



Public Transit Policy Plan

November 21, 2019

Rutland Regional Planning Commission-TAC

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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.

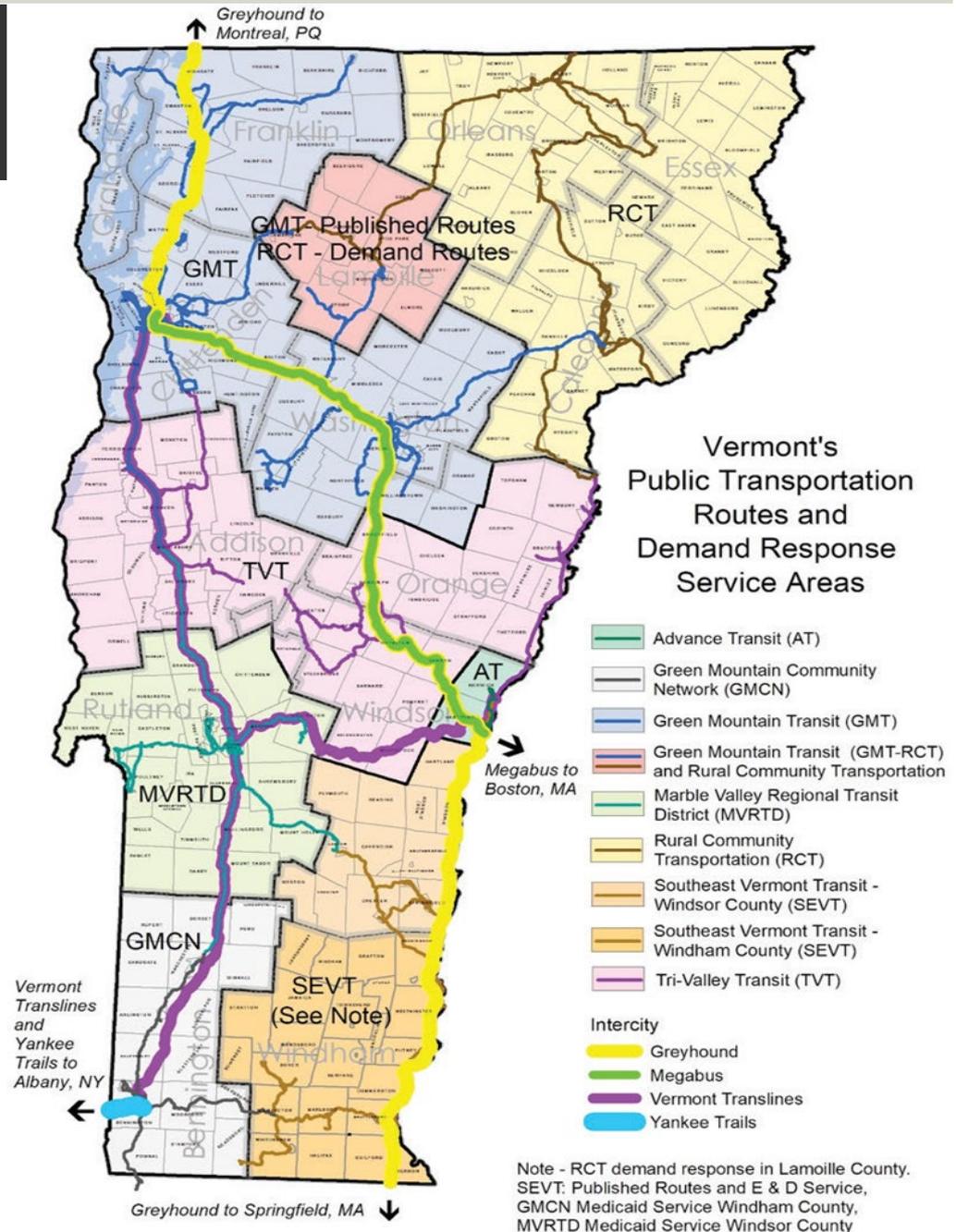


Goals of the Project

- ❑ 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

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





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

The Bus (MVRTD)

5 routes in Rutland City

6 regional routes

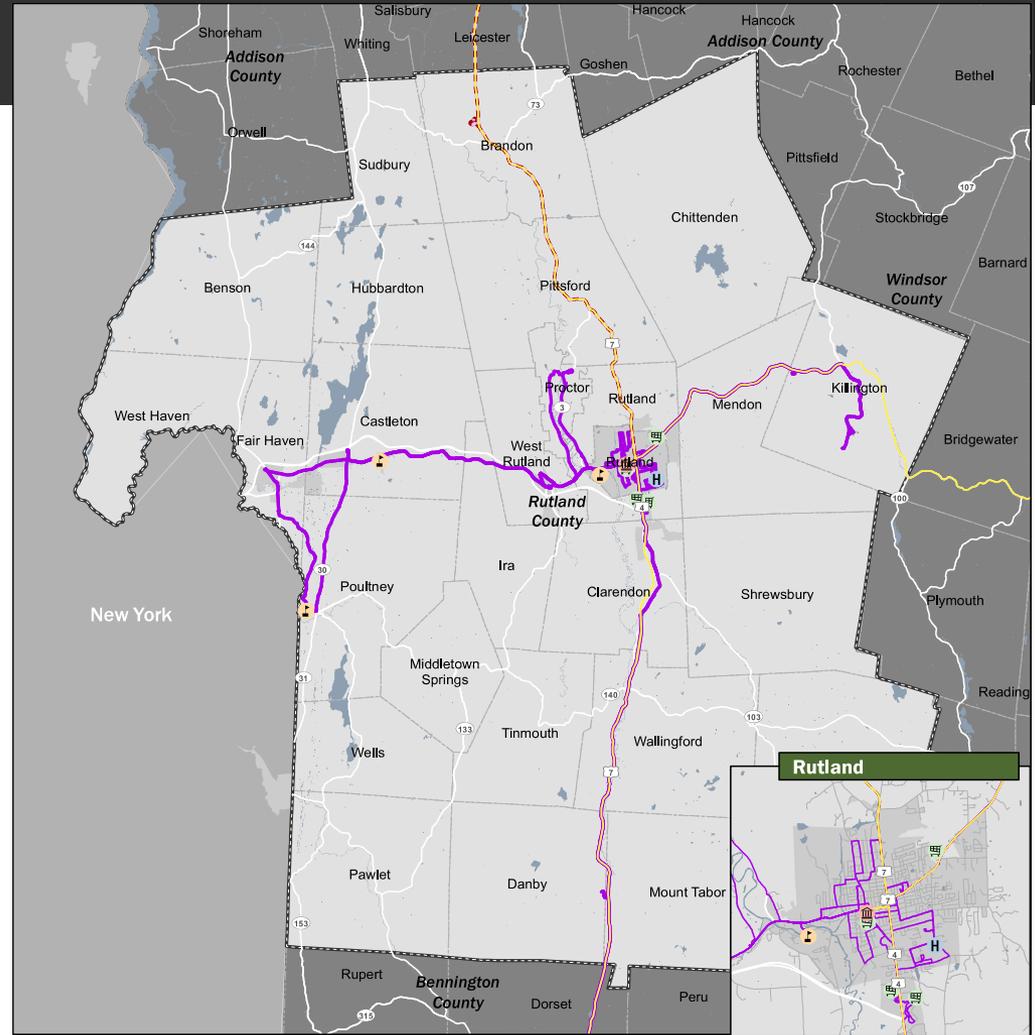
ACTR

Shared service on US 7 to
Middlebury

Vermont Translines

US 7 intercity route

US 4 intercity route



Transit Propensity

Components of Index

Youth

Older adults

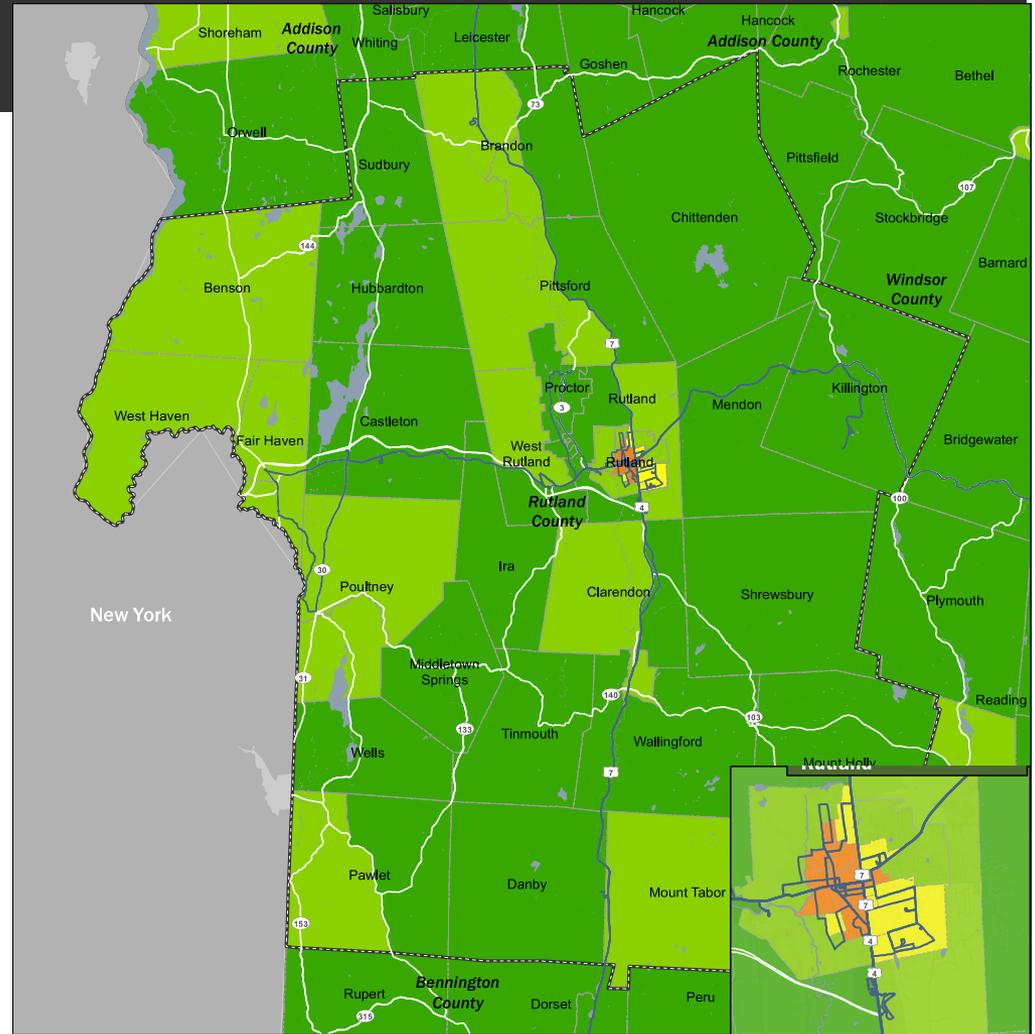
Persons with disabilities

Households with 0-1 cars

Low-income persons

High propensity seen in
Rutland City

Several towns in
Low/Moderate range



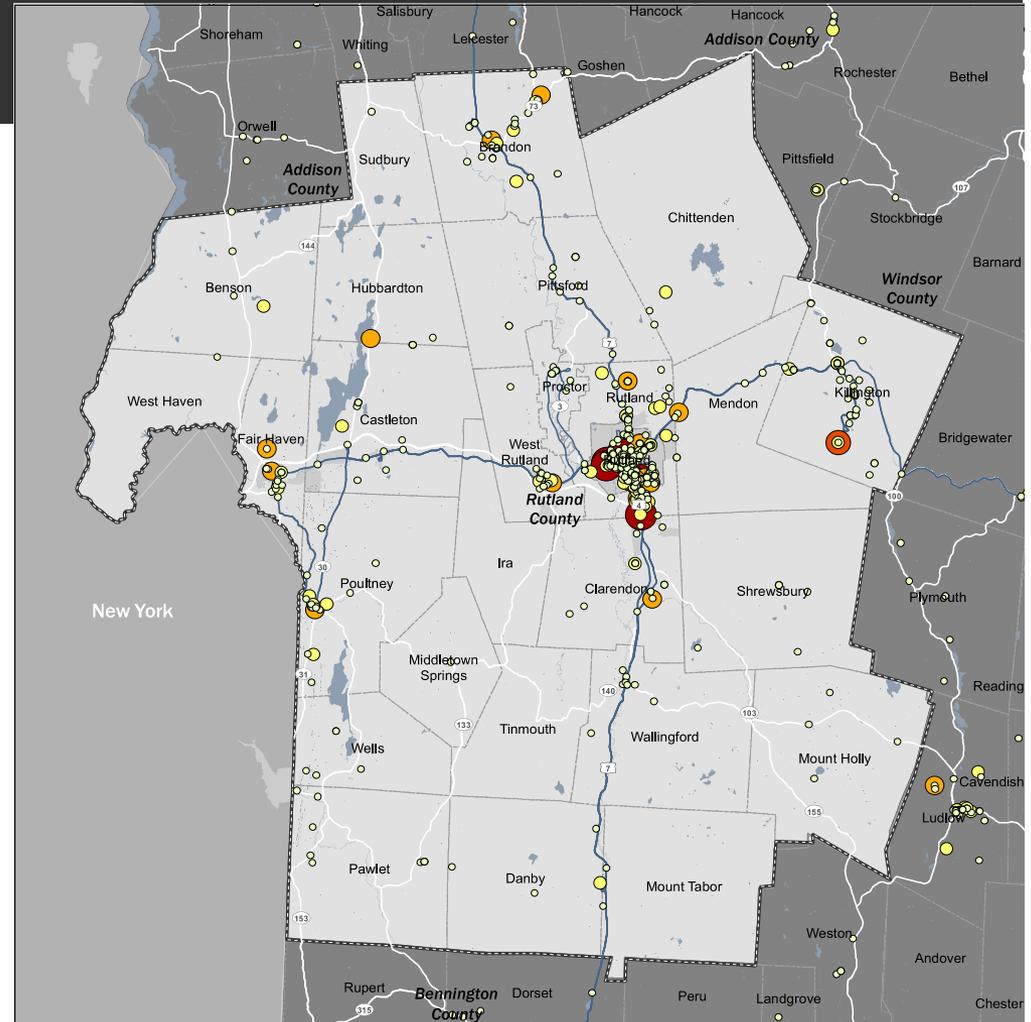
Employment

Highest concentration in
Rutland City

Moderate clusters in
Killington, Poultney, Fair
Haven, Brandon

Large employers in
Hubbardton, Clarendon

Few small employers (<100
employees) scattered in
rural towns



● 50 - 99

Commuting

Rutland County Region

Rutland draws significant numbers from surrounding towns in VT and New York

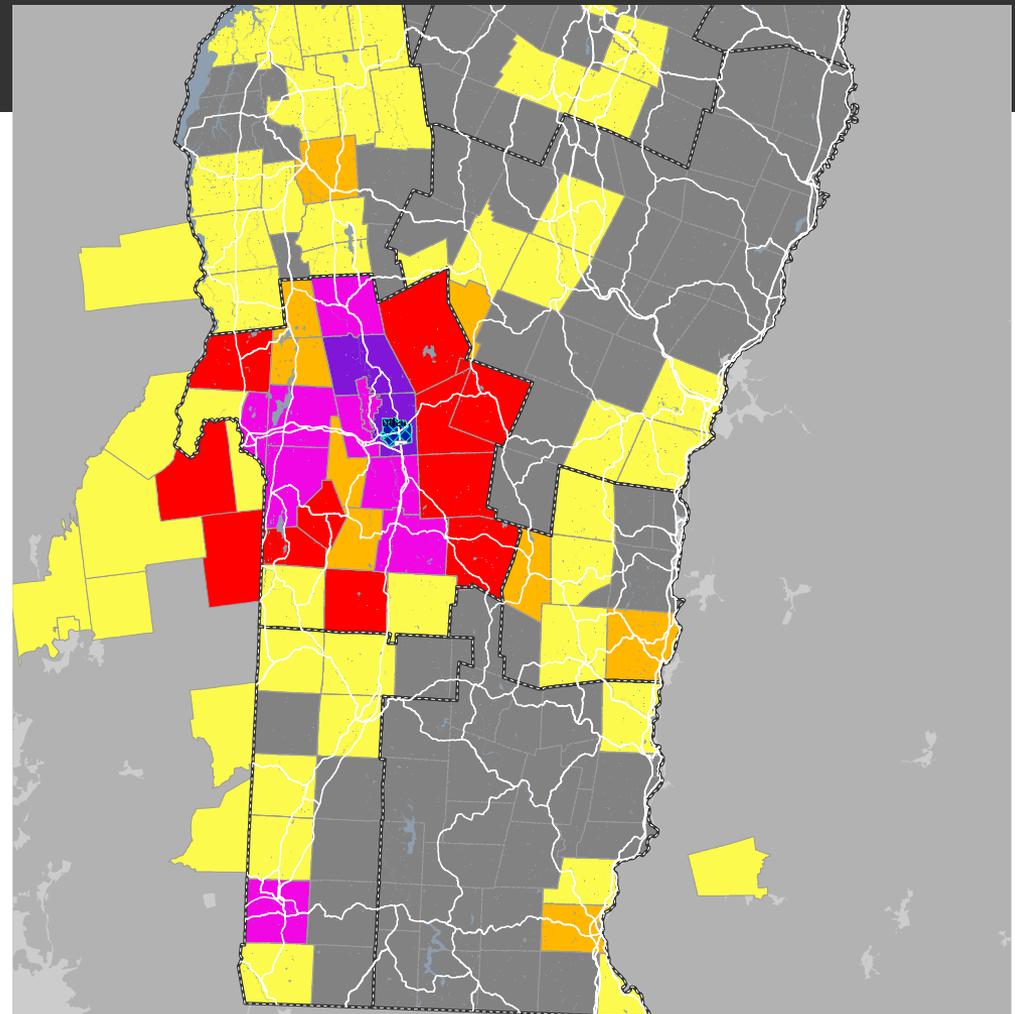
Distant communities send significant numbers:

Bennington – 204

Burlington – 104

Brattleboro – 71

Springfield – 61



Commuters to Rutland



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Municipal Boundary

Commuting

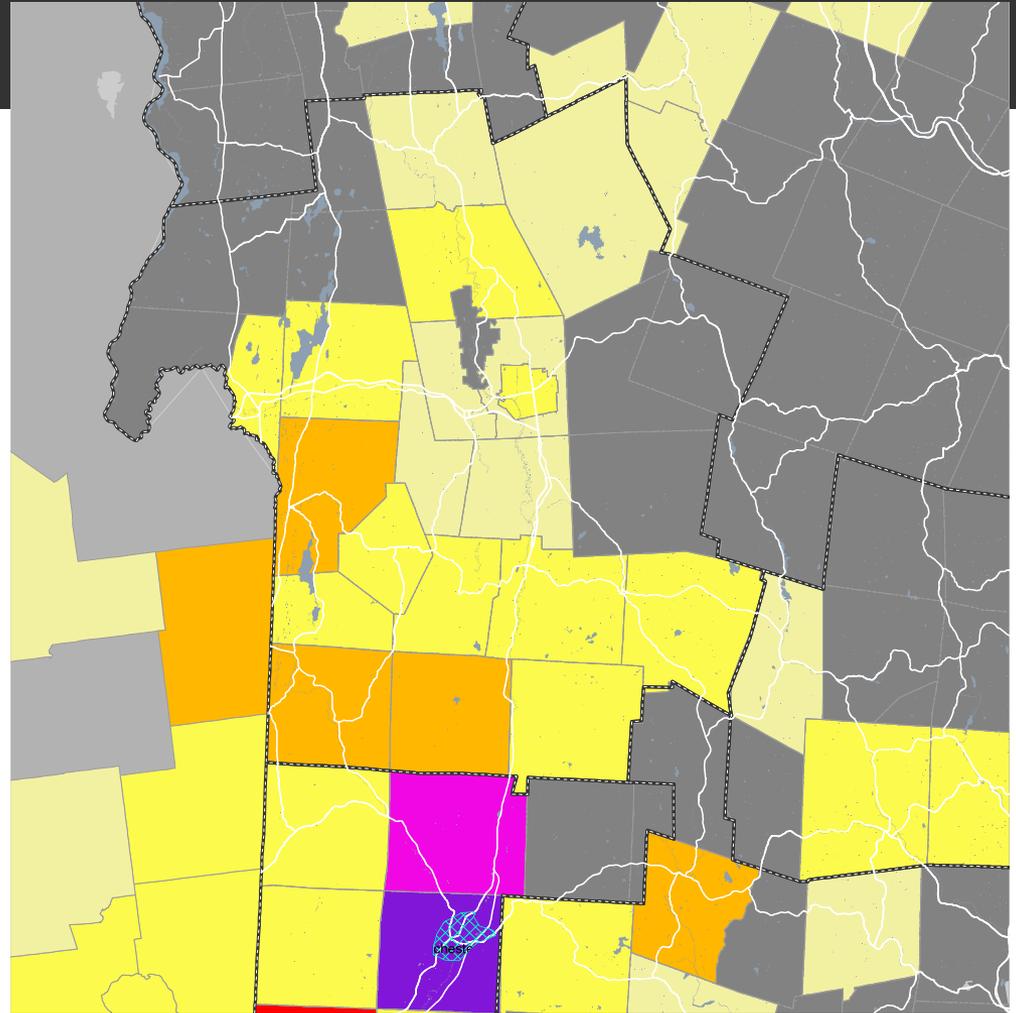
Many residents of southern Rutland County commute to Manchester

Poultney

Pawlet

Danby

Relatively fast and uncongested part of US 7 between Clarendon and Manchester



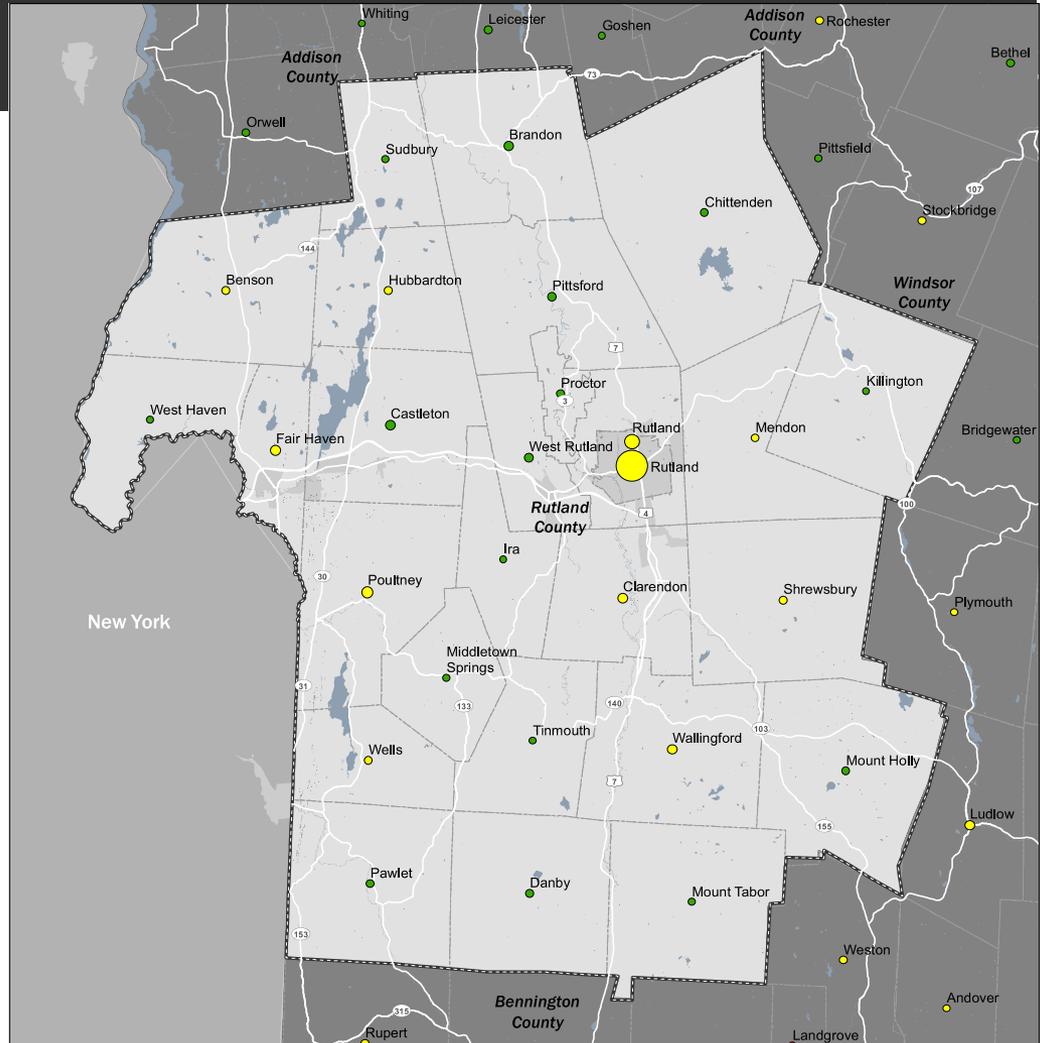
Older Adults

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

Many small towns more than twice VT average

Rutland City is above VT average and has significant population

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



People with Disabilities

Includes four types of disabilities

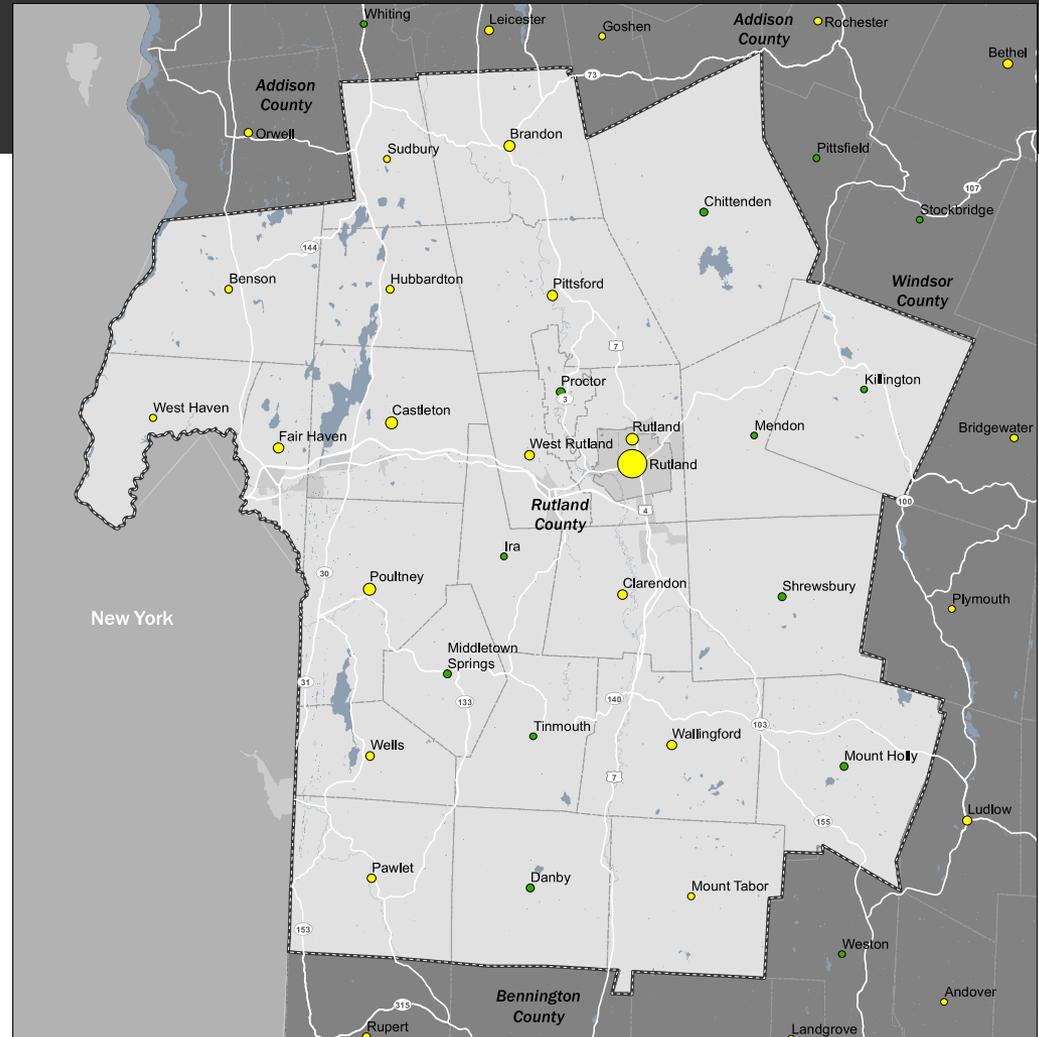
Hearing

Vision

Cognition

Walking

Most towns other than eastern edge of county are above the state average



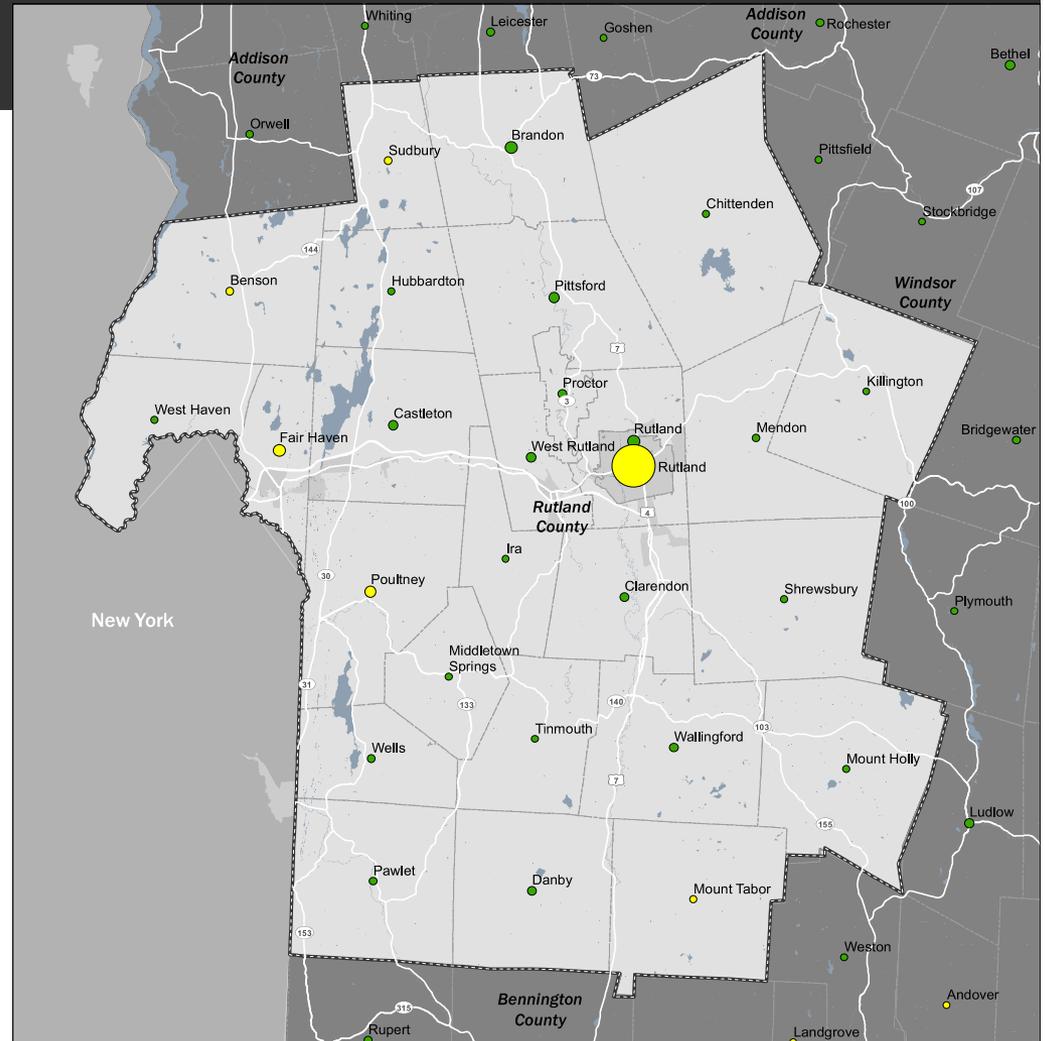
Auto Ownership

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

Large number of people in Rutland City

Most towns below state average

Poultney, Fair Haven and Benson exceptions

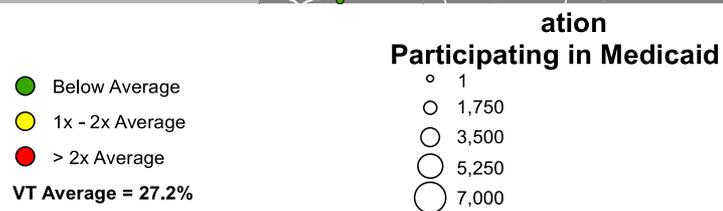
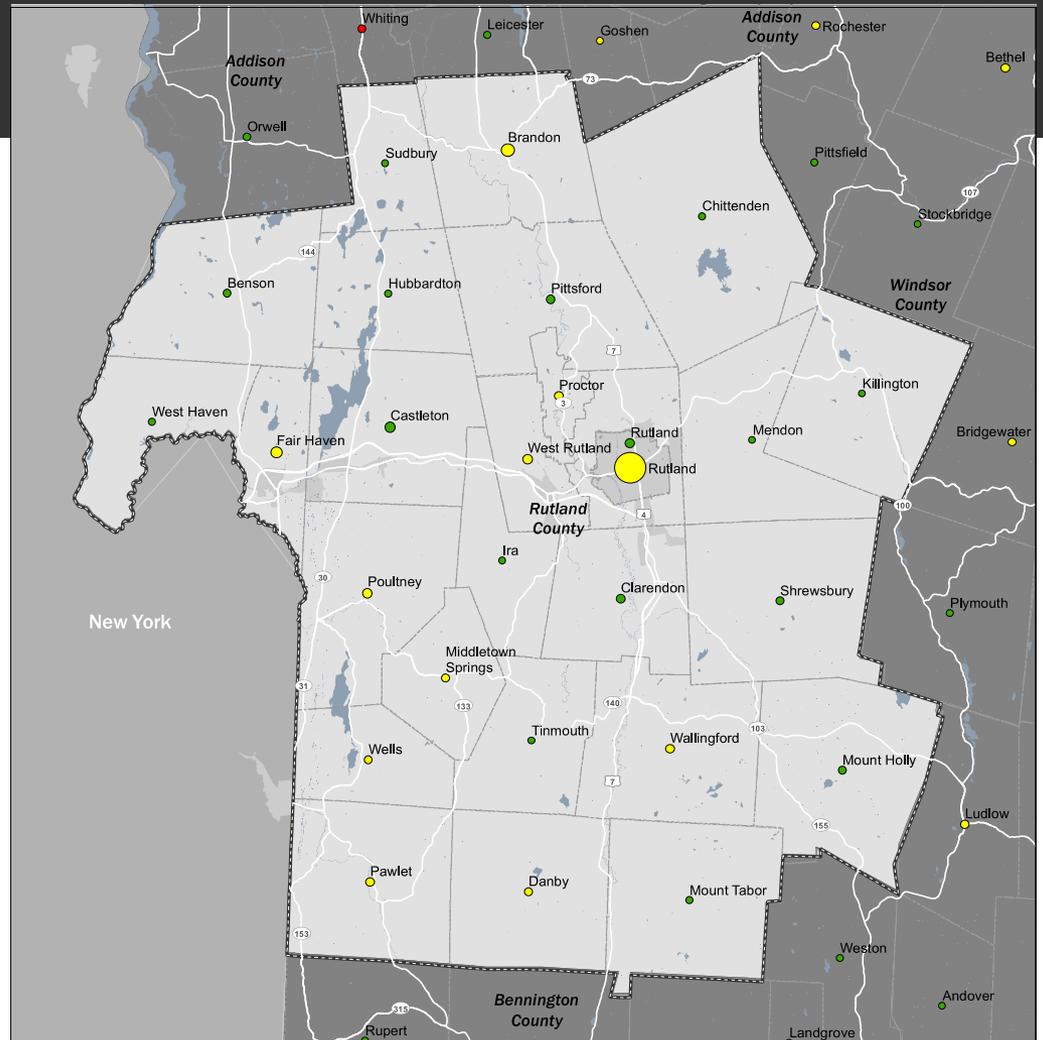


**Total Households with
1 Person & 0 Cars or
2+ People & 0-1 Cars**

Medicaid

Rutland, Fair Haven, Poultney and Brandon above average plus other smaller towns.

Eastern edge and northwest corner of county below average





Themes Across Regions

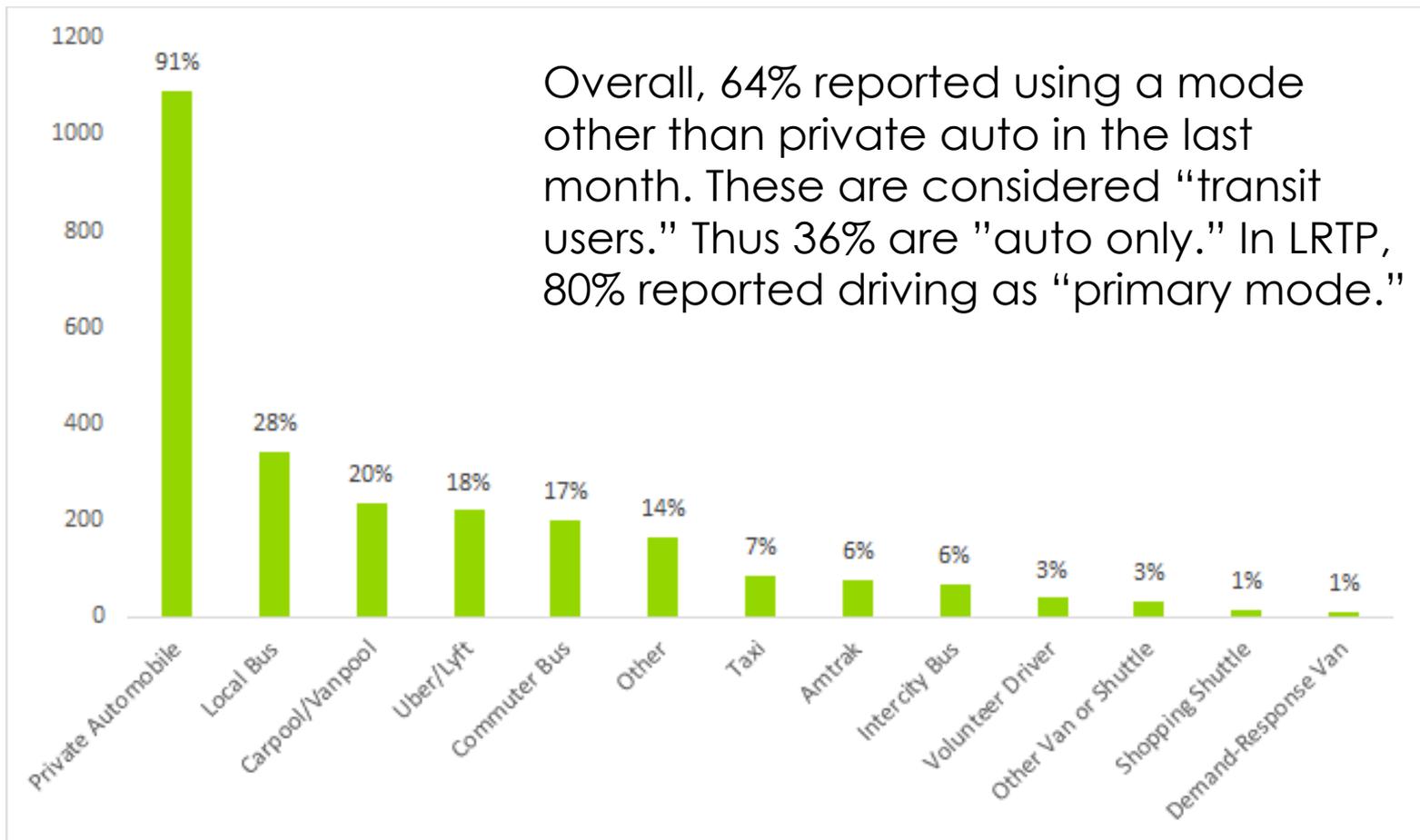
- Workforce development/access to jobs are transportation priorities
- Rural areas need options
- More integrated walk/bike/transit/driving networks would encourage transit use
- “First mile/last mile” needs
- Existing services and resources may not be well known
- Trip limits in some regions not compatible with needs (E&D Program specific)
- Financial resources to bring other human service partners into the program are not available (E&D Program specific)
- Volunteer driver programs are crucial and need strengthening (E&D Program specific)



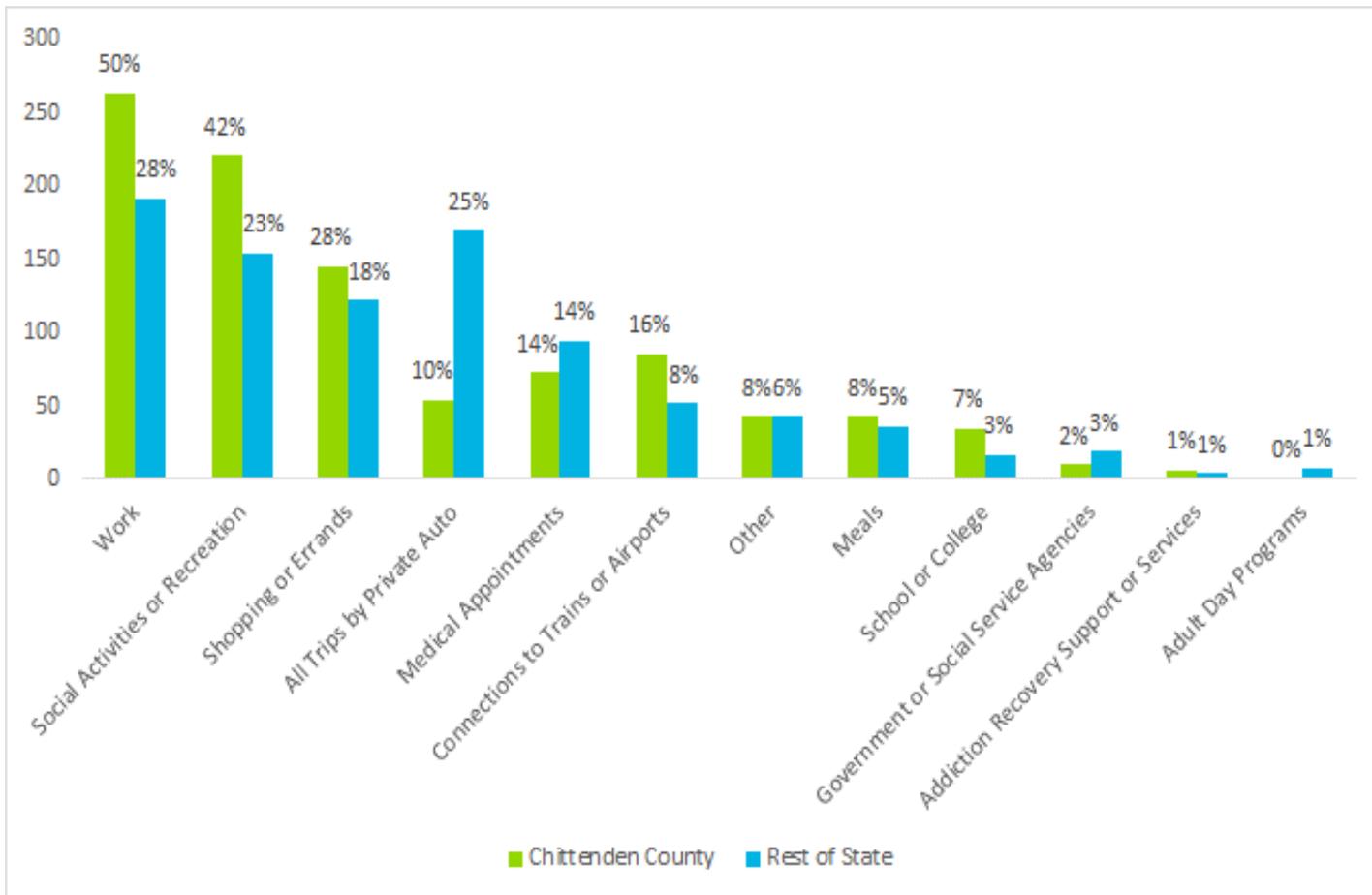
Survey Highlights

- 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

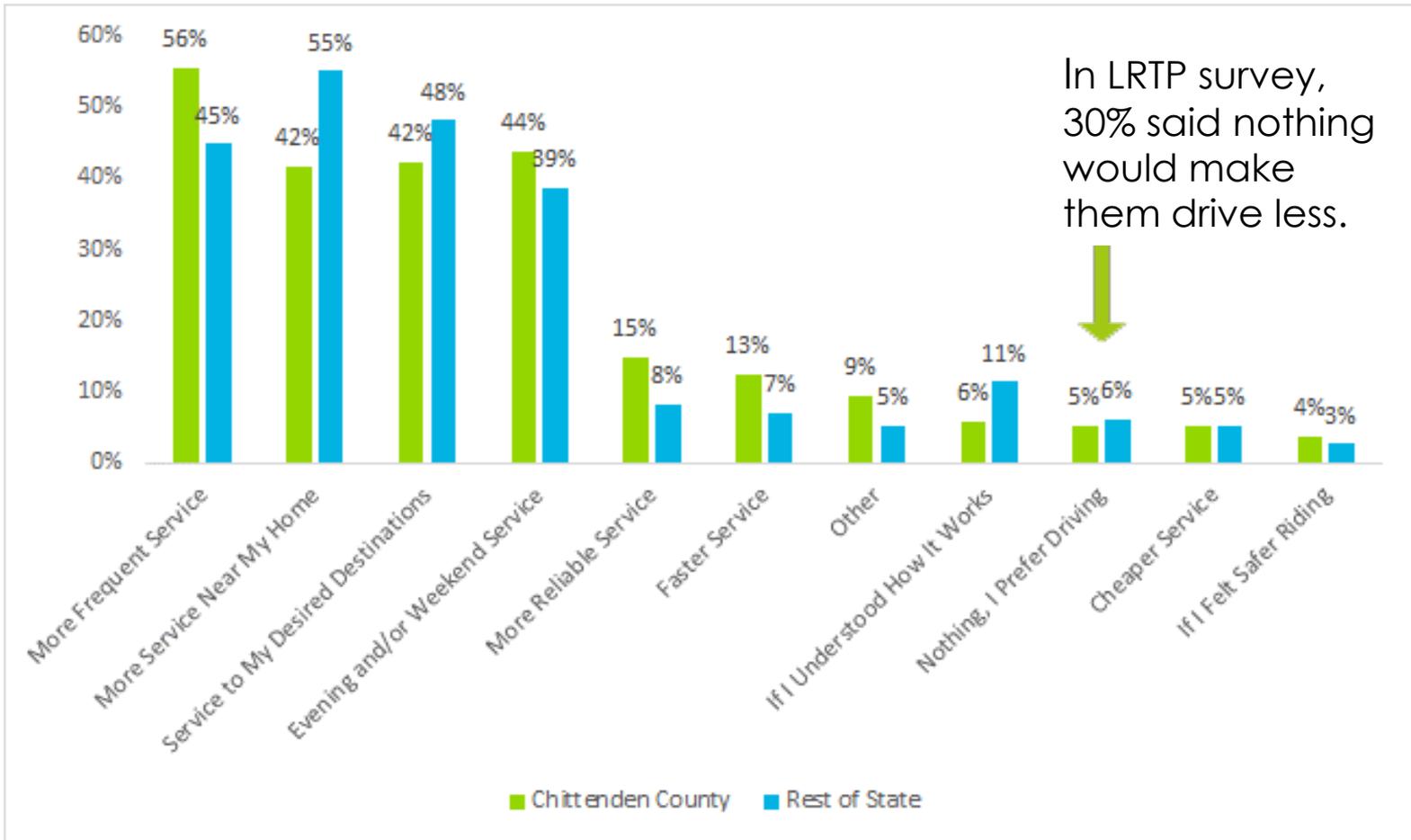
Modes of Transportation Used



Purposes of Transit Trips



What would encourage you to use transit more often?

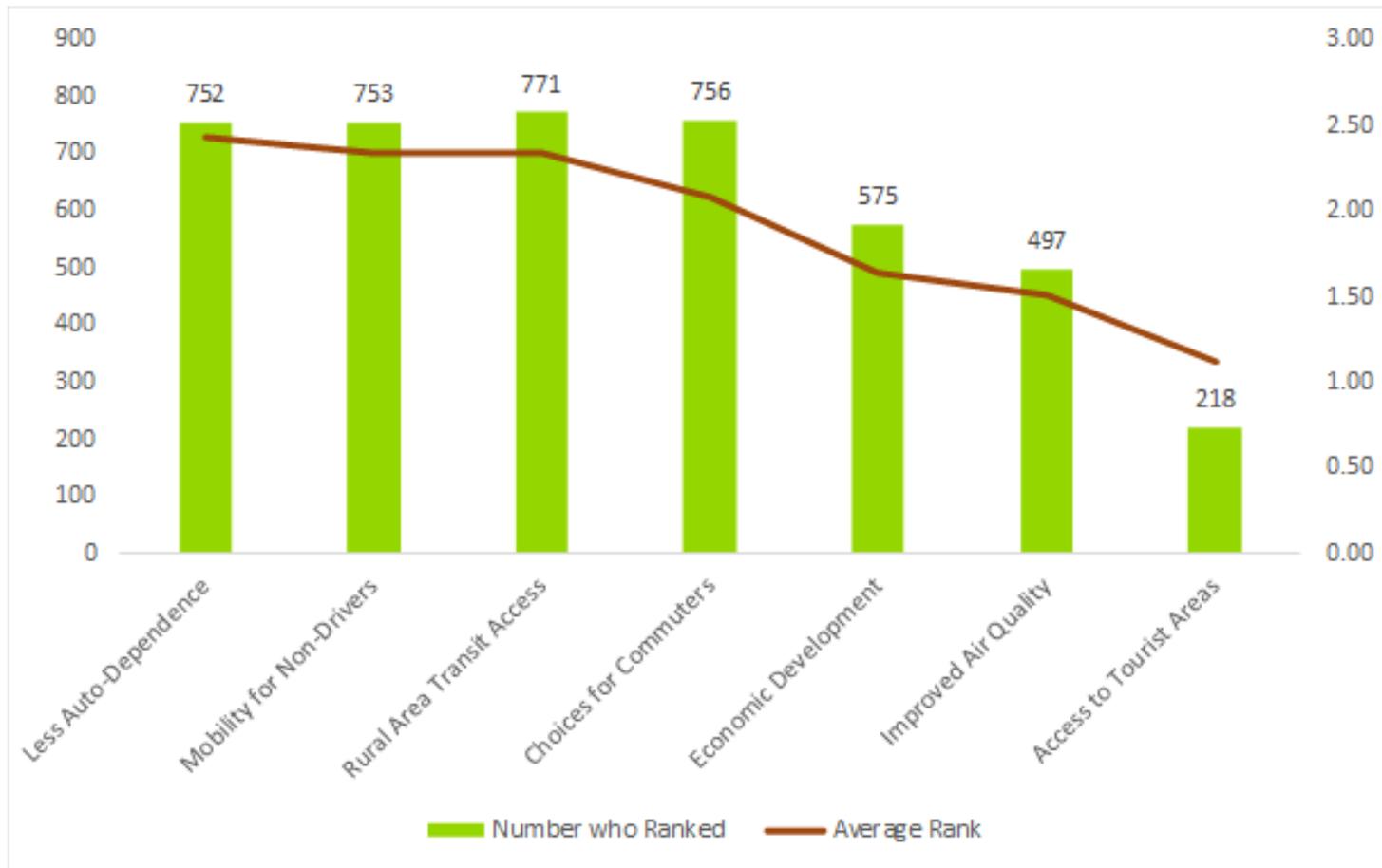




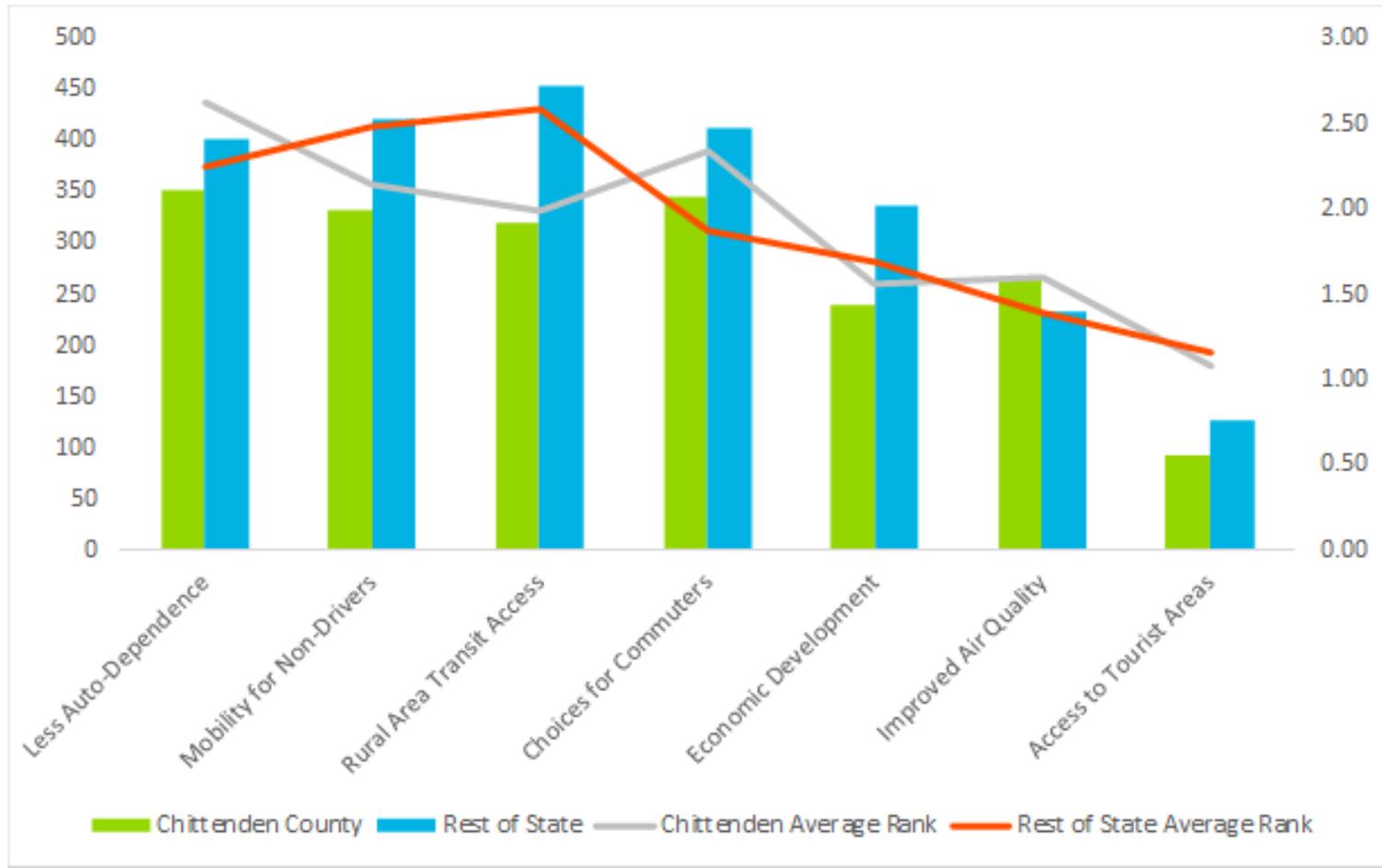
Existing Goals: 24 V.S.A. §5083

- (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...

Policy Ranking from MetroQuest



Chittenden Cty. vs. Rest of State





Needs Assessment Methodology

- Identify service gaps and unmet needs
 - Location of transit services, key destinations, population and target groups
 - Commuting patterns
 - Input from regional forums
 - Comments from interviewed stakeholders
 - MetroQuest survey responses
 - Comments from regional E&D committees
- Estimate transit market segments by age, disability, income, and likely auto access
- Estimate number of trips to address need and associated resources
- Estimate impacts of possible scenarios



Statewide Primary Needs Identified

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



Recommendation Themes

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



Addressing Aging Vermont

- 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 a version of 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
 - 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)
 - Support investment in multi-modal options (i.e. park & rides, bike/ped connectivity, bike share and e-scooters)
 - Pilot 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
- Continue/expand partnerships and activities to raise awareness



Next Generation Ride Scheduling

- Work with microtransit companies to explore enhance software models
 - 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 and development review
- ❑ Continue to provide priority scoring within existing programs for planning and capital investment in downtowns and villages
- ❑ Incorporate additional TDM principles (i.e. parking availability and cost) into transit propensity analysis
- ❑ Invest in workforce development for transit provider staffing (i.e. CDL and mechanic programs)
- ❑ 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
- ❑ Please forward comments and questions to Jackie Cassino at: jackie.cassino@Vermont.gov