

Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages

Technical Committee
Kick off Meeting

June 2, 2021



Agenda

Welcome

- Orientation to TEAMS and meeting management
- Introductions

Project Background

Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL)

Committees

- Roles and membership
- Meeting format
- Decision-making

Scope Overview

Discussion and Next Steps

Introductions

Joe Segale, P.E., PTP
Project Manager



Kathrine Otto, AICP
Assistant Project Manager



Mike Winslow
Local Outreach and Coordination



Consultant Team



Larry Pesesky, AICP
Principal-in-Charge



Mark Tytko
Project Manager



Ken Robie, PE
Deputy Project Manager



Rich Tetreault, PE
Vermont Policy Advisor,
QA/QC



Stephanie Camay
Planning &
Environmental Lead



Chris Sargent, AICP, CFM
Land Use Planner



Stephen Chiaramonte, AICP
Transportation Planning/
Traffic Lead



**William Melendez,
PE, PTOE, PTP**
Traffic Engineer



Laura Toole
Public Involvement Lead



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A river flows through the center-left of the image. To the right of the river is a small town with a grid-like street pattern and several buildings. The surrounding area is composed of various green fields and patches of trees. The overall tone is slightly muted, with a greenish tint.

Project Background

Truck Traffic



300 Medium Trucks/Day



430 Large Trucks/Day

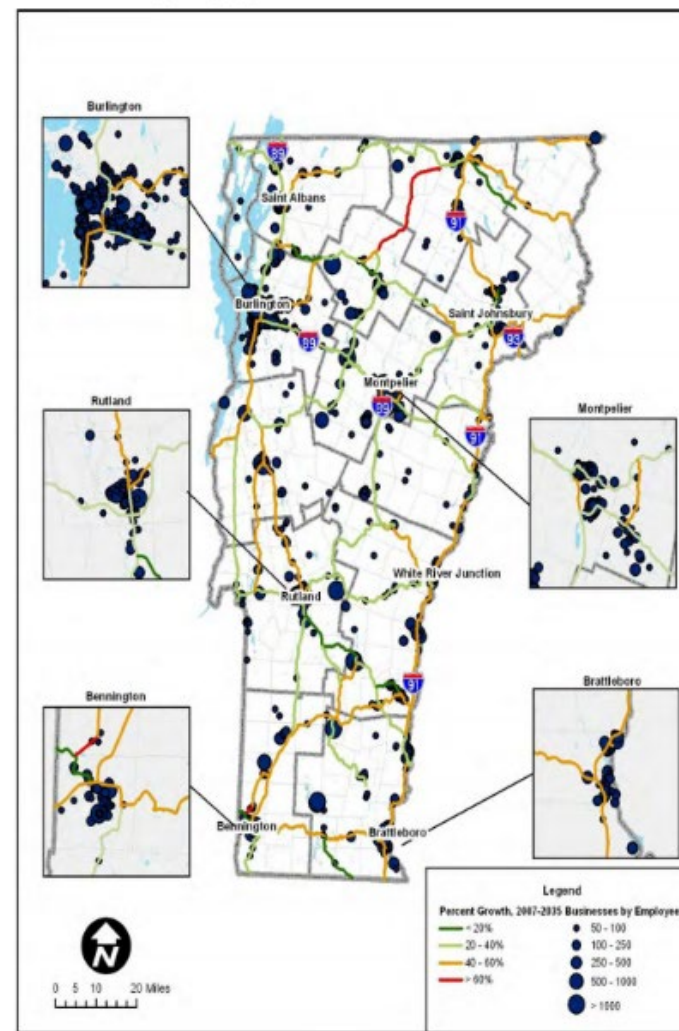
Forecasted Truck Traffic (2007 to 2035)

VT 22A Truck Traffic

- 20-40% Increase US 4 to VT 17
- 40-60% Increase VT 17 to US 7

Source: 2012 Vermont Freight Plan

Figure 4.29 2007-2035 Truck Traffic Growth on Vermont Highway Network
All Commodities



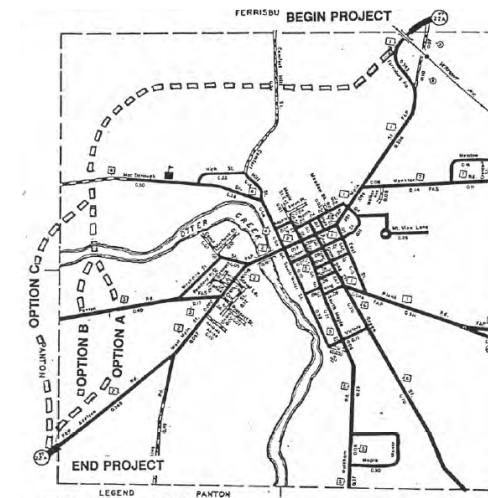
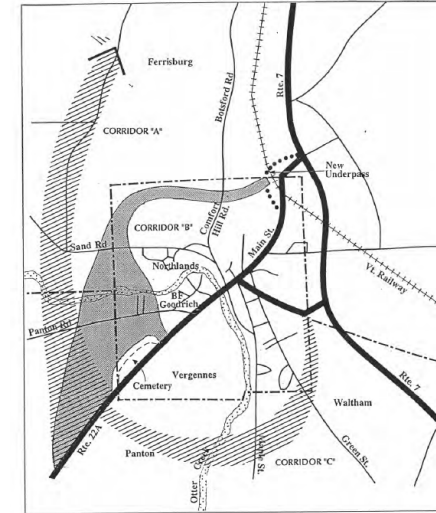
Previous Planning Efforts

1995 Vergennes Route 22A Bypass Study

- Three potential bypass corridors
- Settled on Alignment B ~ 2.5 miles, includes a new bridge over the Otter Creek
- Approximate cost - \$52 million

2002 Vergennes Traffic Impact Study – Public Workshop/Brainstorming

- Downtown Mitigation
- Western Bypass
- Alternative Routes
- Transportation System Solutions
- Status Quo



2019 VT 22A Truck Route Study



VT 22A Truck Route Study OUTCOMES

Agreement that the truck issue needs to be addressed

Near consensus by meeting participants in support of
New Alignment

Reframed as the **Vergennes Economic Corridor**

VTrans Secretary Flynn commits to PEL with letters of
support from legislative bodies Vergennes and six
surrounding Towns

Funding for PEL in VTrans 2021 Capital Program
approved by General Assembly



Scope of work overview

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Update the Purpose and Need
Statement

Transportation Alternatives Screening
& Refinement

- Many Alternatives at High Level
- Fewer Alternatives Evaluated in
More Detail

Integrated Transportation/Land Use
Planning

Alternatives Evaluation

Implementation Plan

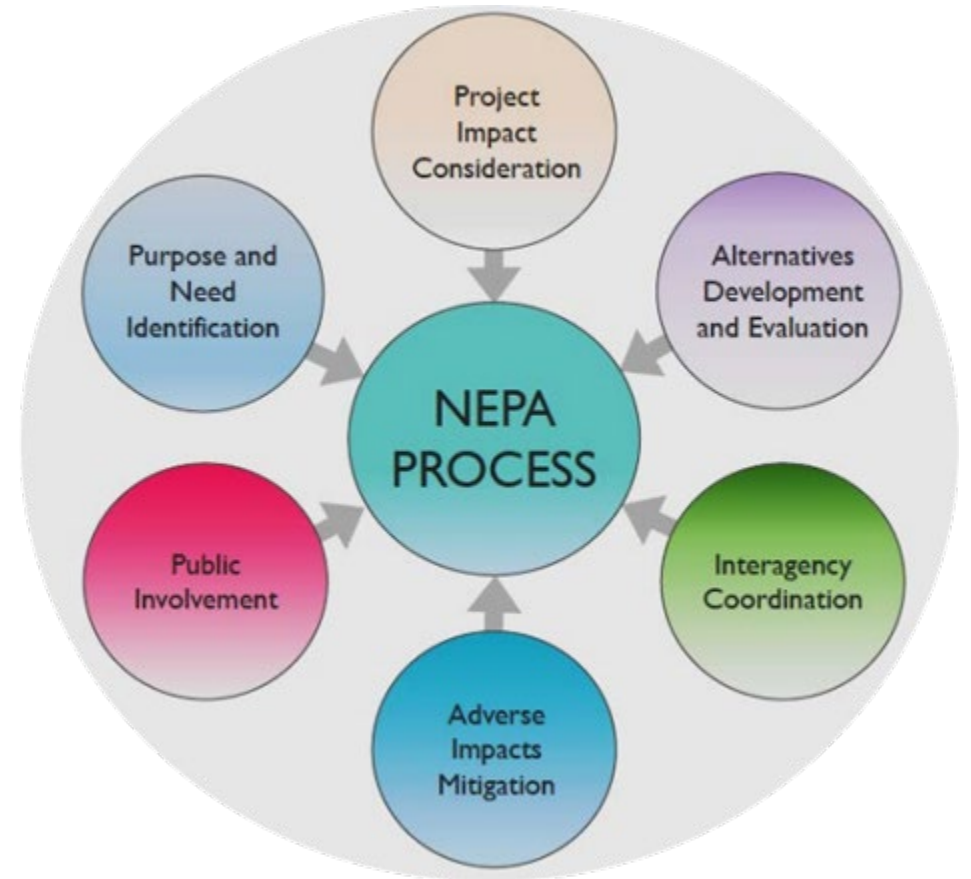


An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A river flows through the center, surrounded by green fields and some buildings. A small town or village is visible in the upper right, with a grid of streets and some larger structures. The overall scene is a mix of natural and developed land.

Planning and Environment Linkages

NEPA Overview

- Became law in 1970
- Requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions
- Requires opportunities for public review and comment on those evaluations
- Types of environmental assessments include:
 - Categorical Exclusions (CATEX)
 - Environmental Assessments (EA)
 - Environmental Impact Statements (EIS)



NEPA Terms

Lead Agency

The federal agency carrying out the federal action is responsible for complying with the requirements of NEPA

When there may be more than one federal agency involved in the proposed action, the lead agency is designated to supervise the preparation of the environmental analysis

Cooperating Agency

A federal, state, tribal or local agency having special expertise with respect to an environmental issue

A cooperating agency has the responsibility to:

- assist the lead agency by participating in the NEPA process at the earliest possible time
- participate in the scoping process
- develop information and prepare environmental analysis that the agency has special expertise in
- make staff support available

Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL)

What is PEL?

- PEL is a collaborative transportation decision-making approach

What is the ultimate goal?

- Reduce duplication of effort and facilitate informed decisions to expedite project delivery

PEL History

1969

National Environmental Policy Act establishes nation's commitment to the environment

2005

SAFETEA-LU requires increased consideration of environment in statewide and metropolitan planning

2005 –
2008

National Highway Institute Linking Planning and NEPA Workshops

2011

FHWA promotes PEL through Every Day Counts, PEL Questionnaire, and Guidance on Using Corridor and Subarea Planning to Inform NEPA

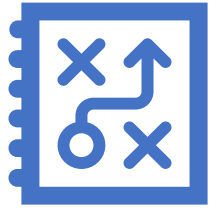
2012

MAP-21 adds new authority for carrying out PEL in 23 U.S.C 168

2015

FAST Act amends 23 U.S.C 168 and adds new PEL authority to 23 U.S.C. 139

What are the benefits of PEL?



**Streamlines efforts
from Planning
into NEPA**



**Shortens timelines for
NEPA review and
project delivery**



**Stimulates the
development of
new tools**



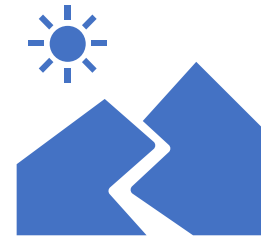
**Helps identify
stakeholders early
in the process**



**Fosters relationships
among agencies and
the public**



**Engages non-
transportation agencies
in decision-making**



**Creates better real-
world outcomes for
the community**



**Improves planning
products that improve
the NEPA process**

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A river flows through the center-left of the image. To the right of the river is a small town with a grid-like street pattern and several buildings. The surrounding area is filled with green fields and some scattered trees. The overall tone is slightly muted and greenish.

Committees

Committee Roles and General Membership



Management

VTrans Project Manager – Joe Segale and Katharine Otto

ACRPC Assisting



Technical Committee

Role

- Guide, review and validate the consultant's methods, analyses, findings, and recommendations on which the Policy Committee will make its decisions

Members

- Subject Matter Experts from VTrans, Region & Municipalities



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.

Technical Committee

Adam Lougee

Andrea Wright
(or Jeff Ramsey)

Ashley Bishop

Bruce Martin

Chris Jolly

David Raphael

Fred Kenney

Jesse Devlin
(or assignee)

Jim Larrow

John Bull

Jon Kaplan

Katie Raycroft-Meyer

Nick Wark

Rick Cloutier

Shannon Haggett

Policy Committee

Adam Lougee

Bill Smith

Brian Shupe

Bruce Martin

Chris Jolly

Clark Hinsdale

Diane Lanpher

Dickie Austin

Harvey Smith

Ian Huizenga

Jeff Kauffman

Jesse Devlin

Mary Rudd

Matt Birong

Mike Audy

Renny Perry

Rob Carter

Tim Glassberg

Will Sipse

Committee Format and Decision-Making Process

- Virtual meetings
- Consensus on best time of day
- Agreement with ground rules on meetings/decision-making process
- Alternate representation

Quorum is 50% of appointed members

Consensus when possible

Voting when consensus not possible

Document dissenting views

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A river flows from the top left towards the center. To the right of the river is a small town with a grid-like street pattern and several buildings. The surrounding area consists of green fields and some wooded areas. The overall tone is slightly desaturated, giving it a vintage or official feel.

Scope Overview

Tasks and Major Deliverables

Task 2A: Public and Stakeholder Engagement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Involvement Plan• Agency Coordination Plan	Summer 2021
Task 2B: Purpose and Need Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purpose and Need Technical Memo	Fall 2021
Task 3: Transportation Alternatives Initial Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial Alternatives Screening Technical Memo	Winter 2022
Task 4: Alternatives Refinement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plans and typical sections	Spring 2022
Task 5: Integrated Transportation and Land Use Alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land Use Visions Technical Memo	Spring 2022
Task 6: Alternatives Evaluation and Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternatives Evaluation Technical Memo	Summer 2022

Discussion

Questions:

1. What do you see happening in your community today?
2. What drives the need for action in the corridor?
3. What are the issues we want to solve?
4. What goals or outcomes are important to your organization?
5. What are your areas of focus, interest, or concern related to this study?

Follow up items:

- Information/data from your organization
- Individuals/organizations to involve in public process including agencies, contacts, champions, skeptics, etc.
- Major events or opportunities for public engagement/input

Task 1: Project Kick-off and Scope Refinement

Goals

- Communicate project goals
- Convey project process and roles
- Set expectations
- Gain local input

Deliverables

- Technical and Policy Committees Kick-off meetings
- Revised Scope of Work
- Schedule

Task 2A: Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Goals

- Facilitate open, two-way communication
- Early involvement in the planning process
- Structure engagement over course of study
- Satisfy FHWA Environmental Justice requirements
- Respond to COVID-19 health and safety requirements
- Identify roles and responsibilities of Cooperating Agencies
- Confirm concurrence points

Deliverables

- Public Involvement Plan (PIP)
- Agency Coordination Plan
- Project website

Task 2B: Purpose and Need (P&N) Statement

Goals

- Gather data to inform P&N
- Solicit public and agency input to inform P&N
- Define study area
- Develop P&N that meets PEL and NEPA requirements
- Lean forward to assess how technological advances may alter current conditions

Deliverables

- P&N Statement memo
- Documentation of public and agency engagement
- Documentation of Cooperating Agency Concurrence



Public concerns regarding the potential for a hazardous materials spill due to a truck accident in Vergennes have been a recurring theme in prior outreach for this project.

Task 3: Alternatives Initial Screening

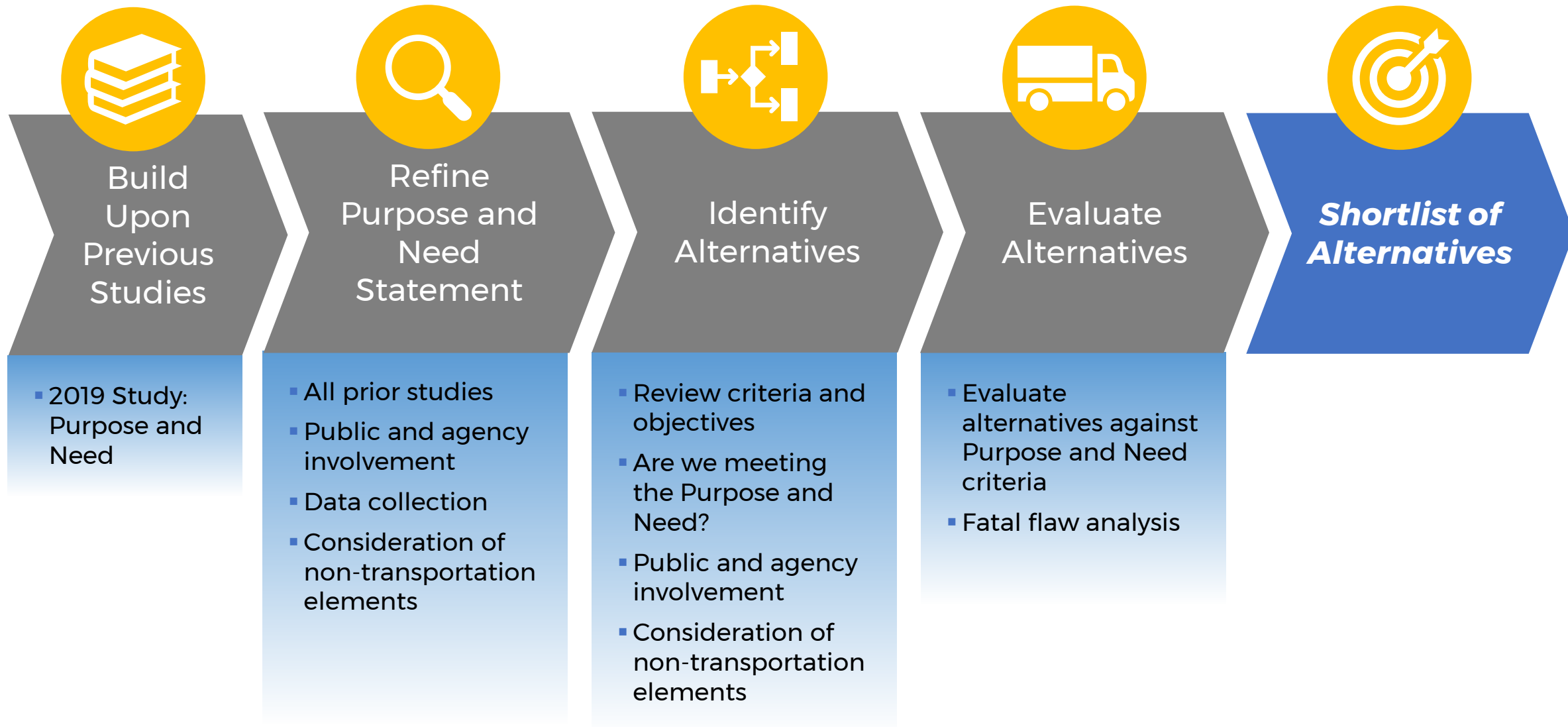
Goals

- Identify initial long-list of alternatives
- Develop initial screening criteria & methodology
- Qualitative screening of alternatives
- Short list of reasonable alternatives

Deliverables

- Initial Screening Technical Memo
- Documentation of public and agency input
- Documentation of Cooperating Agency Concurrence

Initial Screening of Alternatives (Qualitative)



Example Screening

Table 1-1: Alignment Concept Evaluation Results

GOAL	Western Alignment			Central Alignment				Eastern Alignment	
	Oyster Bay to Rye/Port Chester			Kings Park to Bridgeport or Devon				Wading River to New Haven or Branford	
	Bridge Only	Tunnel Only	Combo	Bridge Only		Combo		Bridge Only	Combo
				B-port	Devon	B-port	Devon		
1. IMPROVE REGIONAL MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
2. PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3. MINIMIZE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
4. DEVELOP COST-EFFECTIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

- = best addresses goal
- = moderately addresses goal
- = does not address goal

- = recommended for further study
- = not recommended for further study

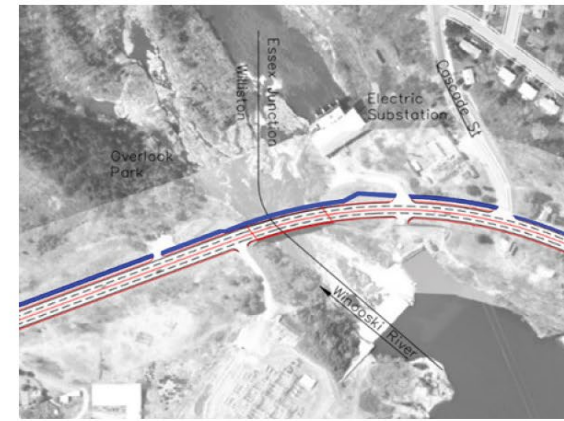
Task 4: Alternatives Refinement

Goals

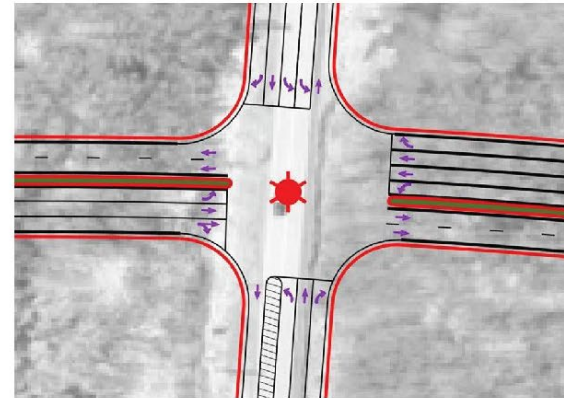
- Develop conceptual design plans for short-listed alternatives
- Graphically convey key elements of alternatives
- Solicit public and agency input on conceptual plans

Deliverables

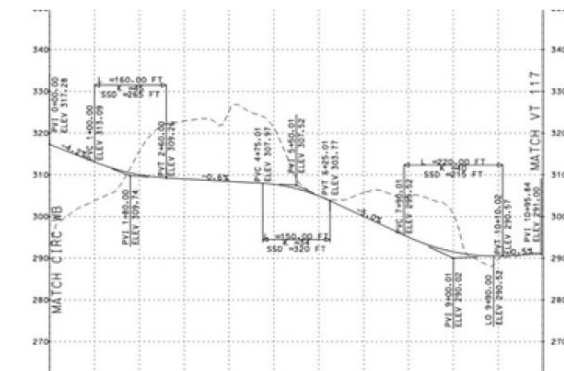
- Engineering design criteria
- Conceptual plans/cross sections/profiles
- Documentation of public and agency input



Horizontal Layout Plan Example 1



Horizontal Layout Plan Example 2



Vertical Profile Example

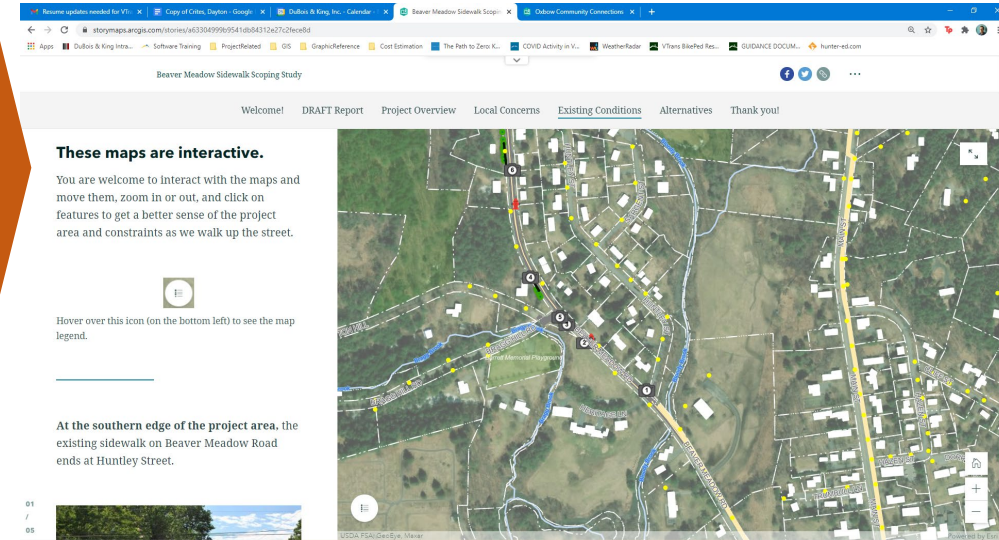
Task 5: Integrated Transportation & Land Use Alternatives

Goals

- Coordinate land use and transportation planning goals
- Develop a shared land use vision for alternatives

Deliverables

- StoryMap Platform
- Land Use Visions Memo
- Documentation of stakeholder involvement



StoryMap Platforms are a powerful public engagement tool to help with envisioning what is to come.

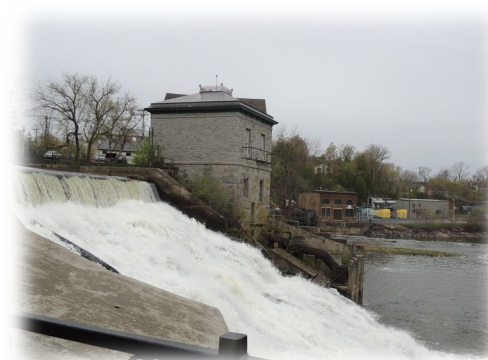
Task 6: Alternatives Evaluation & Recommendations

Goals

- Evaluate and compare alternatives based on transportation, community and environmental impact factor
- Determine short list of alternatives to be carried into NEPA

Deliverables

- Alternatives analysis methodology and metrics
- Alternatives evaluation memo



Task 7: Implementation Plan

Goals

- Provide a roadmap for implementation including NEPA, local land use and potential financing strategies

Deliverables

Implementation memo



Task 8: PEL Report

Goals

- Document the study process including methods, outreach, decisions, results and next steps

Deliverables

- PEL Report



Discussion

Questions:

1. What do you see happening in your community today?
2. What drives the need for action in the corridor?
3. What are the issues we want to solve?
4. What goals or outcomes are important to your organization?
5. What are your areas of focus, interest, or concern related to this study?

Follow up items:

- Information/data from your organization
- Individuals/organizations to involve in public process including agencies, contacts, champions, skeptics, etc.
- Major events or opportunities for public engagement/input

Next Steps

Preferred meeting day and time

Review of Public Involvement Plan and Agency Coordination Plan

Support data gathering

Create website

Primary contact:

Joe Segale, P.E., PTP

joe.segale@vermont.gov



Vergennes Planning and Environment Linkages Study

Technical Committee
Kick off Meeting

June 2, 2021

