



# Public Transit Policy Plan

November 5, 2019

Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission- TAC

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[vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP](http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP)



# Statutory Req't: 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

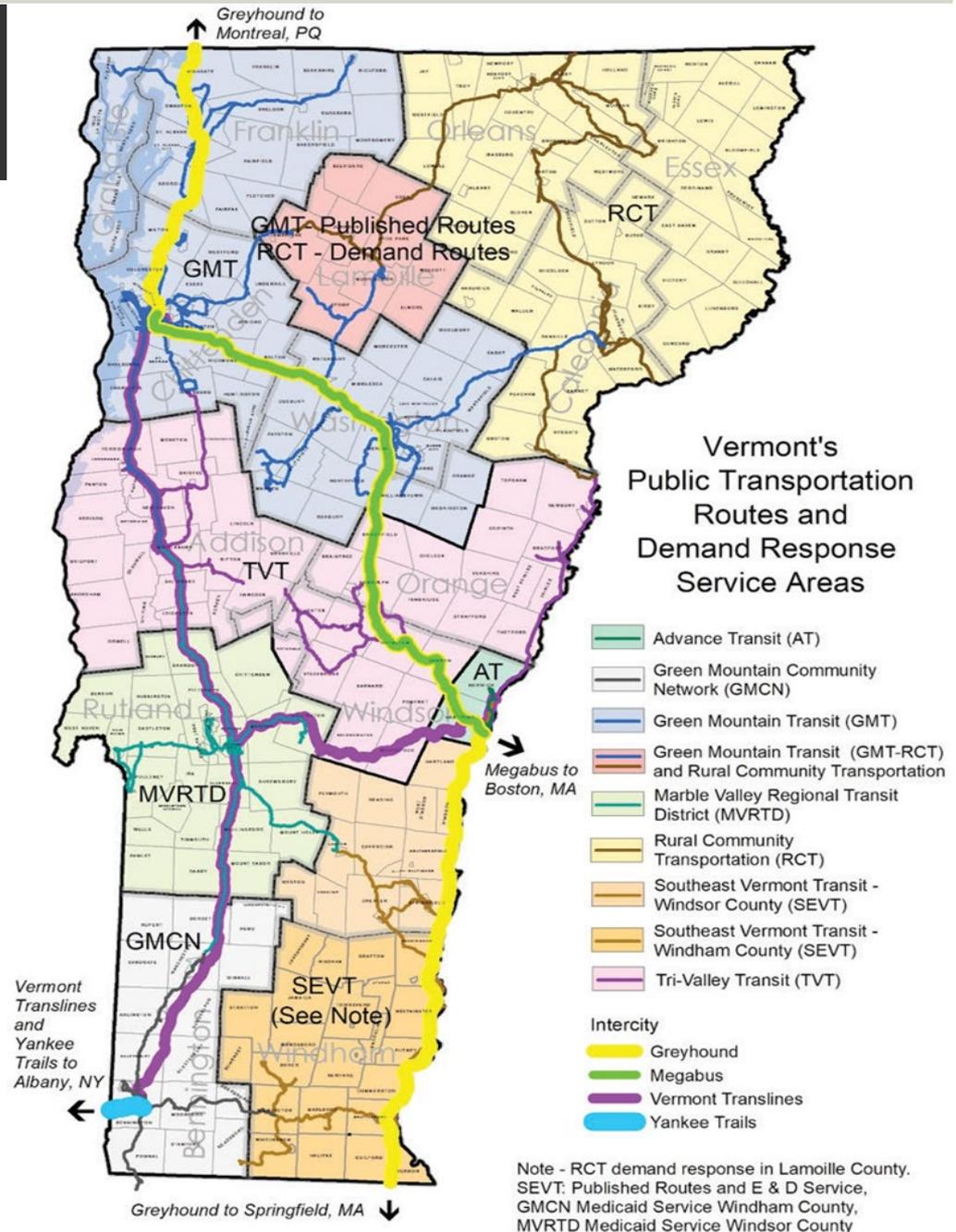


# Outreach Activities

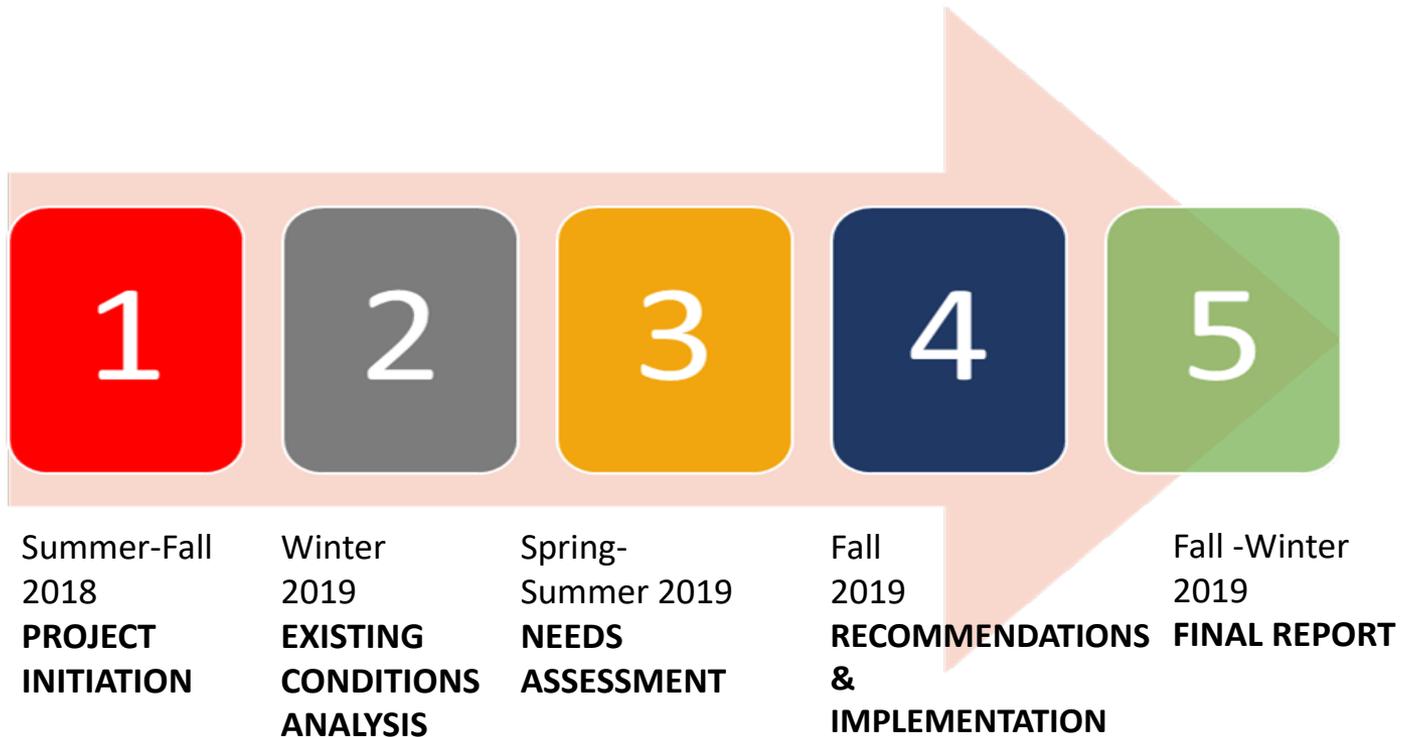
- 11 Regional Forums (Fall 2018)
- MetroQuest surveys (Fall 2018 + Summer 2019)
- 9 Stakeholder interviews (Winter 2019)
- 9 E&D Committee assessments (Spring 2019)
- 3 Study Advisory Committee meetings (Feb + April + October)
- Appearance on VPR's Vermont Edition (July 2019)
- TPI, PTAC, DAIL, VPTA 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



# Project Tasks



**PUBLIC/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH**



# 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
  - ❑ Transit propensity (composite index)
  - ❑ Characteristics (age, disability, auto ownership, income)
  - ❑ Employment
  - ❑ Commuting to key job centers

# Existing Transit

## GMT

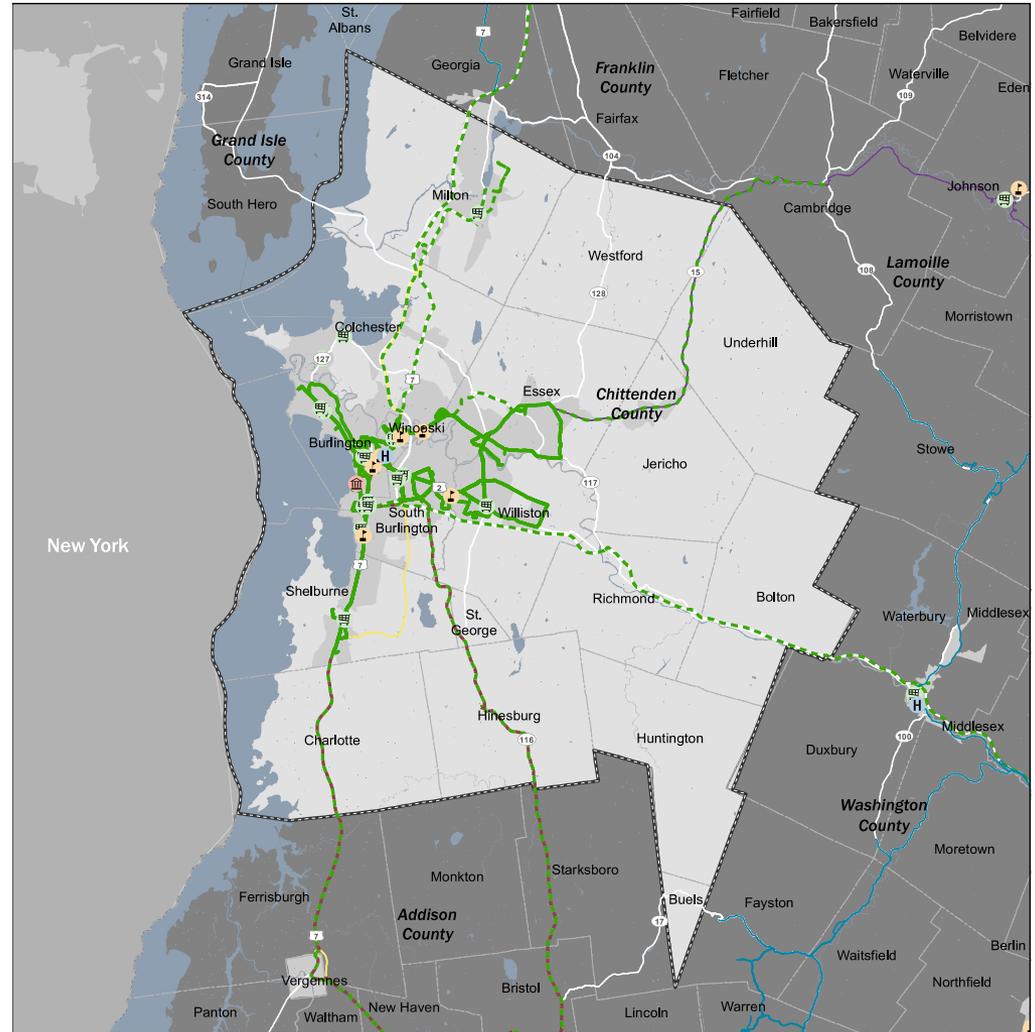
7 local routes in core  
8 commuter routes

## ACTR

Saturday service on  
Middlebury LINK  
Shared service on 116  
Commuter

## Intercity

US 7 VT Translines  
I-89 Megabus and  
Greyhound



# Core Area

## Significant retail areas

- Downtown Burlington
- North Avenue
- US 7 and US 2 in S. Burlington
- Williston (Taft Corners)
- Winooski and Colchester

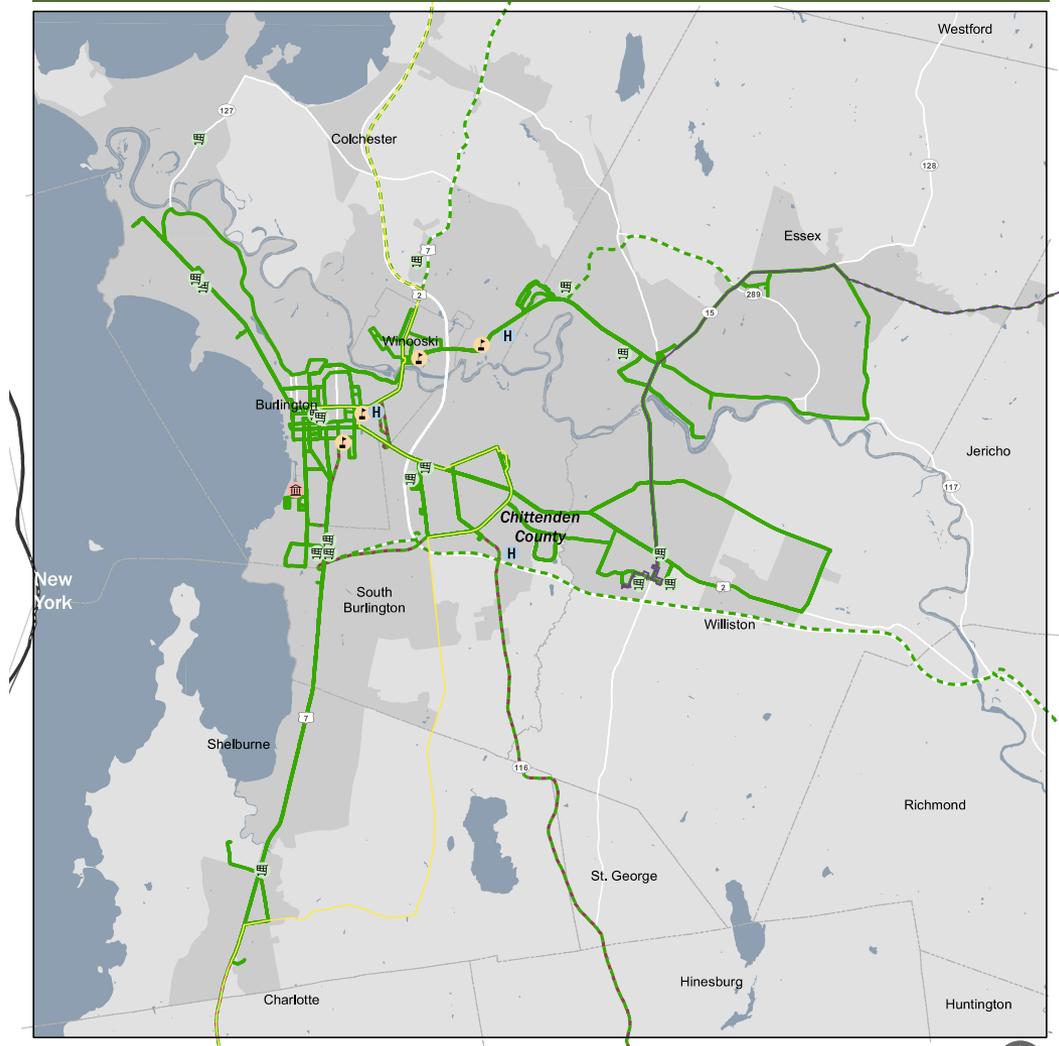
## Education

- VT 15 corridor

## Medical

- UVM MC
- Tilley Drive
- Fanny Allen

## Chittenden County Core



### Existing Transit Services

- |  |                           |  |                    |  |                         |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------|--|--------------------|--|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
|  | GMT Chittenden - Local    |  | Vermont Translines |  | Veterans Affairs Center |  | Regional Planning Commission Boundary |
|  | GMT Chittenden - Commuter |  |                    |  | Social Security Office  |  | Municipal Boundary                    |
|  | GMT / ACTR - Commuter     |  |                    |  | Hospital                |  | Urban Areas                           |
|  | Rural Comm. Transp.       |  |                    |  | Higher Education        |  |                                       |
|  |                           |  |                    |  | Retail Center           |  |                                       |

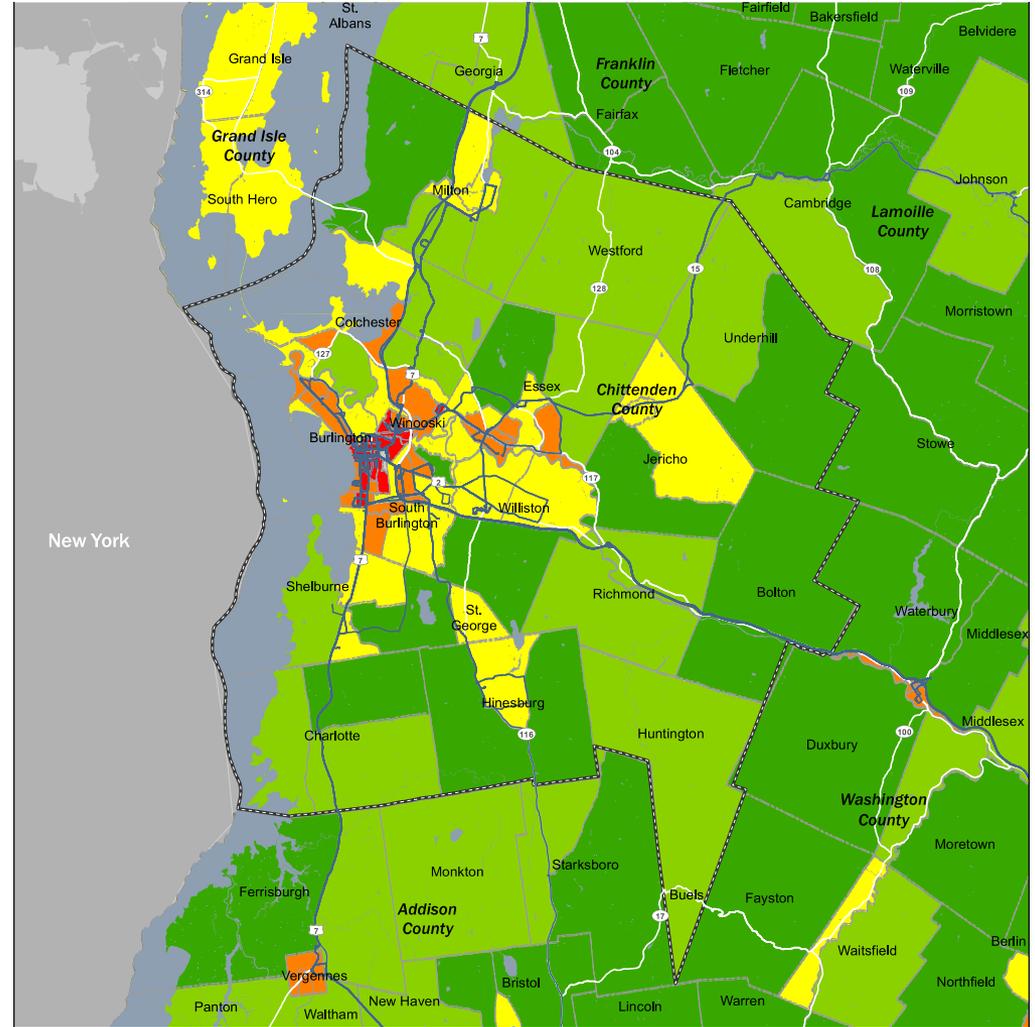
# Population Density

Highest density in core of the region

Moderate to high density portions of Essex and Colchester

Moderate density in Jericho, Hinesburg, Milton, St. George

Rural density in most of outer ring



New York

5,000 +

- Regional Planning Commission Boundary
- Block Group
- Transit Routes

# Core Density

True urban density in  
Burlington and Winooski

Fort Ethan Allen also has  
high density

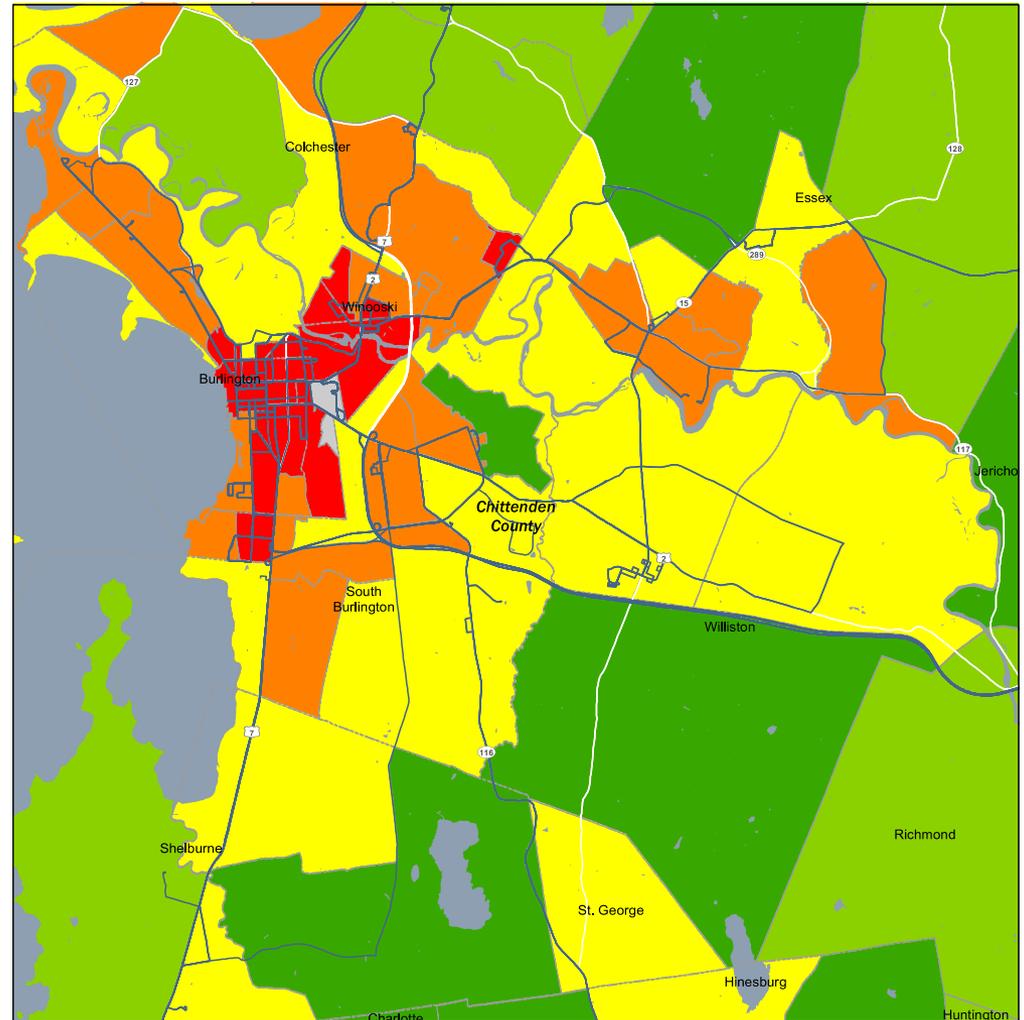
Moderate/high density

New North End

Most of So. Burlington

Essex Junction

Portions of Colchester and  
Essex



999

5,000 +

- Regional Planning Commission Boundary
- Block Group
- Transit Routes





# People with Disabilities

Includes four types of disabilities

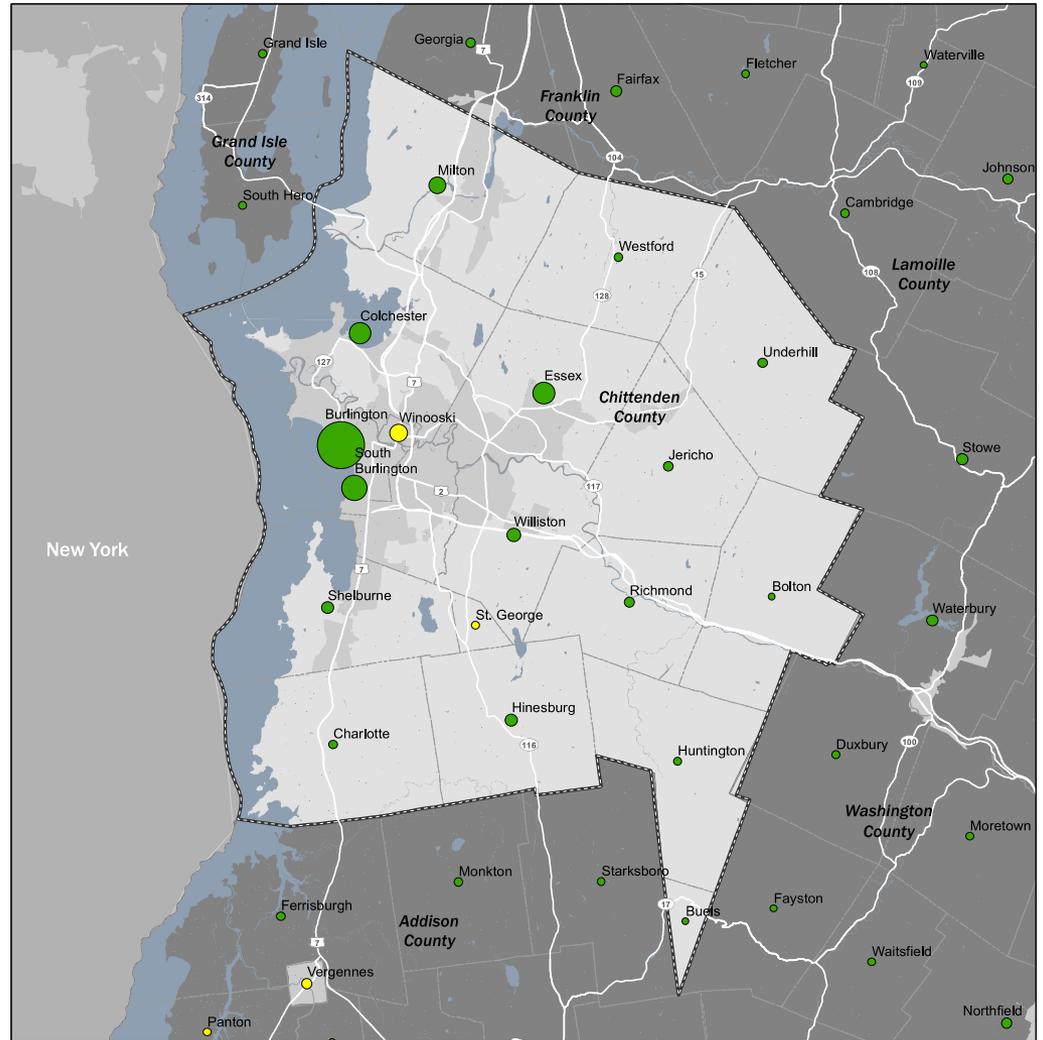
Hearing

Vision

Cognition

Walking

Only Winooski is above state average, though absolute number in Burlington is high



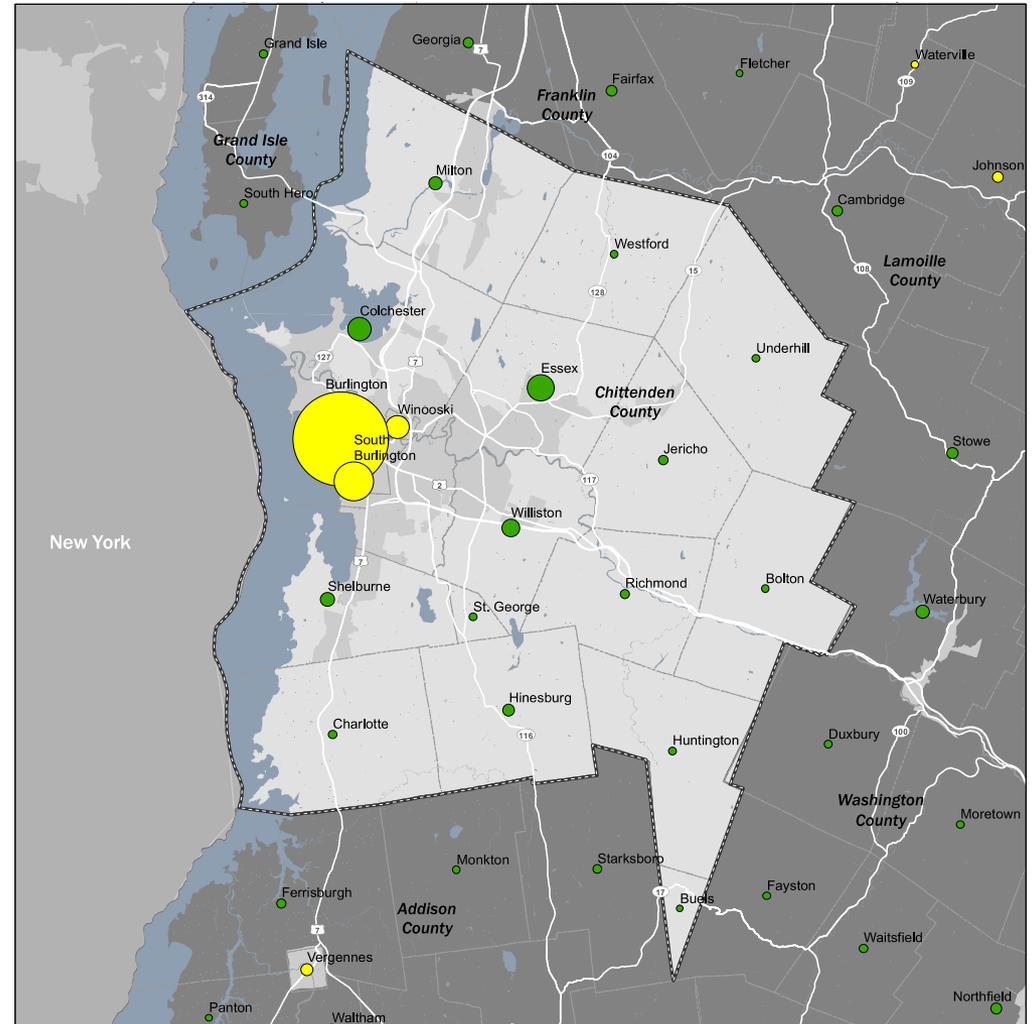
# Auto Ownership

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

Huge number in Burlington (reflects transit availability)

Most towns below state average

Winooski and So. Burlington also above average

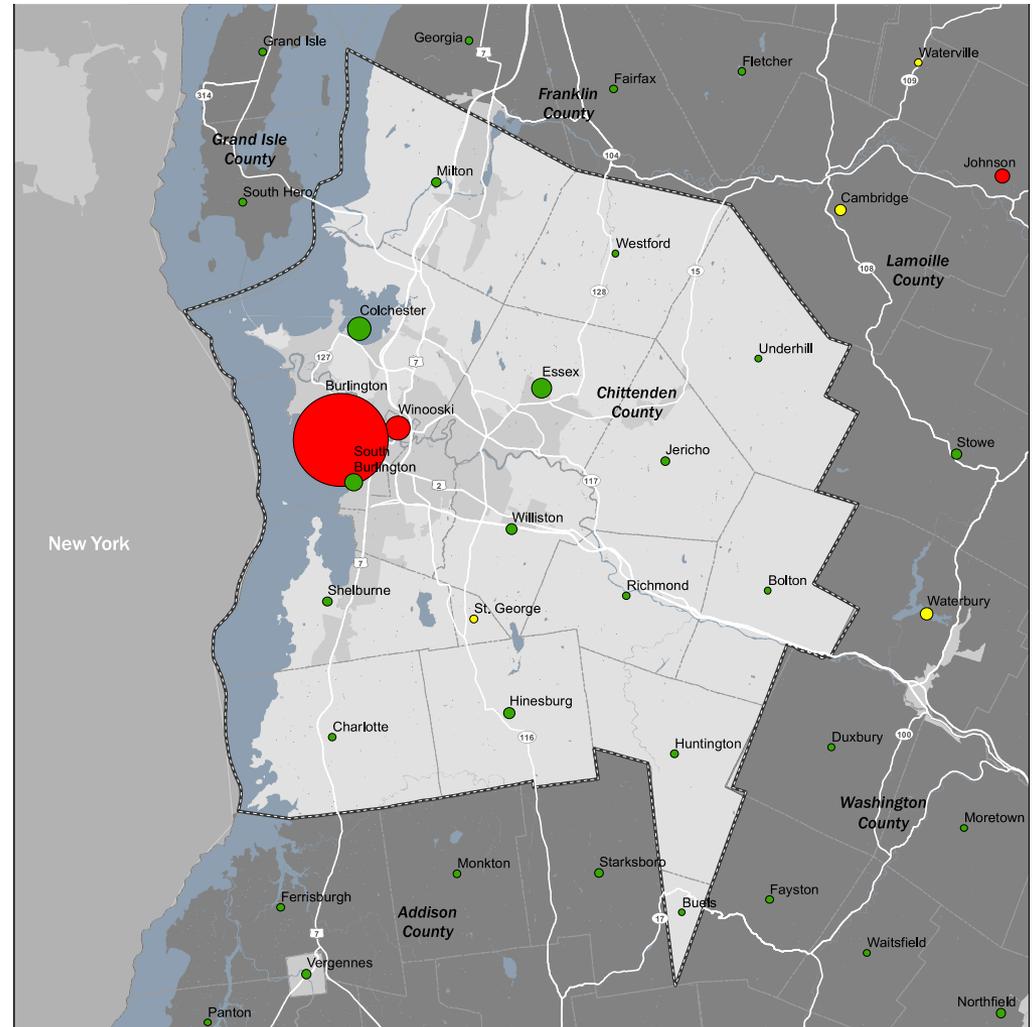


# Poverty

Burlington and Winooski have concentrations of people in poverty

Burlington has the greatest number of people in poverty in Vermont (nearly 9,000)

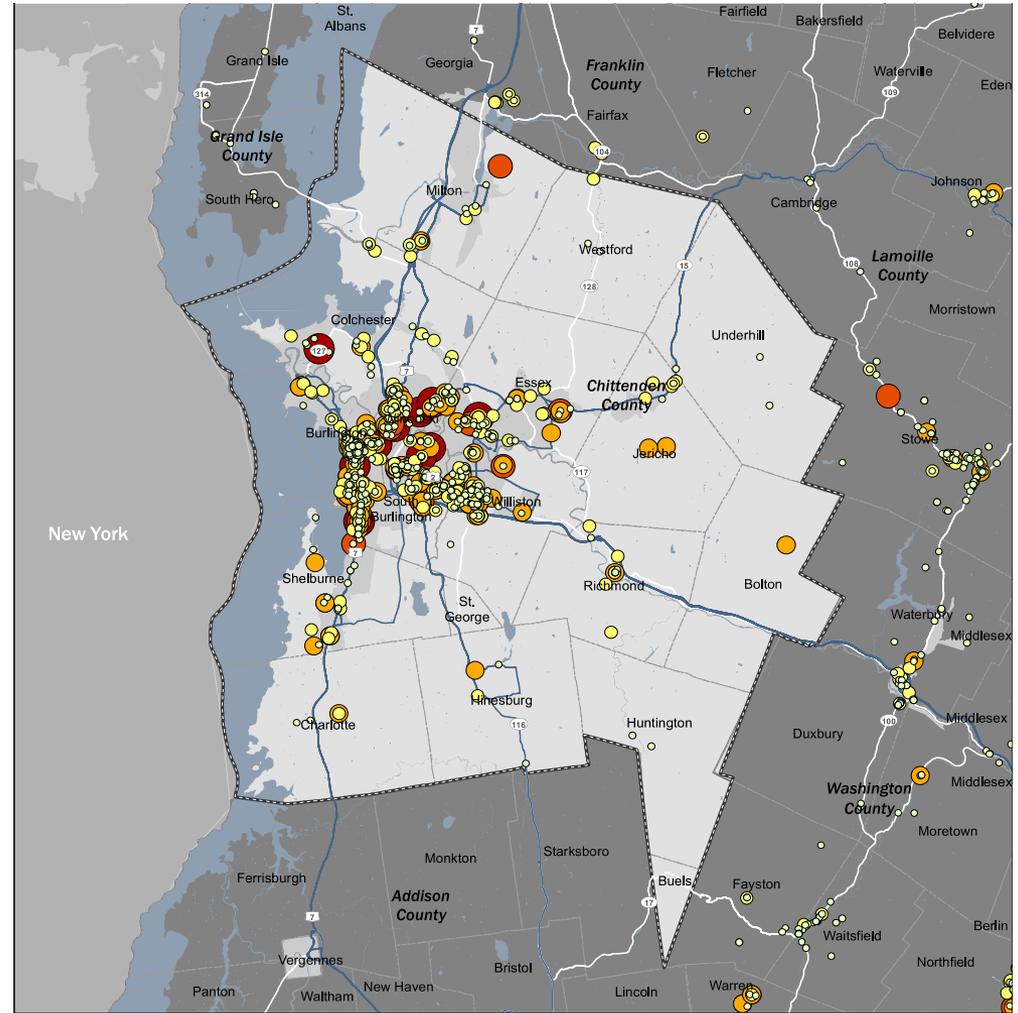
Colchester and Essex have moderate numbers but low concentrations



# Employment

Greatest concentration  
in the core area

Some moderate to large  
employers in outer ring  
towns



## Number of Employees

- 25 - 49
- 50 - 99
- 100 - 299
- 300 - 499
- 500 +

Source: Dun & Bradstreet, 2016

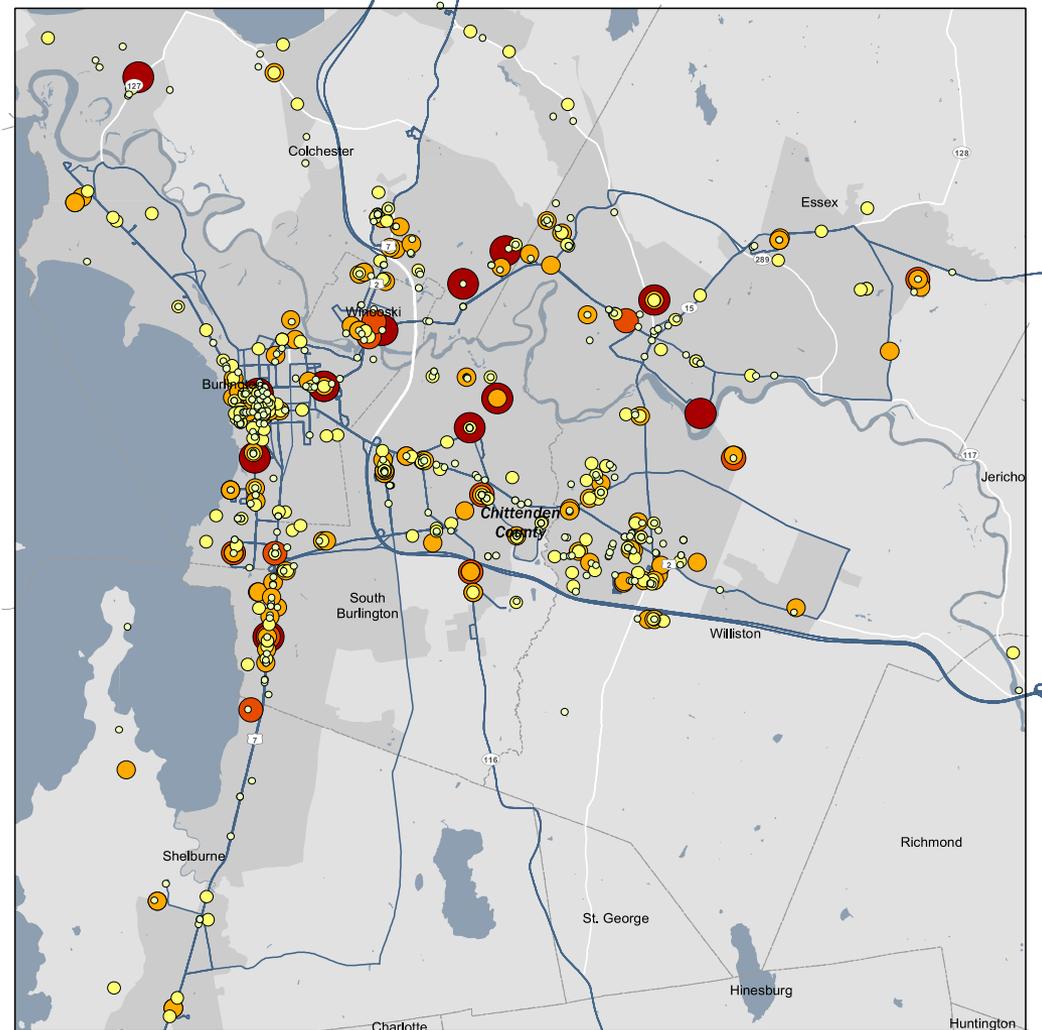
# Employment

Many large employers in all of the core communities

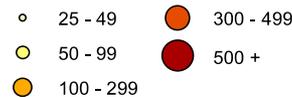
Very dense cluster in downtown Burlington

US 7, US 2 and VT 15 most important employment corridors

## Chittenden County Core



### Employers by Number of Employees



Source: Dun & Bradstreet, 2016



# Commuting

Chittenden County Core is by far the largest job center in VT – nearly 40,000 jobs

Distant communities send significant numbers:

Montpelier – 267

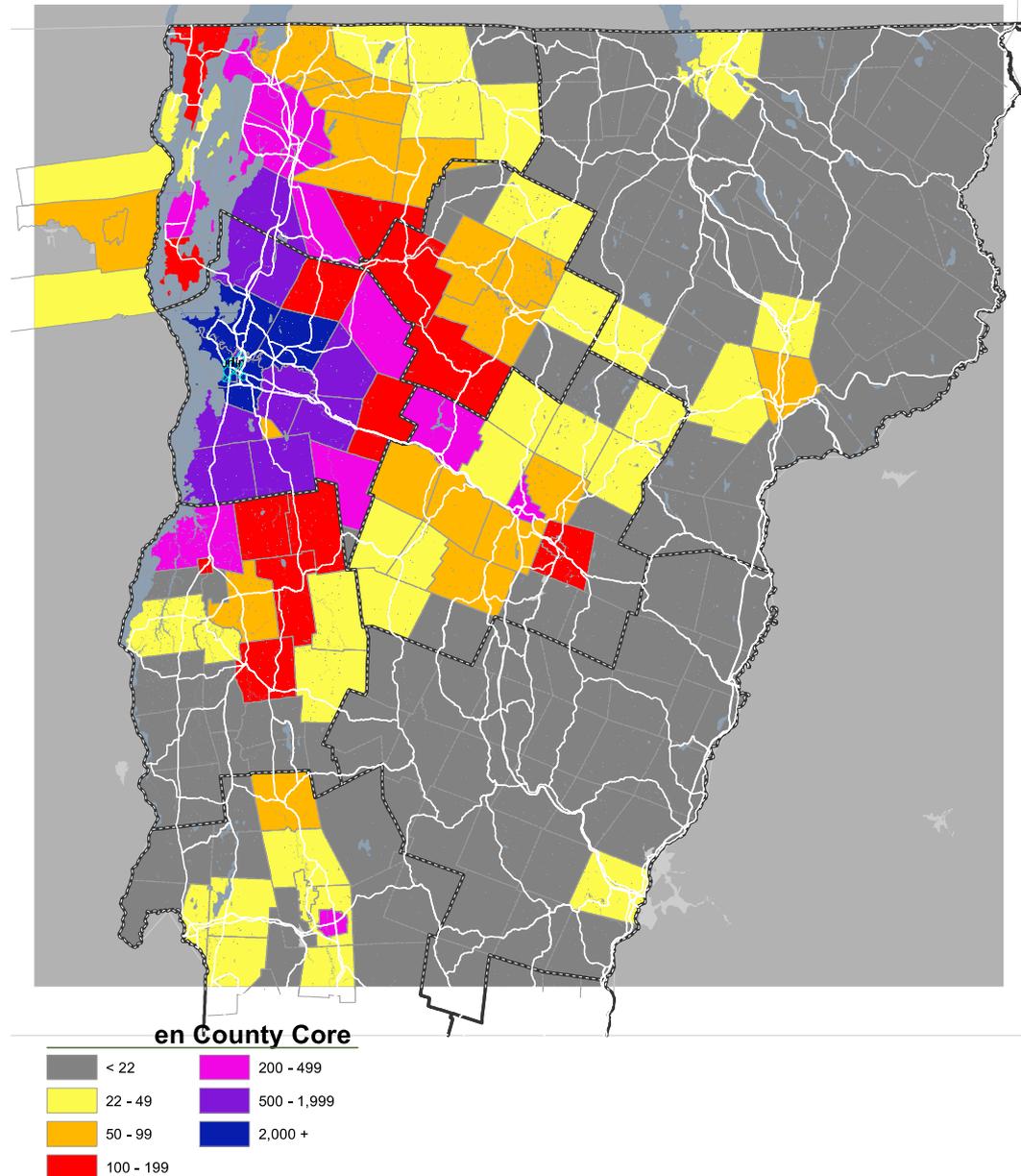
Rutland – 231

Barre – 133

Barre Town - 132

Alburgh – 115

St. Johnsbury – 65





# 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 for E&D Program

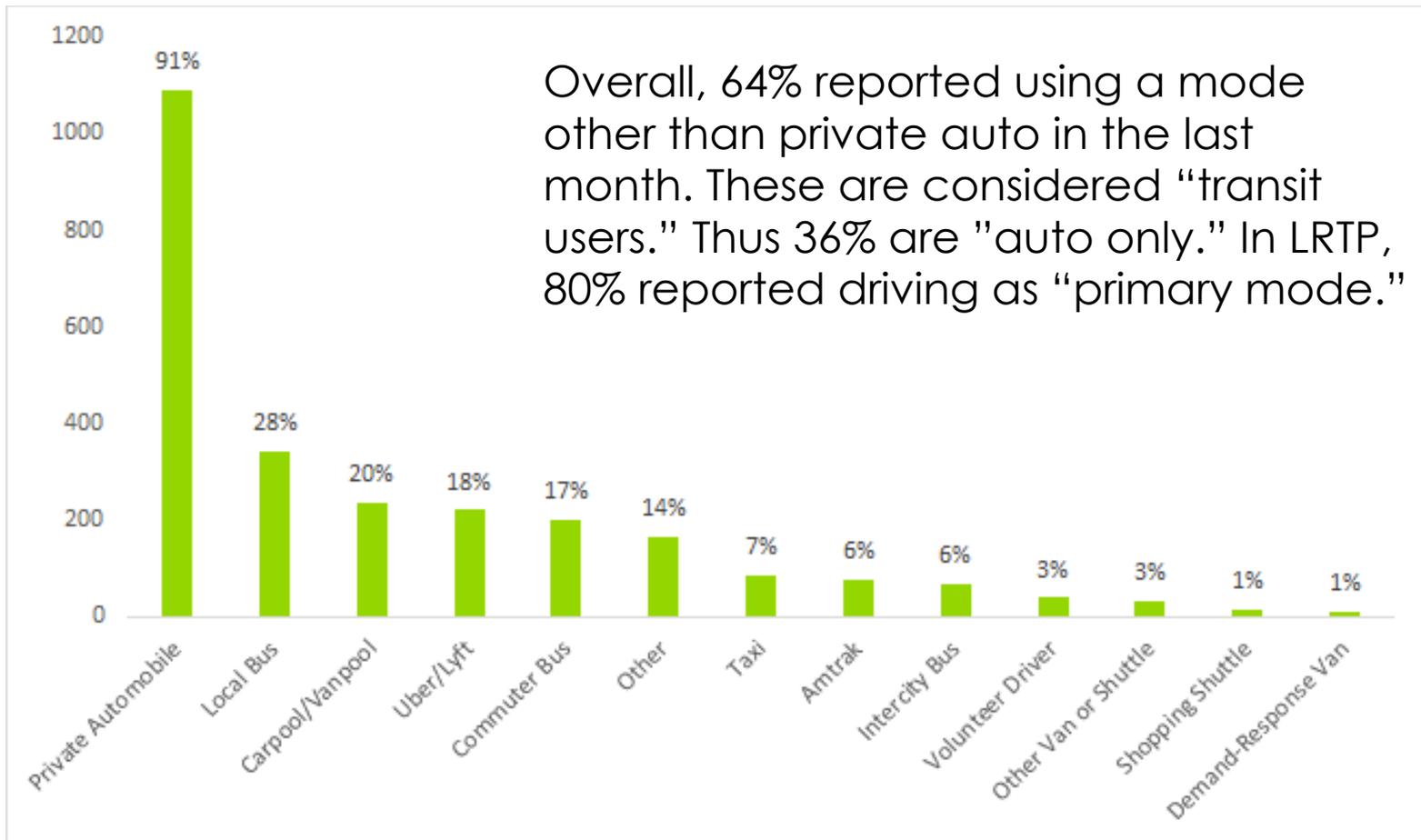
- Trip limits in some regions not compatible with needs
  - Critical medical care and adult day health
  - Shopping and congregate meals
  - Wellness trips
  
- Financial resources to bring other human service partners into the program are not available
  
- Volunteer driver programs are crucial and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



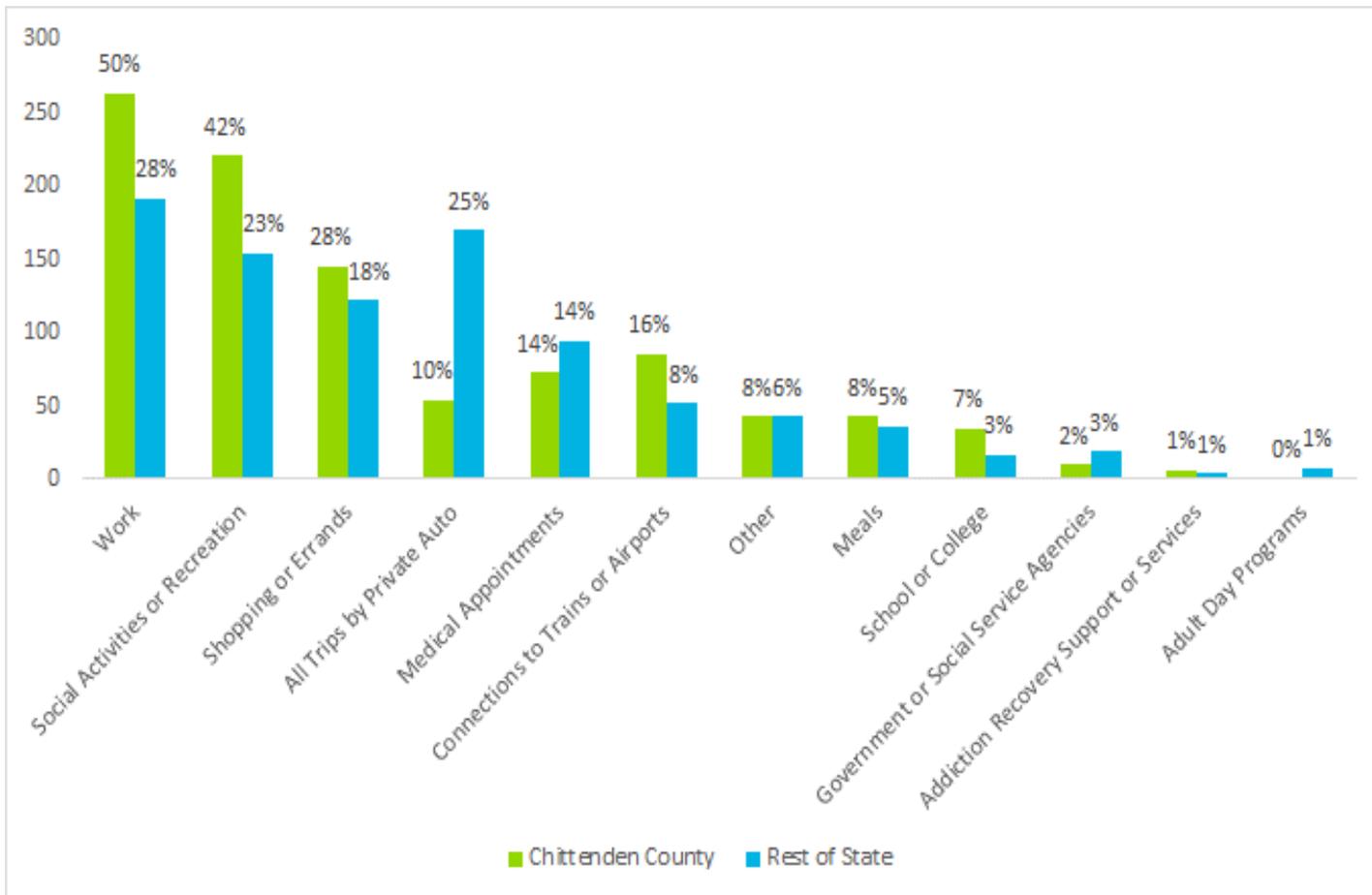
# Survey Highlights

- MetroQuest is widely used online engagement tool
  - Complements regional meetings and interviews
  - Spread word through website, social media, emails
- Sought 500 responses, but over 1,200 (Round 1) and 2,000 (Round 2) responses obtained
- Not a statistically valid sample
  - Likely reflects people with an interest in public transit
  - Not weighted to reflect Vermont demography
- Comparisons to 2016 LRTP Survey
  - 2,496 responses, weighted by demographics
  - Based on random sample of addresses

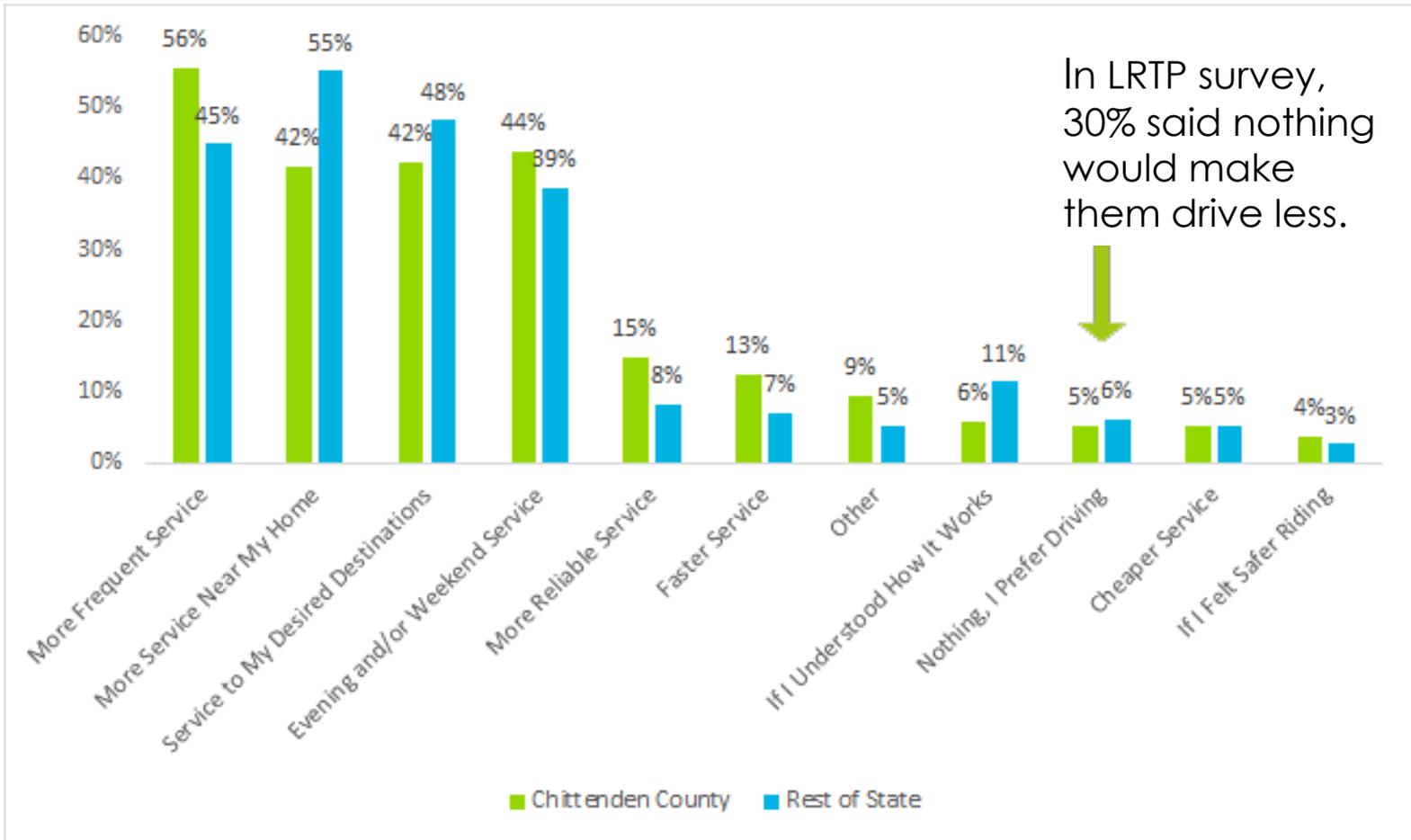
# Modes of Transportation Used



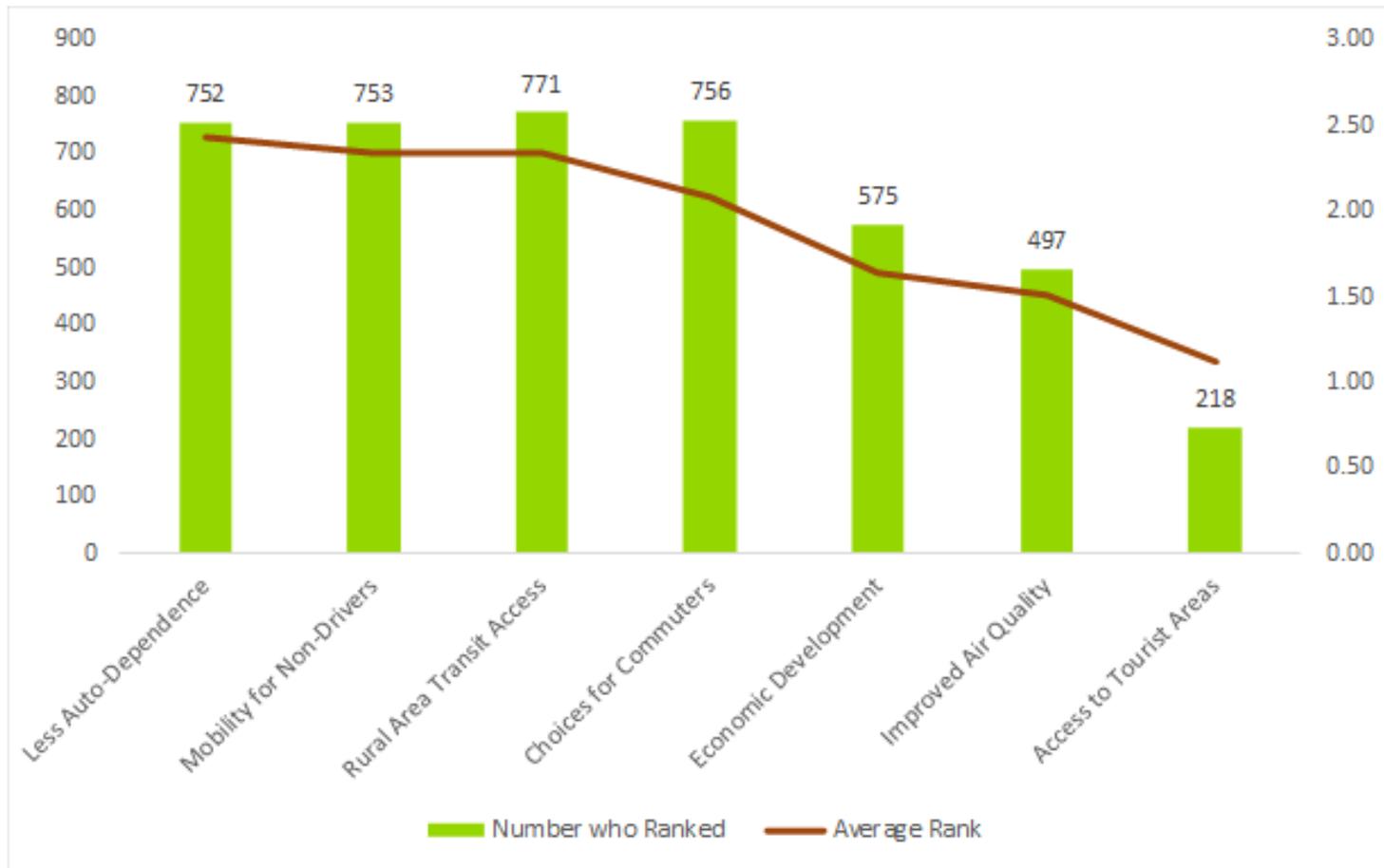
# Purposes of Transit Trips



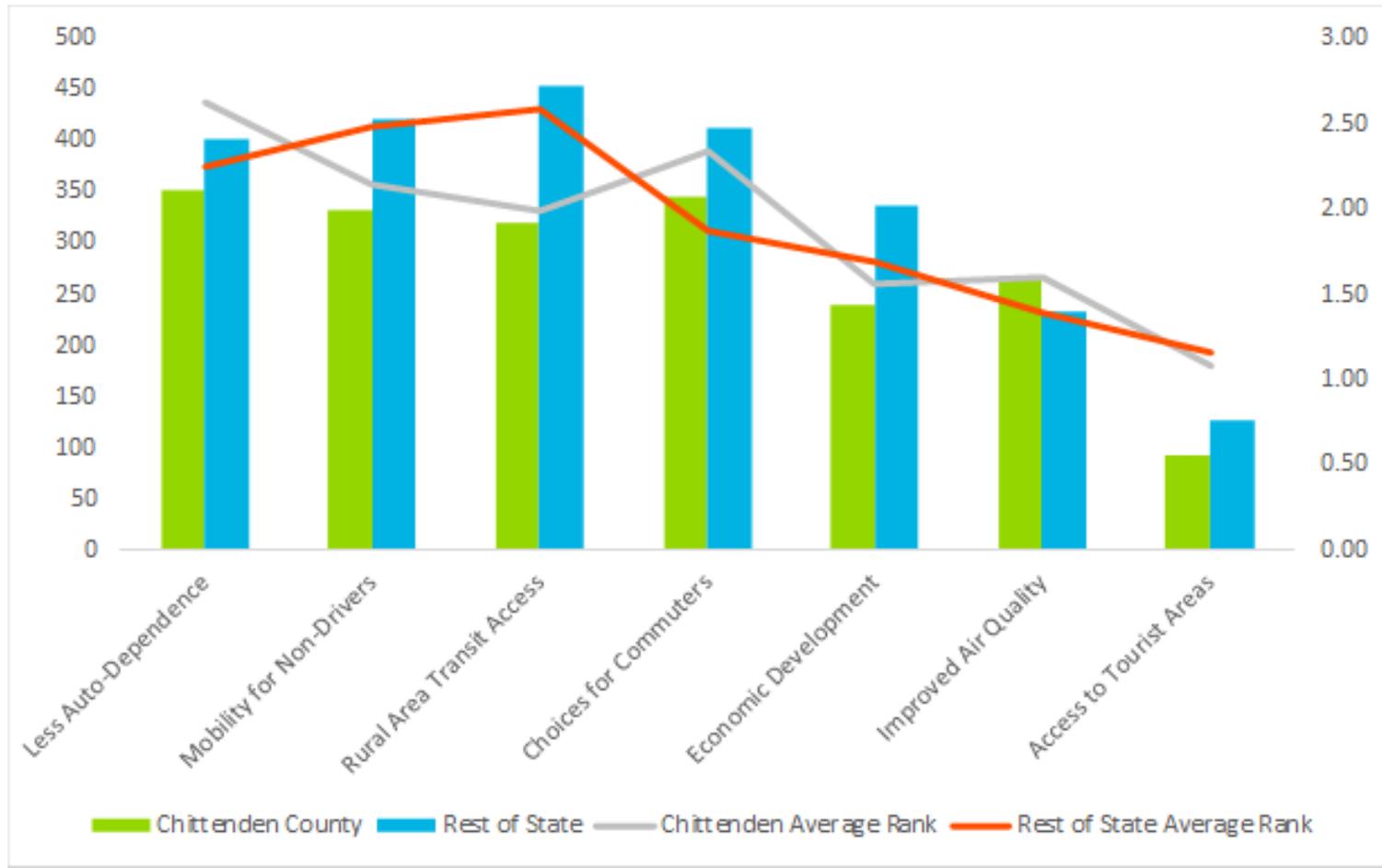
# What would encourage you to use transit more often?



# Policy Ranking from MetroQuest



# Chittenden Cty. vs. Rest of State





# Existing Goals: 24 V.S.A. §5083

- (1) Provision for basic mobility for transit-dependent persons, as defined in the current public transit policy plan, including meeting the performance standards for urban, suburban, and rural areas...
- (2) Expanding public transit service in rural areas and increasing ridership statewide. (NEW IN 2019)
- (3) Access to employment, including creation of demand-response service.
- (4) Congestion mitigation to preserve air quality, decrease greenhouse gas emissions\*, and sustain the highway network. (\*NEW IN 2019)
- (5) Advancement of economic development objectives, including services for workers and visitors that support the travel and tourism industry...



# 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



# Proposed Goals

- (1) Providing basic mobility for transit-dependent people. Basic mobility allows for access to essential services including medical care (including mental health and dental services), food (grocery shopping and congregate meals), day care for children and older adults, and social and wellness resources.
- (2) Providing access to employment both for people who are not able to drive themselves and for people who choose to use transit vehicles and other shared-ride services to avoid congestion and the cost of automobile commuting
- (3) Expanding public transit service in rural areas for all trip purposes, making use of the most cost-effective means of serving low-density areas.
- (4) Providing convenient mobility choices to reduce the dependence on private automobiles, thereby reducing traffic congestion, preserving air quality, decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and sustaining the viability of the highway network.
- (5) Supporting economic development in urban and rural areas, including services for workers and visitors that support the travel and tourism industry.



# 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

- Create working committee with AHS to address mobility issues for vulnerable Vermonters
- More comprehensive planning for E&D program
  - Work with E&D Committees to establish annual work plans
  - Implement statewide E&D riders satisfaction survey
  - Pilot additional performance monitoring methods such as determining and tracking unmet needs
  - Set up annual statewide meeting
  - Share best practices: coordination, low-cost trips, volunteer management
- Establish Personal Mobility Accounts
  - Expand Ticket To Ride statewide
  - Allow for deposits, gifts and possibly ride credits



# Expansion of Transit Access

- Spur growth of volunteer driver programs
  - Check box on VT vehicle registration form to register
  - Streamline background check process
  - Non-monetary incentives
  - Increase marketing budget
  - Support additional recruitment/retention efforts
  
- Expand access to healthcare
  - Expand Rides to Wellness statewide
  - Encourage financial participation from healthcare providers
  
- Expand access to employment
  - Increase awareness of carpool/vanpool (Go Vermont)
  - Enlist support of employers in new JobRides program
  - Create “late bus” for shift workers
  - Support additional partnerships with TNCs, volunteer groups, etc. where available



# Expansion of Transit Access cont.

- ❑ Expand local connections (first mile/last mile access)
  - ❑ Bike share and e-scooters where and when appropriate
  - ❑ Microtransit where appropriate
- ❑ Expand access to available seats in transit vehicles
- ❑ Expand funding pool overall – more service needed
  - ❑ Federal, state, local and private sector
  - ❑ To support improvements in
    - ❑ Geographic coverage
    - ❑ Span of service
    - ❑ More types (purposes) of trips



# Outreach and Raising Awareness

- Continue investment in Go Vermont
  - Increase marketing and awareness
  - Create interactive map of bus routes
  - Explore new program models and staffing
- VTrans-sponsored project to document stories of the value of public transit
- Establish statewide “ambassadors” program
- Create informational brochure: “How Transit Works in Vermont”
- Continue/expand partnerships and activities to raise awareness
  - Partners include AARP, State agencies, elected officials, Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), Vermont Public Radio/Television



# Next Generation Ride Scheduling

- Work with microtransit companies to enhance software
  - Multi-program integration (Medicaid, E&D, client-pay, etc.)
  - Multi-resource integration (vans, taxis, volunteer drivers, bus routes, TNCs)
- Use expanded volunteer driver pool as a resource statewide
- Link to Personal Mobility Accounts



# Long-term Concepts

- Continue to work with state, regional and local agencies to integrate transit into land use planning
  - Continue to promote objectives from LRTP
    - Maintain and strengthen the vitality of Vermont's villages and downtowns.
    - Make transportation investments that promote active transportation and reduce social isolation.
- Invest in workforce development for transit provider staffing
- Support electrification of transit vehicle fleet



# 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](http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP)
- ❑ Please forward comments and questions to Jackie Cassino at: [jackie.cassino@Vermont.gov](mailto:jackie.cassino@Vermont.gov)