



Public Transit Policy Plan

February 11, 2019

Study Advisory Committee Meeting #1



Overview

- Goals of the project
- Tasks
- Results to date
- Timeline



Goals of the Project

- Develop a 10-year vision for improved transit in Vermont
- Update state policies for public transportation
- Incorporate human service transportation coordination plan into the PTPP
- Engage the public and key stakeholders



Tasks

- ❑ Existing Conditions Assessment
- ❑ Needs Assessment
- ❑ Recommendations and Implementation
- ❑ Final Report
- ❑ Meetings and Outreach



Progress Thus Far

- Initial documentation
 - Best practices among other states
 - Summaries of prior studies and background documents
- Overview of transit program
 - Interviews with VTrans staff
- Analysis of other issues (in progress)
 - Graying of Vermont
 - Loss of economic opportunity in small towns and cities
 - Advance of technology
 - Housing location and impact on mobility



Outreach Efforts Thus Far

- Regular attendance at PTAC
- Briefings to partner organizations (DAIL, VPTA, TPI)
- Regional forums
 - Eleven across Vermont
 - Conducted October through December
- MetroQuest survey
 - 5-minute online survey
 - Get policy input and information about travel patterns, purposes and desired improvements
- Stakeholder interviews
 - Up to ten individual interviews



Future Outreach Efforts

- Presentations at RPC Transportation Advisory Committee meetings
- Attending E&D Committee meetings statewide
- Second round of MetroQuest survey to obtain feedback about potential solutions



Regional Forums – Existing Conditions

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



Regional Forums – Needs Analysis

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



Regional Forums – Potential Solutions

- Information
 - One-call/One-click system including planning and reservations
- Service Enhancements
 - Expanded service areas and hours
- Complement Existing Network
 - Volunteer driver program enhancements
- Accessibility Improvements
 - More sidewalks or curb cuts
- Technology
 - Mobile information



High Priority Solutions

- Enhancements to volunteer driver programs
- Expanded service areas
- Extended service hours
- One-call/one-click system
- Better mobile information (highest priority in Chittenden)



MetroQuest Survey

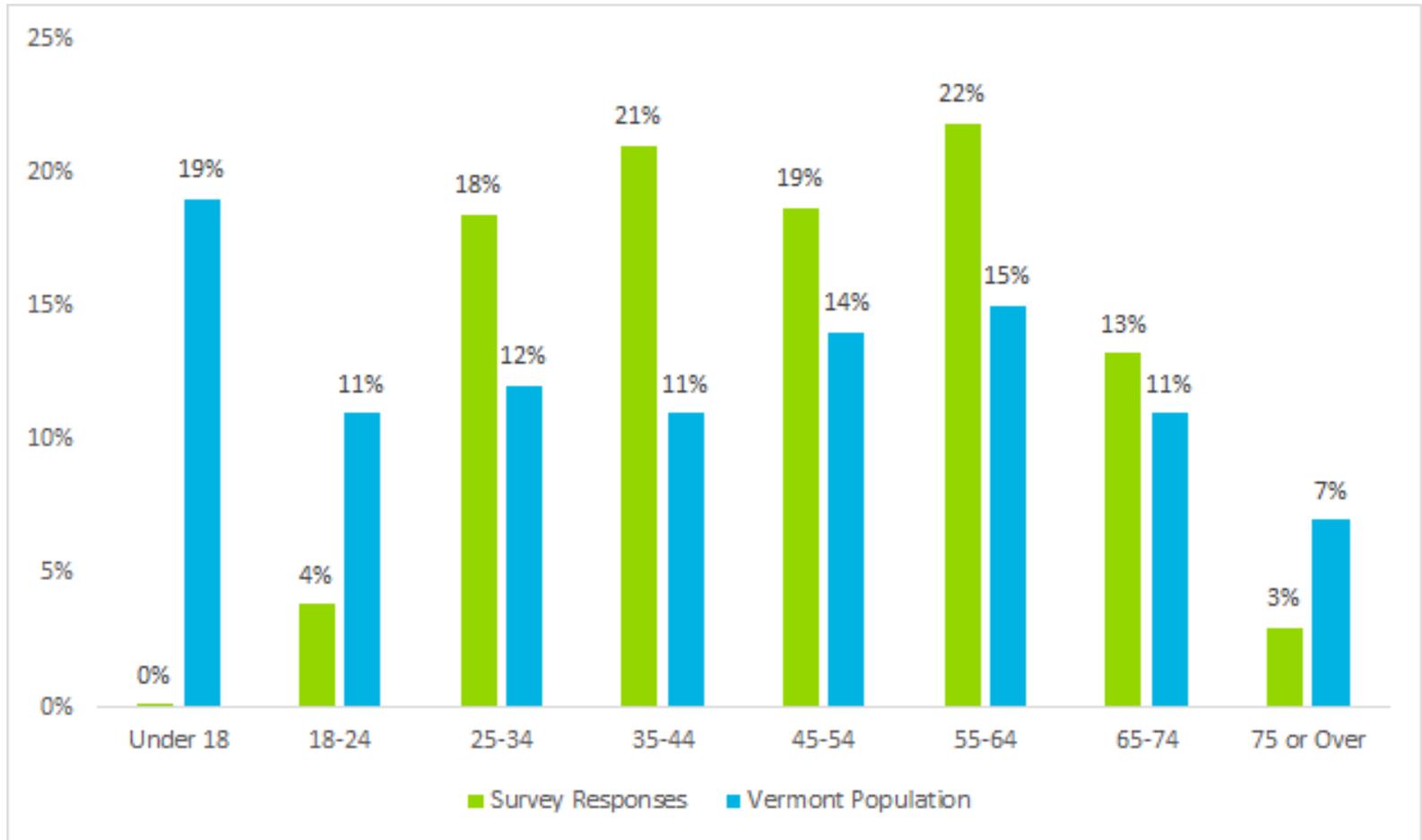
- Widely used online engagement tool
 - Complements regional meetings and interviews
 - Spread word through website, social media, emails
- Sought 500 responses, but over 1,200 responses obtained
- Not a statistically valid sample
 - Likely reflects people with an interest in public transit
 - Not weighted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



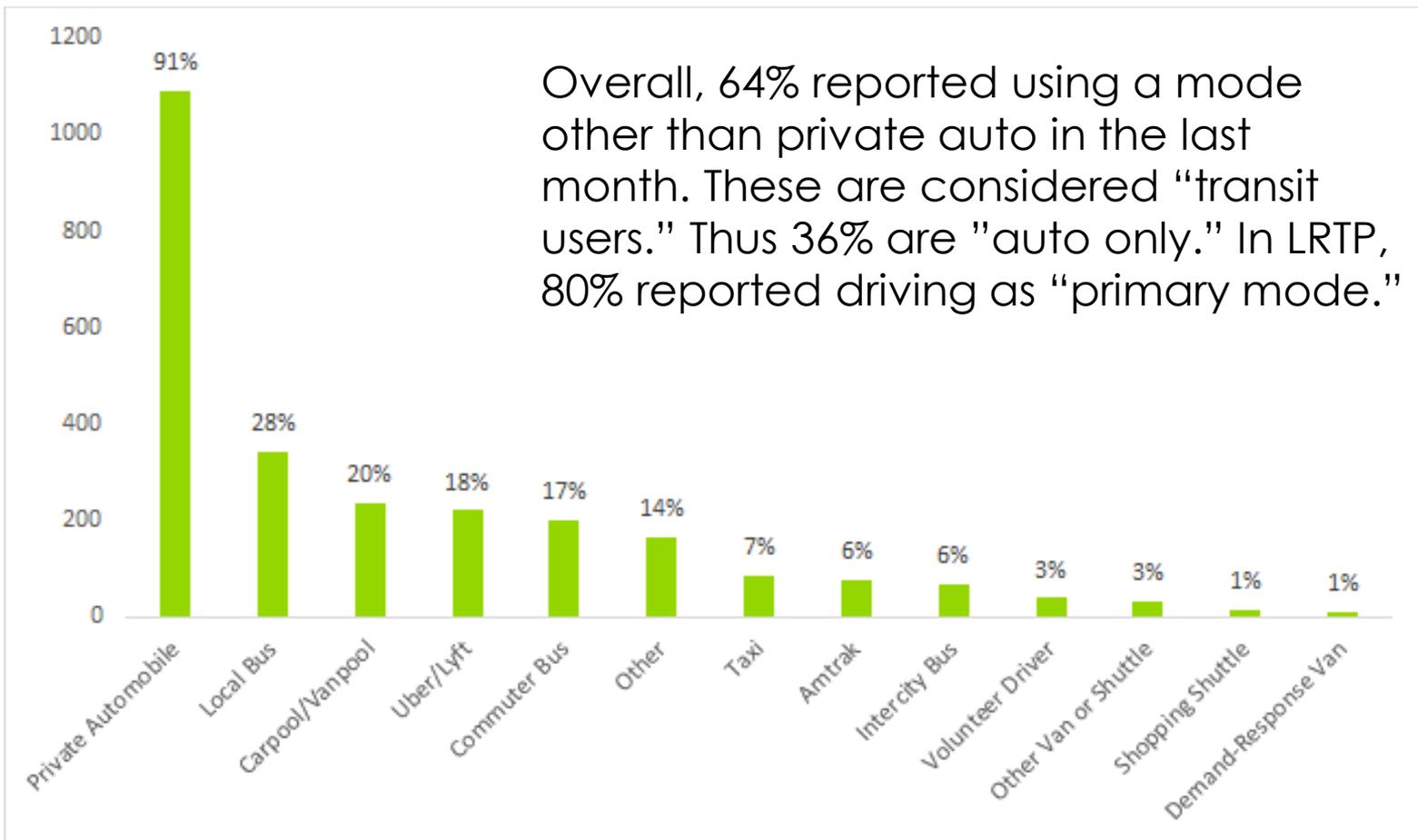
Who participated in MetroQuest?

- 44% of surveys came from Chittenden County (26% of the population)
- 136 Vermont municipalities represented in the sample overall
- 80% of respondents were “working age” 25 to 64
- 59% of respondents had incomes between \$50K and \$150K
- 47% of respondents were in households with two cars; 15% live in households with more than two cars

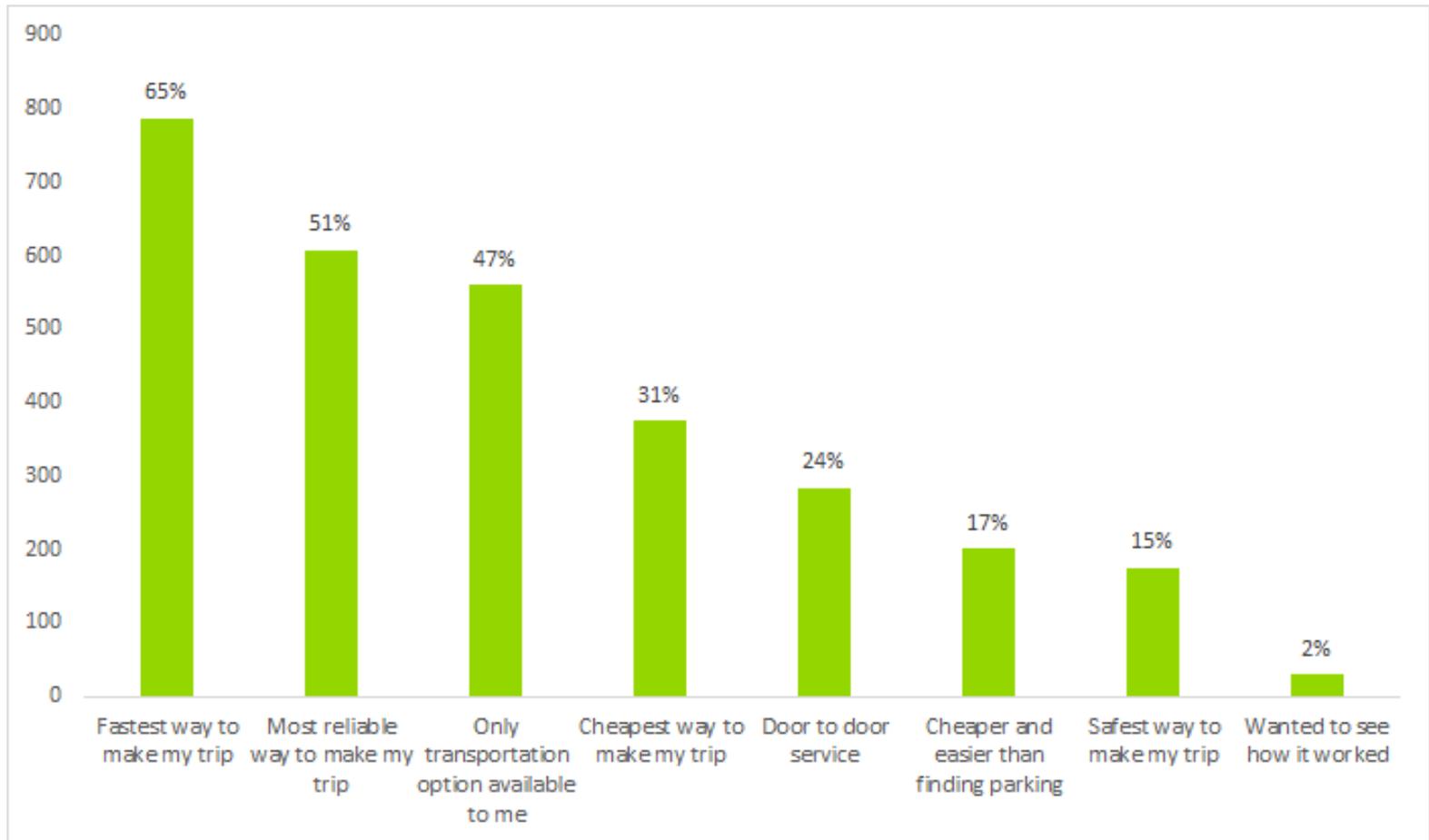
Age Profile of Respondents



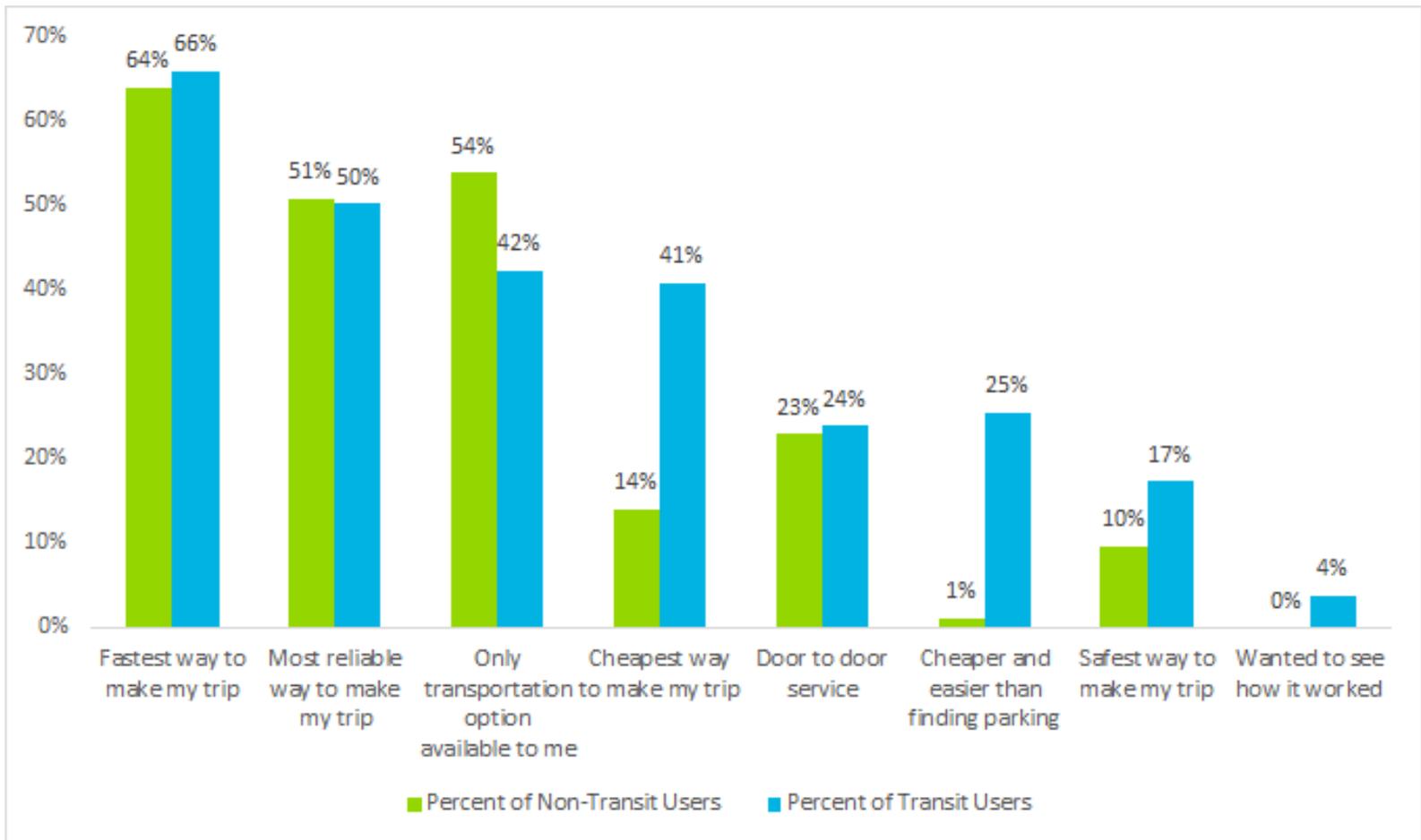
Modes of Transportation Used



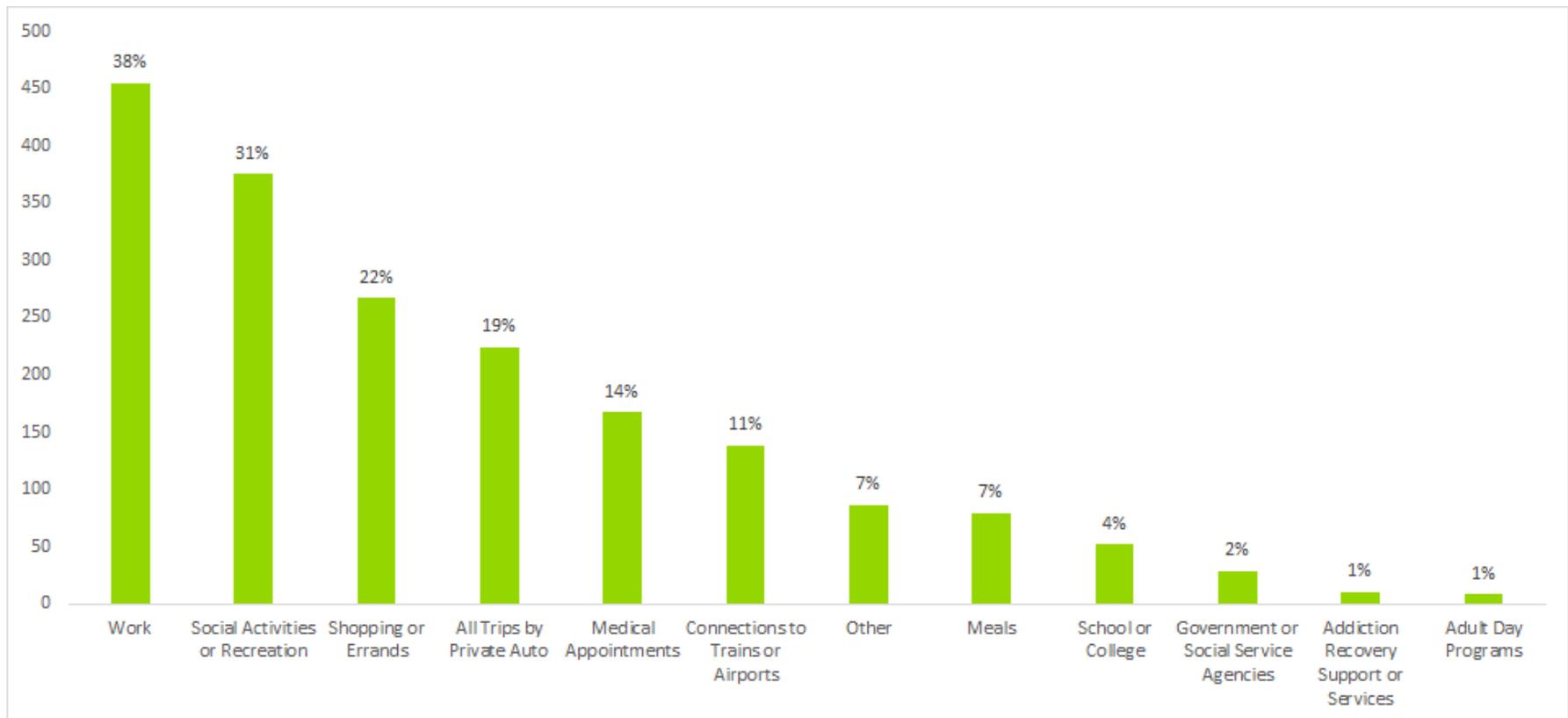
Reasons for Mode Choice



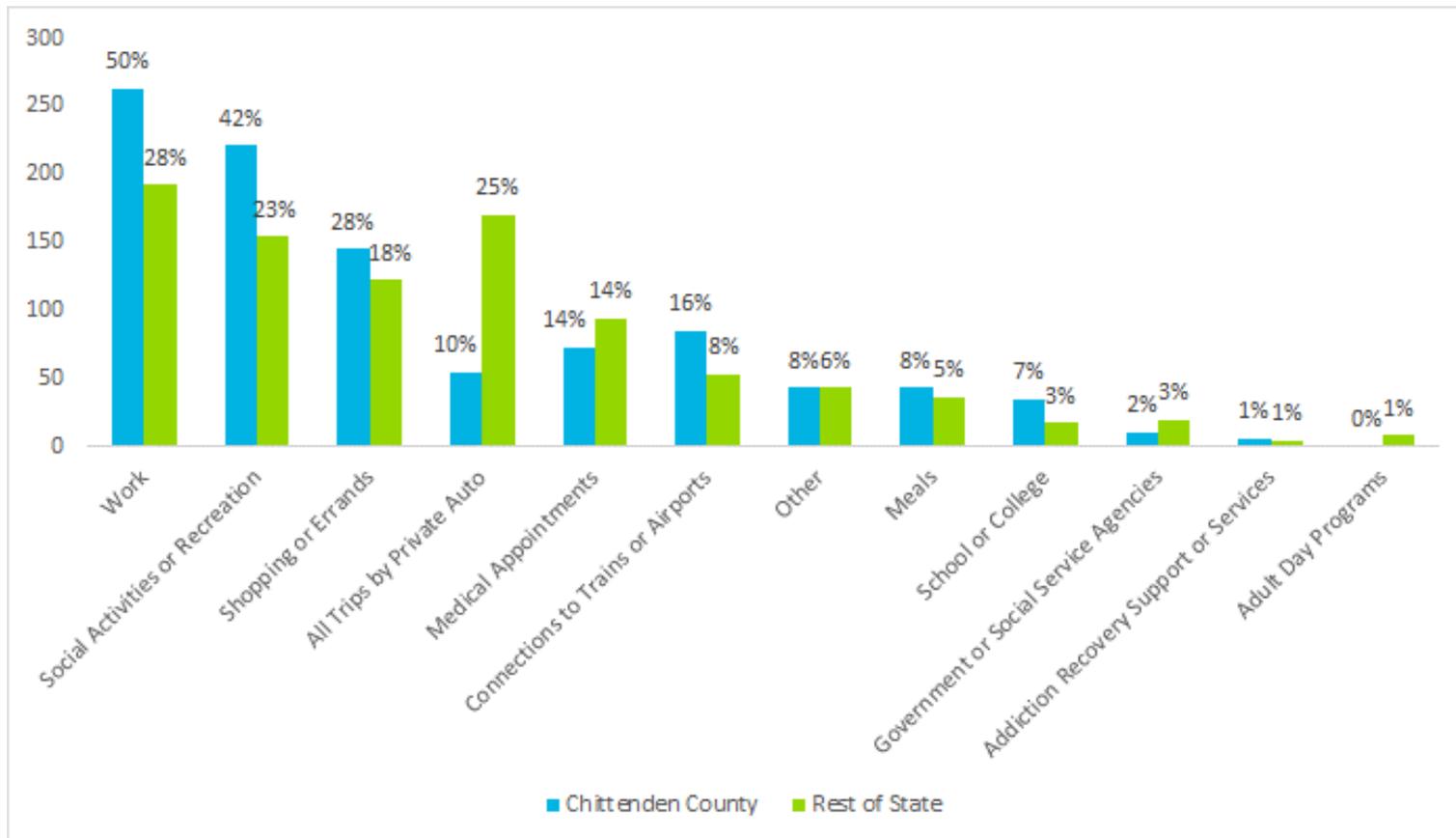
Reasons: Transit vs. Auto



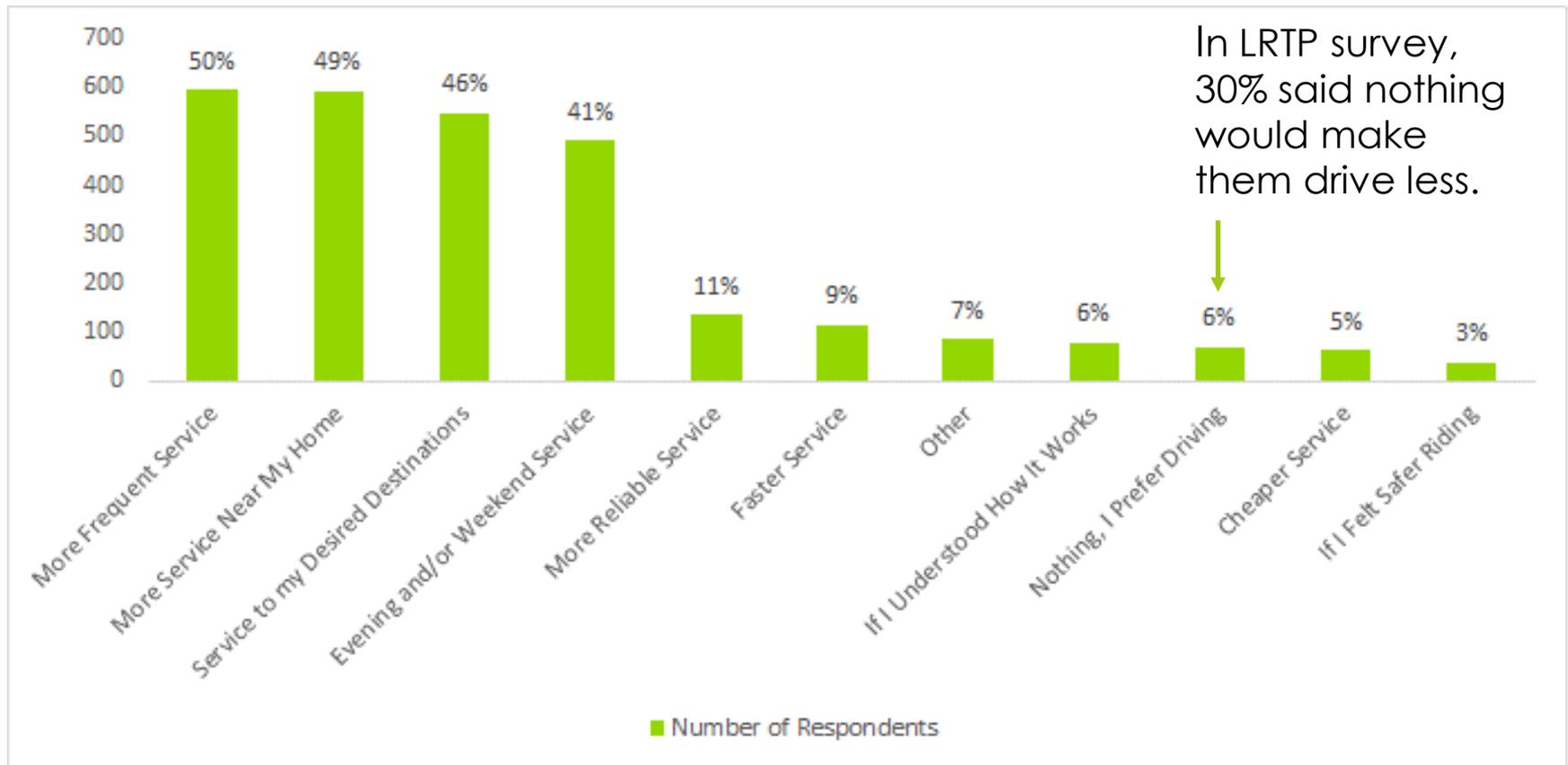
Purposes of Transit Trips



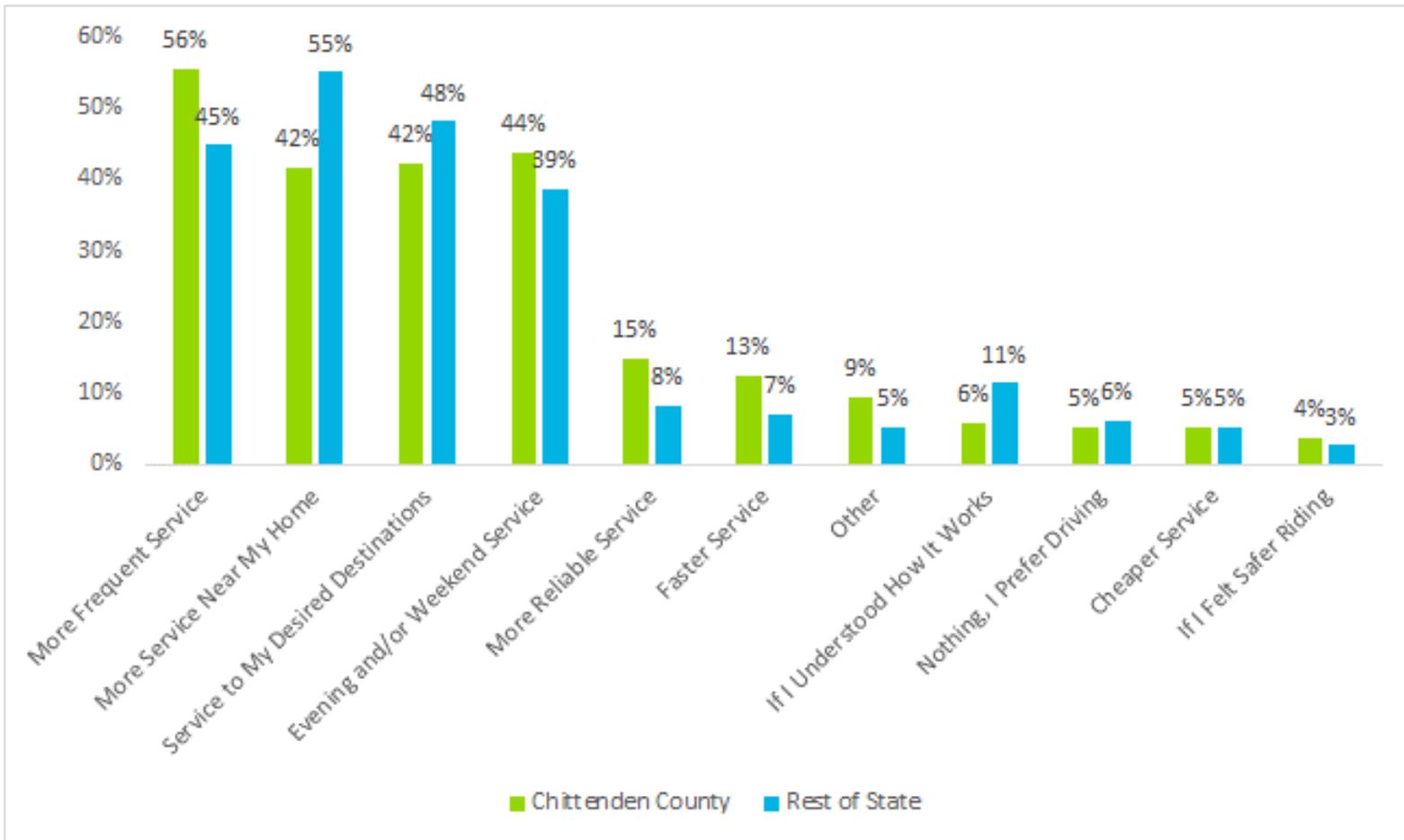
Purposes: Chittenden vs. Rest



What would encourage you to use transit more often?



Improvements: Chitt. vs. Rest





Transit Policy Goals for Vermont

- ❑ What should be the policy priorities for public transit in Vermont?
 - ❑ Mobility for non-drivers
 - ❑ Improved air quality/reduced energy use
 - ❑ Increased transit access in rural areas
 - ❑ Support for economic development
 - ❑ Choices for commuters
 - ❑ Access to tourist areas
 - ❑ Less dependence on automobiles

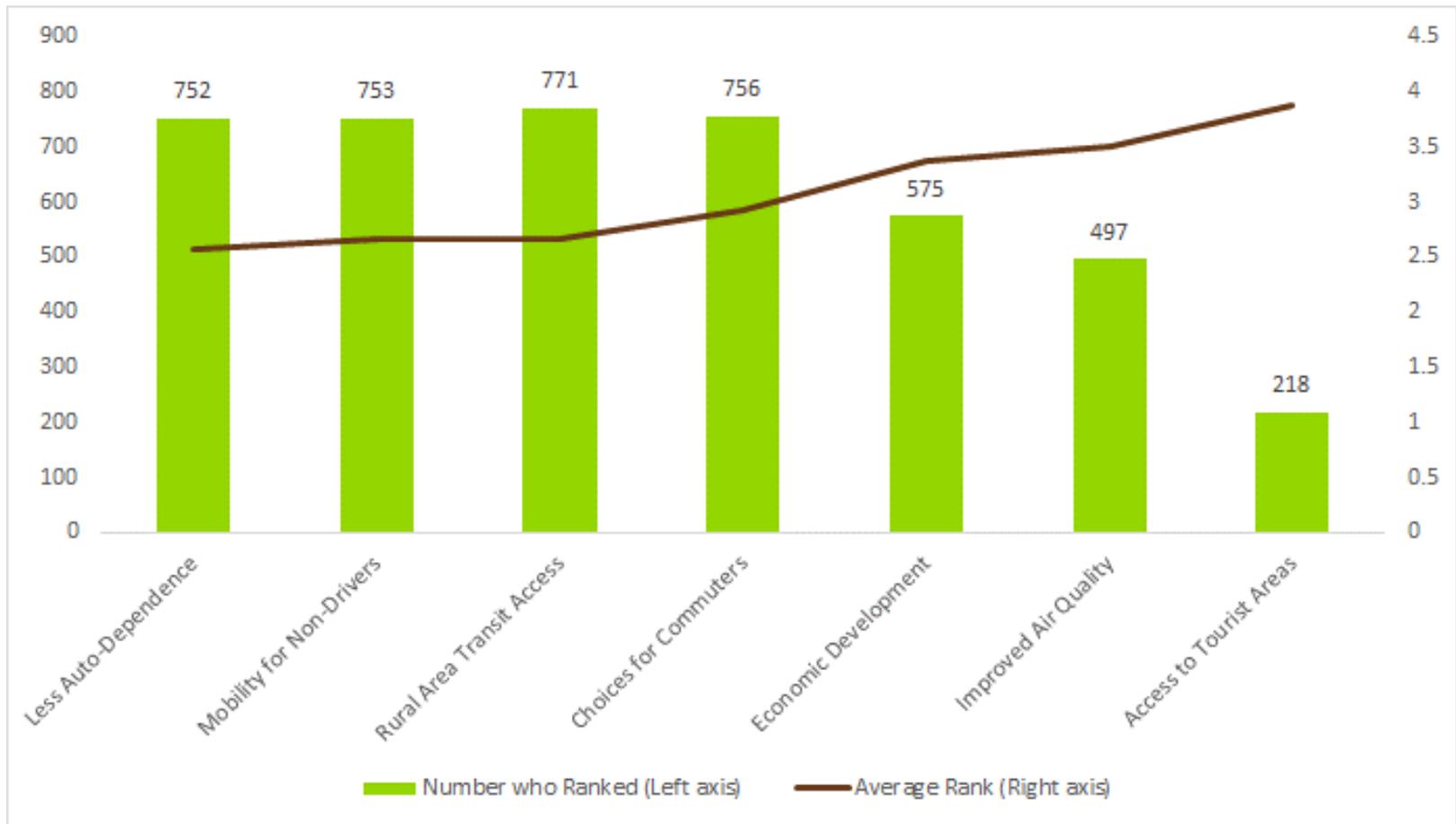
- ❑ In LRTP survey, public transit ranked 10th (of 12) in importance, with only 50% rating it very/extremely important, though “protect the environment” and “support Vermont’s downtowns and village centers” ranked 4th and 6th overall



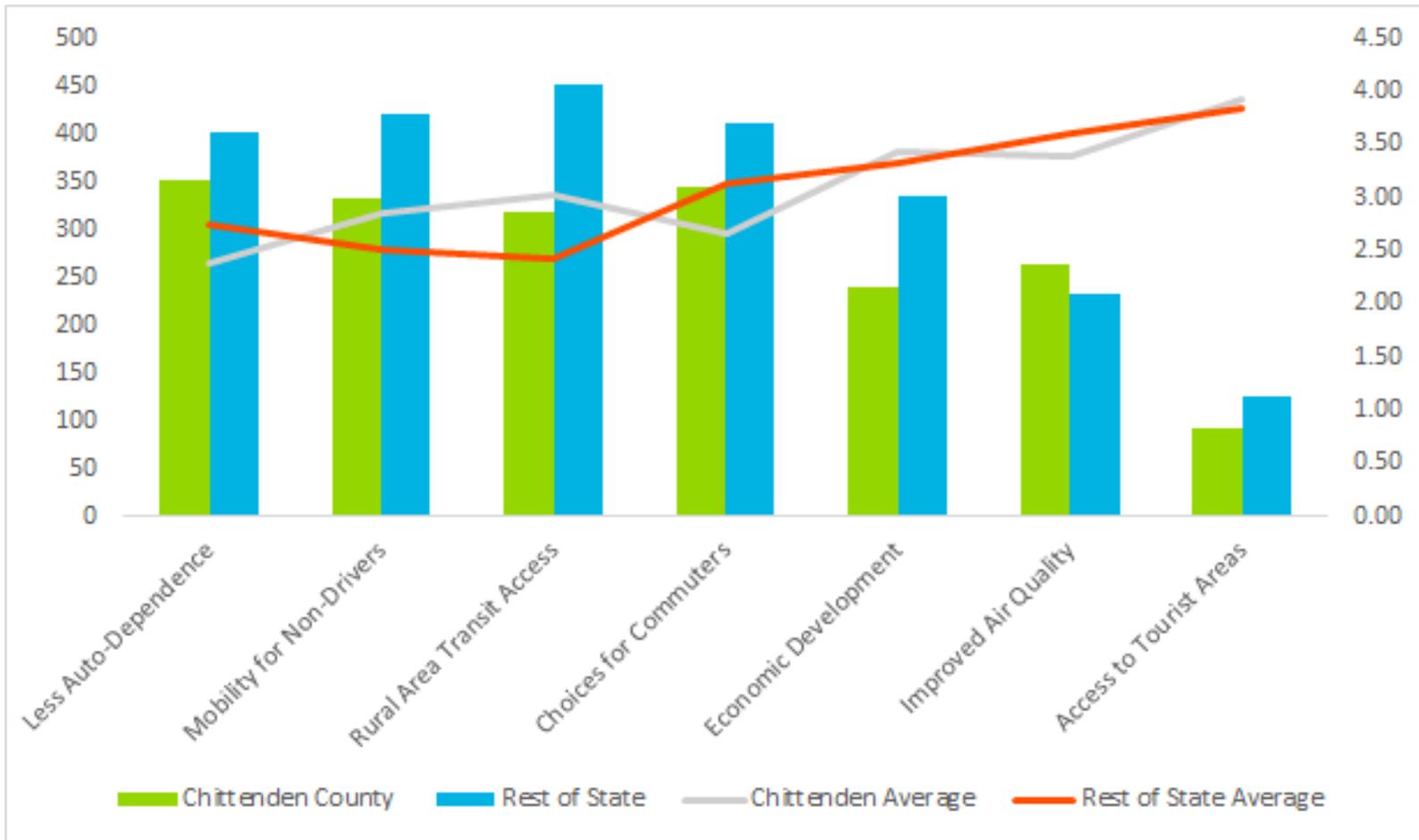
Existing Goals: 24 V.S.A. §5083

- (1) Provision for basic mobility for transit-dependent persons, as defined in the public transit policy plan of January 15, 2000, including meeting the performance standards for urban, suburban, and rural areas. The density of a service area's population is an important factor in determining whether the service offered is fixed route, demand-response, or volunteer drivers.
- (2) Access to employment, including creation of demand-response service.
- (3) Congestion mitigation to preserve air quality and the sustainability of the highway network.
- (4) Advancement of economic development objectives, including services for workers and visitors that support the travel and tourism industry. Applicants for "new starts" in this service sector shall demonstrate a high level of locally derived income for operating costs from fare-box recovery, contract income, or other income.

MetroQuest Results on Policy



Chittenden Cty. vs. Rest of State





Policy Discussion

- Is it time to revise the statutory policy?
 - Incorporate new policy goals
 - “Clean up” older language

- Do MetroQuest results seem reasonable?
 - Balance between urban and rural concerns
 - Do they address the coming challenges adequately?
 - Aging population
 - Technology impacts

Needs Analysis Method





Target Markets

Market Segment	Likely low-auto
Youth (under 18)	X
Young adult (18-24) employed/student	(X) desired
Adults (25-64) not low income	
Adults (25-64) low-income	X
People with disabilities	X
Younger seniors (65-79)	
Older seniors (80 plus)	X



Needs Assessment

- Market Analysis
 - How do the various types of gaps affect the market segments?
 - How do the market segments relate to the policy goals?
- Resource Analysis
 - Estimate resources to meet needs of each market segment
 - Define level of service goals (# annual trips)
 - Multiply by population in each segment and then average trip cost
 - Consider fully meeting needs vs. meeting lifeline needs



Scenario Exercise

- Increased fuel prices
- Low fuel prices
- Changed transportation landscape due to technology
 - Autonomous vehicles
 - Software to aggregate trips more efficiently
 - Better information available to everyone



Other Opportunities

- Volunteer driver expansion
 - Methods to significantly expand the pool of drivers
- Rides to Wellness
 - Sustainable funding from the health sector to overcome transportation barriers to health care
- Cooperation with surrounding states (NH, NY, MA)
 - Cross-border collaboration and integration of service
- Strengthening ties to the community
 - Enhancing community “ownership” of local transit services



Recommendations & Implementation

- ❑ Revise policies, goals, objectives and actions
- ❑ Enhance/update performance measurement system
- ❑ Implementation plan
 - ❑ Statewide initiatives
 - ❑ E.g. Rides to Wellness, Mobility on Demand
 - ❑ Technology applications
 - ❑ Strategies for human service transportation
- ❑ Monitoring plan
- ❑ Final report



Timeline

- Needs assessment – Winter/Spring 2019
- Recommendations – Spring/Summer 2019
- Final report – September 2019
- Meetings and public outreach – throughout project

Keep track of progress at vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP