

Public Transit Policy Plan

House Transportation Committee

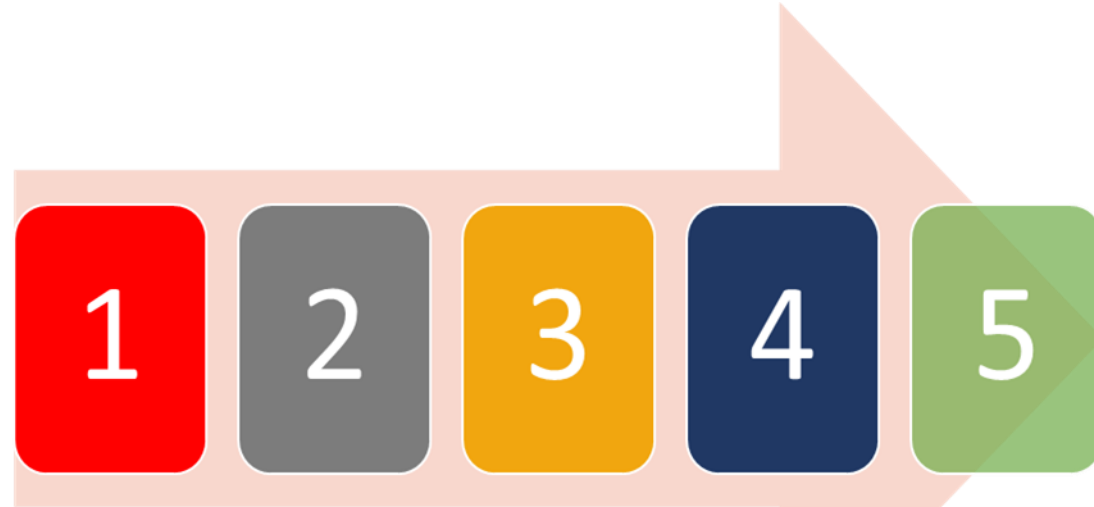
January 8, 2020

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Policy Planning in Vermont

- State law requires the Public Transit Policy Plan to be updated every five years ([24 V.S.A. §5089](#))
- The federal government requires a human service transportation coordination plan to be updated every four years ([FTA C 9070.1G](#))
- For public transit, VTrans combined these efforts into the 2019 Public Transit Policy Plan

PTPP Process



Summer-Fall
2018
**PROJECT
INITIATION**

Winter
2019
**EXISTING
CONDITIONS
ANALYSIS**

Winter-Spring
2019
**NEEDS
ASSESSMENT**

Summer -Fall
2019
**RECOMMENDATIONS
&
IMPLEMENTATION**

Fall
2019
**FINAL REPORT
&
IMPLEMENTATION**

PUBLIC/STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

What did Vermonters think?



PTPP included extensive outreach process

- 11 regional forums
- 3 advisory committee meetings
- 9 stakeholder interviews
- 9 E&D Committee assessments
- Numerous other presentations
- Appearance on VPR's Vermont Edition
- Project website
<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/PTPP>

Two online surveys

- First round (Fall 2018) on needs: 1,200 responses
- Second round (Summer 2019) on strategies: 2,200 responses

Existing Conditions Assessment

Identify best practices

System Overview- 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

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

Critical Themes and Challenges

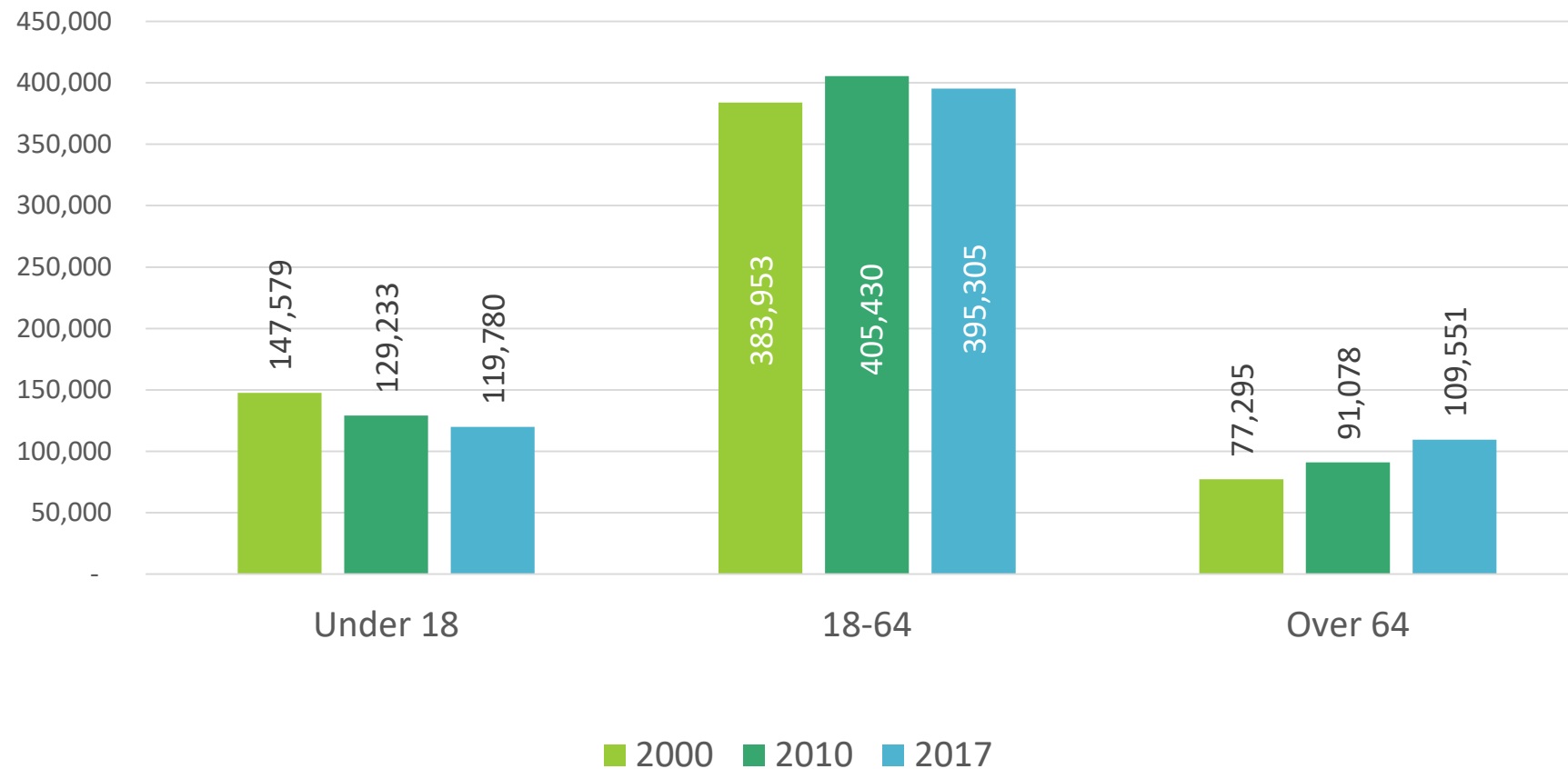
- Aging population
- Economic trends and opportunities
- Technology and information
- Public awareness
- Land use development patterns
- Climate change



Vermont Agency of Transportation
Division of Policy, Planning, and Intermodal Development

November 21, 2019

Aging in Vermont



PTPP Strategies – Aging

Create working committee with Agency of Human Services to address mobility issues for vulnerable Vermonters.

More comprehensive planning for Elders and Persons with Disabilities Transportation Program

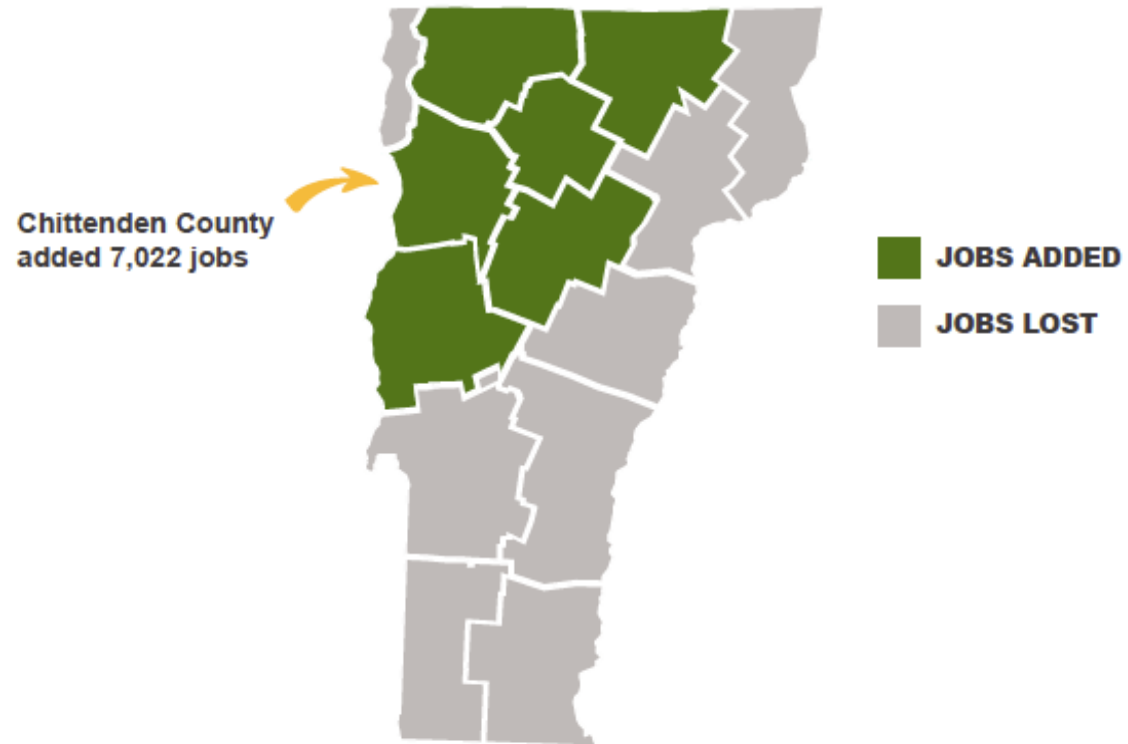
- Set up annual statewide meeting to share best practices- coordination, low-cost trips, volunteer management
- Work with E&D Committees to improve service planning and metric tracking (i.e. establish annual work plans; implement statewide E&D riders satisfaction survey)
- Pilot additional performance monitoring methods such as determining and tracking unmet needs

Establish Personal Mobility Accounts

- Expand Ticket To Ride statewide
- Allow for deposits, gifts and possibly ride credits

Economic Trends & Opportunities

- Job growth in the past decade restricted to Northwest and Central Vermont
- Chittenden County accounts for a third of all jobs in Vermont and half of new jobs created since 2008



Data source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
©2018 Public Assets Institute

PTPP Strategies – Employment

- Increase awareness of carpool/vanpool options through Go Vermont
- Enlist support of employers in new JobRides program
- Create “late bus” for shift workers
- Expand partnership with Good News Garage
- Consider partnerships with Uber/Lyft, volunteer groups, where available

Technology and Information

Multiple impacts on public transit

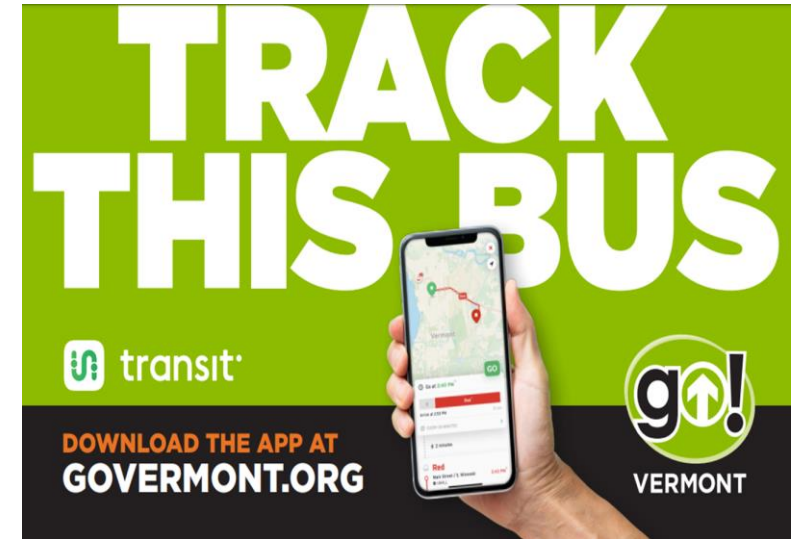
- Real-time information for passengers: Where's my bus?
- Operational management for transit agencies → reliability
- Mobility on demand, more flexible trip planning

Ride-hailing services

- Limited impact outside of Chittenden County thus far
- How do they integrate with other public transit?

Challenges

- Not everyone has a smartphone
- Cellular access/broadband not universally available



POTP Strategies – Technology

Create new paradigm for demand response service

Work with microtransit companies for 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



Public Awareness

Depends on geography

- High awareness in Chittenden County
- Lower awareness in rural areas

Depends on age, income and disability

- Those who can drive don't think much about transit

Depends on the type of service

- Local and commuter bus routes more visible
- Rural services run less frequently, less visible
- Volunteer driver services may be totally invisible

PTPP Strategies – Awareness

Continue investment in Go Vermont

- Expand capabilities
- Increase marketing
- Create interactive map of bus routes

VTrans-sponsored project to document stories of the value of public transit

- Video and audio interviews with beneficiaries
- Could be used at Town Meetings and elsewhere

Continue/expand partnerships and activities

- Partners include AARP, State agencies, elected officials, Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), Vermont Public Radio/Television

Long term concepts

60% of Vermonters live in areas classified as rural

Average population density is 68 people per square mile

- Lowest density: Northeast Kingdom - 32
- Highest density: Chittenden County - 299

Vermont has one urbanized area (Burlington) and 19 “urban clusters” with 2,500-50,000 people each



Policy Challenges – Land Use

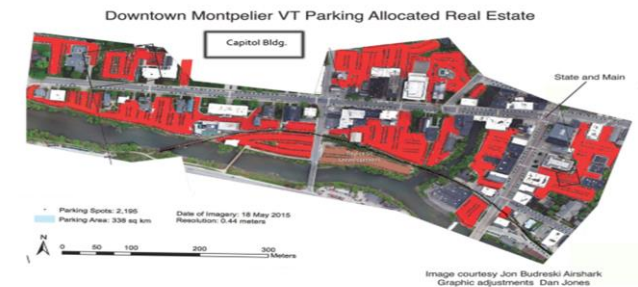
Traditional bus routes viable only in areas with high enough density – 3 households or 4 jobs per acre

Safe, comfortable and accessible pedestrian environment is essential to public transit routes

- Sidewalks, crosswalks, safe places to wait for the bus

In rural areas, demand response service may be only viable type of public transit

- Much less visible and convenient than bus services



PTPP Strategies- 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