

# First Annual Vermont E&D Summit



First Annual Vermont E&D Summit  
July 10, 2020

**The Summit is due to start at 9am.**

You should be able to hear people talking if you are seeing this slide.

If you are having any technical issues that you cannot solve, please contact Katharine 802-917-3451 or [Katharine.otto@vermont.gov](mailto:Katharine.otto@vermont.gov)

# First Annual Vermont E&D Summit

Ross MacDonald  
Public Transit Manager  
Vermont Agency of Transportation



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# Meeting tips – Sound and questions

- Everyone will be muted at the start of the meeting.
- Hover your mouse pointer over the bottom of the screen to see controls
- Please use the Chat feature to ask questions if possible. We will take questions from the chat box first, and then go to voice questions

Chat Box/  
Panel on/off

Video  
on/off

Mute  
on/off

Audio  
settings



Type in questions or comments here. Note that everyone will see them.



# Meeting tips – Video and tech support

## Videos/ webcams

- Most presenters will use a video during their presentations
- Given the number of participants, we request that everyone else does not turn on their webcam

## Having technical issues?

- You can download all presentations from <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/public-transit/E-and-D> and try to call by phone
- If you need assistance with technical issues during the meeting, please reach out to 802-917-3451 or [Katharine.otto@vermont.gov](mailto:Katharine.otto@vermont.gov)

# Additional resources

- Contact information for all of today's presenters is included within the agenda
- All presentations and additional resources are uploaded on the E&D Website - <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/public-transit/E-and-D>

# Welcome

Michele Boomhower  
Director of Planning, Policy and Intermodal Development  
Vermont Agency of Transportation



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# 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Vermont E&D Summit – Welcome!

## The Importance of Today's Summit

- Public Transit Policy plan
  - The Demand Response service was identified as a primary area of interest **and** opportunity
  - Demographics, Surveys, Interviews, Pilot projects, etc.
- Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs)
  - Partnering with the transit providers for years/decades.
- Public Transit Organizations
  - Providing over 700,000 demand response trips every year.

# *1<sup>st</sup> Annual* Vermont E&D Summit – Welcome!

## **The Importance of Today's Summit**

### **Goal for Today:**

To review and embark on an improved process to respond to the increasing trip demands, the IT opportunities, and to become more efficient in terms of shared trips and services.

### **Goal for the Program:**

To institute improved coordination, reporting, communication and processes to expand modes, improve service, and reduce the costs per trip.

**There's much to do and let's get started – Thank You!**



# COVID-19 Effects on Transit in Vermont

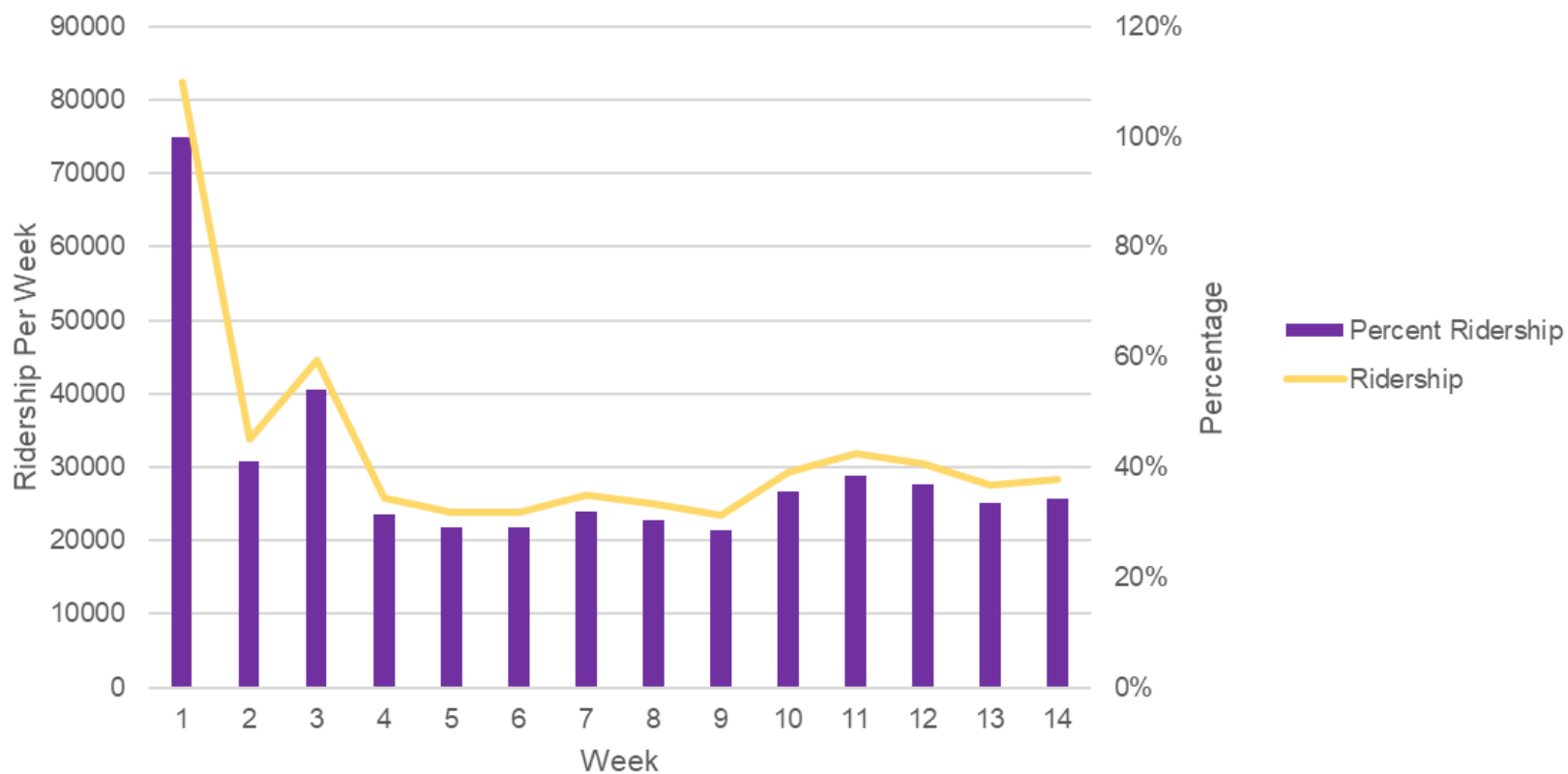
Ross MacDonald  
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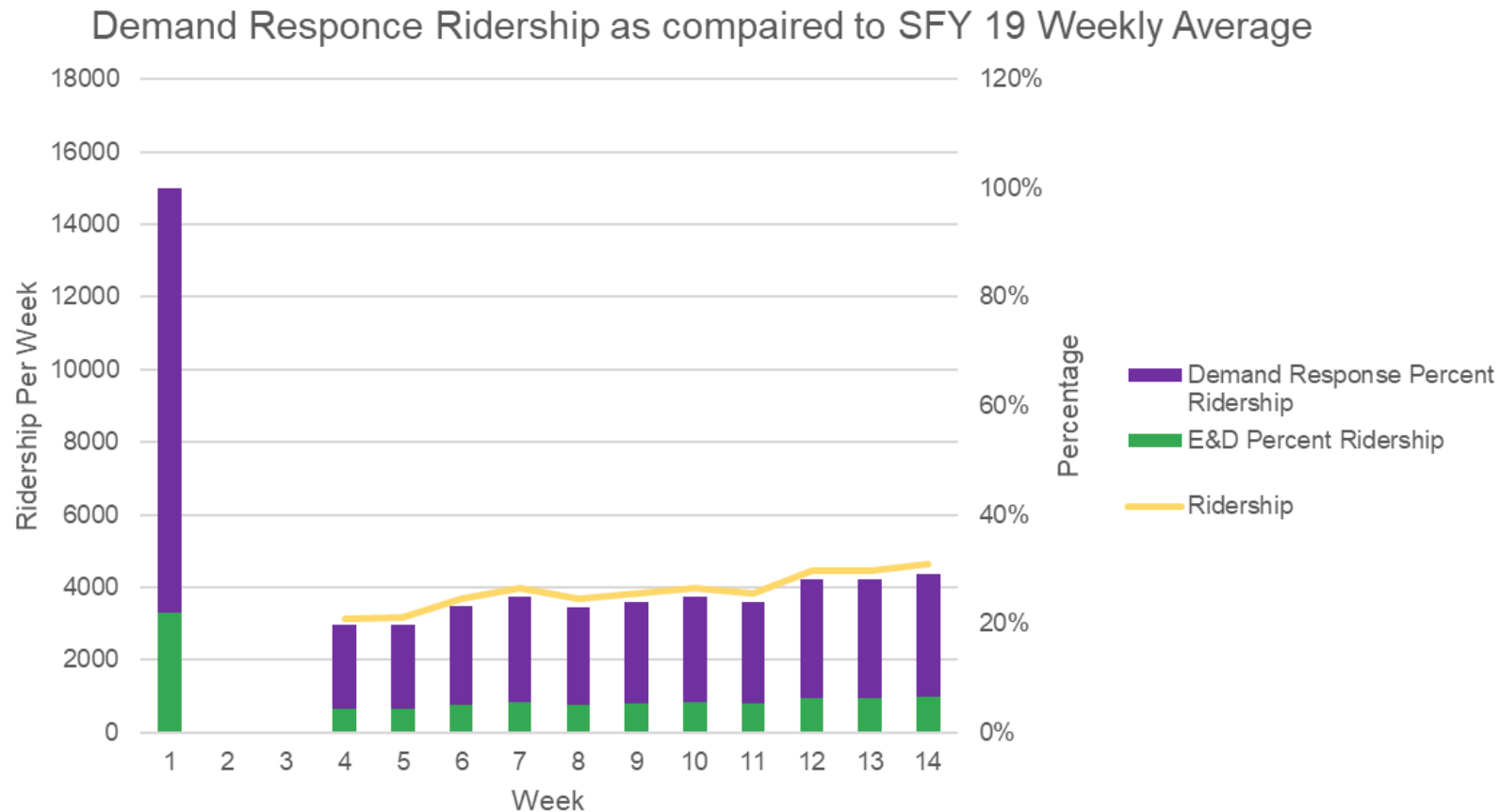
# COVID-19 Effects on Fixed Route Ridership

Fixed Route Ridership as compared to SFY 19 Weekly Average



- Loss of drivers
- Temporary suspension of services
- Increased physical distancing on buses
- Required to wear face covering
- Frequent cleaning of vehicles
- OSHA Training
- Screening Questions

# COVID-19 Effects on Demand Response Ridership



- Loss of volunteers
- Temporary suspension of all volunteer trips
- One passenger per car
- Required to wear face covering
- Cleaning before and after each trip
- OSHA Training
- Screening Questions

# Innovative New Programs for Transit

Timothy Bradshaw  
Public Transit Coordinator  
Vermont Agency of Transportation



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# Current Transit Programs in Vermont



Our budget allows for some investments and innovations that would not be possible without the current legislative and admin support. The Trip Planner, Statewide Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), Job Access and Rides to Wellness (R2W) programs are a few examples.

# GO! VERMONT

- Redesigned site
- Open Source Data
- Trip Planner
- AVL
- Microtransit
- Rides to Wellness
- Recovery Rides
- What Else?



Rides for Veterans



Travel By Train

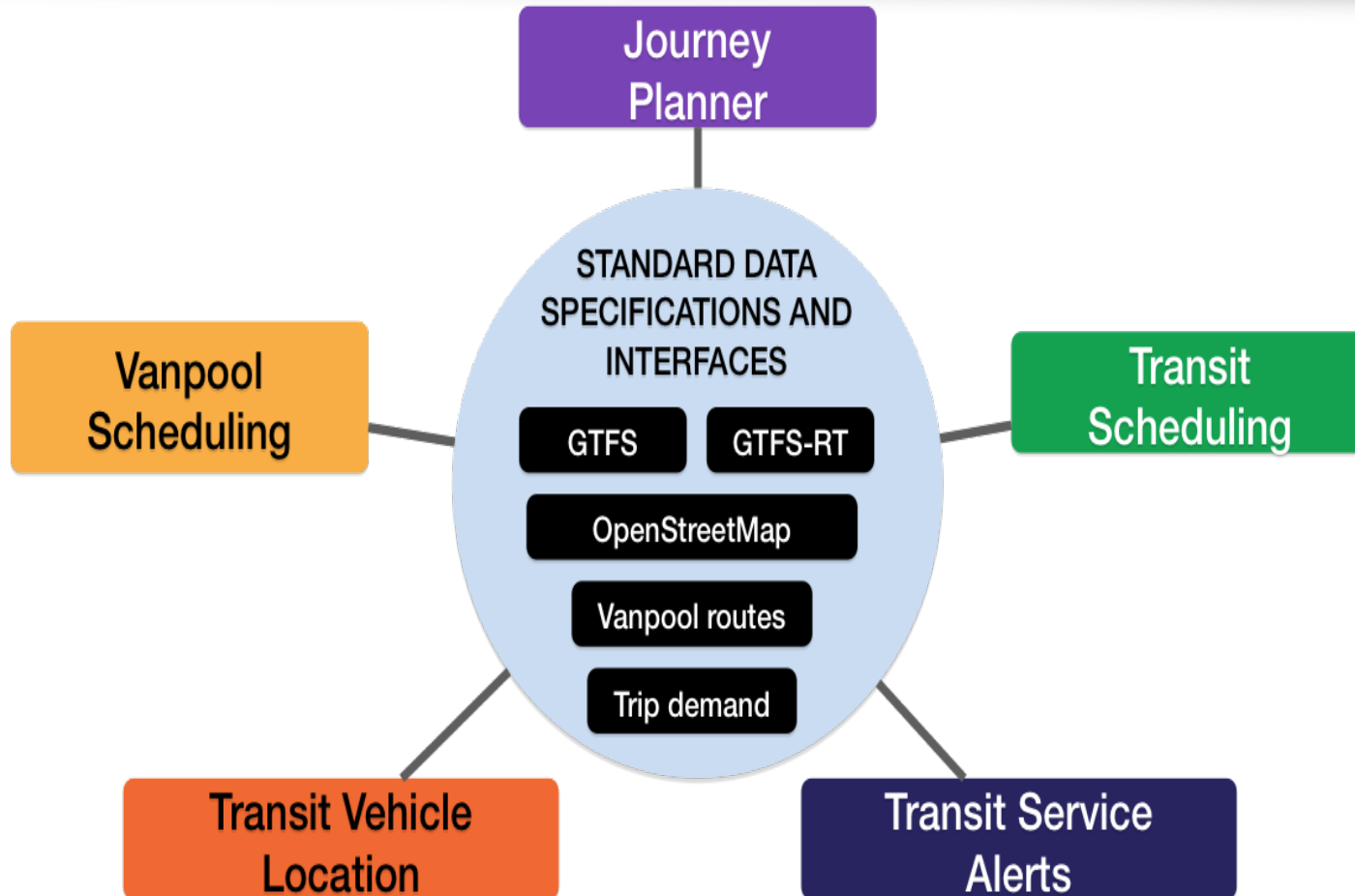


Travel By Bike



Trip Planner

# Open Source Data



Standards Allow interoperability

Interoperable technologies are modular and can be replaced easily.

# Google Trip Planner

Menu

32 Daltons Rd, Duxbury, VT 05676

Montpelier, Vermont 05602

Leave now

OPTIONS

*Sorry, we could not calculate transit directions from "32 Daltons Rd, Duxbury, VT 05676" to "Montpelier, Vermont 05602"*





# GO! VERMONT Trip Planner

## go! VERMONT TRIP PLANNER

32 Daltons Rd x

Montpelier City Hall x

Depart by

7:41 AM 04/24/2018

Show Settings

Submit

Drag start and end location pins on the map or use the form above to adjust trip settings.

Option 1: departs at Apr 24th 7:49am 56 min

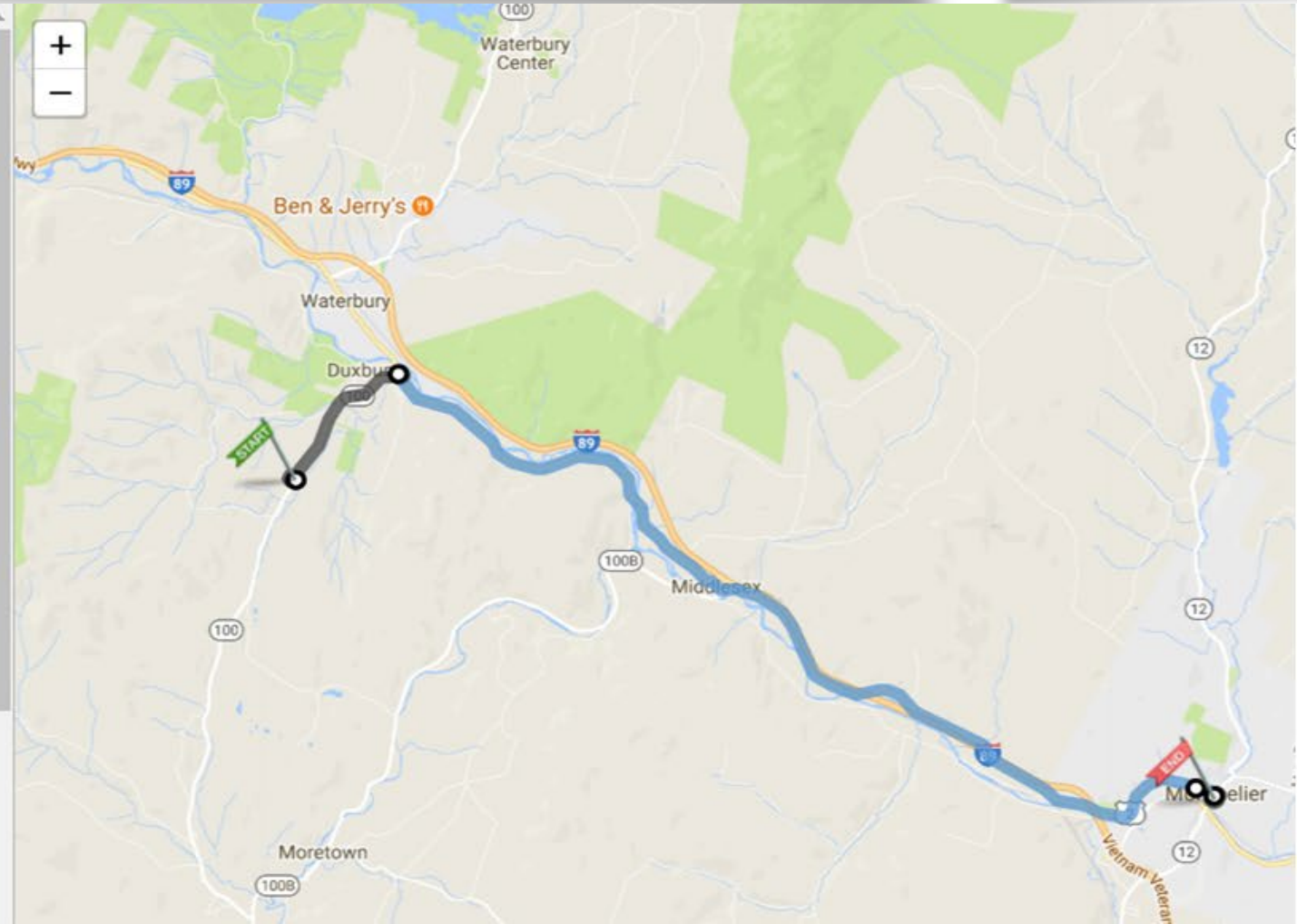


\$2.00

This itinerary exceeds your maximum walk distance.

to Route 2 at Route 100

36 min



# Google Trip Planner

Navigation icons: Car, Bus, Walking, Bicycling, Airplane

Origin: 1787-2155 Spaulding Rd, St Johnsbury, VT

Destination: 1 National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT

Leave now

OPTIONS

*Sorry, we could not calculate transit directions from "1787-2155 Spaulding Rd, St Johnsbury, VT 05819" to "1 National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT"*



# GO! VERMONT Trip Planner

1787 Spaulding Rd

National Life Drive

Depart by

6:41 AM  04/24/2018

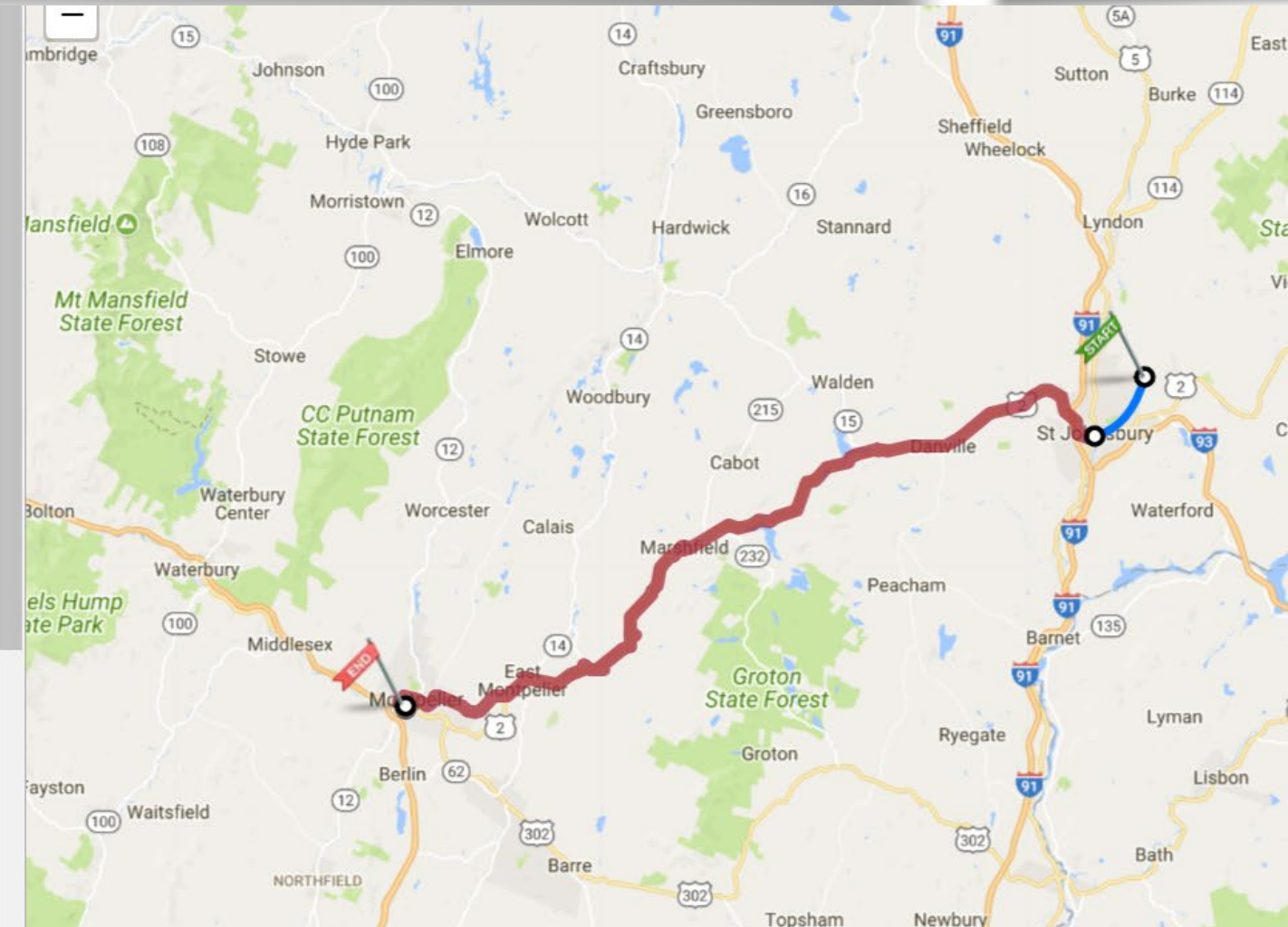
Drag start and end location pins on the map or use the form above to adjust trip settings.

Option 1: departs approximately Apr 24th 7:08am 2 hr, 0 min +

84

This itinerary exceeds your maximum walk distance.

Rural Community Transportation



# Statewide Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL)

- All providers, routes, and bus stops operating with the same AVL service.
- Open Source Data(GTFS-RT)
- Basic Service expectation

transit

Regions

Partners

Blog



## GO YOUR OWN WAY

iPhone



Android

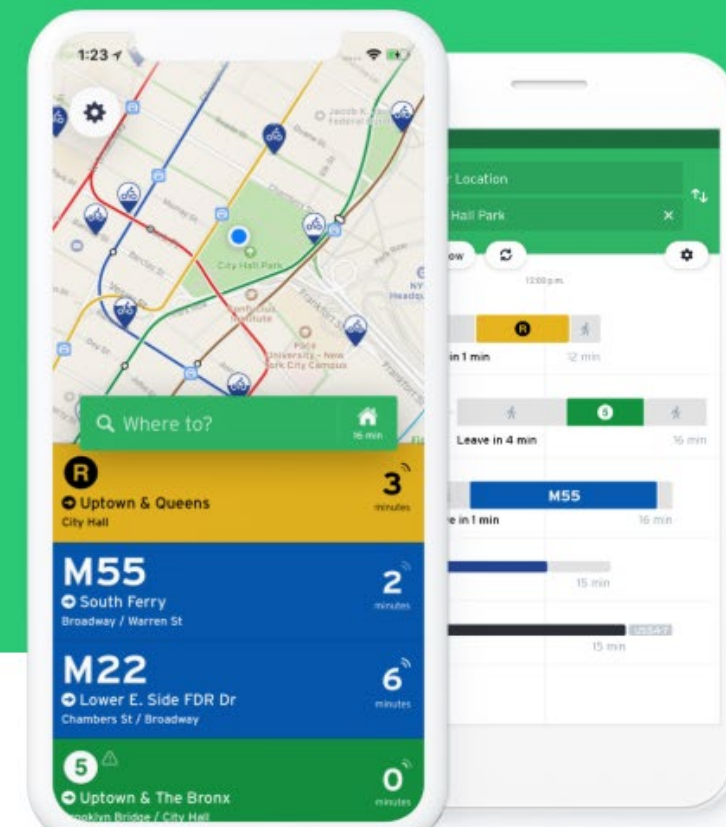


It's in the Name™

## FIND MY BUS



New Transit App helps track and plan your route.



# MicroTransit

## Why consider this “new” type of Service?

Aging population  
Current ridership  
Costs of transit service  
New technologies

More flexible  
More Convenient?  
Successful Case Studies



Figure 2: Total Ridership

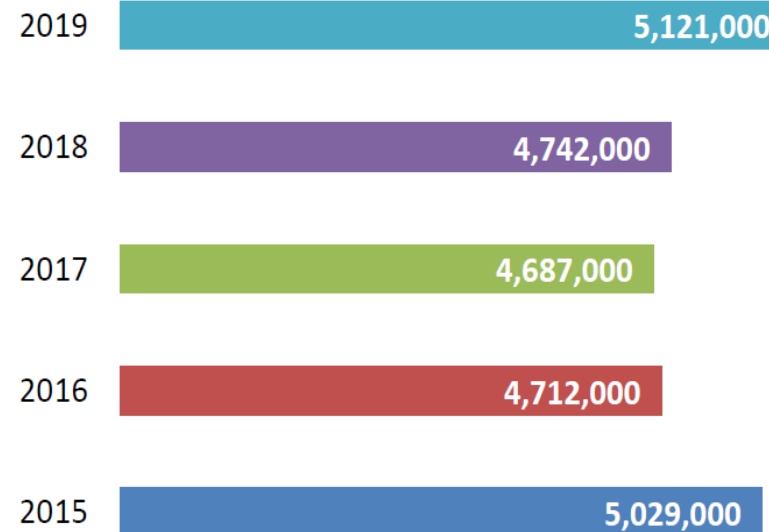
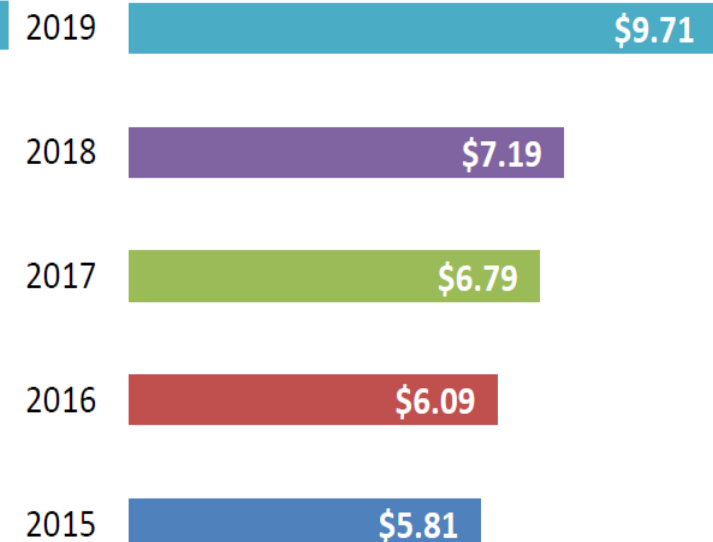


Figure 4: Cost per Trip



# MicroTransit

## Why consider this “new” type of Service?



- New technologies such as smartphone apps allow for on-demand, flexible and efficient service delivery
- No advance notice for service requests
- MicroTransit software balances goals of minimizing passenger wait time and maximizing efficiency
- Serves a specified region rather traditional routes
- Dozens of successful pilots underway nationwide
- May provide more services to more people

## RIDES TO WELLNESS



# Need a ride...

to your medical or dental appointment?

Don't let a lack of transportation stop you from getting the care you need.

**Vermont 2-1-1**

can help connect you with resources to meet your medical transportation needs in the Windsor area.

# Dial **2-1-1** today!

Text your zip code to **898 211**



# Rides to Wellness



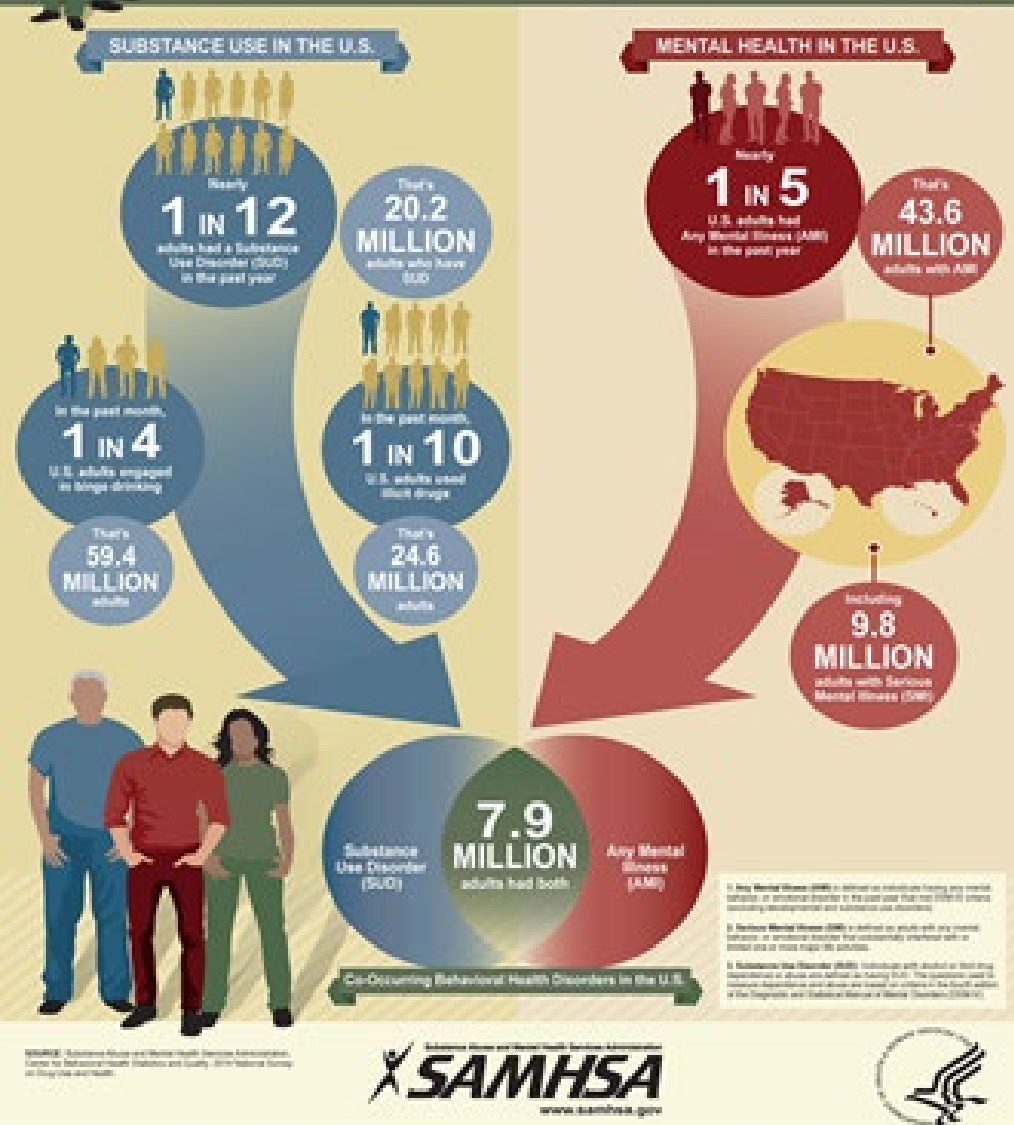
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July 10, 2020

- Five successful pilots currently in place using Federal Transit Administration grant funds.
- Consultants working with additional medical facilities on training and implementation regardless of available seed money.
- Trip eligibility decision Roadmap developed to assist regional transit providers, health centers and our partners at 211 with triage of transportation requests.
- Pilot intended to bridge the gap for trips not eligible under Medicaid and E&D.
- Approximately 1,000 trips provided since April 2018.

# SUBSTANCE USE & MENTAL ILLNESS IN U.S. ADULTS (18+)

FROM THE 2014 NATIONAL SURVEY ON DRUG USE AND HEALTH (NSDUH)

Behavioral health (substance use and mental health) issues affect millions in the United States each year.



## Recovery and Job Access



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- \$320k over two years to cover costs for recovery and job access transportation
- Service began in September 2019 in partnership with Rural Community Transportation and recovery centers in Newport, St. Johnsbury and Morrisville
- Second pilot started in January 2020 in partnership with Marble Valley Regional Transit District and the Rutland recovery center
- VTrans and the Agency of Human Services collaborating on oversight and funding
- Over 2,000 trips provided from September 2019 through April 2020
- \$160k currently committed to two pilot regions but VTrans and AHS considering viable partnerships in other Vermont locations



# E&D Rider Satisfaction Survey

Jackie Cassino  
Planning Coordinator  
Vermont Agency of Transportation



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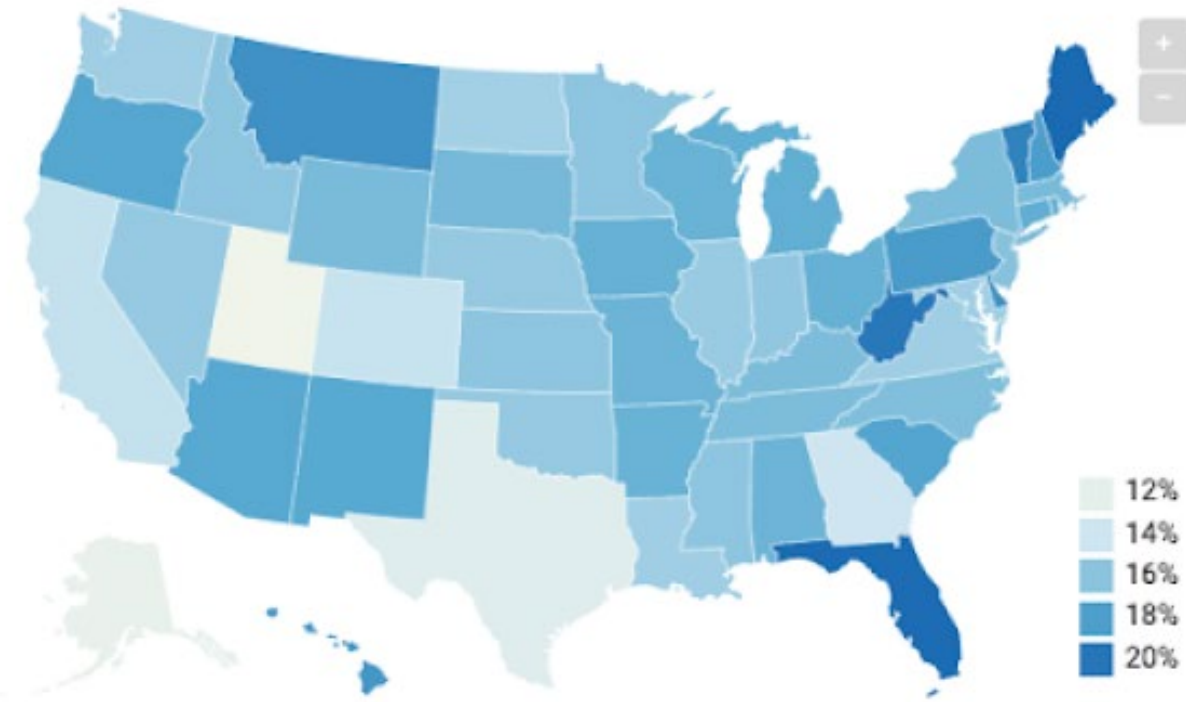
# Project Partners



# Context

## AGING- INDEPENDENCE- MOBILITY **Share of Population Aged 65 or Older in 2018**

- The older Vermonters population continues to grow and demand for transportation services increases, yet transportation resources have remained stagnant.
- Changing population demographics: By 2030, it is estimated that 1 in 4 Vermonters will be 65 years or older.
- Unmet need: Statewide it is estimated that the E&D program only reaches about 12% of eligible individuals.



July 2018 population estimates

Map: U.S. News & World Report • Source: U.S. Census Bureau • [Get the data](#)

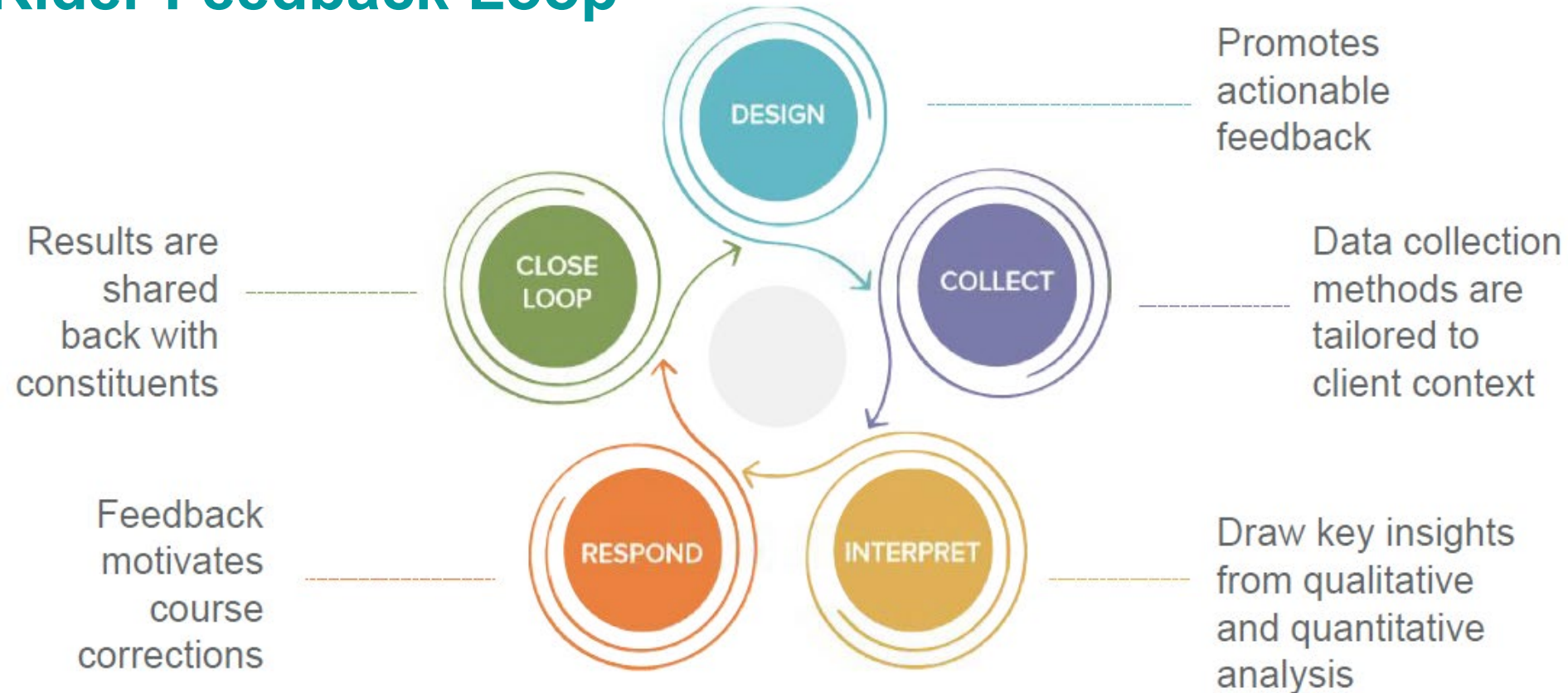
# Why Survey E&D Riders?

A safe, reliable, and multimodal transportation system that grows the economy, is affordable to use and operate, and serves vulnerable populations.

-VTrans Vision Statement



## Rider Feedback Loop



# What we asked...

## Benchmarked Questions:

- How likely are you to recommend [service provider] to a friend or family member? (scale of 1-10)
- What does [service provider] do well? *open response*
- What could [service provider] do better? *open response*
- Overall, how well has [service provider] met your needs?
- How often staff at this organization treat you with respect?
- How easy it is for you to get services at [service provider] ?

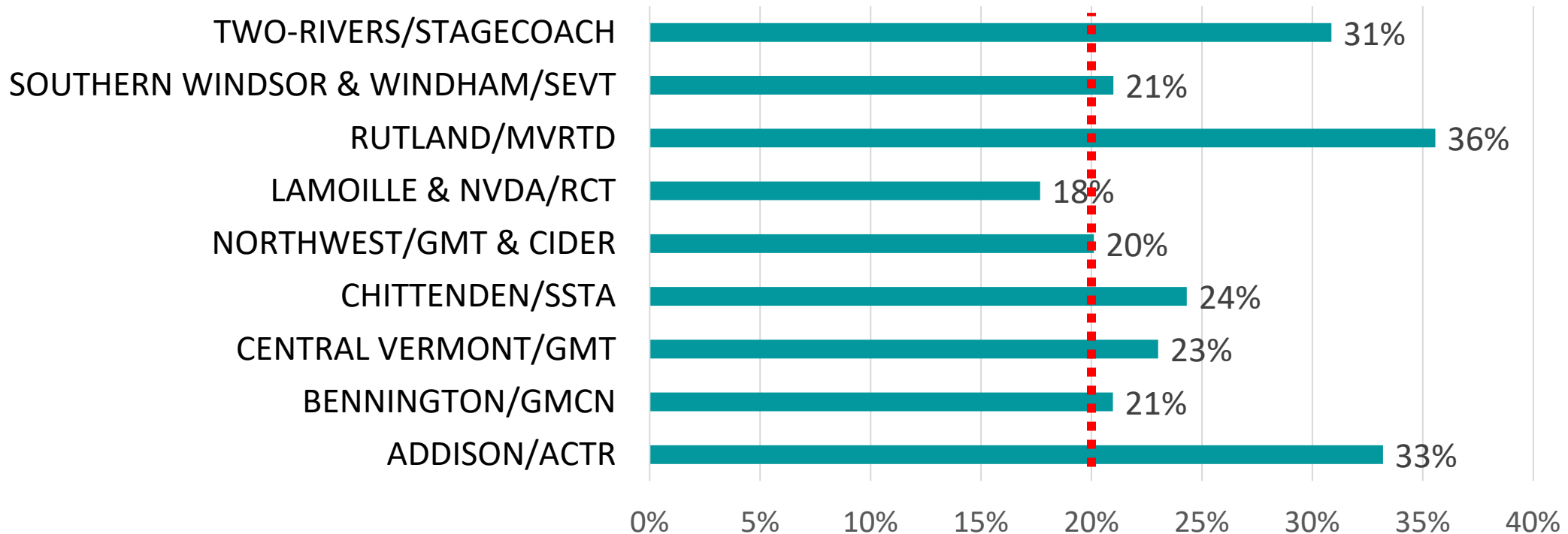
## Custom questions:

- What would make it easier for you to utilize [service provider] transportation services?
- What type of vehicle do you prefer to use when utilizing [service provider] transportation services?
- The transportation [service provider] provides is important to maintain my health and well-being.  
(scale)

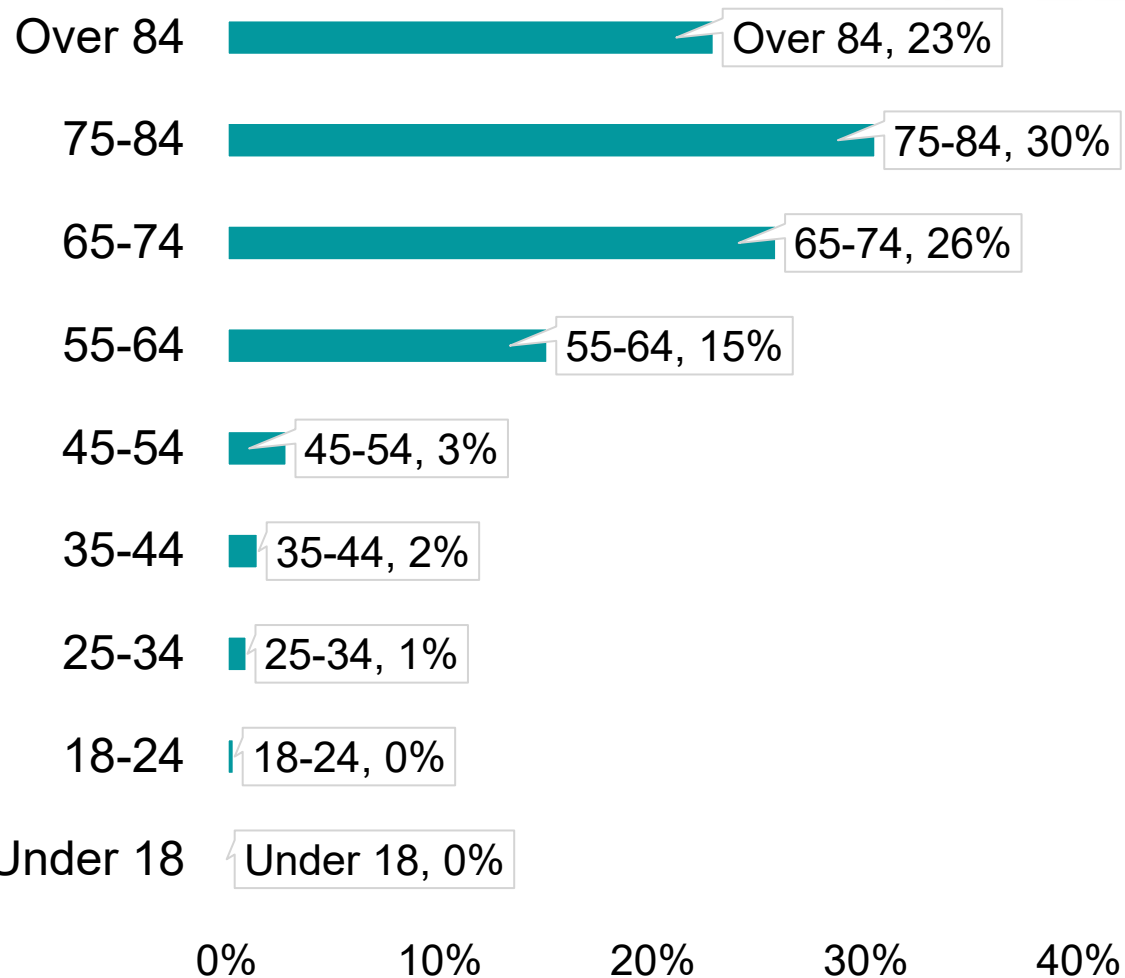
# Response Rate

1,402 complete surveys over 5,818 unique riders\*

Percent Surveys Completed  
*(out of total potential rider list per region)*



# Who we heard from



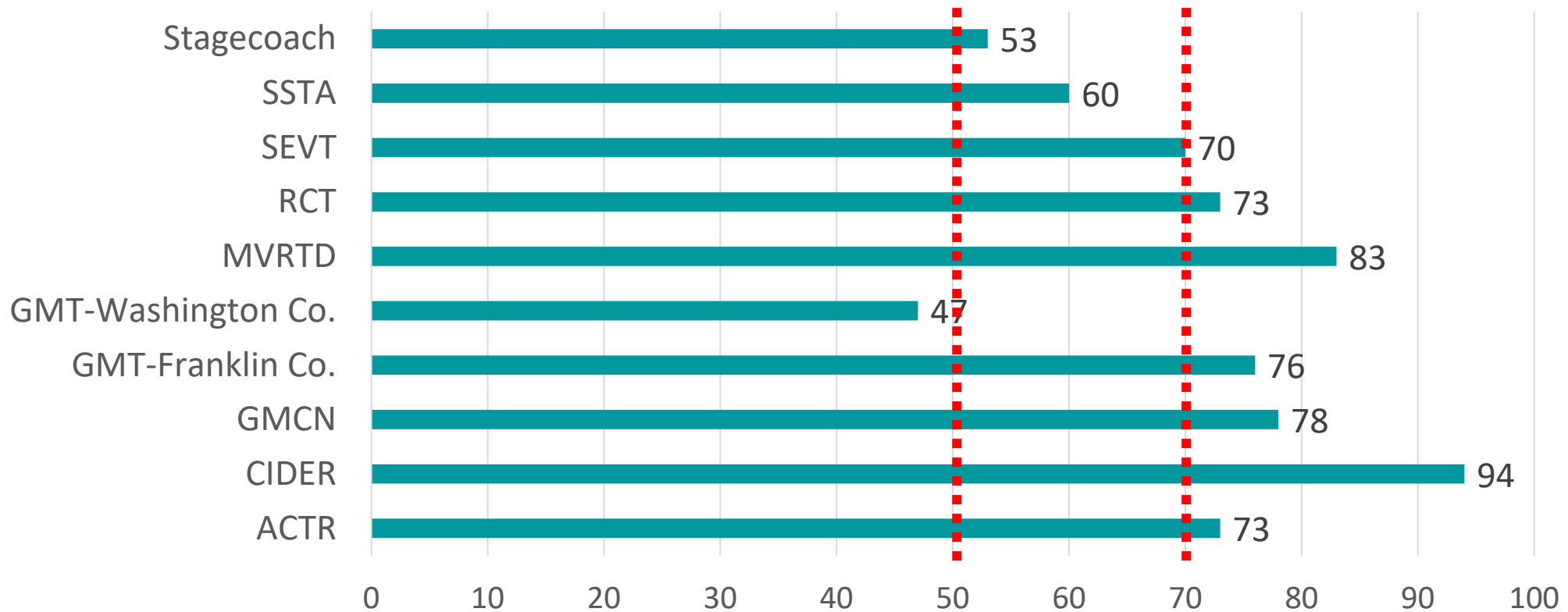
## Regional Variations

- Oldest respondents (Over 84) Stagecoach-Upper Valley 28%
- Youngest respondents (54 and under) GMT-Central Vermont 12%
- Oldest counties (% total population over age 80):
  - Essex
  - Bennington
  - Windsor
  - Orleans



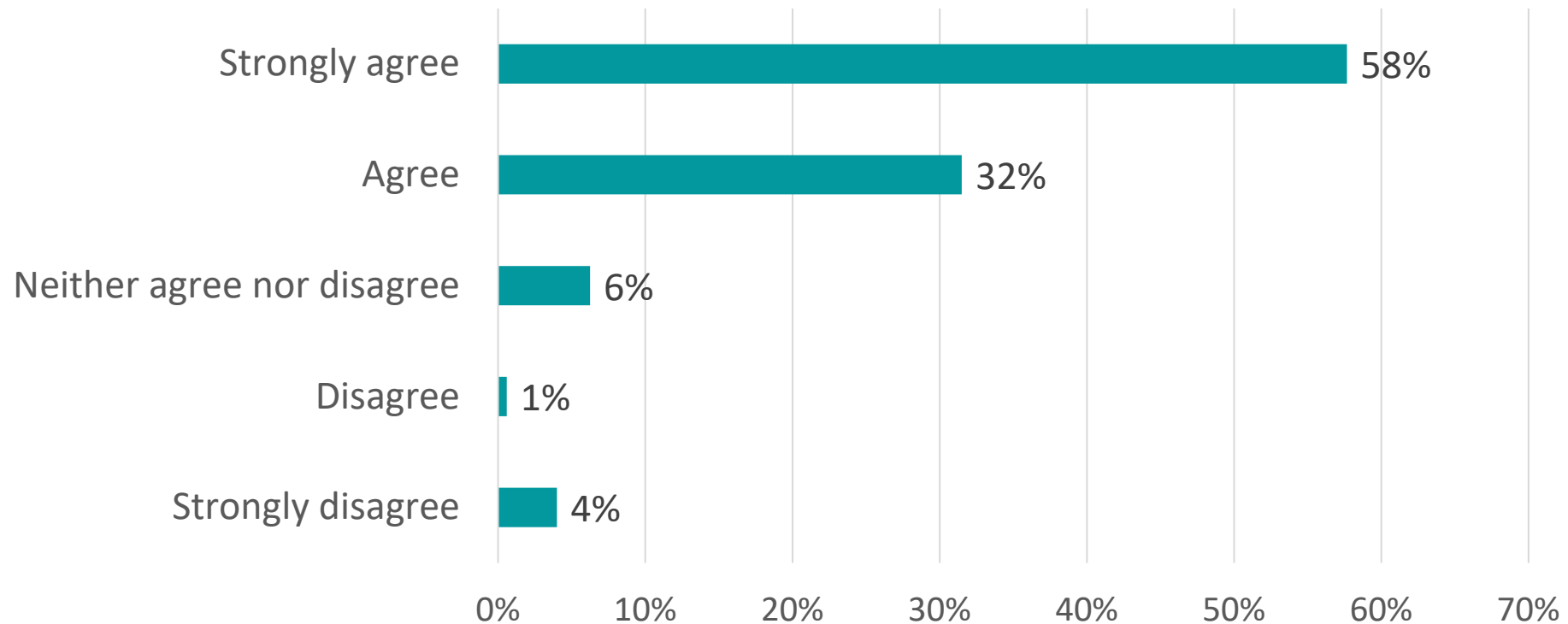
# Results

## Net Promoter Score

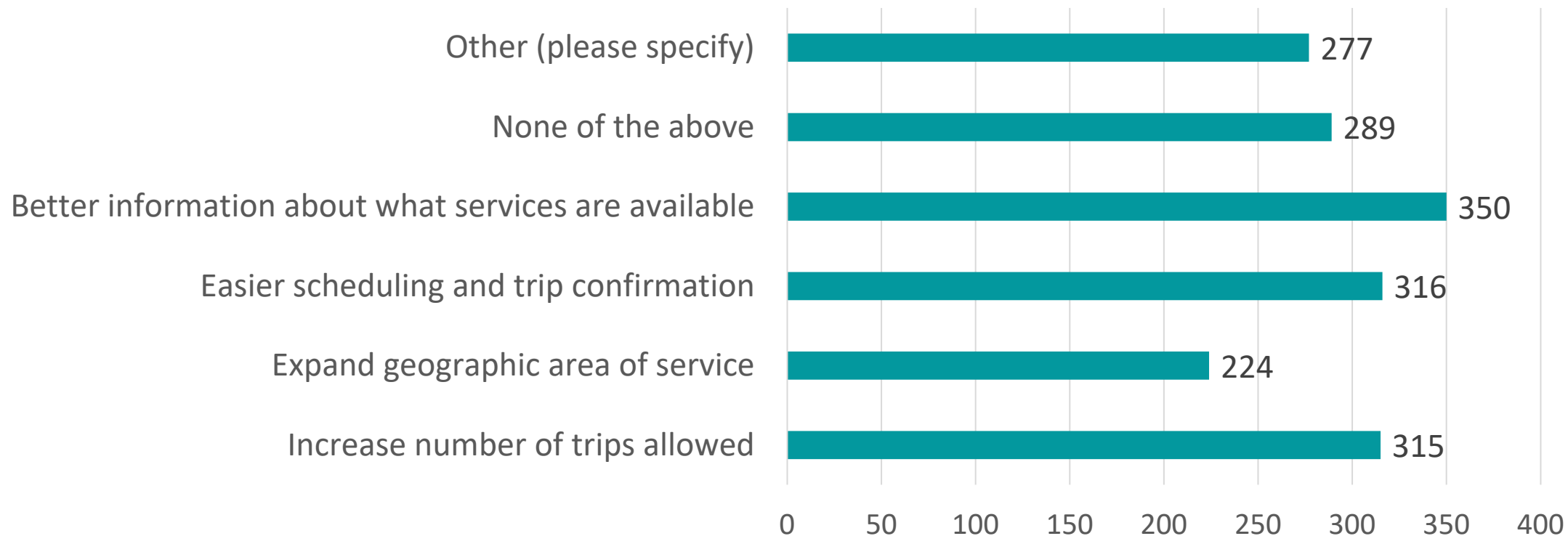


# Results

**The transportation [service provider] provides is important to maintain my health and well-being.**



## What would make it easier for you to utilize [service provider] transportation services? Select all that apply.



# Results

*“Some printed information on services to have at hand.”*

*“Reliable pick up and drop off.”*

*“Shorter time for scheduling trips.”*

*“Personal (non-medical) appointments transport .”*

*“If my Dr. needs more time for me but the volunteer needs to leave!”*

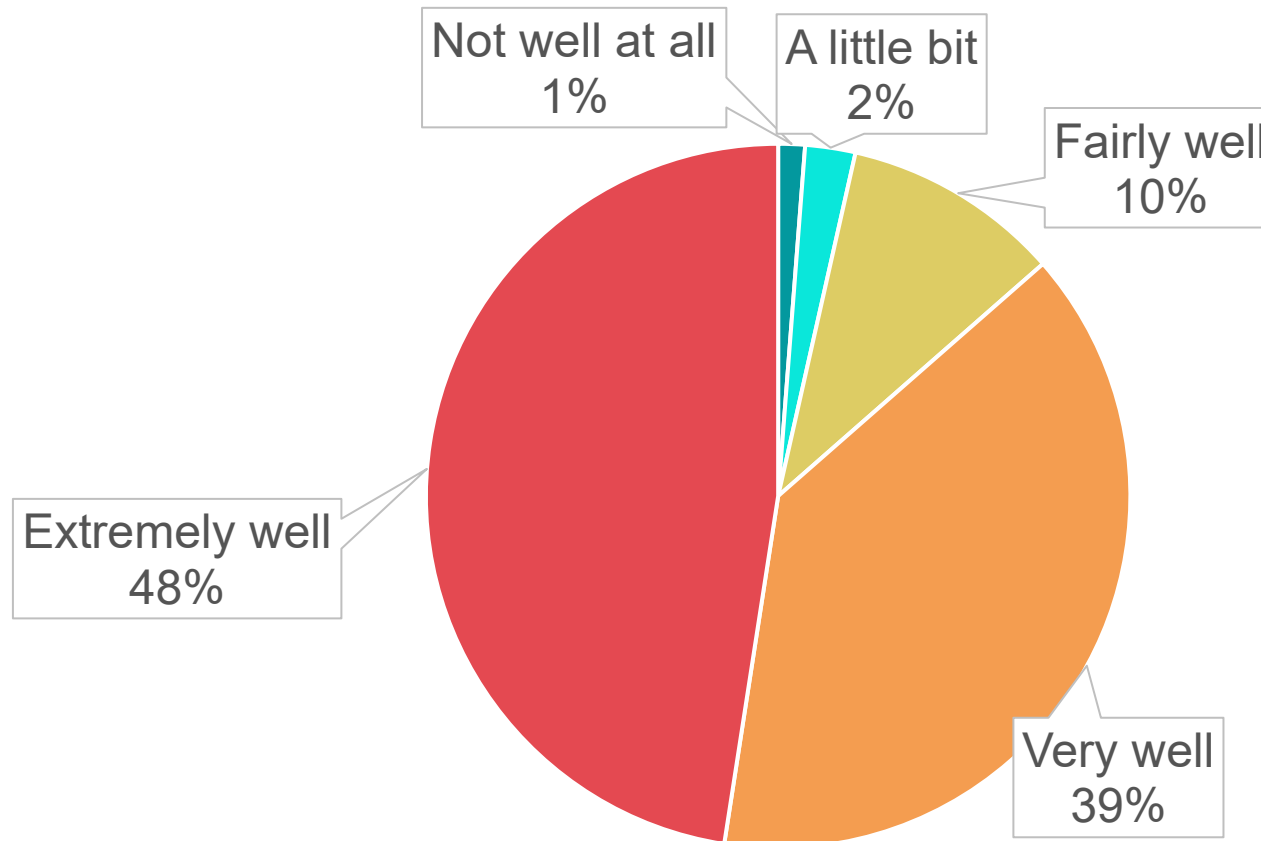
*“Attitude - I did monthly doctors and groceries - not recently because of attitude when you call .”*

*“Have more transportation in “off” times - like after dark.”*

*“I have difficulty getting in some vehicles and could use some help sometimes. They are very busy and sometimes difficult to reach but they always phone back. “*

# Results

Overall, how well has [service provider] met your needs?



# Next Steps

**The Agency of Transportation (VTrans) will work with Regional Planning Commissions, E&D Committees, and Transit Providers to continue the survey analysis and follow up.**

- **Goal:** To foster the inclusion of older adults and persons with disabilities in transportation planning and design.
- **Vision:** By listening to E&D Riders about the quality of their experience, we believe that together we can better meet the needs of our constituents and get more impact from the state and local transit investment.
- **Desired Outcomes:**
  - Data on E&D program performance and E&D rider experience.
  - Support collaboration between RPC, E&D Committees, and transit providers.

# Beyond the Basics

Ross MacDonald  
Public Transit Manager  
Vermont Agency of Transportation



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# Beyond the Basics

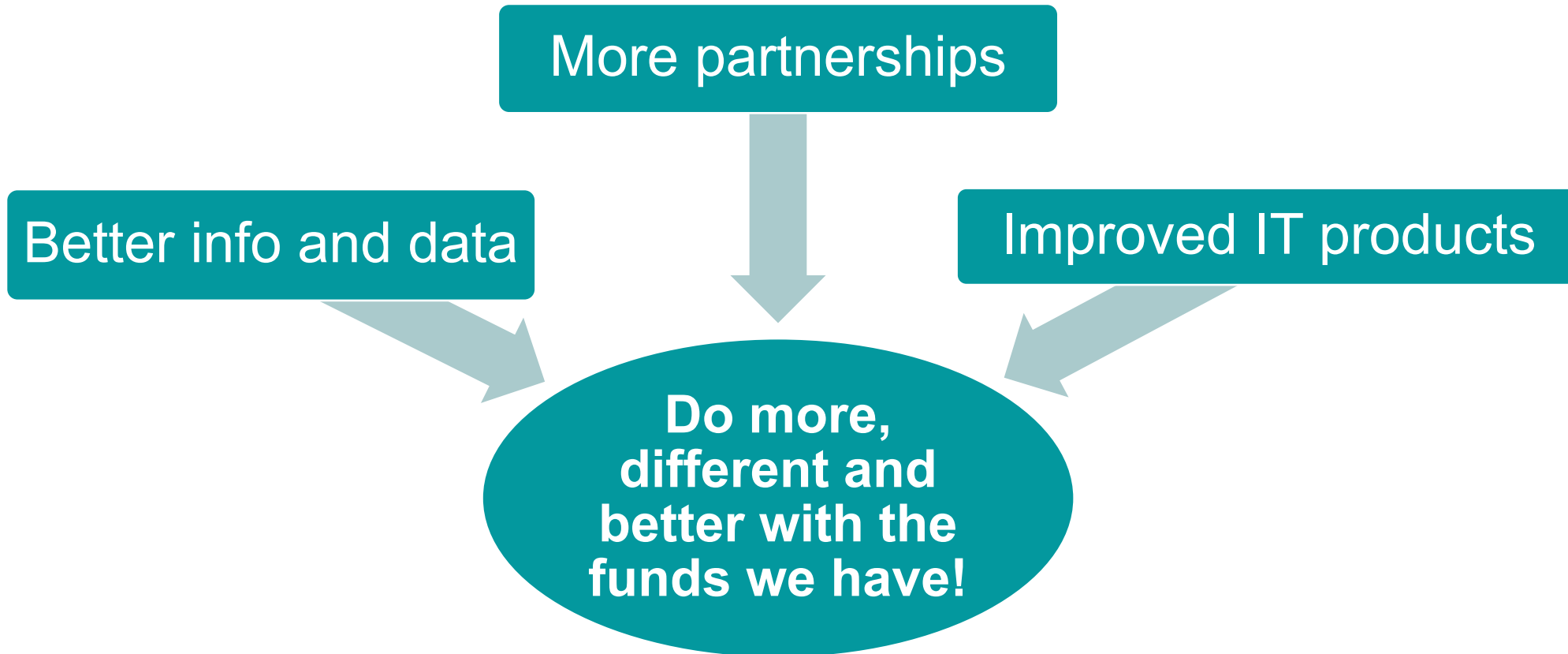
## Why is this important?

- Aging population = increased demand
- Increases in trip costs
- Budget pressures
- Mobility gaps continue to exist throughout our State.





# To meet future demands, we need your help!



# New E&D Annual Workplan

- Now available on E&D webpage - <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/public-transit/E-and-D>
- For RPC Planners and Public Transit Providers to guide work with Regional E&D Committees
- Public Transit Coordinators will dive into more details in the fall
- *We thought it would be useful to share some inspirational examples of what has been done, or could be*

## Key elements

- E&D meetings held in accordance with Vermont Open Meeting Law by 1/1/2021
- Rider Survey Follow up
- Establish Regional E&D Committee Workplan by 6/20/2021
- Hold four quarterly regional E&D Committee Meetings per year
- Attend Statewide E&D Summit

# Ideas for E&D Committee next steps

Timothy Bradshaw  
Public Transit Coordinator  
Vermont Agency of Transportation

For more details about the examples given, as well as others,  
visit <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/public-transit/E-and-D>



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# Expand your partner base

Hospital  
Community  
Health Team

E&D Rider

VT Center for  
Independent  
Living

Workforce  
organizations

Local  
Advocacy  
Group

Politicians

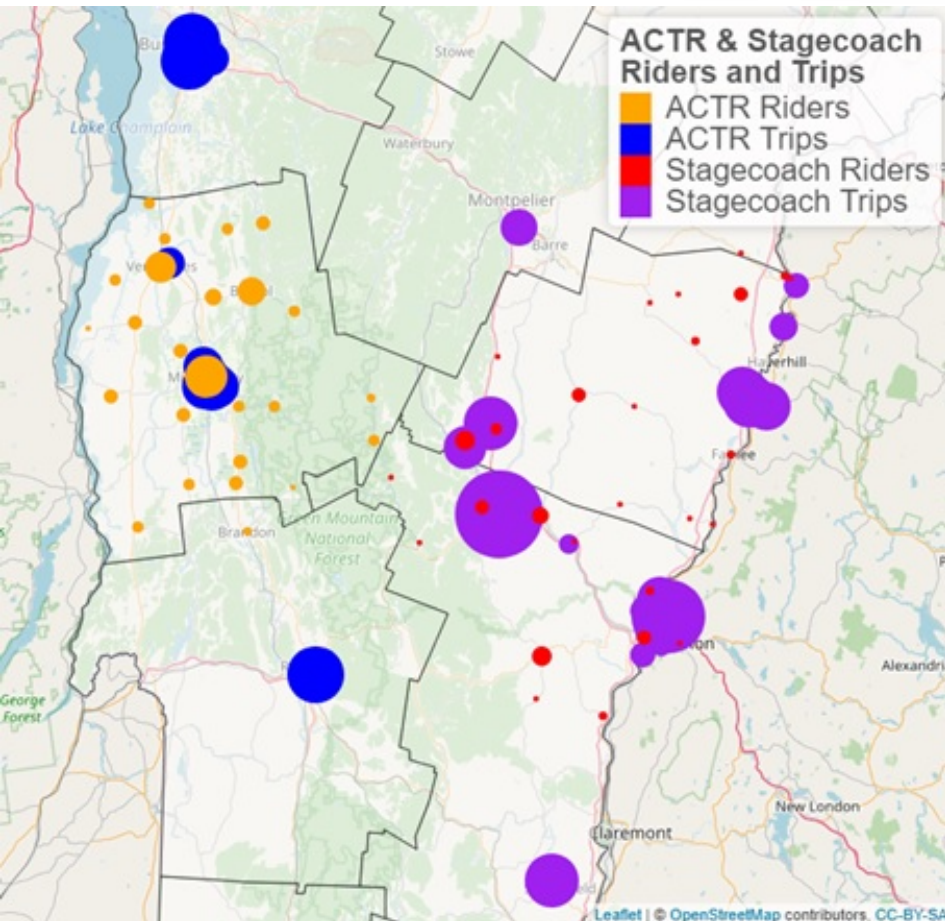
Partners don't just have to be financial!

- Are there any groups or individuals that could help you to better understand E&D needs and experience?
- Are there any groups or individuals who provide similar or overlapping services where it might be good to coordinate better?

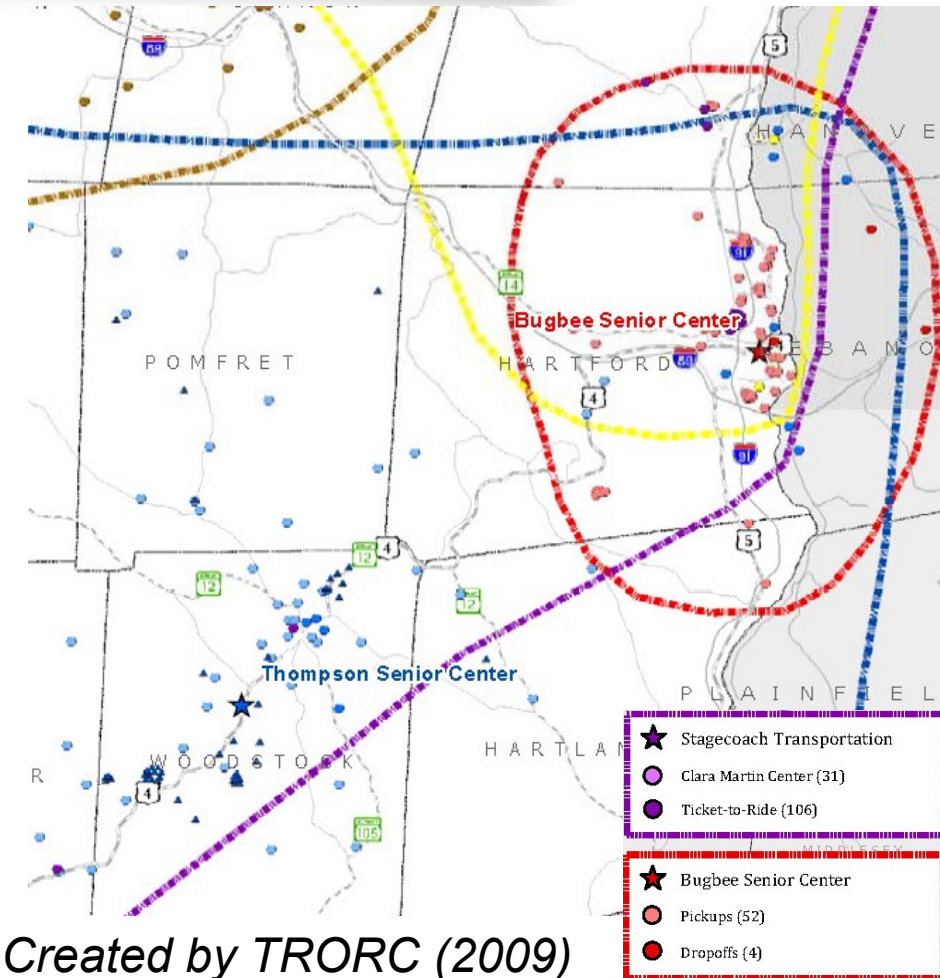
For some ideas of partners:

- Rides to Wellness
- A to B Mobility Project by SWCRPC

# Map your trips



- Where are trips going from and to?
- What are the service areas?
- Are there any areas that appear underserved?



Created by Middlebury College Students (2020)

Created by TRORC (2009)

# Telling the story

Some people answered the E&D survey indicating they would be willing to answer more detailed questions

Middlebury College Students worked with Tri-Valley Transit in Spring 2020 to do follow up phone interviews

## Martha Soderberg

Martha began using Dial-A-Ride 10 years ago, after being diagnosed with breast cancer. Over the course of her daily radiation treatment in Rutland, she developed a friendship with her driver, remembering, “He loved to tell stories, and I had a good time just listening... If I didn’t have that service, I couldn’t have done it.”

Nowadays, Martha goes to Burlington for regular eye injections. The door-to-door service of Dial-A-Ride is very helpful for her; when she had a bad leg, she remarked that the drivers “would go into the doctor’s office and get the wheelchair for me and bring it out. And put me in a wheelchair and push me in again, which is really nice.”

While recognizing the assistance of Dial-A-Ride in getting to medical appointments and other essential trips, she also points out the importance of rides for giving her the freedom to get out of her house. Remembering her longer trips, she explains, “I was amazed to see the scenery for a change on the way up and back. I’d go, ‘Oh! That’s a new building, isn’t it?’”

Martha highlights that some of the main benefits of the service are the bonds she has made with the amazing drivers, and the sense of community it creates within Middlebury. On the drivers, she praises, “I can’t say enough good things about them, and because I live on my social security alone here... they are the only people that I give money to. Because I just think that they are well worth it.”

“I arrange for a ride, mainly when I have to go to a doctor’s appointment. And then I try and work it out that I could maybe stop in for a little shopping too.”

– Martha

“Since I decided not to drive anymore, [Dial-A-Ride] sure has been a godsend.”

– Martha

*Story summary created by Middlebury College Students (2020)*

# Next Steps after the Survey: Chittenden County's E&D Evaluation



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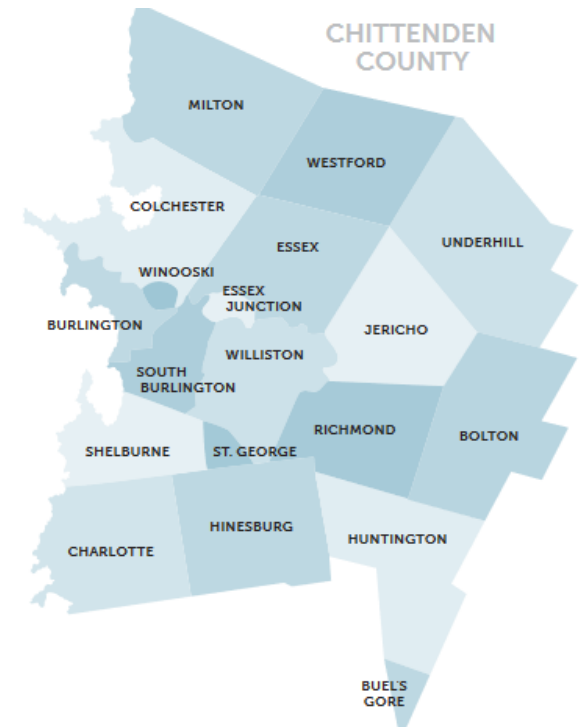


Marshall Distel, CCRPC  
Jordan Posner, GMT



# E&D Program Evaluation

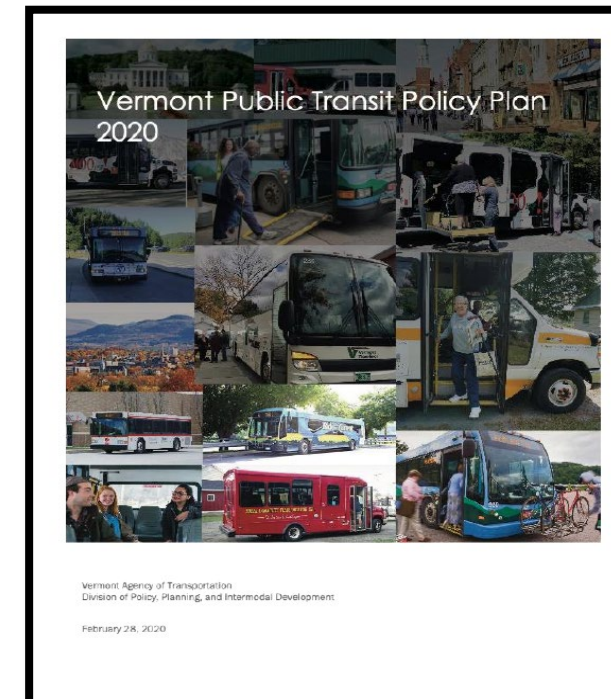
- Over the next decade, Vermont will see an increasing challenge to its ability to meet the basic needs of aging Vermonters and Vermonters with disabilities.
- It has become imperative to identify efficient and equitable transportation options for our communities.
- CCRPC, GMT, and United Way of Northwest VT worked together to evaluate Chittenden County's E&D Transportation Program.
- Goal to expand the understanding of the program among stakeholders, and identify and discuss places of strength and places for improvement.





# Methodology

- This project started as a request from the CCRPC's UPWP Committee.
- Throughout the process, we strived to generate opportunities for shared learning and collaboration between all of Chittenden County's E&D stakeholders.
- After a year of collaboration between the core project team and the E&D partners, we developed a greater understanding of our program and prioritized long-term opportunities for improvement.
- Alignment with the development of the VTrans Public Transit Policy Plan (PTPP).



**A collaboration by Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission | United Way of Northwest Vermont | Green Mountain Transit | Special Services Transportation Agency | Chittenden County Elders and Persons with Disabilities Partners**

# E&D Evaluation Outcomes

- Comprehensive program history.
- Identified challenges and areas for improvement.
- Creation of a Chittenden County E&D Program Ride Guide.
- Universal definitions for trip types.
- Development of a data management tool.
- Moving forward with a feasibility study to consolidate the call center operations for E&D, ADA, and Medicaid transportation.

## Chittenden County Elderly & Disabled Transportation

### Ride Guide Information Handbook



Prepared by



United Way of  
Northwest Vermont

In cooperation with

Special Services  
Transportation  
Agency



# Deliverables and Results

- In conjunction with its Paratransit Contractor, SSTA, GMT, CCRPC, and the local E&D partners set forth a strategy to simplify ridership data and billing.
- The goal was to reduce the amount of “trip categories” being used. Since the development and intergradation of RouteMatch, SSTA had used over a dozen “trip categories” on a regular basis.
- After the survey, trip categories dropped from 12 to 8, over the course of just one month. This simplified the billing and program process for local parameters, and made the program easier to manage.

# Lessons Learned

## (1) Accessible Info

- It was important to hear from our E&D riders in order to prioritize areas for improvement.
- Getting E&D partner buy-in early and often was vital.

## (2) Shared Data/Performance Metrics

- Beyond budgetary goals, visibility to performance metrics can't be overlooked (on-time performance, productivity, unique riders, trip destinations, etc.)

## (3) Regionally Distinct Program

- Chittenden County's E&D challenges have been amplified by the existing complexities of the mix of urban and rural transportation, the large number of E&D partners, and the wide variety of services they provide.



United Way of  
Northwest Vermont

# Q&A

Facilitated by Stephanie Reilly  
Public Transit Coordinator  
Vermont Agency of Transportation



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# Questions?

- Please use the chat feature to ask questions if possible.
- We will take questions from the chat box first, and then go to voice questions
- Everyone was muted at the start of the meeting
- Hover your mouse pointer over the bottom of the screen to see controls.

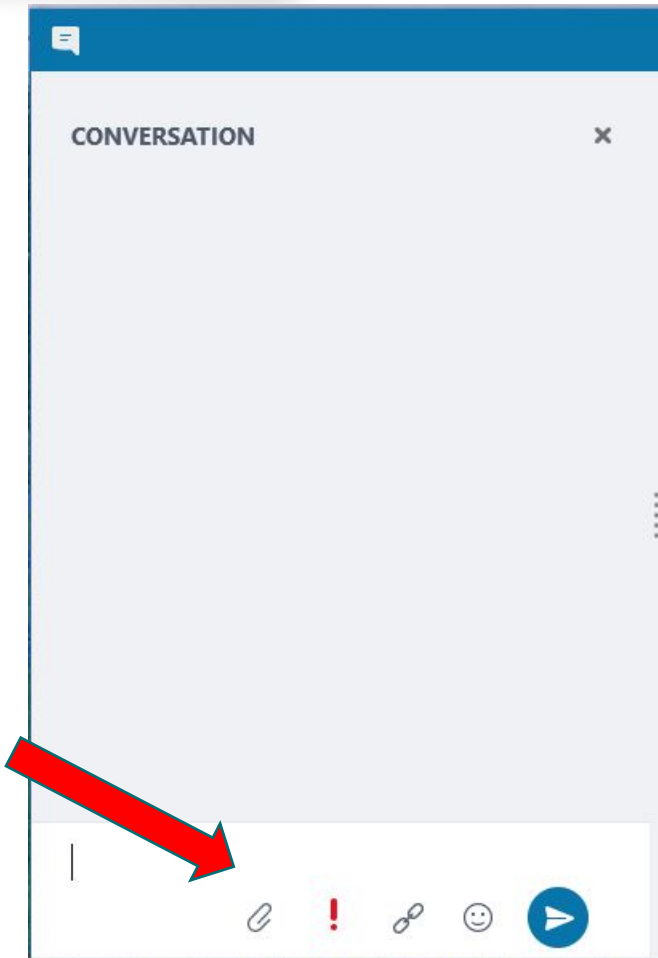
Chat Box/  
Panel on/off

Video  
on/off

Mute  
on/off

Audio  
settings

Type in questions or comments  
here. Note that everyone will  
see them.



# Discussion groups

Katharine Otto  
Planning Coordinator  
Vermont Agency of Transportation



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# Everyone is assigned to a group

Email from Katharine Otto on 7/6/2020 gave you:

- The group leader's name
- A phone number to call
- The questions that will be discussed

**If you do not have an email from Katharine, please email or text her ASAP for details.**

**802-917-3451 or**  
**[Katharine.otto@vermont.gov](mailto:Katharine.otto@vermont.gov)**

Each group has

- Facilitator/ group leader
- Note taker
- A mix of experience, geographic area and organizations

Notes from the groups will be collated and shared a few weeks after the event.



# Discussion Questions

The highest 4 ranked questions were:

1. What is planned for your region? During times of direct Covid-19 impact? For the new normal?
2. What are the issues in your region? Covid-19 related and issues from before Covid-19
3. What outreach methods have you used to recruit volunteer drivers? Have you had difficulties finding volunteers? What could make it easier for volunteers?
4. What could help you and your committee to pursue the ideas you have discussed today?

Thank you for the additional question suggestions.

If there is time the group can discuss other topics/ questions.

# Wrap up and next steps

Ross MacDonald  
Public Transit Manager  
Vermont Agency of Transportation

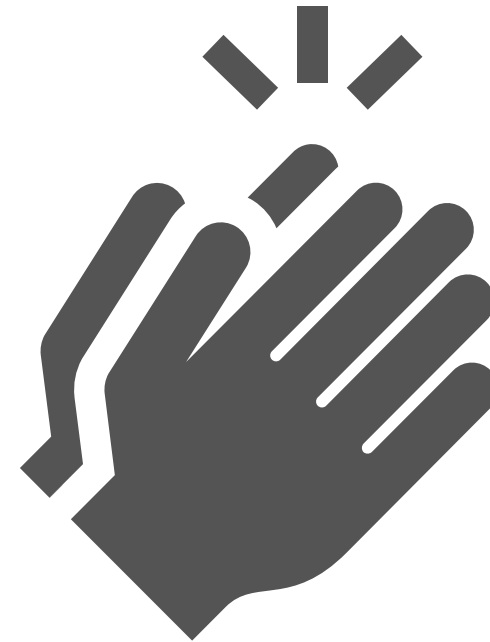


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# From the Organizers

A big thank you for everyone's attendance and participation today!

Thank you also for all your hard work for the E&D program!



# Next Steps

## Visit the new E&D website

<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/public-transit/E-and-D>

- Presentations and additional resources are already uploaded
- Videos of the presentations will be uploaded soon
- Summaries from the discussion groups will be collated and shared

**Please answer the follow up survey to help us plan for next year.  
It will be emailed to you.**

# Questions

**If there are any questions we have not had time to answer during today's summit, we will reach out to you in the next few weeks.**

**If you have any additional questions, please contact:**

- **Ross MacDonald**, VTrans Public Transit Manager  
[Ross.macdonald@vermont.org](mailto:Ross.macdonald@vermont.org)

**AND**

- **Katharine Otto**, VTrans Planning Coordinator  
[Katharine.otto@vermont.gov](mailto:Katharine.otto@vermont.gov)

# Break/ Time to connect to discussion group



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Please disconnect from this meeting

Please call the phone number assigned

Discussion groups are due to start promptly in 5 minutes

**Reminder - If you do not have an email with information about your group from Katharine, please email or text her ASAP for details.**

**802-917-3451 or [Katharine.otto@vermont.gov](mailto:Katharine.otto@vermont.gov)**