Public Transit Policy Plan

Regional Forum

Upper Valley Region: Orange County and Northern Windsor County

October 30, 2018

Agenda

- Goals of the PTPP
- Tasks
- Public outreach
- Discussion of regional issues
  - Existing services and gaps
  - Potential solutions

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
- Identify components of an enhanced statewide transit system in Vermont

Tasks

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

Recommendations & Implementation

- Revise policies, goals, and objectives
- Enhance/update performance measurement system
- Implementation plan
  - Statewide initiatives, including strategies for human service transportation
- Monitoring plan

Public Outreach

- Regional forums
- Stakeholder interviews
- Online participation
  - Project website (https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP)
  - Web-based survey

Current Transportation Services

- Stagecoach Transportation Services (part of Tri-Valley Transit)
  - Local Shuttles
    - Randolph Area Circulator
    - Bradford Area Circulator
  - Commuter Routes
    - 89er North
    - 89er South
    - River Route
  - Shoppers/Part-time Routes
    - Serving Randolph, Royalton, Chelsea, Hancock, Woodstock, Rochester

Current Transportation Services

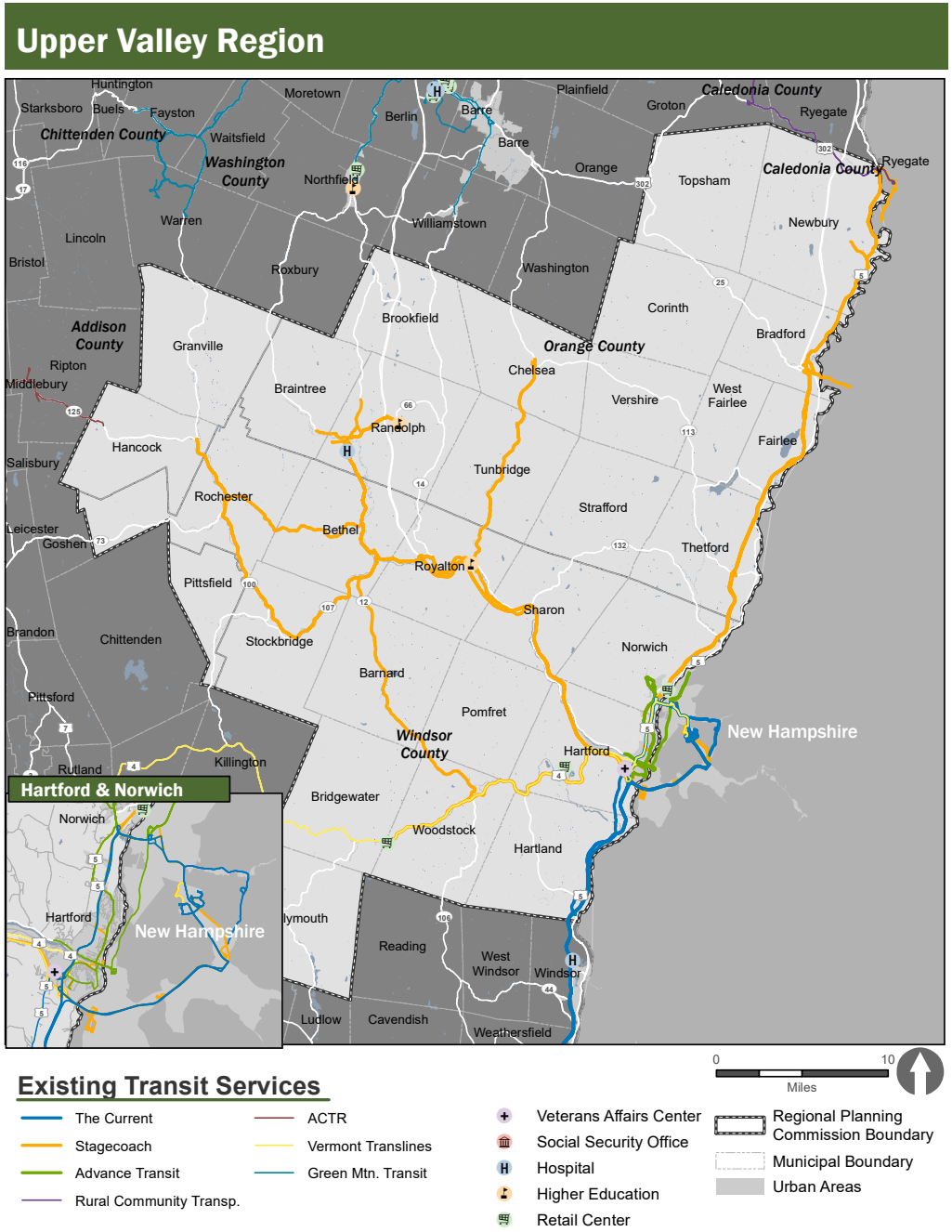
- Stagecoach Demand Response
  - E&D and Medicaid service
- Advance Transit – connections to Hanover/Lebanon
  - Green Route – Wilder
  - Orange Route – White River Junction
  - Brown Route – Norwich
  - ADA paratransit
- The Current
  - Commuter express routes from I-91 corridor to Hanover/Lebanon and White River Junction

Additional Services

- Other Human Service
  - Volunteers in Action
  - Thompson Senior Center
  - VA Medical Center
  - VT Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Intercity
  - Vermont Translines from Rutland
  - Greyhound stop in White River Junction
  - Amtrak stops in Randolph and WRJ
- Numerous taxis
- Other providers in New Hampshire

Existing Transit

- Stagecoach
  - Local shuttles
  - Commuter routes
  - Shopping shuttles
- Advance Transit
  - Line routes
  - Shuttles in Hanover/Lebanon
- The Current
  - Commuter routes
- Intercity at WRJ



Employment and Retail

- Major employers or office/industrial parks
  - Hanover/Lebanon (Dartmouth/DHMC/Hypertherm etc.)
  - Randolph
  - Hartford (WRJ, Wilder, Quechee)
- Large retail areas/supermarkets
  - Norwich
  - Hartford
  - Woodstock

Medical and Human Services

- Medical facilities
  - VA Medical Center (WRJ)
  - Gifford Hospital (Randolph)
  - Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (Lebanon)
  - Ottauquechee Health Center (Woodstock)
- Human Service Agencies
  - White River Junction (Bugbee Senior Center, Listen Center)
  - Woodstock (Thompson Senior Center)
  - Randolph (Clara Martin Center)

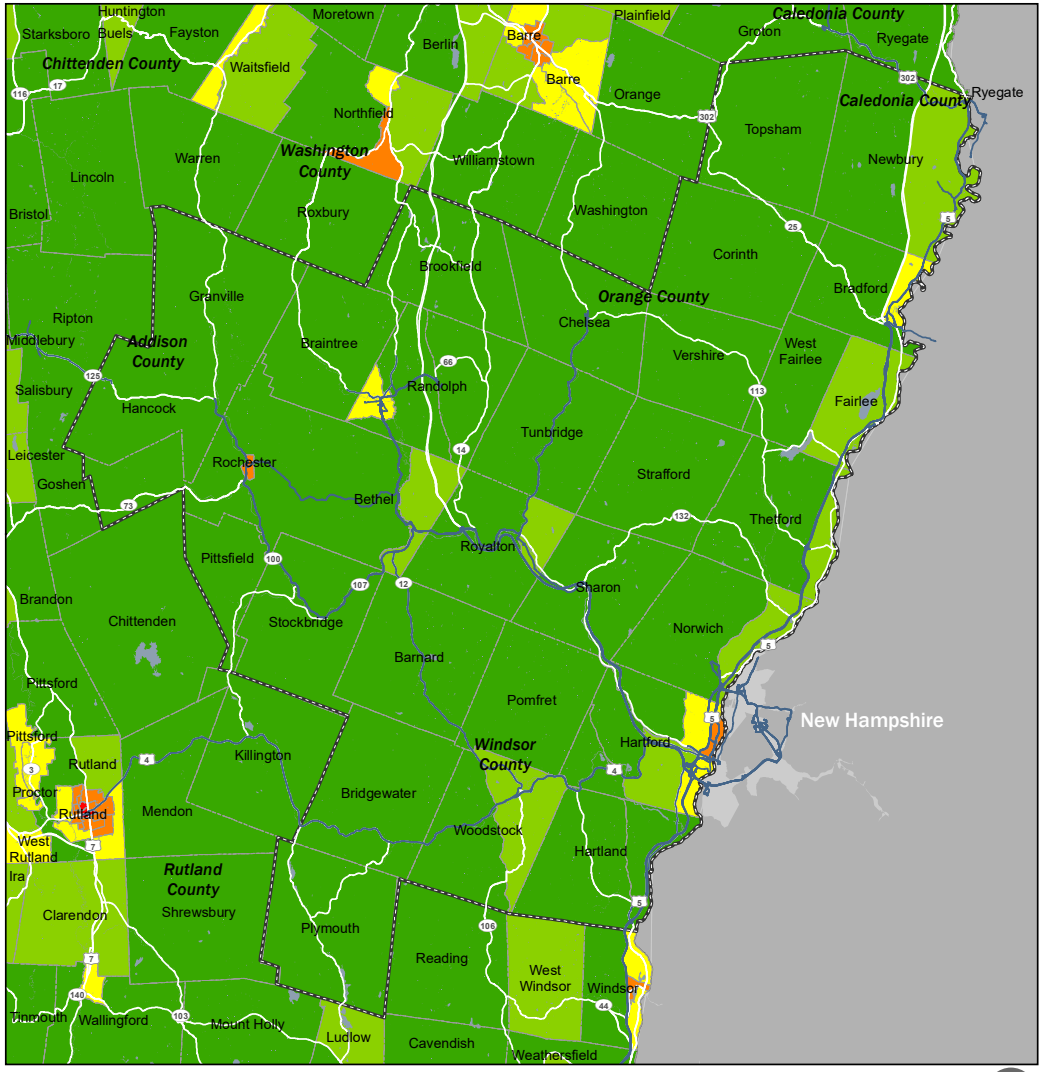
Demographics: Overview

- Total population: 55,299 (8.8% of VT population)
- Population Density: 43 persons per square mile (68)
- 28% of population 60+ (24%)
- 3.9% of population 80+ (4.3%)
- 10.2% of people below the poverty line (11.6%)
  - Third lowest percentage among 11 regions

Population Density

- Moderate-high density in Wilder/WRJ and Rochester
- Moderate-low density in Randolph, Hartford
- Rural density in the rest of the region

Upper Valley Region



Residents per Sq Mi

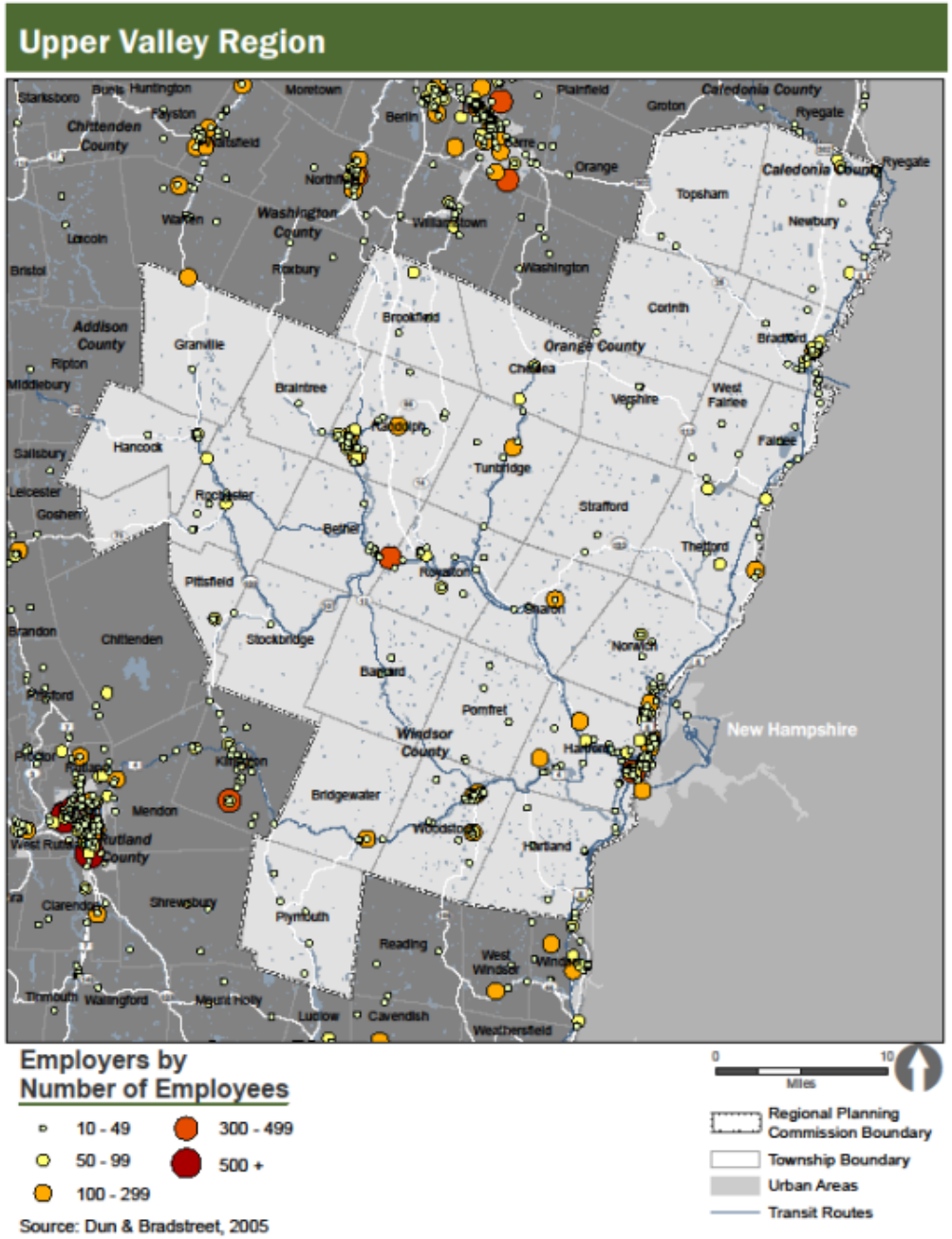
- < 100
- 100 - 499
- 500 - 999
- 1,000 - 4,999
- 5,000 +

0 10 Miles

- Regional Planning Commission Boundary
- Block Group
- Transit Routes

Employment

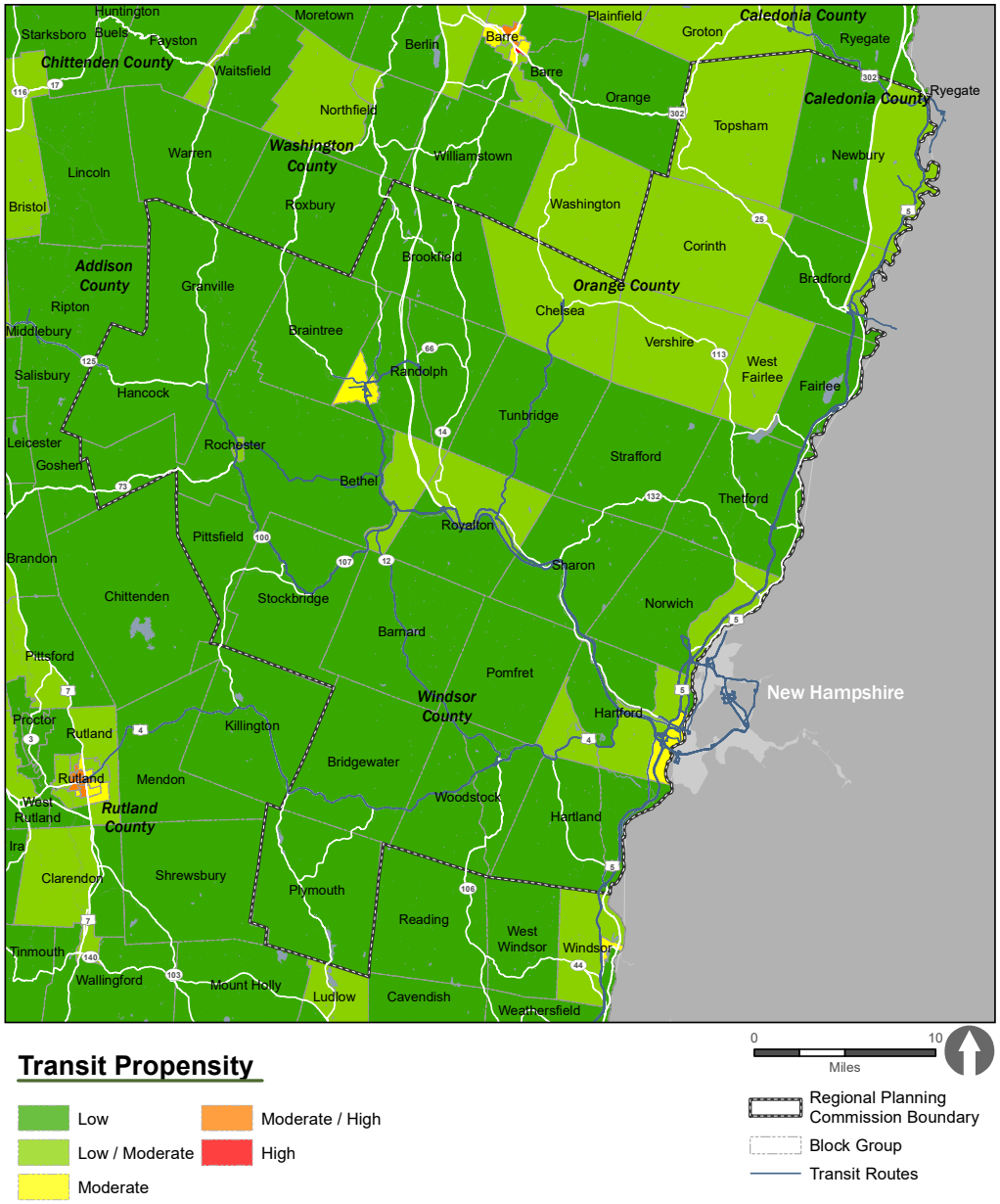
- Larger employers (100+ employees) located throughout the region along major roadways and New Hampshire border
- Smaller employers (<100 employees) in same areas and scattered throughout region



Transit Propensity

- Youth
- Older adults
- Persons with disabilities
- Households with 0-1 cars
- Low-income persons
- Portions of Randolph and Hartford only areas with even moderate transit propensity

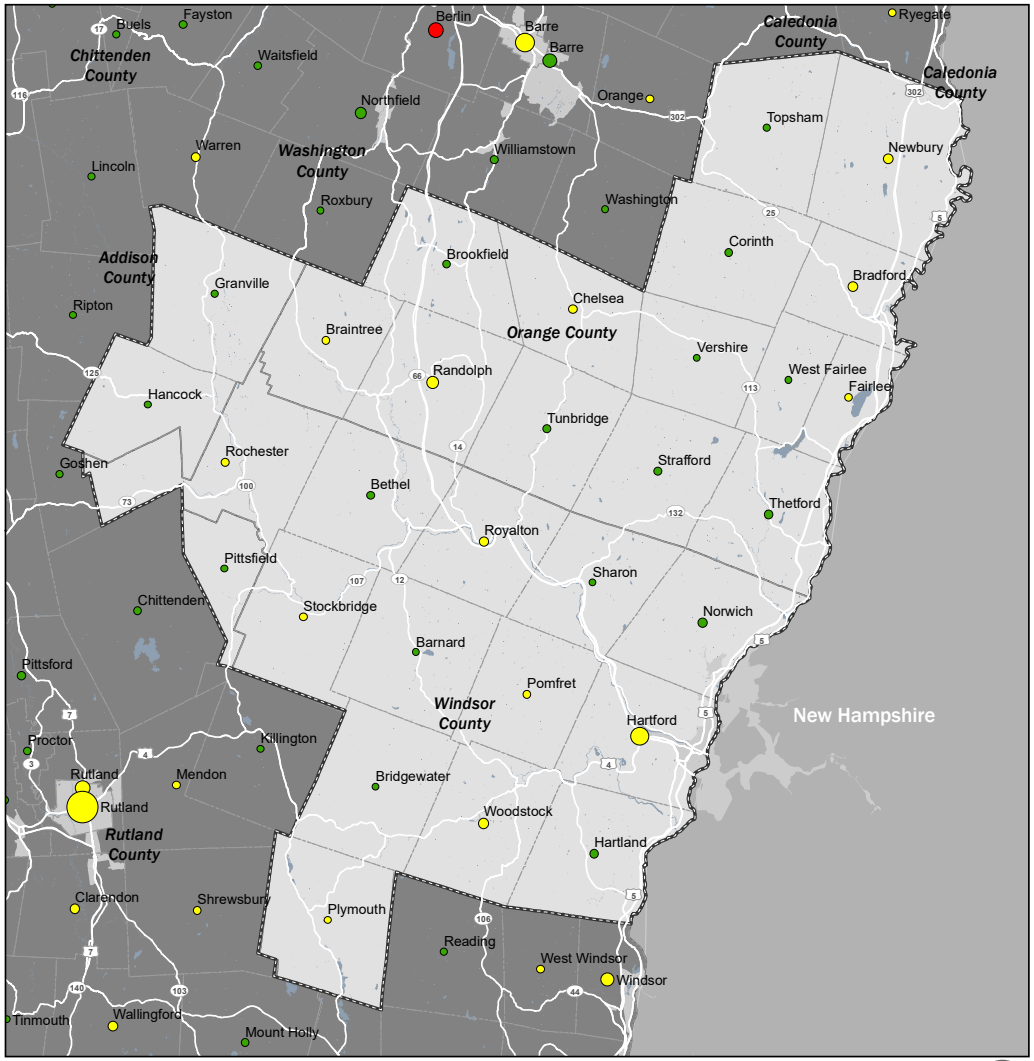
Upper Valley Region



Older Adults

- Focus on people over age 80 as younger seniors overwhelmingly continue to drive
- Concentrations seen in Hartford and Randolph; very small numbers elsewhere
- Significant rise in the over-80 population expected in next 10-20 years

Upper Valley Region



% of Population Over 80

- Below Average
- 1x - 2x Average
- > 2x Average

VT Average = 4.3%

Total Population Over 80

- 1
- 250
- 500
- 750
- 1,000

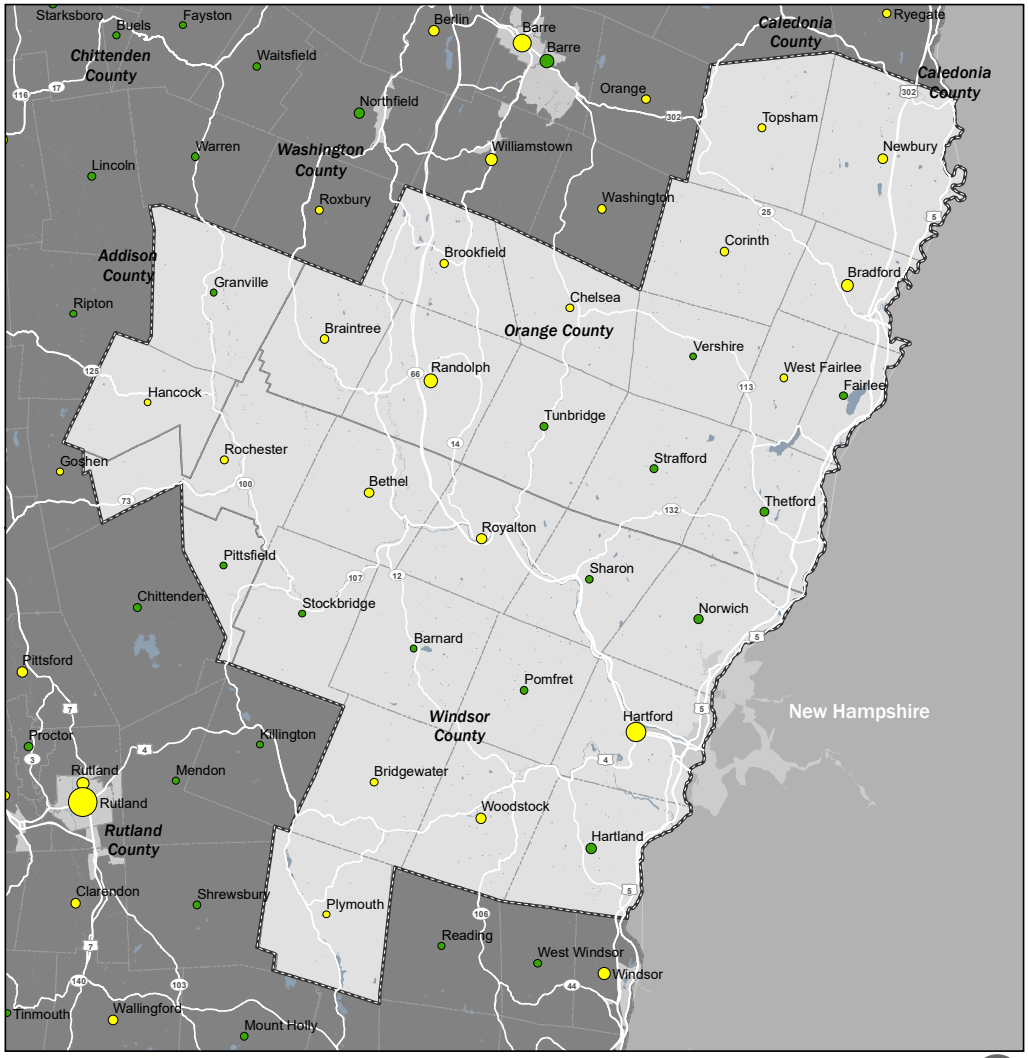
0 10 Miles

- Regional Planning Commission Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Areas

People with Disabilities

- Includes four types of disabilities
  - Hearing
  - Vision
  - Cognition
  - Walking
- Concentrations
  - Hartford
  - Randolph
  - Bradford

Upper Valley Region



% of Population with a Disability

- Below Average
- 1x - 2x Average
- 2x - 3x Average

VT Average = 14.0%

Total Population with a Disability

- 1
- 750
- 1,500
- 2,250
- 3,000

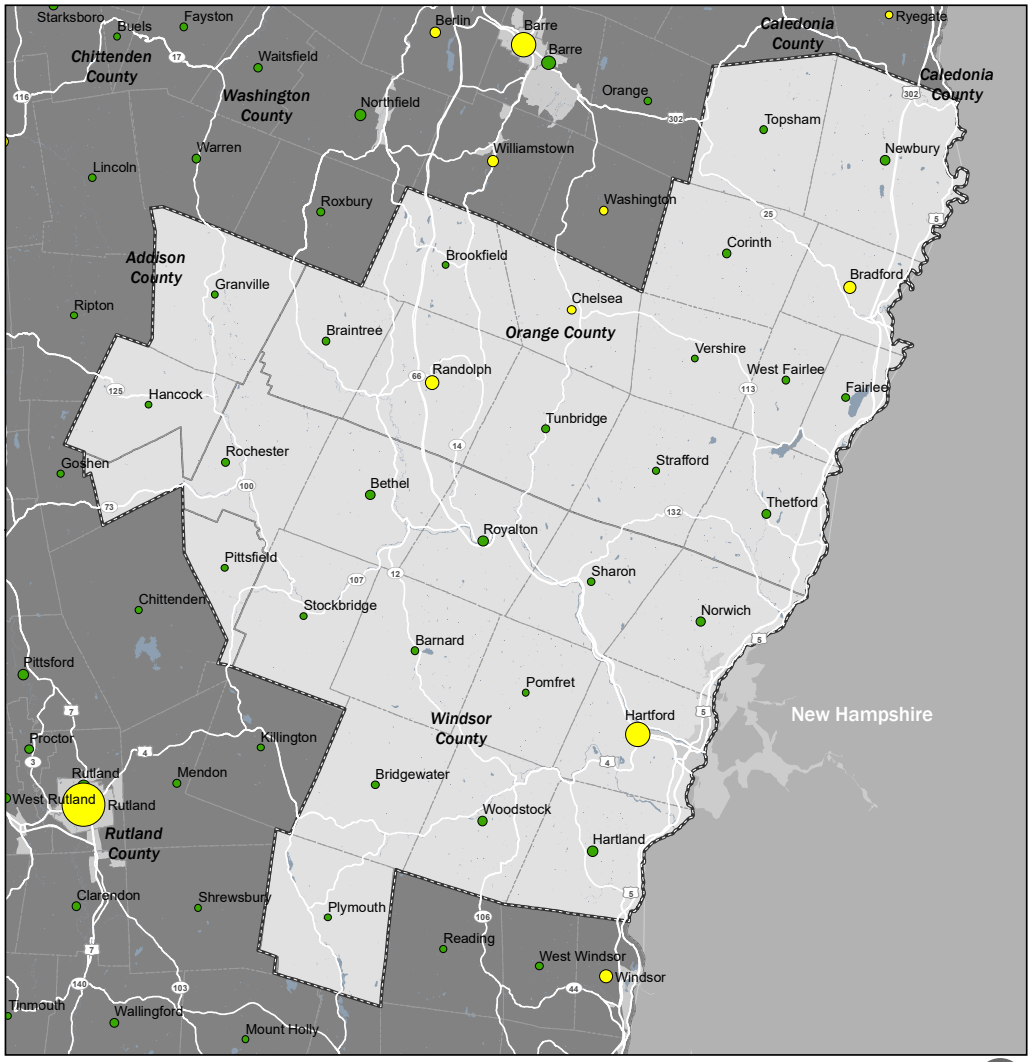
0 10 Miles

- Regional Planning Commission Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Areas

Auto Ownership

- Considered households with no vehicles and those with two or more members with only one vehicle
- Concentrations
  - Hartford
  - Randolph
  - Bradford

Upper Valley Region



% of Households with 1 Person & 0 Cars or 2+ People & 0-1 Cars

- Below Average
- 1x - 2x Average
- > 2x Average

VT Average = 20.6%

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

- 1
- 500
- 1,000
- 1,500
- 2,000

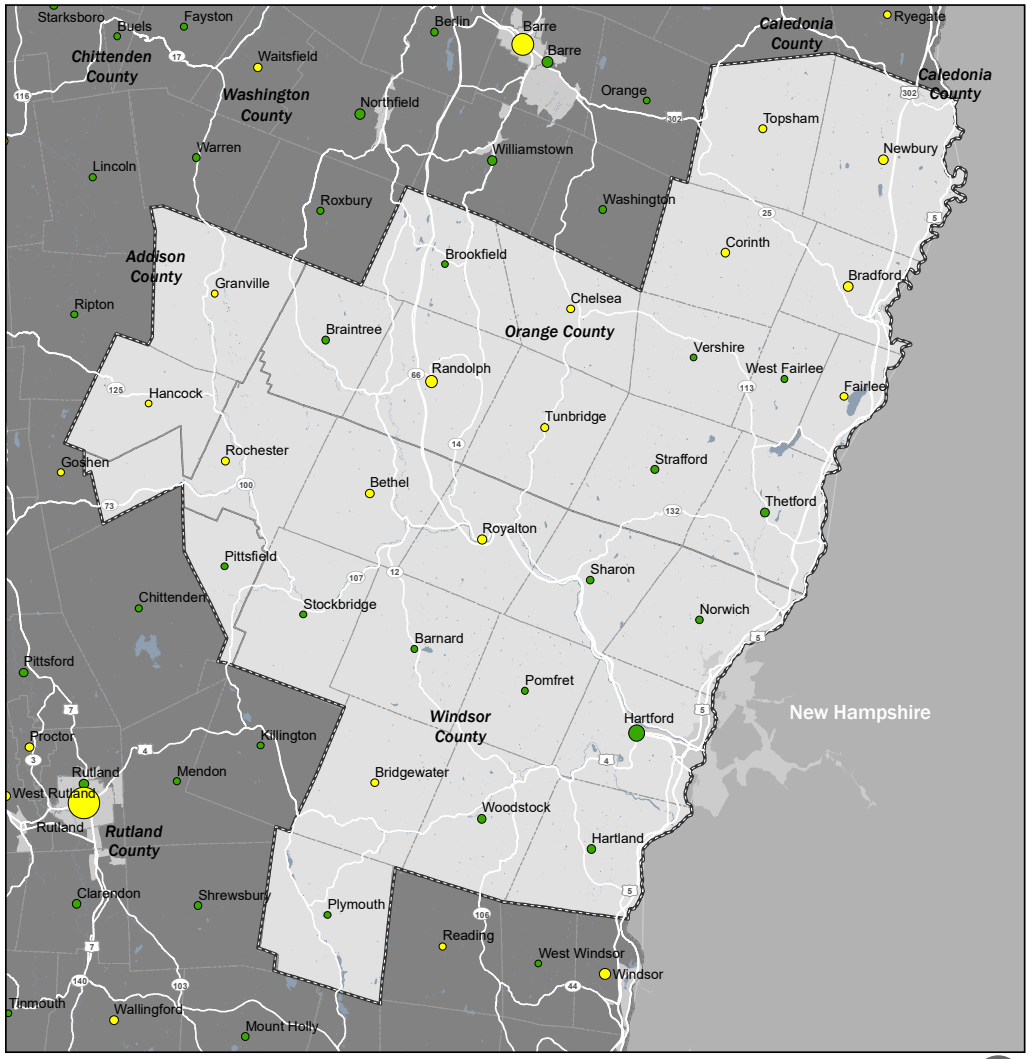
0 10 Miles

- Regional Planning Commission Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Areas

Medicaid Recipients

- Most towns above average, but small numbers
- Hartford has largest number but below average concentration

Upper Valley Region



% of Population Participating in Medicaid

- Below Average
- 1x - 2x Average
- > 2x Average

VT Average = 27.2%

Total Population Participating in Medicaid

- 1
- 1,750
- 3,500
- 5,250
- 7,000

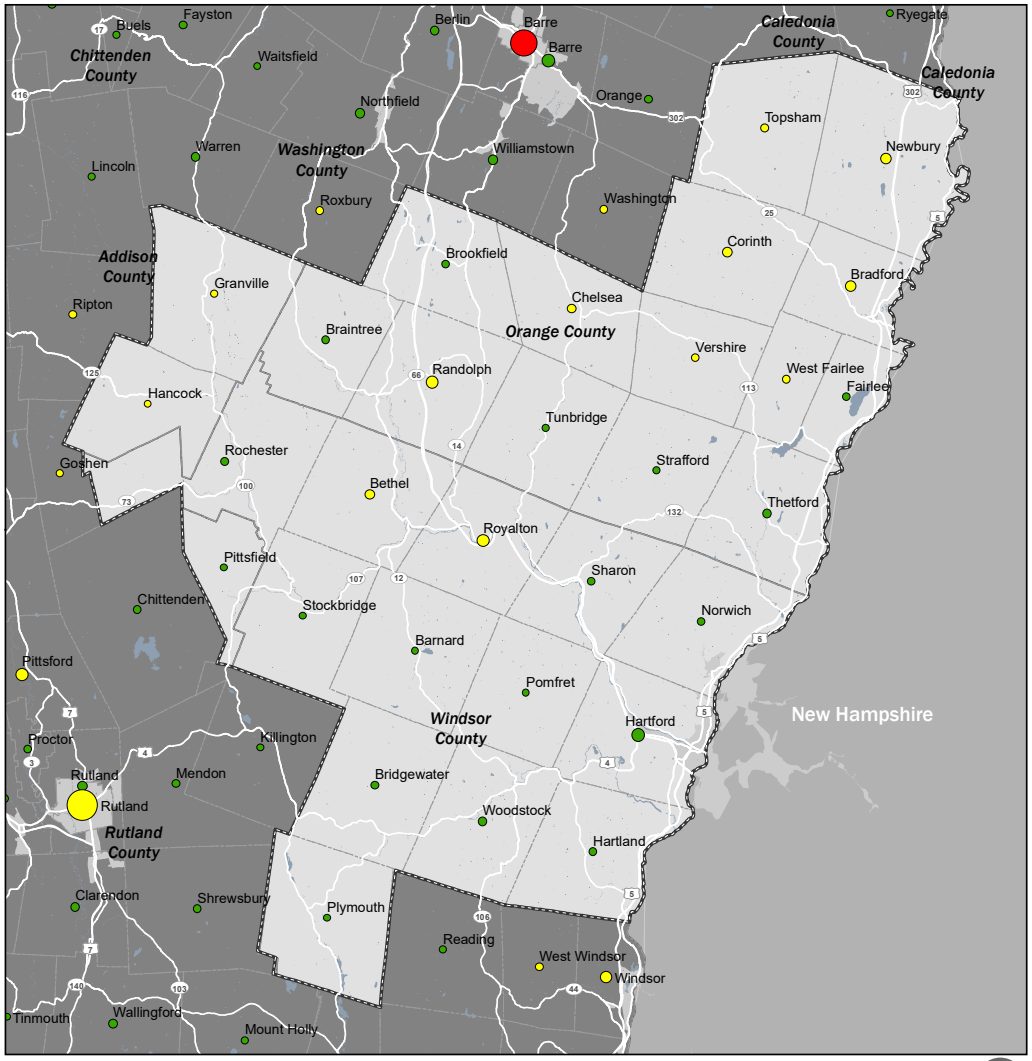
0 10 Miles

- Regional Planning Commission Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Areas

People Below Poverty Level

- Used federal definition of poverty
- Similar to Medicaid pattern

Upper Valley Region



% of Population Below Poverty Line

- Below Average
- 1x - 2x Average
- > 2x Average

VT Average = 11.6%

Total Population Below Poverty Line

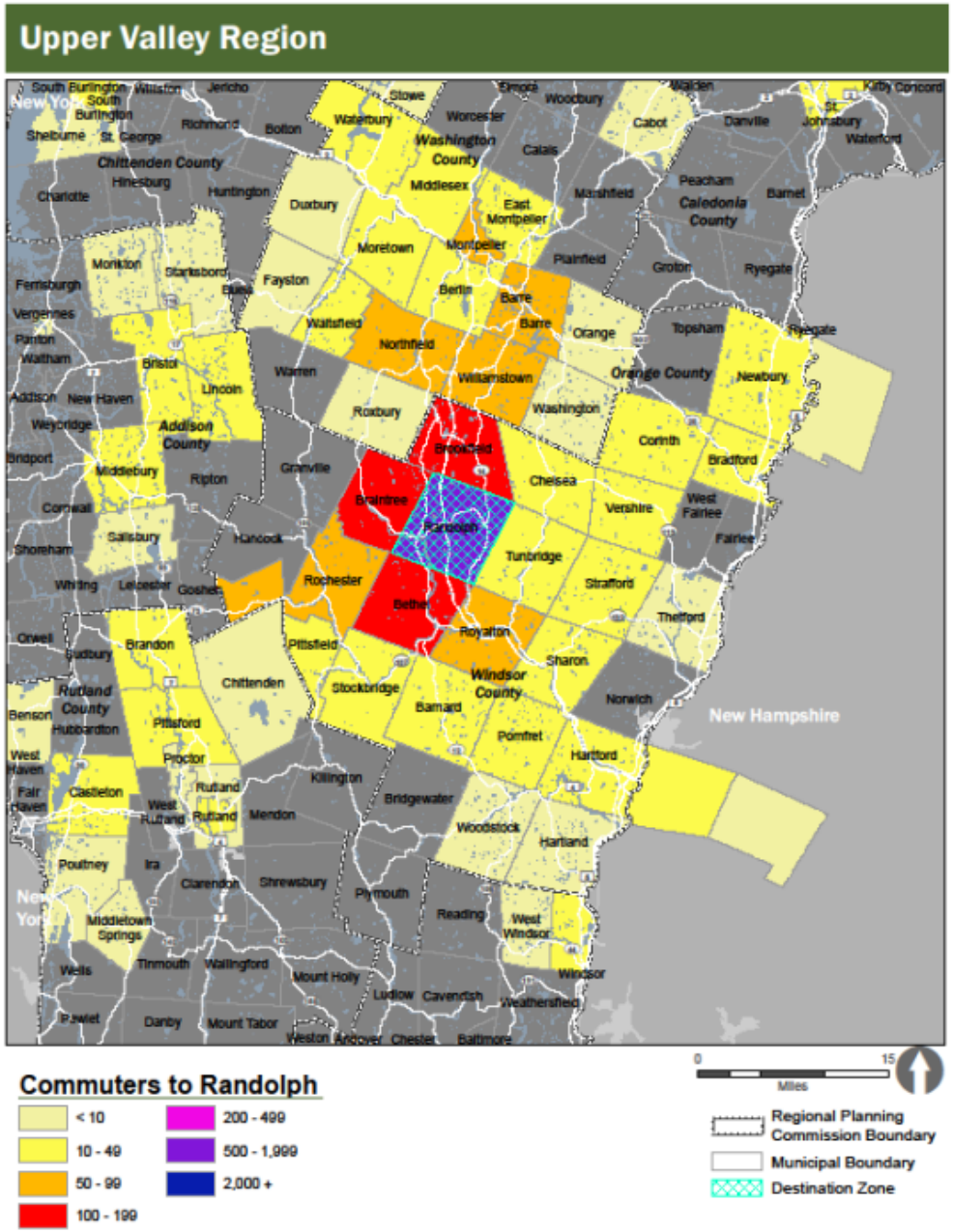
- 1
- 625
- 1,250
- 1,875
- 2,500

0 10 Miles

- Regional Planning Commission Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Areas

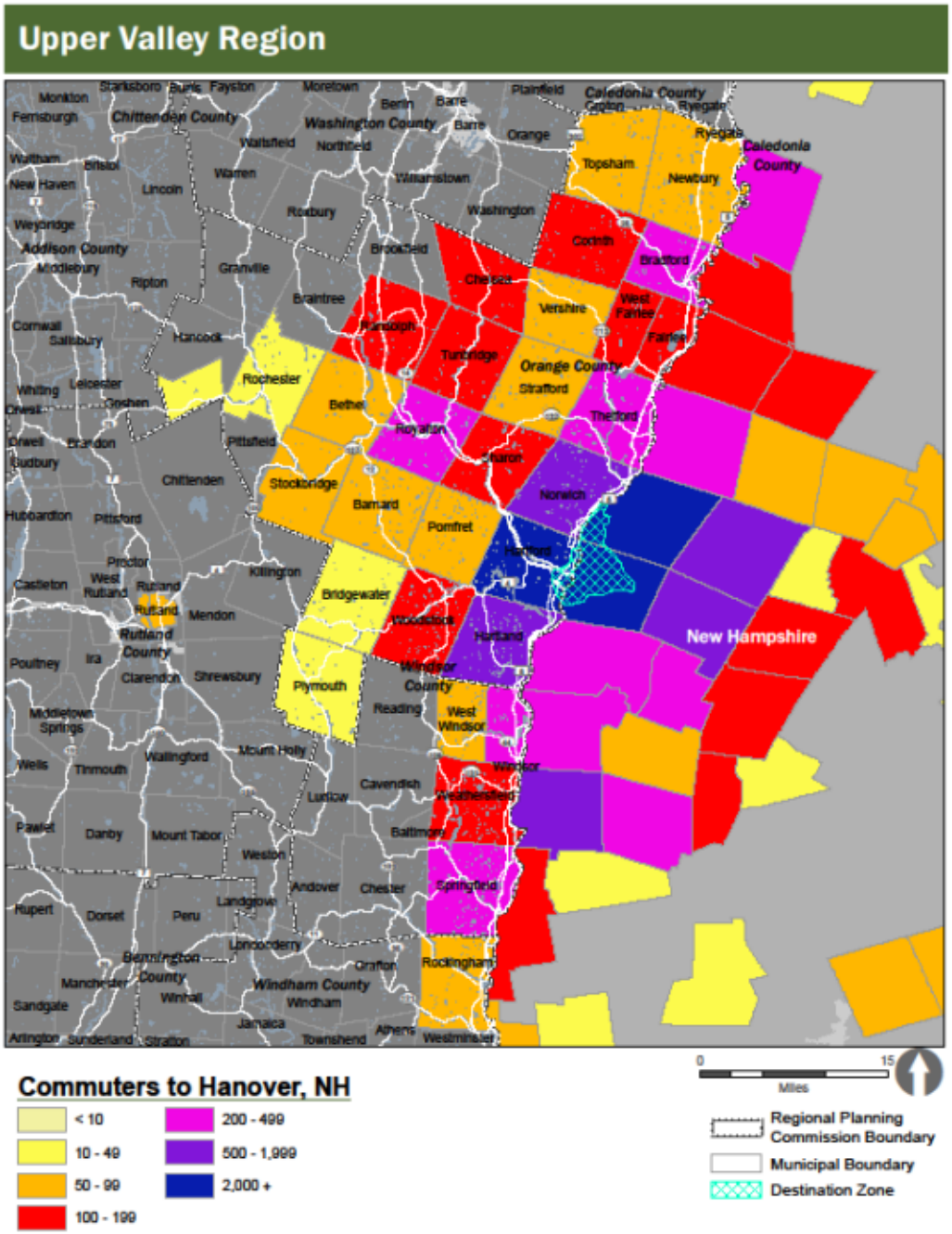
Commuting

- Most commuters to Randolph come from Randolph, Brookfield, Braintree, and Bethel
- Access provided by I-89 brings in moderate numbers from Montpelier, Barre and Northfield
- Commuters also come from many other towns, but in smaller numbers



Commuting

- Hanover/Lebanon/WRJ area is an important employment destination for Upper Valley residents
- 50+ commuters per day from most Orange County communities and a number of Windsor County communities



Discussion

Transit Goals, Existing Services, Service Gaps/Challenges, Solutions

Public Transit Goals for Vermont

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

Current Services

- What are the strengths of the existing transit network? What services work well?
- Other providers not identified?
  - Human service transportation providers
  - Volunteer driver programs
  - Private carriers
- Are taxis available and a viable option?
- Is Uber/Lyft service available?
- Does any service information need to be corrected?

Geographic Service Gaps

- Areas without public transit service
- Need to travel across county lines or into other regions
- Destinations that are hard to reach
- Connections that are feasible but not convenient

Temporal Service Gaps

- Evenings
  - Do services operate late enough for work or recreational trips?
- Weekends
  - Saturday
  - Sunday
- Other limitations in operating hours?

Trip Type Gaps

- Are residents able to travel for any type of trip they need to make?
- What types of trips are difficult or impossible to make?
  - Medical
  - Shopping
  - Work
  - Recreational/personal business

Accessibility Needs

- Can fixed-route and demand-response vehicles accommodate multiple wheelchairs?
- Are paths of travel to bus stops safe and accessible for pedestrians and wheelchair users?
- Is more accessible information needed?
- Do riders need assistance on vehicles?

Technology Challenges

- Do information sources, trip reservations, or fare payment require a computer or smart phone?
- Is that a barrier?

Information Gaps

- Is information about transportation options available, easy to find, easy to use?
  - Service area
  - Days and hours
  - Eligible users and trip types
  - Fare
- What information sources are most useful?

Affordability Gaps

- Are fares reasonable?
- Does the cost of any service keep potential riders from using it?
- Are cities and towns able to provide sufficient local funding to leverage federal funds and support their residents?

Other Gaps or Travel Challenges

- Are there any other issues we should be aware of or that you'd like to discuss?

In a few words, what are other service gaps or challenges in the region?

Start the presentation to see live content. Still no live content? Install the app or get help at **PollEv.com/app**

Potential Solutions

- Information
- Service Enhancements
- Complement Existing Network
- Accessibility Improvements
- Technology
- Other Potential Solutions

Information

- Centralized transportation service directory – Go! Vermont
- Trip planning assistance
- Trip reservations assistance
- Online trip reservations
- One-Call/One-Click system including some or all of the above

Information

Centralized transportation service directory – Go! Vermont

Trip planning assistance

Trip reservations assistance

Online trip reservations

One-Call/One-Click system including some or all of the above

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Service Enhancements

- Extended service hours
- Expanded service areas
- More eligible trip types
- Out-of-county or out-of-region services

Service Enhancements

Extended service hours

Expanded service areas

More eligible trip types

Out-of-county or out-of-region services

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Complement Existing Network

- Use of available demand-response vehicle seats
  - Centralized scheduling
  - Contracting among providers
- Volunteer driver program enhancements
- Travel training
  - Fixed route or paratransit services
- Flexible voucher program
  - Agencies sponsor cost of vouchers
  - Vouchers can be used for trips provided by public, private, or nonprofit operators or friend/family member volunteer driver
- Rider "trip banks" or "trip accounts"

Complement Existing Network

Use of available demand-response vehicle seats

Volunteer driver program enhancements

Travel training

Flexible voucher program

Rider “trip banks” or “trip accounts”

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Accessibility Improvements

- Sidewalks or curb cuts
- Accessible signals or signage
- Bus shelters

Accessibility Improvements

Sidewalks or curb cuts

Accessible signals or signage

Bus shelters

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Technology

- Scheduling/dispatching software
  - Do providers have access to RouteMatch?
  - Software to match volunteer drivers with trip requests
- Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems
- Tablets onboard vehicles
- Mobile information, reservations, real-time vehicle location (apps)

Technology

Scheduling/dispatching software

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems

Tablets on-board vehicles

Mobile information, reservations, real-time vehicle location (apps)

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Other Potential Solutions

- Other ideas for addressing service gaps and improving mobility in the region?

Are there any other issues we should be aware of or that you'd like to discuss?

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Priorities

- Polling/dot voting exercise to establish local priorities among potential solutions to travel challenges

Stay Involved!

- Check project webpage
  - http://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP
- Please complete online survey!
- Look for and comment on draft PTPP Spring 2019