic Development Planning

The Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development has several tools for guiding business planning within the study area. For example, its online Sites and Buildings tool allows users to find optimal business locations using real estate, demographic, and industry analysis to find potential properties for business locations or to obtain demographic and business data for a particular selected site.

2.4 LAND USE MAPS

Each of the seven communities in the study area takes a unique approach to documenting current land uses and the vision for future land uses. The land use maps for each community helped to guide the development of the land use visioning scenarios. Generally, they exhibit a desire for the preservation of rural or agricultural character, encourage development in existing developed areas (including the City of Vergennes or along major roadways), and are intended to preserve open spaces for wildlife habitat/corridors, and flood risk management, and open viewsheds.

- Addison (Planned Land Use Areas Map - Figure 2-1)
- Ferrisburgh (Planning Areas Map - Figure 2-2)
- New Haven (Land Use Planning Areas Map - Figure 2-3)
- Panton (Future Land Use Map - Figure 2-4)
- Vergennes (Land Use and Zoning Map - Figure 2-5)
- Waltham (Land Use Planning Regions - Figure 2-6)
- Weybridge (Zoning Districts Map - Figure 2-7)

Planned Land Use Areas
Town of Addison

Legend:

- Village Neighborhood Commercial Area
- Shoreland Recreation Area
- Low Density Residential/Agricultural Area
- Shoreland Residential Area
- Conservation Area
- Flood Hazard Overlay
- Residential Structures (2013)

Sources:
Planned Land Use Districts:
As reviewed by the Planning Commission, 2006/2008.
Tax Parcel #: 2011, Town of Addison and
Cartographic Associates, Littleton, NH

ACRPC 1/2014

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Addison County
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Figure 2-2 Planning Areas Map, 2016, [Ferrisburgh Town Plan](#)

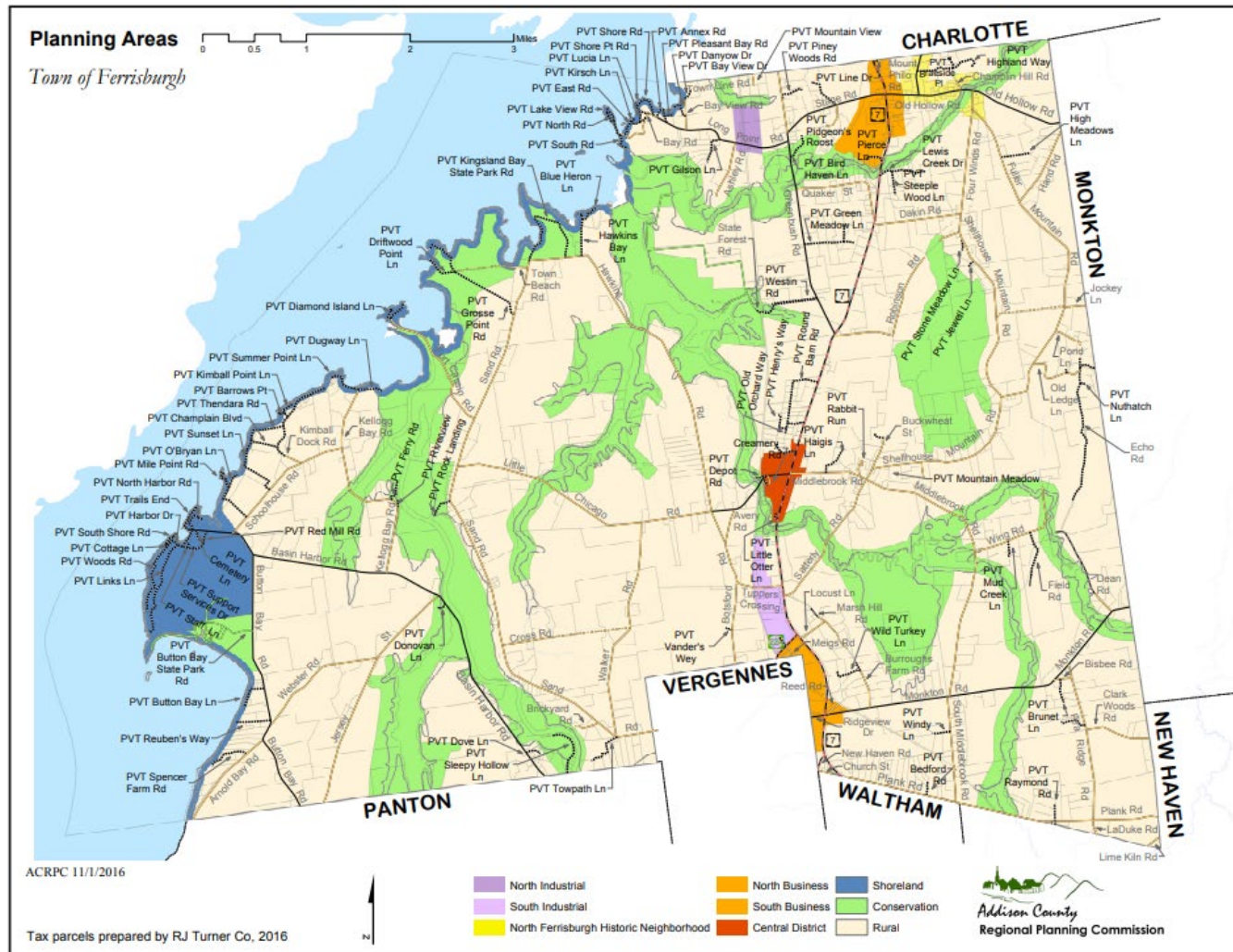


Figure 2-3 Land Use Planning Areas Map, 2017, [New Haven Town Plan](#)

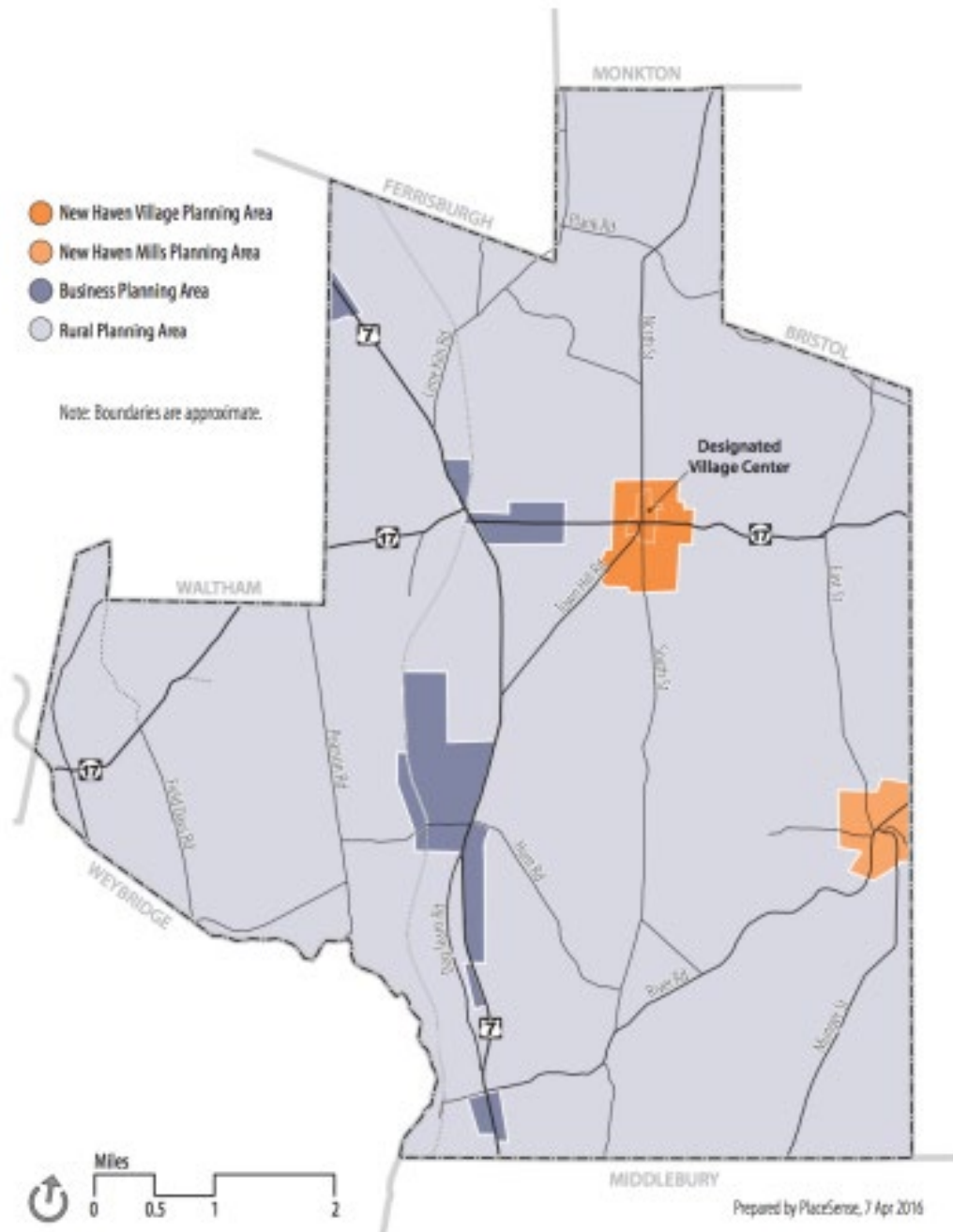


Figure 28. LAND USE PLANNING AREAS MAP

(Note: Base map omits the Town Trail and a small segment of the North South Highway; see VTRANS map for these elements, and Note Regarding Maps elsewhere in this Plan. Potential Municipal District is not indicated, but is intended to comprise the

Figure 2-4 Future Land Use Map, 2011, [Panton Town Plan](#)

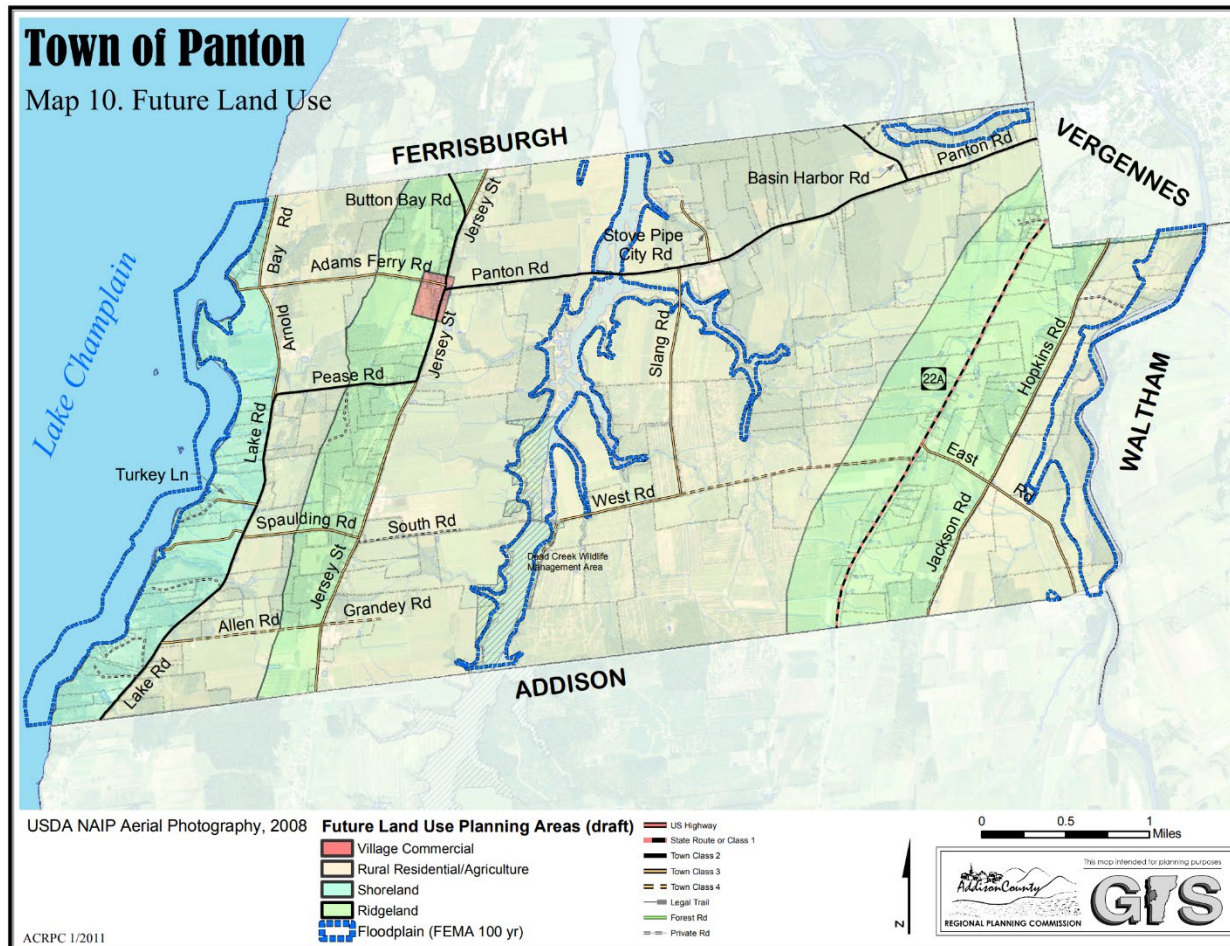
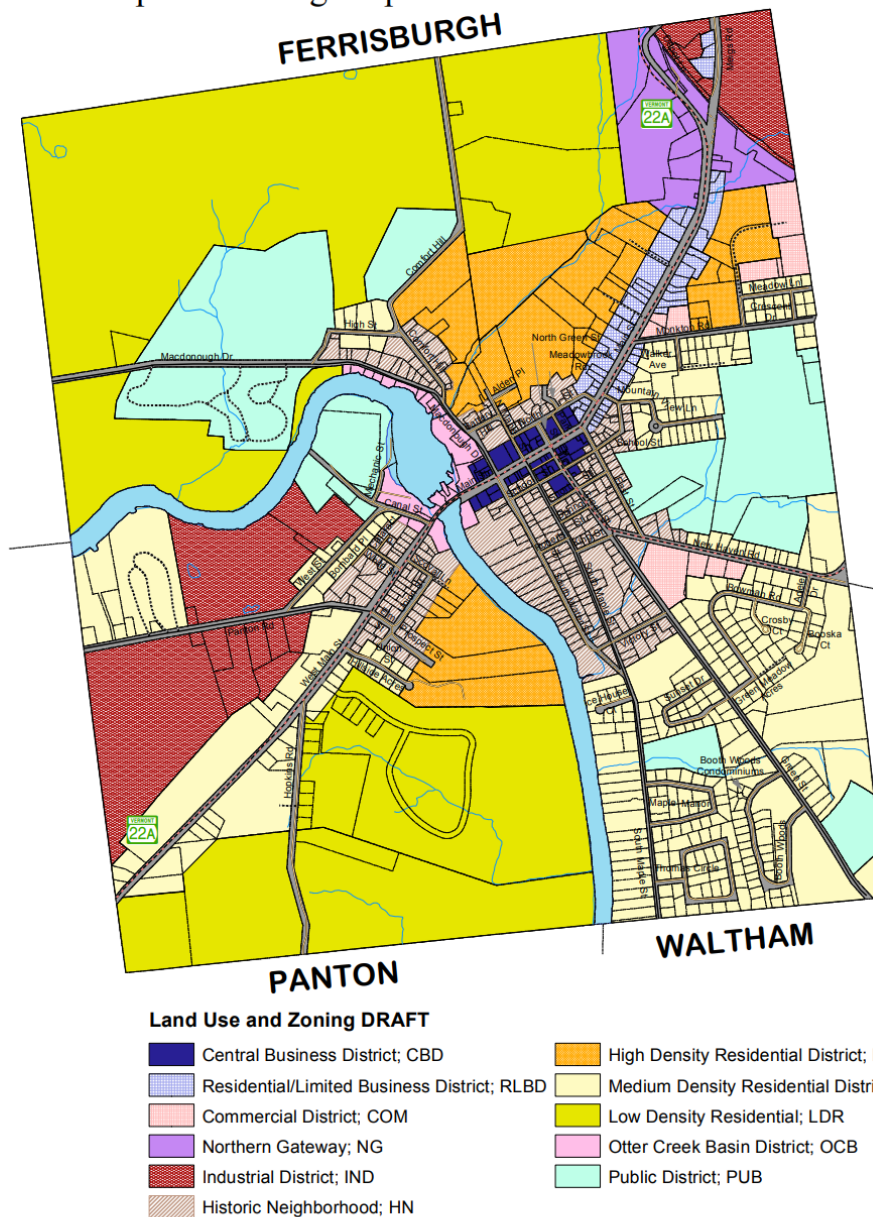


Figure 2-5 Land Use Map and Zoning Map, 2019, [Vergennes Municipal Development Plan](#)

City of Vergennes

Land Use Map and Zoning Map



Sources:

Zoning Districts: DRAFT under Planning Commission Review; July, 2019

Zoning Districts: Adopted by the City Council, Sept 25, 2018.

Land Use Map: Adopted under the Municipal Development Plan by the City Council, Sept 30, 2014; updated 7/18/2017.

Parcel Boundaries: Prepared under State contract, 2017.

See Zoning Administrator for current information.

ACRPC 12/2019

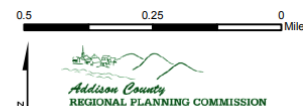


Figure 2-6 Land Use Planning Regions Map, 2016, [Waltham Town Plan](#)

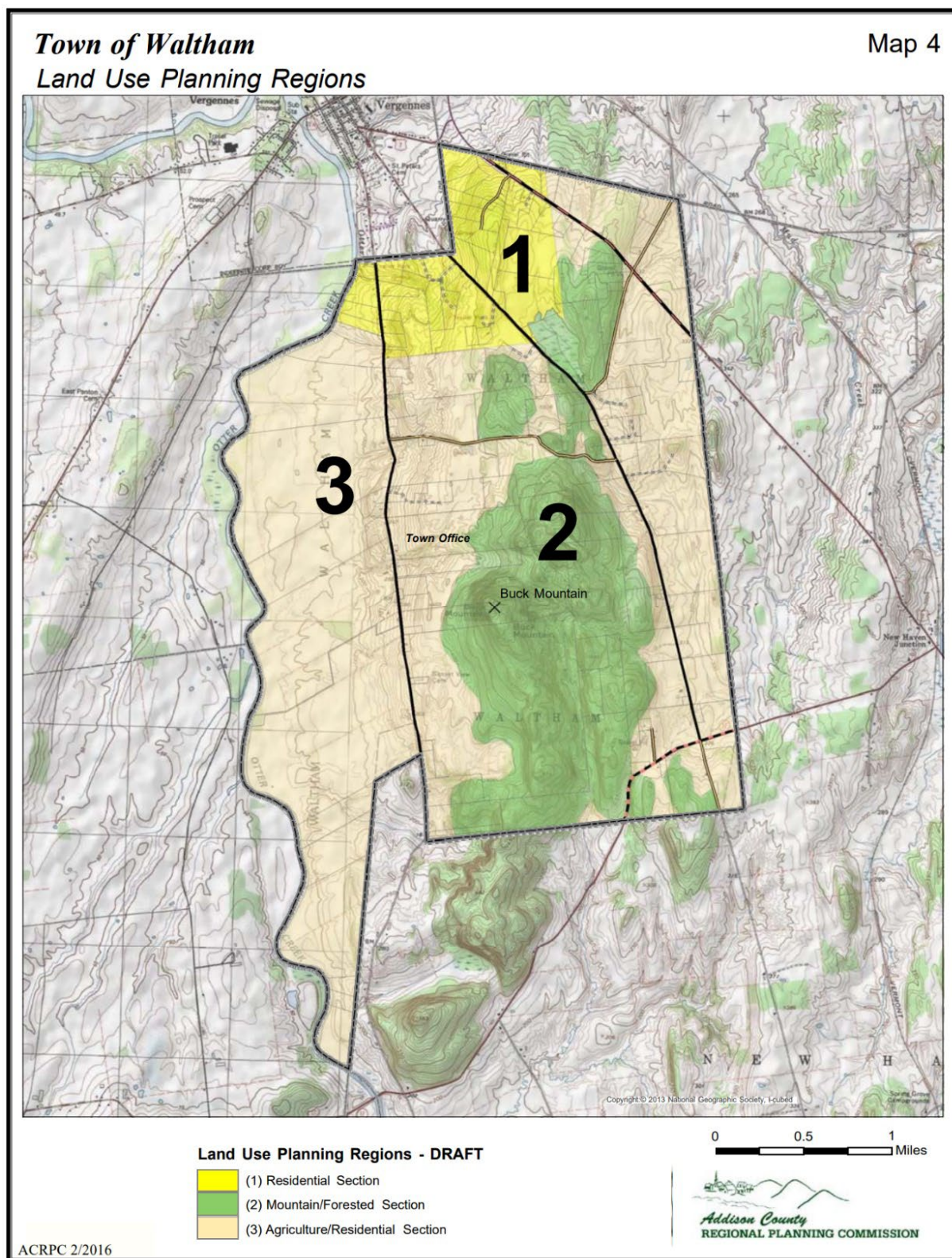
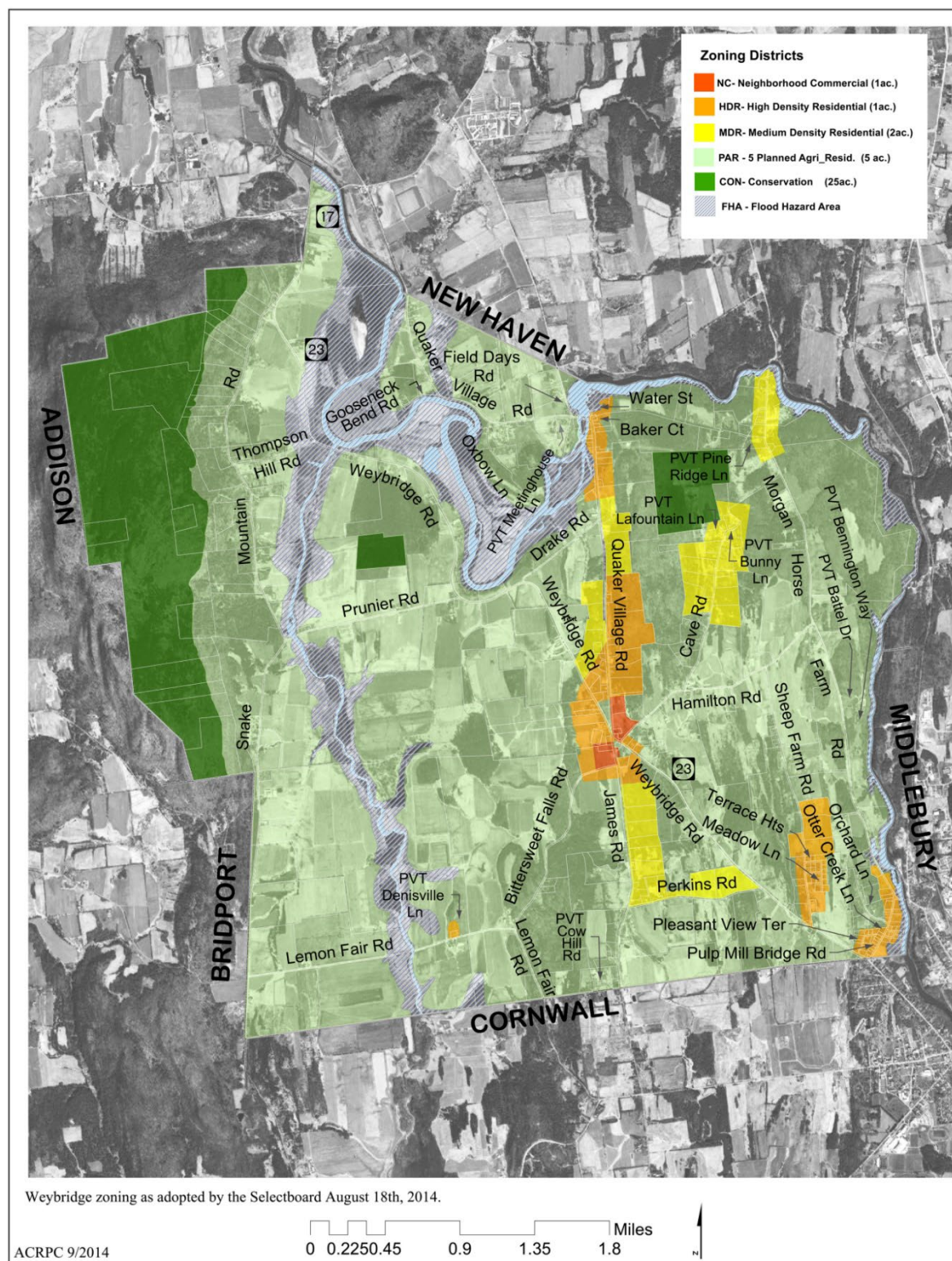


Figure 2-7 Zoning Districts Map, 2014, Weybridge [Zoning Regulations](#)



2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

Natural resources and features influence the cultural, social, and environmental landscape of the region, offering economic value, scenic beauty, and recreational opportunities. The ACRPC has adopted natural resource goals and policies in its Regional Plan and collaborates with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and community groups to develop resource use plans and guidelines, including water, agricultural soils, wetlands, wildlife habitat and corridors, and forests. Key considerations that define the environmental context include the following:

- The study area lies within the Otter Creek basin, which is the second largest watershed in Vermont, draining an area of approximately 936 square miles. Most of the sub-basins in Addison County flow into Otter Creek, which in turn flows into Lake Champlain. Additionally, there are several sub-basins in the region that drain directly to Lake Champlain.
- Agriculture is a driving economic and cultural force in the study area and plays an important role in patterns of community and social development. Due to a multitude of factors, the dividing of farming lands over times has led to larger intact parcels of farming land are highly valued and often sought after.
- The protection of wetlands is essential to maintaining the ecological functions of the area. Wetlands provide habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals, including threatened and endangered species. Many wetland areas have historically been altered to support land development or agriculture. Additionally, excessive runoff from agriculture activities may cause siltation or result in impacts to surrounding wetlands from excessive nutrients and pesticides.
- According to the ACRPC, more than half of Addison County's landscape is forested. The study area's forests, and the resources and services they provide, are essential to the high quality of life enjoyed by area residents.
- the study area has a range of archeological, historic, and cultural resources. According to the ACRPC, approximately 60 buildings or sites within the region are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as three nationally recognized historic districts in Bristol, Middlebury and Vergennes.

3. Planning Commission Meetings

Following a review of municipal planning and zoning for each municipality within the study area, the study team visited each community's planning commissions during regularly held public meetings in September through November 2023. The purposes of these visits were to:

- Provide an overview about the PEL Study, its Purpose and Need, and the evaluation of potential routes
- Discuss the background evaluations, with a focus on receiving locally driven feedback on the assumptions developed by the study team
- Promote the visioning public workshops
- Obtain additional feedback from planning commission members and meeting attendees

The following sections describe each meeting and summarize the input provided by each planning commission.

3.1 VERGENNES PLANNING COMMISSION

The study team attended the Vergennes Planning Commission meeting on September 11, 2023. The meeting was held both in person and virtually, and six members of the planning commission were present. Following the study team's presentation, the planning commission provided the following input:

- Vergennes functions as the "downtown" for surrounding communities, with businesses and services that are not otherwise available or desirable within those communities.
- It is critical to preserve and promote Main Street's economic and social vitality.
- Residents of Vergennes and surrounding communities have expressed a desire to access goods and services in Vergennes and, to a lesser extent, in Ferrisburgh.
- A new route could benefit Vergennes by offering connections to new diverse housing options, and increasing walkability, including to the train station, as well as adding transportation and emergency services redundancy via an additional bridge over Otter Creek.
- If there were to be a new route, the planning commission expressed concern about potential issues associated with speeding traffic.

3.2 WALTHAM PLANNING COMMISSION

The study team attended the Waltham Planning Commission meeting on September 18, 2023. The meeting was held in person, and five members of the planning commission were present.

Following the study team's presentation, the planning commission provided the following input:

- The planning commission emphasized the importance of inclusivity in the community outreach process.
- The proximity of McKnight Lane (a mobile home community off South Maple Street) and Champlain Valley Christian School (on Church Street at New Haven Road) may create design challenges for the Green Route.
- Concern was expressed that the Green Route could impact areas in the northern part of the town
- A member of the public, with experience driving a tractor-trailer, expressed concern about the intersection of Route 17 and Route 7—in particular, the grade following the turn from Route 17 eastbound to Route 7 northbound.
- The planning commission supported non-motorized connectivity as a useful topic to consider in the visioning workshops.

3.3 ADDISON PLANNING COMMISSION

The study team attended the Addison Planning Commission meeting on October 16, 2023. The meeting was held in person, and three members of the planning commission were present.

Following the study team's presentation, the planning commission provided the following input:

- The Four Corners area is zoned "Village Neighborhood Commercial"—this is considered Addison's "downtown."
- Cyclists, hikers, and birders travel to and through Addison, and facilities for each would be supported at the Four Corners and elsewhere.
- Additional grocery shopping opportunities would be supported by Addison residents, being closer than Vergennes/Ferrisburgh or Middlebury where they have to travel now for groceries.
- Addison Town Hall (southwest corner of the Four Corners intersection) will be rehabilitated, including the historic building, monument, and fence that are more than 200 years old.
- Traffic backs up for 2 hours along Route 17 during Field Days.
- Deer crossings are frequent through the area, particularly along Route 17.
- Trucks turning from Route 22A northbound onto Route 17 eastbound may need to encroach into the oncoming (westbound) lane of Route 17.

- Zoning regulations in Addison have been updated recently, and an update to the Addison Town Plan is to be completed by December 2024.

3.4 FERRISBURGH PLANNING COMMISSION

The study team attended the Ferrisburgh Planning Commission meeting on October 16, 2023. The meeting was held in person and virtually, and six members of the planning commission were present. Following the study team's presentation, the planning commission provided the following input:

- There is a general desire within Ferrisburgh to reduce the appearance of sprawl, while promoting cluster development.
- Ferrisburgh's section of Route 7 is a designated part of the "Lake Champlain Byway." The Ferrisburgh Town Plan affirms that "planning and policy will determine how well Route 7 can offer safe services and amenities to both visitors and residents, while maintaining its unique sense of place, with views to the mountains and farm fields, historic structures, and safe access to successful local businesses."
- Most bicyclists avoid Route 22A and Pantown Road, instead choosing other routes. A new roadway should be designed from the outset with bicyclist safety in mind.
- An additional bridge over Otter Creek would be a benefit to emergency services.
- The Blue Route would impact Ferrisburgh on the west side of Vergennes, as the bridge crossing would be sited in and near the town. However, the planning commission also noted concerns with impacts to farm properties (aesthetic, functional and property rights concerns).
- Any proposed zoning changes that correspond with the construction of a new route must be consistent with the town's municipal plan.
- Ferrisburgh received funding via the 2022 RAISE grant cycle in order to explore Route 22A/Route 7/Monkton Road. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) will support increased residential density in the vicinity of the train station, including improved walkability and other public/private amenities.

3.5 PANTON PLANNING COMMISSION

The study team attended the Panton Planning Commission meeting on November 9, 2023. The meeting was held in person and virtually, and five members of the planning commission were present. Following the study team's presentation, the planning commission provided the following input:

- The planning commission indicated general support of the PEL Study, without supporting particular routes.
- There is a belief in the community that Panton has disproportionately less voting strength than Vergennes.
- Rising from the belief in the community that Panton has disproportionately less voting strength than Vergennes, there is a desire to change the makeup of decision-making and advisory groups to this PEL Study in order to provide smaller communities such as Panton greater relative voting strength.
- Residents of Panton do not want trucks on the rural roads in their town and suggested that solutions be explored with the Trucking Association of New York, in addition to the Vermont Truck and Bus Association.
- There is a local perception that the Blue and Pink Routes could cut Panton residents off from Vergennes, if it is a limited access highway with few intersections.
- The Pink Route is very close to the Otter Creek Mobile Home Park.
- Farm traffic must be considered in any roadway design; there is a lot of farm traffic along Jersey, Spaulding, and other roads.
- There is a concern that a new bridge could increase noise levels in Panton.
- There is a desire to hold hearings about potential environmental impacts.

3.6 NEW HAVEN PLANNING COMMISSION

The study team attended the New Haven Planning Commission meeting on November 13, 2023. The meeting was held in person and virtually, and five members of the planning commission were present. Following the study team's presentation, the planning commission provided the following input:

- Overall, the planning commission indicated that they did not want their community to be impacted just so trucks can drive more easily from Albany to Montreal.
- "Dark skies" lighting, which minimizes light pollution through design, is important to New Haven.
- Any new or improved route should have a shared-use path.
- The northbound/southbound split of the Purple Route makes sense, balancing impacts.
- At New Haven Junction (the intersection of Route 7 and Route 17), there is a need to manage traffic, emergency services, and the ducks and geese in the wetlands adjacent to the south.

- Sight lines are critical along the route; there are some challenging locations along Route 17, including the intersection at Hallock Road.
- The planning commission requested clearer guidance on how the Purple Route split would be enforced.
- The New Haven Conservation Commission has prepared a township-wide Wildlife Crossing Study.

3.7 WEYBRIDGE PLANNING COMMISSION

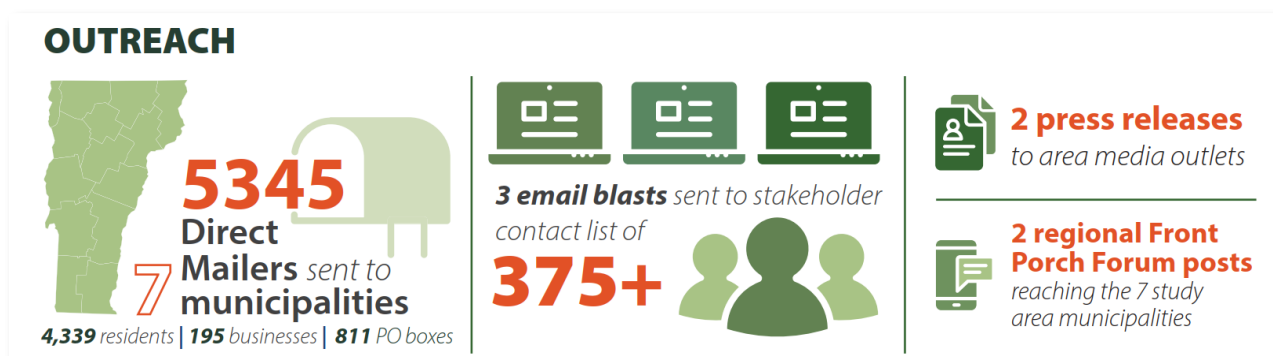
The study team attended the Weybridge Planning Commission meeting on November 14, 2023. The meeting was held in person and virtually, and four members of the planning commission were present. Following the study team's presentation, the planning commission provided the following input:

- General concerns were voiced about how changes to travel patterns and safety would impact daily travel for residents.
- Within Weybridge, only Weybridge Road/VT Route 23 (Route 23) connects directly to Route 17. However, residents of Weybridge use other connector roads that intersect with Route 17.
- The way that sound (such as truck air brakes) travels within the Otter Creek watershed creates a situation where noise along Route 17 that may be emanating from other communities is still heard in Weybridge.
- Residents of Weybridge use bicycle routes (e.g., Green Street) that connect with Route 17 in other towns.
- The intersection of Route 23/Weybridge Road and Route 17 is dangerous, with poor sight lines and challenging geometry.
- Safety is a concern at Burnham Road, where Lazy Breeze Farm and Burger Buggy are located.
- Shoulders on Route 17 are a challenge for bicyclists due to narrowing in some areas.
- Where possible, any concept should consider including off-road multi-use paths.

In response to a planning commission question regarding hourly truck traffic through Vergennes, the study team noted that average volumes vary throughout the day, with a peak during midday (35 trucks) and volumes generally less than 10 per hour overnight.

4. Public Survey

The study team conducted a public survey from August 14 to September 26, 2023, to solicit public input on the potential route options, existing conditions, and future land use preferences should a new route be constructed. The survey was promoted through over 5,000 direct mailers, about 400 direct emails, two press releases, and two Front Porch Forum posts, as well as via in-person events, through municipalities and local organizations, and the PEL Study website. Below is an infographic showing some of the outreach data.



There were 903 responses to the public survey, including 901 responses submitted through the online platform and two submitted as paper surveys. Survey respondents were older, on average, than the general population of the study area, with the largest group of respondents over the age of 65 (32%). The survey received the smallest number of responses from those aged 17 to 24 (1%). About one-third of respondents either lived (34%) or worked (30%) in Vergennes, and 12% of respondents lived outside the study area. Based on population data from the 2020 Census, survey respondents overrepresent the resident population of Vergennes, Panton, and Waltham, and they underrepresent the resident population of Ferrisburgh, Addison, New Haven, and Weybridge.

The average rating among survey respondents for each route option is presented below:

- Blue Route (3.32 out of 5),
- Pink Route (3.24 out of 5)
- No Build options (2.48 out of 5)
- Green Route (2.43 out of 5)
- Purple Route (2.29 out of 5)
- Orange Route (1.87 out of 5)

Survey respondents were asked about their land use preferences in three areas that would be affected by a new route. Respondents provided their preferences for keeping land use as it is today, adding more housing, and/or adding more commercial or industrial land use.

Results are summarized in Table 4-1. Overall, respondents preferred to add housing in all locations and to add commercial or industrial land use around a new route intersection with Route 22A.

Table 4-1 Summary of Land Use Preference Surveys

AFFECTED LAND USE AREA	ROUTES			PREFERENCES ON HOUSING	PREFERENCES ON COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL LAND USE
	PINK	BLUE	ORANGE		
New route northern intersection with Route 22A near police station	•	•	•	Add housing*	Add commercial or industrial land use^
New route intersection with Panton Road	•	•		Add housing*	Keep land use as it is today^
New route through Northern Vergennes	•	•		Add housing*	Keep land use as it is today^

* Strong preference; ^Slight preference.

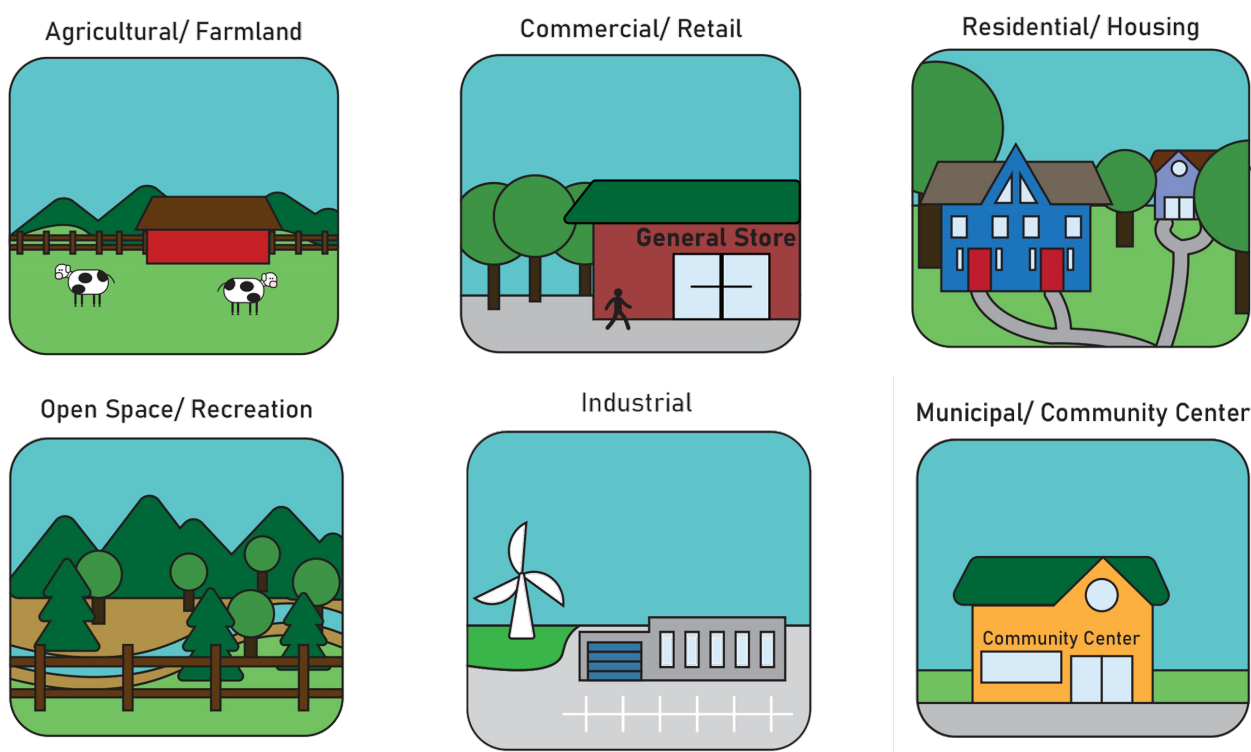
Respondents also had the opportunity to provide open-ended comments; there were 2,119 in total. The study team categorized these comments by sentiment (positive, negative, or neutral), theme (e.g., noise, traffic congestion), route option, and impact area (e.g., a specific street or municipality).

The majority of the open-ended comments (63%) were negative in sentiment. Of the remainder, the routes receiving the highest proportion of positive comments were the Blue Route (41%) and Pink Route (40%), while the Orange Route (8%), Green Route (14%), No Build option (21%), and Purple Route (27%) received the lowest proportion of positive comments.

More than 100 comments referred to the impacts of the Green Route on residents and residential areas. The Purple and Orange Routes received a relatively high number of comments related to safety and circulation of trucks, road geometry (alignment, grade, width, lanes), and traffic congestion. Comments about businesses/economic vitality and noise were relatively evenly distributed across the route options.

5. Land Use Visioning Workshops

The study team developed a workshop program that included a presentation and interactive mapping exercise used at each of five land use visioning workshops. Four workshops were held in person within study area communities in December 2023, and a fifth was held virtually in January 2024. The format of the workshop included a presentation of the PEL Study Purpose and Need, the overall PEL Study process, visualizations of the proposed route/s, “land” and “use” examples, and an overview of the mapping exercise. Participants then engaged in a collaborative group process that allowed them to identify locations along potential new routes where six land use types could be appropriate, including:



Existing and potential bicycle or pedestrian facilities were also discussed, recognizing opportunities for active transportation and recreation connections along each of the proposed concepts.

In addition to supporting discussion of future land use options, the workshops also offered participants the opportunity to supply the study team with local information that could be useful in other parts of the study, including the forthcoming evaluation task and design refinement. Some examples of the information shared are safety concerns, wildlife habitat and crossings, the presence of natural features such as wetlands or exposed bedrock, and current motorized and non-motorized travel patterns, including those of farm vehicles or bicycles.

Highlights and takeaways from each of the land use visioning workshops are presented below, organized by route. The highlights and takeaways from the virtual workshop route discussions have been integrated with those from each in-person workshop. More detailed meeting notes, including all annotated maps, are available on the study website at <https://www.vergennespel.com/public-outreach>.

5.1 ORANGE ROUTE

The Orange Route land use visioning workshop was held on December 4, 2023, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Vergennes Opera House in Vergennes. The workshop was attended by 45 participants. Figure 5-1 presents one of the maps from the workshop. Workshop highlights are listed below.



- accommodate bicycle and pedestrian traffic.
- The intersection of MacDonough Drive and Main Street is near existing residential areas; design this to minimize impacts to residents.
- Add a connector road or roads between Comfort Hill and the proposed route.
- There was less support for commercial uses along most of the Orange Route (as opposed to housing and open space/recreation), so as to not draw economic activity away from Main Street.
- Maintain a rural context, with two lanes surrounded by undeveloped green space on either side.
- Concerns regarding noise, especially if the Orange Route is constructed at a higher elevation than Main Street.
- Concerns about adding a full traffic signal at the intersection of Main Street and MacDonough Drive could create backups on Route 22A northbound approaching the intersection.
- concern regarding the lack of a secondary bridge, which is seen as a positive of the Pink, Blue and Green Routes.
- The current geometry of MacDonough Drive poses challenges to truck travel.
- Wildlife impacts and the protection of habitat corridors and crossings should be considered.
- The soil stability and infrastructure of MacDonough Drive is a concern, as a natural gas pipeline was recently installed along this road.

- A rail trail has been explored through this area previously and should be considered if the Orange Route is advanced.
- Conserved land to the north should be retained for agriculture.
- Concern for the archeological and historic zoning district overlays of the area.
- Otter Creek, below the falls, is considered a recreational “gem.” Any design of a potential Orange Route should maintain or facilitate public access to and from the creek.
- The area along the eastern side of where the proposed route enters MacDonough Drive is part of Vergennes’ historic district.

Figure 5-1 Orange Route Workshop Map



5.2 PINK AND BLUE ROUTES

The Pink and Blue Route land use visioning workshop was held on December 11, 2023, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Vergennes Opera House in Vergennes. The workshop was attended by approximately 40 participants.

A poll of attendees indicated that most were residents of Vergennes, with smaller numbers from Panton or Ferrisburgh. A majority of attendees indicated that they work in Vergennes, with a smaller number working elsewhere.

Figure 5-2 presents one of the maps from the workshop. Workshop highlights are listed below.

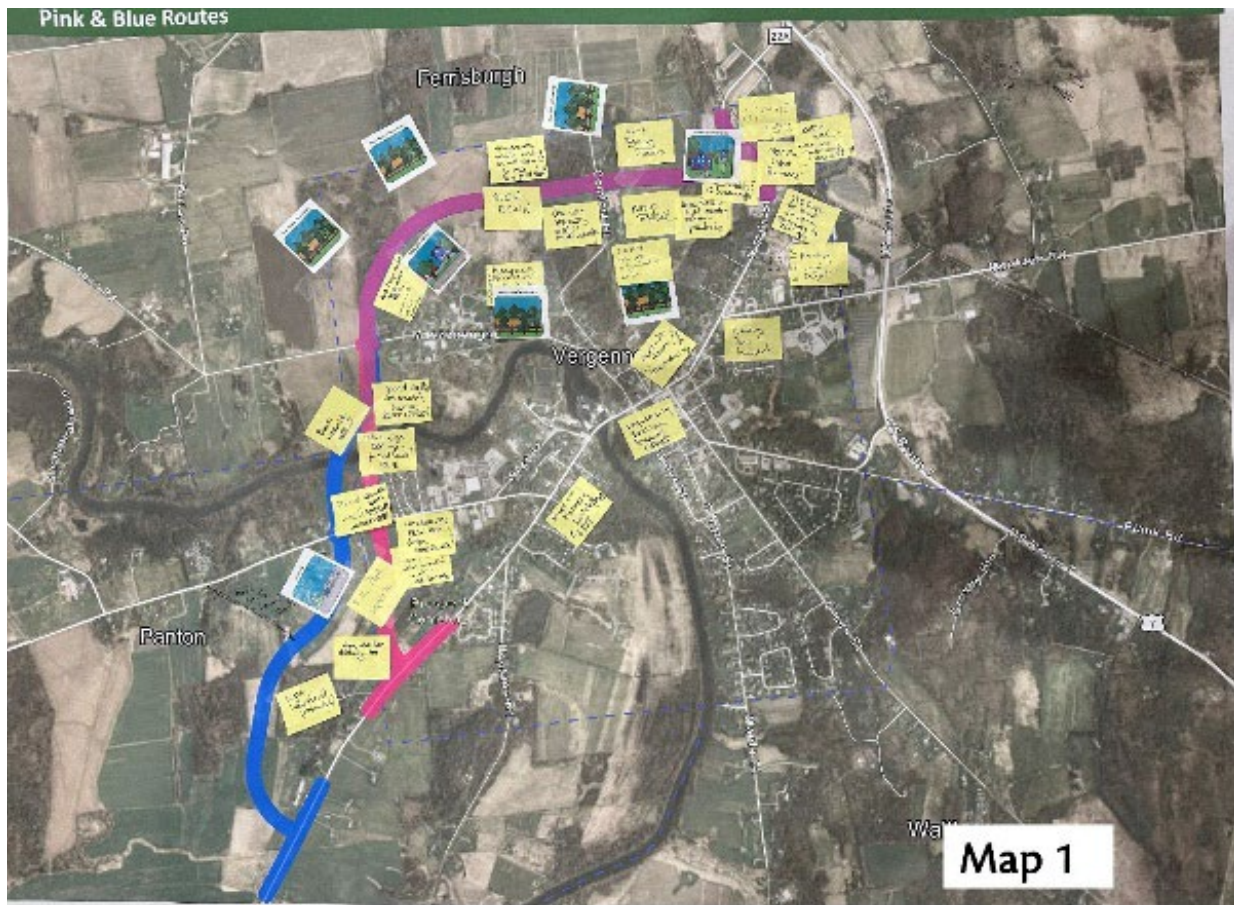


- Maintain existing agricultural lands and open spaces as much as possible, adding pedestrian and bicycle connections along the route and developing residential/housing or light industrial uses at intersections to build up what already exists.
- Economic development along the new route, needs to be done correctly. The routes access multiple housing opportunities.
- Expanding the tax base will help the town. There is interest in additional industrial uses near Collins Aerospace along Panton Road.
- There is an active wildlife corridor in the northern segment of the Pink and Blue Routes.
- Multi-use paths should be constructed on a Pink or Blue Route, connecting with existing paths and trails. The area southwest of Main Street is popular with bicyclists and supports business activity along Main Street. Overall, any new route should support all modes of travel, not just trucks and cars.
- maintain access for farm vehicles; a new route may improve access/transportation for farmers.
- Concern about the proximity of the Pink Route to the Otter Creek Mobile Home Park.
- New bridge construction associated with the Pink or Blue Routes could support recreational use of Otter Creek.
- development along the southern segment of the Blue Route would be difficult as there are a lot of wetlands, clay soils, and agricultural lands. the Blue Route places a burden on

Ferrisburgh and Panton residents, while the Pink Route is almost completely within Vergennes.

- Participants stated that they understand that they may not have control over each individual property and what is done with it, but realize that their recommendations can help inform future decision-making.
- Crossing through or near the cemetery would be strongly opposed, particularly by family members with loved ones there.
- The impact of a new road on the Comfort Hill Kennels should be considered.
- Intersections with existing routes like Panton Road or N. Main Street would be great locations for walkable, higher-density development. Development at these locations could be served by the town's water supply.
- Farms should not be divided. Limiting development to existing intersections would reduce potential farm impacts.
- The Job Corps campus could be developed more fully. The land around it is a resource.

Figure 5-2 Pink and Blue Route Workshop Map



5.3 PURPLE ROUTE

The Purple Route land use visioning workshop was held on December 12, 2023, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at Tourterelle Restaurant and Inn in New Haven. The workshop was attended by approximately 40 participants.

A poll of attendees indicated that most were residents of the communities along the Purple Route segment of Route 17, including Addison, Weybridge, Waltham, and New Haven. The work locations of attendees were from several communities, though many attendees did not respond to this question.

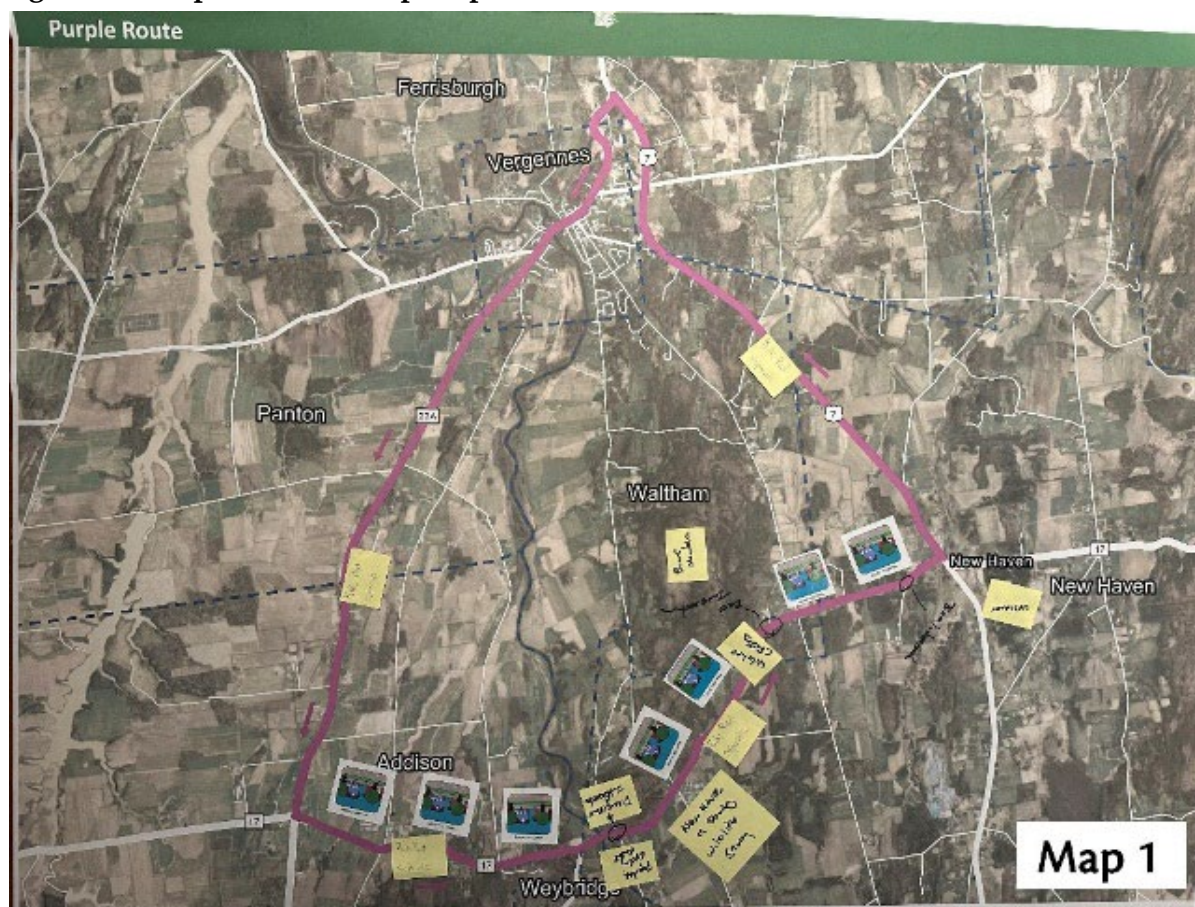


Figure 5-3 presents one of the maps from the workshop. Workshop highlights are listed below.

- little support for significant land use changes other than for a separated bicycle facility along Route 17.
- Commercial or retail developments should be focused on the ends at Route 17 or Route 7.
- New Haven is preparing a wildlife study, and residents are aware of wildlife crossings along the route.
- The major destination along this route is the Addison County Fair and Field Days; which is surrounded by working farmlands.
- The Purple Route is the longest route, resulting in a substantial detour for trucks. This is a significant potential increase in fossil fuel usage and a cost to the truck operator.
- These routes exist whether this transportation solution is executed or not. There is a strong desire to preserve agricultural and open space uses along these routes.
- This route goes through a valley, which creates a sound corridor in the area, particularly near Weybridge.
- Interactions between tractor trailers and wide farm vehicles was noted as a challenge.
- There is a desire to preserve the scenic views along Route 17.
- The intersection at Quaker Village Road and Chalker Farm is a dangerous intersection involving a hill, a twisting road, and poor visibility, but is located on a popular bicycle route.
- If the road is modified, it may be an opportunity to improve utility infrastructure.
- Safety and efficiency should be guiding principles of this study.

- There was distinct interest in maintaining currently existing “special” places along the corridor.
- Safety concerns were expressed regarding several intersections. Four Corners in Addison may need a full traffic signal (it currently has north/south blinking yellow, east/west blinking red), but this could increase noise due to air brakes.
- The Kelly Brush annual bicycle ride includes a segment on Route 17. This is an important event for the adaptive recreation community.
- Participants suggested the addition of pull-offs to allow passing and scenic overlooks.

Figure 5-3 Purple Route Group Maps



5.4 GREEN ROUTE

The Green Route land use visioning workshop was held on December 13, 2023, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Panton Town Hall in Panton. The workshop was attended by approximately 95 participants.

A poll of attendees indicated that most were residents of Panton or Waltham, with smaller numbers from Vergennes or Ferrisburgh. Attendees indicated that their place of employment was located in Vergennes or outside of the study area municipalities. Several attendees of this meeting indicated that they do not work.



Figure 5-4 presents one of the maps from the workshop. Workshop highlights are listed below.

- concerns regarding intersections of the new route at Church Street and New Haven Road.
- Concerns regarding wildlife and wildlife crossings. Wildlife travel from the south between Green Street and Route 7—this area was referred to as a “wildlife highway.”
- interest in a shared-use path along the route.
- Participants preferred to maintain agricultural lands rather than add substantial development.
- The Green Route would operate between the Champlain Valley Christian Reformed Church and the Champlain Valley Christian School. Children cross Church Street between the two facilities multiple times per day.
- There is currently no traffic signal at New Haven Road and Route 7. If a signal is warranted, traffic traveling northbound on Route 7 would approach the intersection on a steep slope.
- Water currently moves northwest across the proposed route into the neighborhood between New Haven Road and Green Street, causing basement flooding.
- Boat ramps and fishing access at the new bridge would enhance the recreational opportunities and the scenic value of the area.
- Maintain floodplain protections near Otter Creek, in the vicinity of the intersection with Maple Street. Soil conditions there may limit development options.
- Economic activity in Vergennes needs to continue and expand.
- The Green Route could increase both traffic and the need for parking along Maple and Green Streets; parking is already considered a problem.

- the Green Route avoids the more significantly populated areas in Vergennes and provides a new crossing of Otter Creek. Offers a benefit for emergency services.
- historic homes located near Maple Street
- keep residents up to date about any next steps.
- “the road should look like Vermont.”

Figure 5-4 Green Route Group Maps



5.5 ALL ROUTES VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

A virtual land use visioning workshop was held on January 9, 2024, from 4:00 to 6:00 PM via Zoom. The virtual workshop provided an opportunity for residents or stakeholders who could not attend the in-person workshops to share their thoughts and suggestions regarding the land use visioning process. The workshop was virtually attended by approximately 50 participants.

Figure 5-5 presents an example of the maps generated during virtual breakout session “whiteboards”. The highlights and takeaways from the virtual workshop route discussions have been integrated with those from each in-person workshop (see above).

October 2024



6. Land Use Scenarios

The study team integrated the background information, input from the planning commission meetings, land use forecasting, and public input from the five land use visioning workshops as well as the 2024 public survey to develop land use scenarios aligned with each of the proposed routes. These scenarios will be included in the implementation plan for this PEL Study as land use recommendations to guide the implementation of a new route and inform future planning work within each of the study area communities. The land use vision scenarios were shared with the seven PEL Study municipalities at a second round of planning commission meetings in March and April 2024 to provide the opportunity to review and discuss planning implications within their community.

6.1 LAND USES

Each land use vision scenario depicts some or all of the six land use types explored during the visioning workshops:

- Residential/Housing
- Agricultural/Farmland
- Open Space/Recreation
- Commercial/Retail
- Industrial
- Municipal/Community Center

There is some overlap between these general categories. For example, an area that is currently in Agricultural/Farmland use, or is illustrated as such in these vision scenarios, could also support residential uses, or may include commercial uses that are open to the public such as farm stands or farm stores. Similarly, a Residential/Housing area, such as in downtown Vergennes, may also accommodate non-residential uses such as offices or home-based businesses.

The land use vision scenarios on the following pages convey a community-guided, high-level image of spatial form and function, should one of the PEL Study routes be built. They are intended for discussion purposes as the illustrative product of a “what if” exercise and do not imply or authorize changes in property ownership or other legal condition. For each route, highlighted areas are shown for planning purposes with a 500-foot setback. In many locations along the potential routes, workshop participants generally preferred that future land uses reflect the status quo. Therefore, many of the land uses illustrated in the land use vision scenarios are consistent with their current use. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

As with the land uses, the function and design of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along a potential new route would be context-dependent. A new road that passes near an existing or new neighborhood in the vicinity of downtown Vergennes may support sidewalk connectivity to its businesses and restaurants. Alternatively, based on its geometry and topography, and relative lack of destinations, improvements along Route 17 could be focused on specific off-road multi-use path segments that would provide connections to existing regional bike routes.

In addition to fostering public health and reducing motor vehicle traffic, an active transportation network that facilitates access to public recreation areas can become a regional destination, drawing visitors that in turn support local businesses. Trailhead parking, bicycle repair stations, covered bike racks and lockers, wayfinding signage and map kiosks, public restrooms, and Wi-Fi are all features of an active transportation network that could be developed in conjunction with a new route, which would support the economic vitality of the study area communities.

6.2 ORANGE ROUTE

The land use vision scenario for the Orange Route is illustrated in Figure 6-1. It is influenced by its proximity to Main Street businesses and civic spaces, and its position along a natural gully, an ecological, aesthetic, and potentially recreational asset.

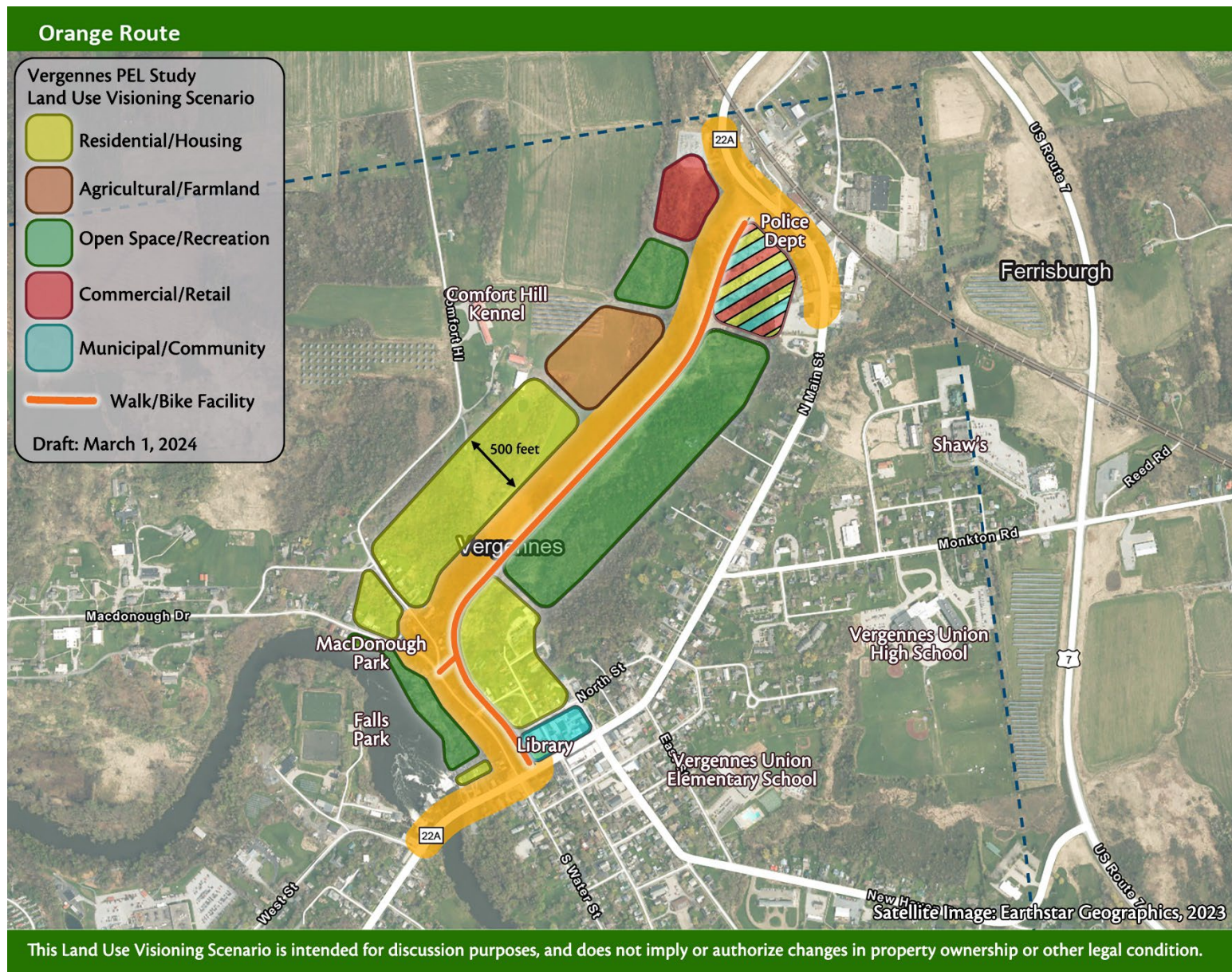
Traveling northwest from its southern terminus at Main Street, the Orange Route passes the Bixby Memorial Free Library and along MacDonough Drive and Comfort Hill. Existing civic and residential uses would remain in the land use vision scenario for this route.

Turning north in the vicinity of the existing intersection of MacDonough Drive and Comfort Hill, a new Orange Route road offers opportunities for housing to the north of the roadway and open space/recreation uses along the gully to the south of the roadway. The land to the rear of Comfort Hill Kennel, which includes a portion of a solar array, would remain working lands.

At the northern terminus of the Orange Route at Route 22A, the land use vision includes additional civic or commercial uses.

A sidewalk or multi-use path along the entire route would support connectivity among residential, civic, commercial, and recreational uses. Portions of the Orange Route align with the Vergennes' Proposed Pedestrian Loop Trail, as illustrated in the city's Municipal Development Plan.

Figure 6-1 Orange Route Land Use Scenario



6.3 PINK AND BLUE ROUTES

The land use vision scenario for the Pink and Blue Routes is illustrated in Figure 6-2. Given that a significant portion of these routes overlap, they were discussed collectively during the land use visioning workshops. Thus, this land use vision illustrates them together.

Traveling north from the southern terminus of each route at Route 22A, the land use vision for these routes indicates uses consistent with their current uses or functions, which include agricultural, residential, open lands (under private ownership), and the civic use related to the Prospect Cemetery.

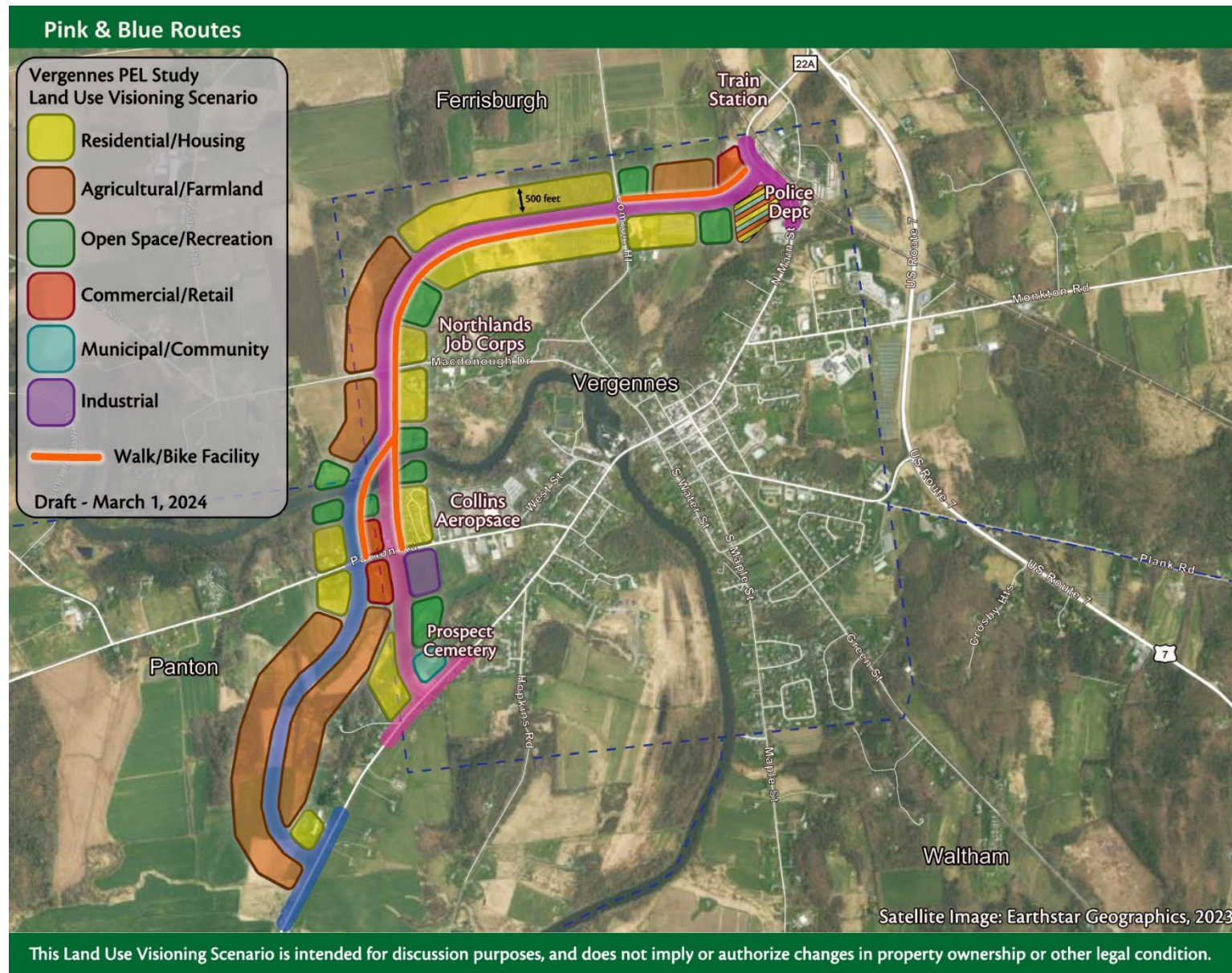
In the vicinity of Panton Road, areas east of the Pink Route may support additional industrial uses (to the south) or residential uses (to the north), while the segment located between the Pink and Blue Routes may support commercial or retail uses. Areas west of the Blue Route may support additional housing. The lands closest to Otter Creek would be best suited to open space for flood resilience or natural features preservation and may support recreational uses associated with direct access to Otter Creek.

North of Otter Creek, the Pink and Blue Routes are generally co-located. the vicinity of MacDonough Drive to the northwest quadrant of Vergennes, offers opportunities for neighborhood-scale housing construction, and active transportation facilities.

Closer to the Pink and Blue Routes' northern terminus at Route 22A, commercial uses would be appropriate in the Northern Gateway District. Preserved agricultural property near the Northern Gateway District would remain agricultural.

A sidewalk or multi-use path along the Pink or Blue Route would support connectivity between potential new housing, Main Street, Northlands Job Corps, and Panton Road businesses and employment centers. While extending beyond the Pink and Blue Routes, an active transportation route could connect directly to the Ferrisburgh-Vergennes Train Station.

Figure 6-2 Pink and Blue Route Land Use Scenarios



6.4 GREEN ROUTE

The land use vision scenario for the Green Route is illustrated in **Figure 6-3**. A substantial portion of the Green Route exhibits an agriculture or open space character, including wetlands with notable wildlife corridors. Workshop participants supported an expansion of land preservation and open space along the route.

Traveling northeast from the southern terminus of the route at Route 22A, existing patterns of residential and agricultural uses may be augmented with additional open space/recreation uses on lands that are less suited to crop growth or grazing due to topography or soil moisture. Lands between Hopkins Road and the Otter Creek floodplain would remain primarily agricultural.

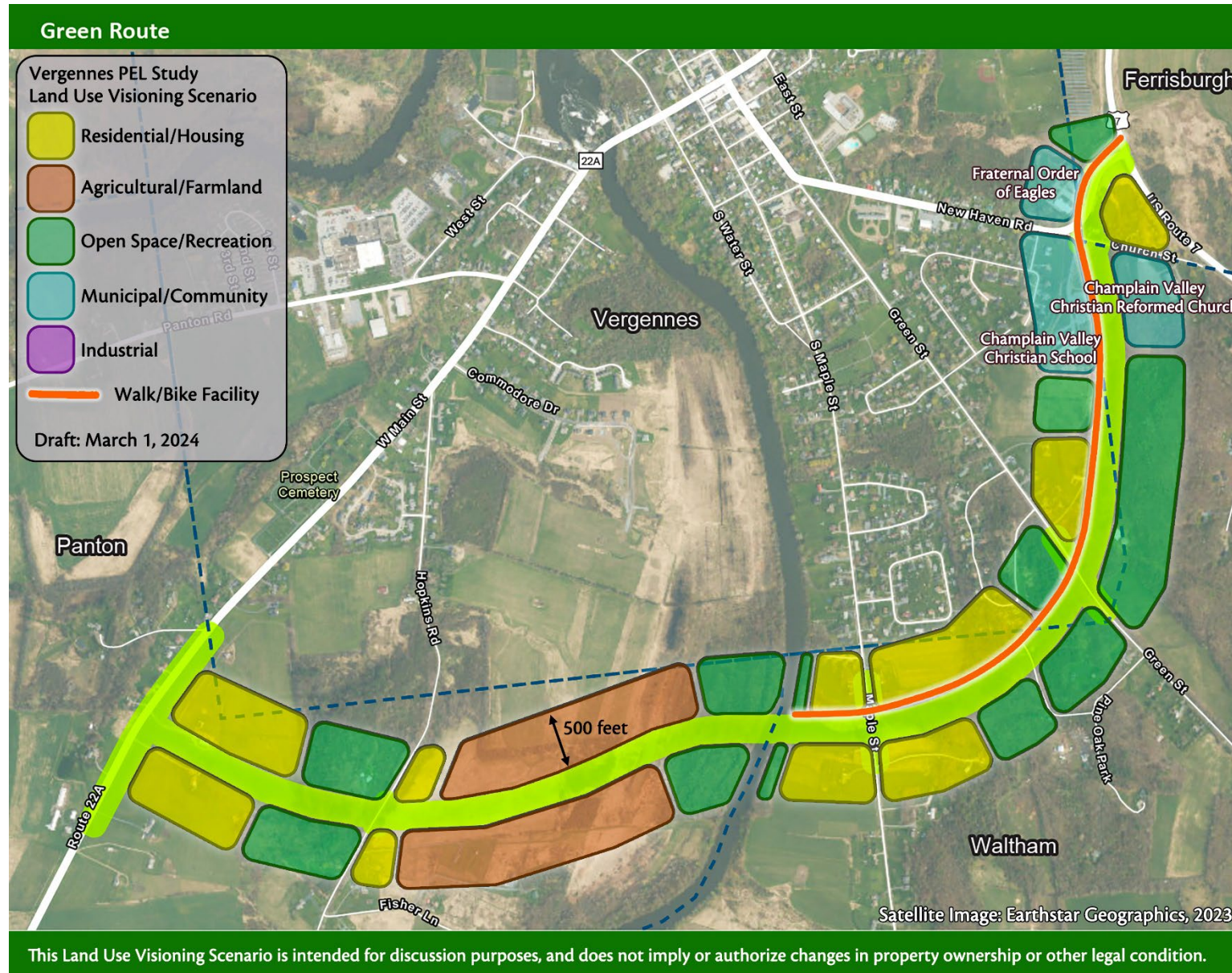
This land use scenario includes open space/recreation opportunities in the vicinity of Otter Creek that include flood risk management, wetland and habitat preservation, and recreational access.

Housing opportunities exist in the vicinity of Maple Street, particularly in the medium-density and high-density residential districts at the north end of Waltham. Continuing north from Green Street, wildlife habitat, and hilly topography suggest that additional open space/recreation uses would be suitable, with the potential for some additional housing west of the Green Route.

Existing housing and civic uses toward the east/north end of the Green Route would remain unchanged, including the Champlain Valley Christian Reformed Church, the Champlain Valley Christian School, and the Fraternal Order of Eagles. Workshop participants considered the parcel adjacent to the southwestern corner of the northern terminus of the Green Route at Route 7, in the vicinity of an existing solar array, to be suitable for an industrial or light manufacturing land use, should the soils support building between potential wetland areas.

This eastern portion of this route, between Route 7 and Otter Creek, could be well served by a sidewalk or multi-use path.

Figure 6-3 Green Route Land Use Scenario



6.5 PURPLE ROUTE

The land use vision scenario for the Purple Route is illustrated in Figure 7-4. The Purple Route includes northbound truck traffic on portions of Route 7 and Route 17, and southbound truck traffic on Route 22A. However, this land use vision scenario depicts only the Route 17 portion as the proposed improvements associated with this route would be primarily along Route 17.

Due to the relative length of Route 17 compared with the other routes, these Purple Route scenarios are provided below with two maps of overlapping west and east segments.

The land use scenarios reflect the consistently expressed view that land uses along Route 17 should remain largely as-is, with smaller potential adjustments to serve local communities or travelers along Route 22A and Route 7 at each end of the Route 17 segment of the Purple Route.

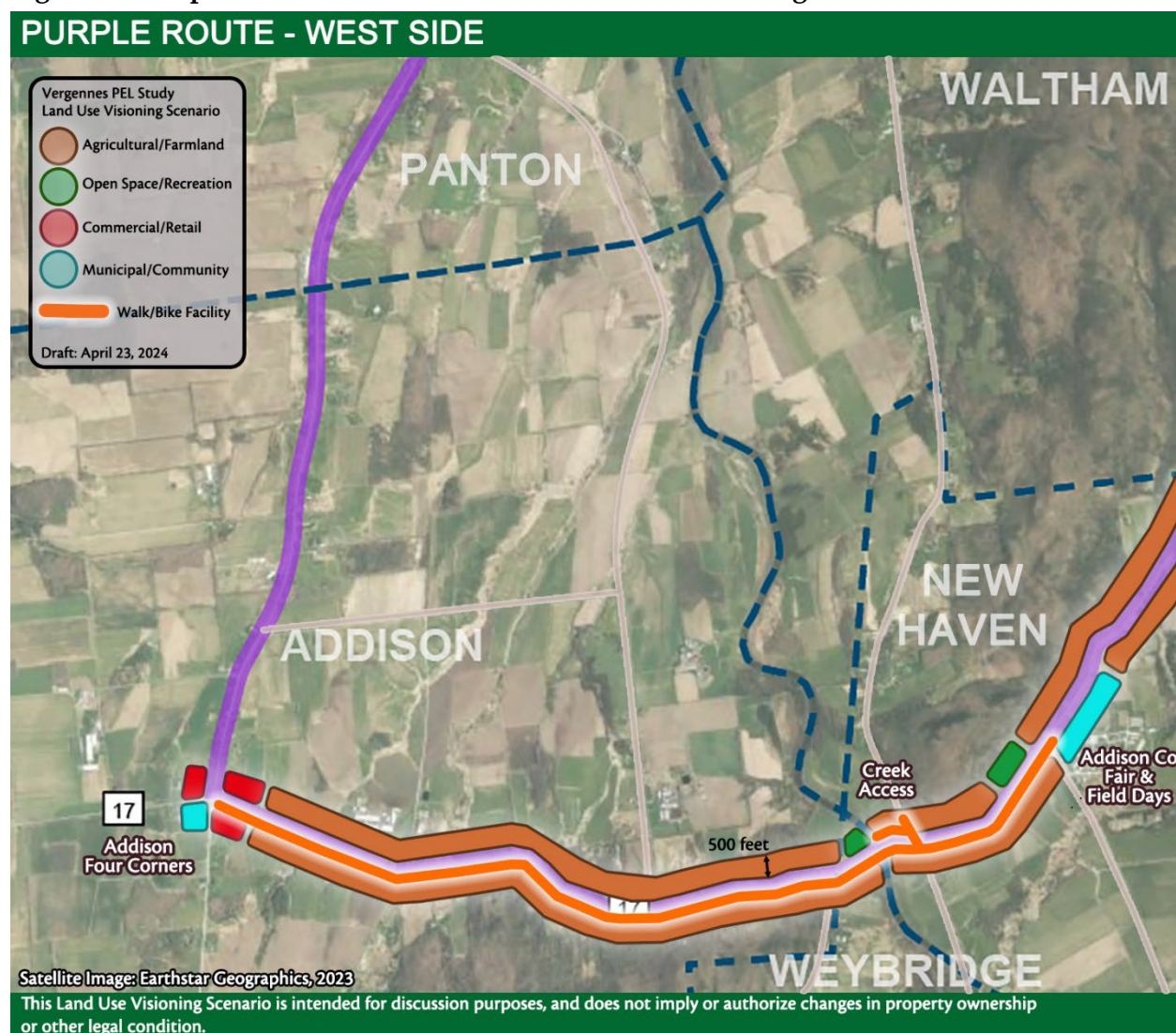
At the western terminus of the Route 17 segment of the Purple Route, Addison has designated the Addison Four Corners area as its Village Neighborhood Commercial District. Additional commercial uses would complement the civic and commercial uses that already exist at this node.

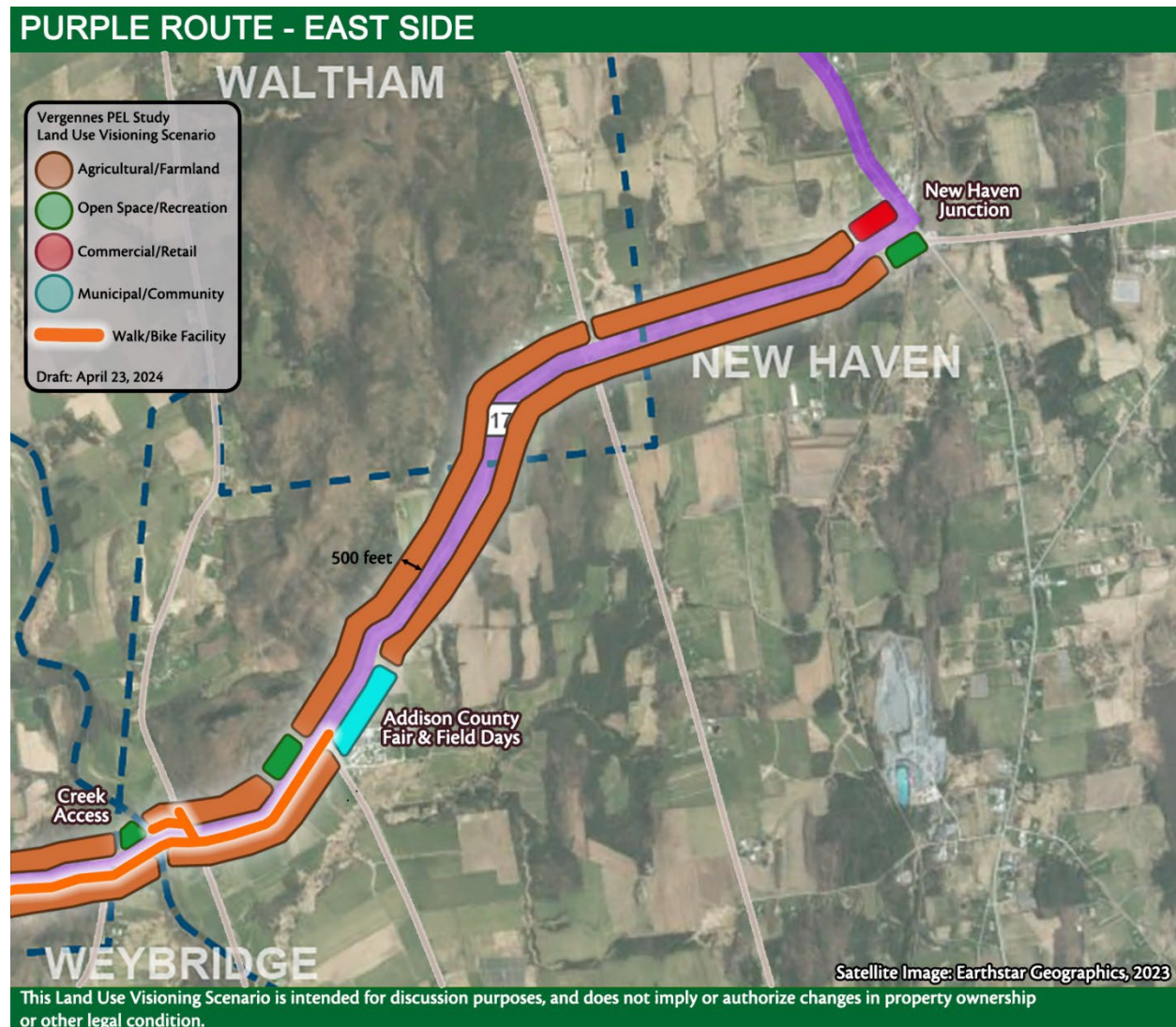
Traveling east along Route 17, the lands are primarily agricultural in use and character and would remain so under this land use visioning scenario. There are smaller-scale opportunities for open space/recreation next to Otter Creek, and at an identified hilly location along the north side of Route 17 east of Hallock Road. Additionally, the Addison County Fair and Field Days property would likely remain a community gathering place.

The eastern terminus of the Route 17 segment within New Haven may support additional commercial uses at the northwest corner of the intersection with Route 7.

An off-road multi-use path may be feasible between Weybridge Road/Route 23 and the Fair and Field Days property, as it would promote improved access to Otter Creek.

Figure 6-4 Purple Route Land Use Scenario – West and East Segments





6.6 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

During planning commission meetings and public workshops, additional input was provided that may inform future tasks within the PEL Study and future design efforts if one of the routes moves forward to implementation. The following sections summarize these themes.

6.6.1 Road Use and Safety

Workshop participants noted the importance of farm vehicle traffic as an essential part of the local economy in the study area. Traffic backs up significantly along Route 17 during Farm and Field Days. Cyclists travel many of the study area roads, though many prefer the secondary roads that cross or meet Route 22A (East Road and West Road), Route 17 (Hallock Road/Quaker Village Road, Green Street/Pearson Road), and Route 7 (Monkton Road, Middlebrook Road). Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) trails cross Route 17 near the intersection with Route 23. Along the Green Route, children frequently travel between the Champlain Valley Christian School and the Champlain Valley Christian Reformed Church.

6.6.2 Intersection Design

Workshop participants voiced support for roundabouts at new intersections, coordinated with active transportation facilities. Specific to the Orange Route, participants expressed concern for potential truck queueing down the hill to the Main Street bridge, due to the northbound left turn onto MacDonough Drive. Specific for the Green Route, participants expressed concern regarding the intersection of New Haven Road and Route 7. The intersection is not currently signalized—there is only a stop sign at New Haven Road. If the Green Route utilizes this intersection, consideration should be given to truck traffic on Route 7, particularly given that the northbound approach of Route 7 is a steep downhill grade.

6.6.3 Environmental Considerations

Workshop participants discussed the presence of habitat areas and wildlife corridors in the study area and expressed support for designs that facilitate animal passage, reduce visual impacts, and minimize the potential for motor vehicle/animal conflicts. Workshop participants also noted that soils along portions of MacDonough Drive near its intersection with Comfort Hill (particularly on the south side of the road adjacent to Otter Creek) are reported to be unstable. The potential impacts to community character were identified, including noise and lighting, of a new route.