

Go! Vermont Strategic Plan

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Prepared for:

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1. Executive Summary

Go! Vermont is the statewide transportation demand management (TDM) program providing travel resources and information to help Vermonters get around. The program focuses on bringing awareness to different travel modes and connects resources to individuals, arming them with the tools and information to make informed decisions about their travel choices. The strategic plan builds on the awareness and education of travel modes and expands to support statewide climate action goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), a key pathway to greenhouse gas emissions reductions for all of Vermont. Beyond VMT reduction, Go! Vermont is working to improve the efficiency and use of Vermont's existing transportation system. Through partners and businesses, the program helps residents and visitors navigate Vermont's green travel options. Resources include: a multimodal trip planner, a rewards program, a Guaranteed Ride Home, a vanpool subsidy, marketing campaigns, educational materials, and business consulting services. Because Go! Vermont is not providing new mobility options or transportation services; the focus of the program is on influencing travel behavior. Levering the existing program tools and future innovations, the strategic plan will serve as a guide for the next five years to help the program meet its future vision through actions aligned with the program goals.

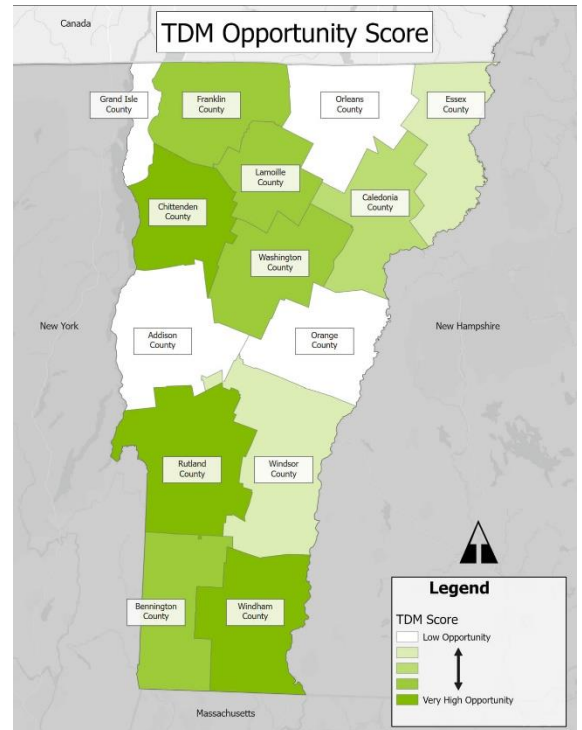
The strategic plan supports a new vision and goals for the program, outlining the aspiring position of the program and defined pathways to help Go! Vermont and its partners achieve the vision: To cultivate a vibrant, healthier, and environmentally conscious Vermont through mobility choice and innovative travel resources. The new program goals create actionable steps aligning with the current mission and future vision. The goals provide focus and direction in planning resources and efforts and encourage performance measures:

- Promote accessible, convenient, reliable, and affordable travel options for all Vermonters.
- Serve as a statewide transportation hub for information and evaluation to leverage efficiency in our transportation system.
- Meet transportation climate change targets through trip reduction and environmentally friendly travel options.

The strategic plan is built upon a solid foundation of insights into the context of Vermont and how best to leverage these factors into influence travel behavior. This includes:

- Many TDM stakeholders across the state work in coordination with Go! Vermont and its funder, VTrans, to influence travel behavior for all trip types so that Vermonters do not rely on drive alone travel all the time. The strategic plan documents those activities and the input of these organizations to inform the strategic plan.

- A demographic analysis of Vermont shows the population and employment trends, travel trends, and socioeconomic trends that align with opportunities to influence how Vermonters make transportation decisions. This demographic analysis informed a TDM Opportunity Score by county for Vermont. The TDM score was calculated using an index (with all factors weighted equally) that considers the data set, normalized by area in square miles. Areas with very high TDM scores relative to the full state have residents or workers with higher propensities to utilize or benefit from TDM interventions.
- Input from the TDM stakeholders and existing Go! Vermont members to confirm a new future vision and goals for the TDM program.



The strategic plan is an actionable document, providing Go! Vermont and its partners guidance for program development and implementation to help Vermont meet its climate actions goals of reducing VMT. The 44 identified strategies are organized by seven categories

(environmental, statewide coordination, outreach and incentives, customer service, transit, trip planner, and marketing) to provide a comprehensive look into programmatic opportunities for enhancement. These categories align with VMT reduction targets, opportunities to build efficiencies in TDM implementation across the state, and then focus on specific service areas of TDM programs to create additional opportunities to influence travel behavior.

The five-year strategic plan and the implementation of specific strategies is then organization by short-term (by year 2025), mid-term (by 2028), and long-term (beyond 2028) so the plan can inform future workplans. These timeframes were chosen to mirror VTrans' strategic plan updates. The workplan through 2024 is included at the end of the strategic plan to support the implementation of the short-term strategies.

The immediate outcome of the strategic plan is centered in coordination and collaboration of the many partner organizations coming together to drive the mission of Go! Vermont in a program annual workplan. The other short-term strategies intended for implementation over the next 18 months include a focus on building out the county-level strategy based on the TDM Opportunity Score to prioritize direct-to-business outreach and engagement, evaluating the use of incentives to drive behavior change, focused marketing efforts on building awareness and recording of travel behavior, and incorporating metrics to enhance the reporting of outcomes for Go! Vermont and its partners.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the longer-term strategic plan seeks to build upon Go! Vermont's current structure and existing activities to create a future vision. This vision will define the role that the program plays in the state as a resource for Vermonters. The strategic plan will also define the mission and the overarching goals supported by the deployed strategies to accomplish each goal. Ultimately the strategic plan will provide a look into the near future for transportation demand management (TDM) in Vermont and what successes, innovations, and service enhancements the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans) will plan for the valued resources that support it.

3. TDM Inventory

TDM is a collection of strategies that aim to reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel. Ranging from shared ride options like carpool, vanpool, and transit, active modes like walking and bicycling, and teleworking, TDM programs work to influence behavior to redistribute travel across modes and away from daily peak periods. Go! Vermont is the statewide TDM program working with partners across the state to deliver TDM consultations, programs, and services. A program of VTrans, Go! Vermont is a resource to assist travelers in finding greener travel options that will get them where they need to go.

This Vermont TDM inventory will serve as a baseline for the presence of TDM resources and activities occurring across the state, including programs receiving VTrans funds to support their implementation as well as those operating independently. In addition to TDM implementation, the project team will document any plans or studies supporting TDM strategies. Lastly, the inventory will document observations and input from stakeholder representatives to ensure the strategic plan is comprehensive for the state.

3.1 Go! Vermont Grant Recipients & Funded Partners

- VTrans is the funding agency for Go! Vermont and oversees the delivery of the program and its partners. VTrans also funds the Mobility and Transportation Innovations (MTI) grant designed to support innovative TDM programs, strategies, resources and first/last mile programs.
- AECOM is the largest TDM service provider in the world and operates more than a dozen comprehensive commuter assistance programs around the country, including programs in Maine, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. AECOM supports administrative functions for Go! Vermont including Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) and customer service, supplements the direct to business outreach led by EcoStrategies, and is leading the development of this strategic plan.

Expected Outcome: Increased employer engagement across Southern and Northeast Kingdom Vermont and the development of a five-year strategic plan for Go! Vermont.

- Agile Mile's mission is to reduce climate change and improve mobility by providing governments with software to help reduce driving and emissions. Agile Mile provides the trip planner and green rewards for the Go! Vermont program.

Expected Outcome: Provide a multi-modal trip planner to help Vermonters and continue providing trip planner, ridematching, and rewards for the Go! Vermont program.

- The Chittenden Area Transportation Management Association (CATMA) administers and manages customized, turn-key TDM programs that offer a better way to get to work, save money, reduce parking challenges and congestion, and cut carbon emissions. Their membership is represented by three colleges/universities, three public entities, and 10 other organizations.

Expected Outcome: Reach new organizations through TDM planning, providing innovative solutions and advancing transportation equity to reduce SOV trips and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

- Commute with Enterprise is the largest national provider of turnkey vanpool services across the country. Enterprise works directly with employers across the state to create vanpool programs as a reliable transportation option for commuters. Commute with Enterprise promotes the Commuter Co-Op program and coordinates with VTrans on the Go! Vermont vanpool subsidies.

Expected Outcome: Form new vanpools across the state reducing SOV commute trips.

- EcoStrategies is one of two organizations that provides the direct to business outreach for Go! Vermont. EcoStrategies is a sustainability consulting firm providing technical assistance and contract services across the state, supporting Vermonters in exploring different travel modes for all trip types.

Expected Outcome: Create new partnerships with organizations across the state to increase access to mobility options and reduce the reliance on SOV trips.

- Local Motion's mission is to make it safe, accessible, and fun for everyone to bike, walk, and roll in Vermont as the statewide advocate for active transportation, vibrant communities, and safe streets. Go! Vermont funds Local Motion's efforts connected to walk/bike elements of transportation plans and projects, supporting walk/bike committees, educational events, workshops, and activities, e-bike lending libraries, and e-bike demonstrations.

Expected Outcome: Launch e-bike lending libraries across the state to encourage lending library operation by outside organizations as well as e-bike adoption by Vermonters to replace SOV trips.

- Place Creative is a full-service marketing and advertising agency in Vermont. The agency supports all the graphics, branding, digital and print assets, media strategy and buying, and leads the communication strategy for the Go! Vermont program.

Expected Outcome: Effectively support the awareness and use of Go! Vermont brand through the program website, marketing campaigns, and other digital assets to communicate the travel options available around the state.

- Upper Valley TMA, a program of Vital Communities, is a membership-based group of workplaces, transportation providers, municipalities, and planners eligible for customized programs and services for their town or workplace. Membership is currently represented by eight employers, five municipalities, five transit providers, and three regional planning commissions. Go! Vermont funds commuter surveys and organization action plans, outreach, bicycling workshops, emergency ride home, and educational/networking activities.

Expected Outcome: Provide TDM programming for towns and workplaces, information regional and municipal planning, and serving as a connector between their members and the broader TDM networks.

- VBike is a nonprofit organization dedicated to shifting the bike and bike culture in Vermont towards a far more inclusive, fun, and transportation-oriented future. Go! Vermont contracts with VBike to provide free bike consultations to Vermont households, families, businesses, and bike shops.

Expected Outcome: Conduct e-bike consultations creating an increase in awareness and e-bike adoption.

- The Vermont Energy Education Program (VEEP)'s mission is to build a deep understanding of energy through education, encouraging choices that result in sustainability in our communities, economy, and environment by offering programs to K–12 students, their

teachers, and their school communities. With VTrans funding, VEEP is implementing Safe Routes to School programming.

Expected Outcome: Pilot and expand a travel training curriculum for transit and micro transit service for students K-12 and their families. Continue Safe Routes to School programming.

3.2 TDM Programs/Efforts Across Vermont

While not tied directly to Go! Vermont, there are multiple organizations receiving Mobility and Transportation Innovation (MTI) grant funds from VTrans. The grant is designed to support innovative programs that reduce the use of SOVs, reduce GHG emissions, and improve both mobility and access to services for transit-dependent Vermonters. The funds can be used for TDM program delivery and microtransit planning and implementation, creating a natural alignment with the Go! Vermont funded partners. Below is a sample of the MTI grant recipients playing an advisory role in the development of the Go! Vermont strategic plan:

Community Rides Vermont is non-profit with a goal of supporting families in Central Vermont to achieve stability and rise out of poverty. Their Mobility and Equity Program aims to analyze travel behaviors in areas with limited mobility options and where the financial burden of owning a vehicle creates a disproportionate impact. The outcome of the analysis will be preparations for a ride-hailing service to complement other transit services.

CarShare Vermont is a non-profit organization that provides affordable access to vehicles as an alternative to personal vehicle ownership. There are various membership options available, including fully subsidized memberships for households and individuals with low incomes. CarShare Vermont has 25 vehicles located throughout Burlington and Winooksi (as of June 2023) that can be self-accessed and used by the hour or day. About half of CarShare Vermont's fleet consists of EVs. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission is one of 11 regional planning commissions in the state, and serves as the sole Metropolitan Planning Organization in Vermont. The organization promotes TDM strategies within the County by connecting individuals with resources ranging from park-and-ride lots to support provided through the national Association for Commuter Transportation.

Drive Electric Vermont, sponsored by Efficiency Vermont, is a statewide public-private partnership of policy makers, industry leaders, and ordinary citizens accelerating transportation electrification. The organization coordinates with stakeholders on electric vehicle (EV) education and outreach, advances EV charging infrastructure, and administers the state incentives around electric vehicles.

NetZero Vermont is a non-profit organization focused on supporting a sustainable future with an efficient transportation system, conservation of energy resources and citizens aware of their role in the future state. One of their cornerstone programs is Walk to Shop, encouraging Vermonters to walk to grocery stores and markets instead of driving.

Old Spokes Home, a bike shop and non-profit, is working to improve access for transit-dependent Vermonters to the existing transportation system through an equity coalition. They implement outreach and marketing strategies targeting diverse communities.

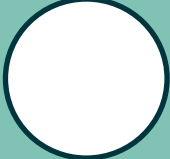


University of Vermont is developing a statewide educational campaign for transit-dependent Vermonters to improve mobility and access. The goal of this campaign is to reduce SOV trips and GHG emissions.

The Vermont Public Transportation Agency (VPTA) works to increase mobility for Vermonters by providing service for non-emergency medical appointments, elderly and disabled transportation, rides to work, mobility for non-drivers, choices for commuters, access to tourist areas and decreasing dependence on automobiles and improved air quality. They are the Medicaid broker for transportation and support individuals leveraging the volunteer driver networks throughout the state.

3.3 TDM Program Matrix

To illustrate the TDM programs, services, audiences served and the trip-types these organizations are influencing across Vermont, the project team developed a TDM program matrix. The matrix shows what each organization is doing, along with the level of effort based on the input from each organization and its leadership. Each organization designated their range of effort and involvement for each program, audience, and trip type at three levels: 1) Informing/Awareness; 2) Engaging/Education/Implementing; and 3) Influencing/Investing. The following provides examples to further define these three levels.

Table 1 TDM Program Matrix Description

Description	 Informing/ Awareness	 Engaging/ Education/ Implementing	 Influencing/ Investing
Green Rewards	Mention Green Rewards on website	Share Green Rewards flyer on table at local bike event	Actively register Vermonters in Agile Mile to record trips and claim rewards
Employers	Provide information to employers if requested	Participate in employer outreach/events	Influence TDM programs with employers and leverage transportation problems/solutions at worksites
Traveller Surveys	Offer to conduct surveys	Conduct standard surveys as needed – promote	Develop and deploy customize surveys on a

		other TDM surveys	regular routine basis
Shopping/ Errand Trips	Reference all trips on website	Influence trip making through community stakeholder event(s)	Conduct personalized trip plans for shopping/errand trips

The TDM program matrix developed by the TDM Partners is shown below. It includes the organizations receiving VTrans funding for TDM efforts through the Go! Vermont and MTI grants. Almost every organization listed provided input on their role of supporting TDM in Vermont.

3.3.1 Key Observations

Go! Vermont Programs

- VTrans has invested in the Go! Vermont program and tools to help Vermonters access the information to help them make informed decisions about transportation and reduce drive alone travel. There is an opportunity to identify more efficient ways for the TDM partners around the state to use and promote the existing Go! Vermont services. With more coordinated planning and evaluation of programming, the TDM partners across Vermont can better promote the existing programs and tools.

Modes Supported

- The TDM partners across the state are regularly supporting active transportation modes and existing transit service. There is an identified gap in supporting rideshare (carpool/vanpool) and remote work. Carpool/vanpool will likely be most common for promotion in rural areas of the state. Additionally, through direct-to-employer outreach, telework and hybrid work can be promoted for adoption and trip recording.

Audiences

- The TDM partners are doing a thorough job catering to multiple audiences and comprehensive monthly reporting from the partners is one way to ensure an equitable distribution of outreach and marketing efforts. With additional analysis, there could be the opportunity to expand or better define the audiences to include additional segmentations like age, geographic location, and other demographic data.

TDM Services

- In addition to the Go! Vermont tools and programs, many organizations are also conducting other TDM activities with their stakeholder organizations. For example, they are conducting surveys and distributing materials, but those efforts are mostly siloed based on the organization's goals. A coordinated effort across the state on TDM activities that everyone is doing could better serve Go! Vermont and its partners.

Trip Types

- Like the audience segments, the partners are working to influence all ranges of trip types. Not all organizations can focus on every trip type, for example, Commute with Enterprise is only influencing commute trips. Go! Vermont may consider promotions that target specific trips or modes, and how to encourage the trip tracking of all trips in Agile Mile to help the program meet its environmental goals.

3.4 Vermont Travel Analysis & Demographic Data

To inform the strategic plan, we conducted an extensive analysis of Vermont’s population, travel and spending trends, socioeconomic factors, and employment/income trends. The data points were then used to create a TDM Opportunity Score by county. The TDM score was calculated using an index (with all factors weighted equally) that considers the data set, normalized by area in square miles. Areas with very high TDM scores relative to the full state have residents or workers with higher propensities to utilize or benefit from TDM interventions. Counties with the highest scores include Windham (48 points), Chittenden (46 points), and Rutland (46 points). These counties contain a blend of urban and remote areas and have the highest likelihood for adopting non-drive alone travel options. Conversely, Grand Isle (35 points), Orange (36 points), and Addison (36 points) County scored the lowest. This comprehensive analysis is in the Appendix.

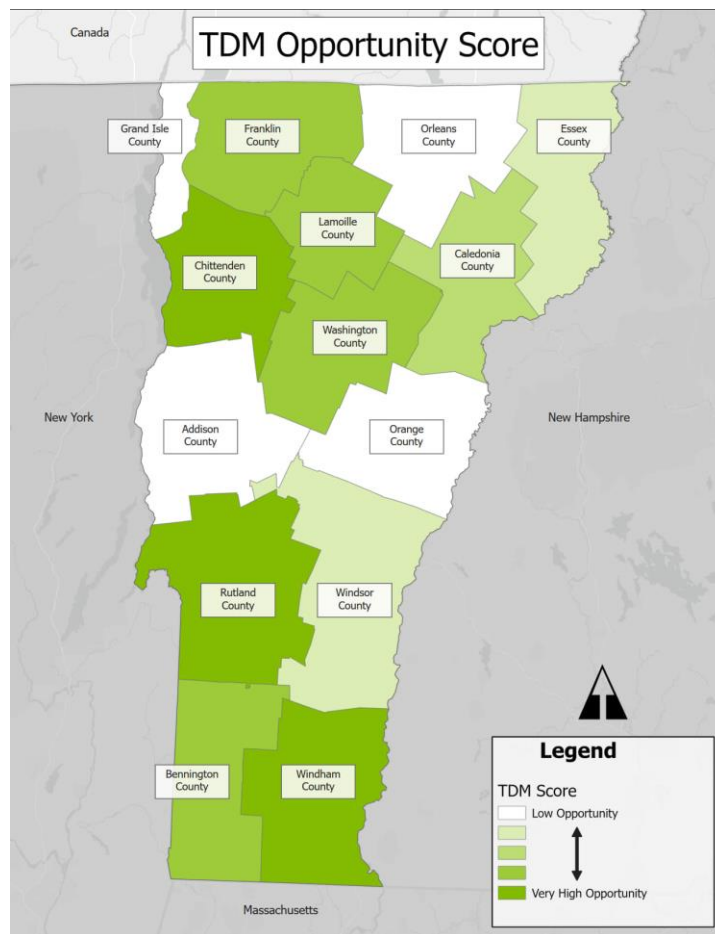


Figure 1 TDM Opportunity Score

3.5 Stakeholder Input

The Go! Vermont program relies on partner organizations to offer transportation resources to Vermonters and encourage the use of travel options other than driving alone. Additionally, the effectiveness of the Go! Vermont program relies on the changes in travel behavior and attitudes of individual members who use the programs and services. In developing the strategic plan, the project team leveraged input from TDM Partners as well as Go! Vermont members to influence the vision and strategies for the program.

3.5.1 TDM Partner Stakeholder Input

In January 2023, the TDM Partners from around the state gathered in a stakeholder meeting to provide input on the vision, goals, and strategies for the program. Leveraging the baseline data of travel behavior and demographics, combined with existing plans and documents like the Vermont Climate Action Plan, Go! Vermont’s Brand Assessment, and the overarching mission, vision, and goals of VTrans, the stakeholder group shared insights and interests to support the future vision of the program. After a group discussion, the stakeholder group answered questions via Mentimeter focusing on elements to be included in the vision and the preferred goals for the program.

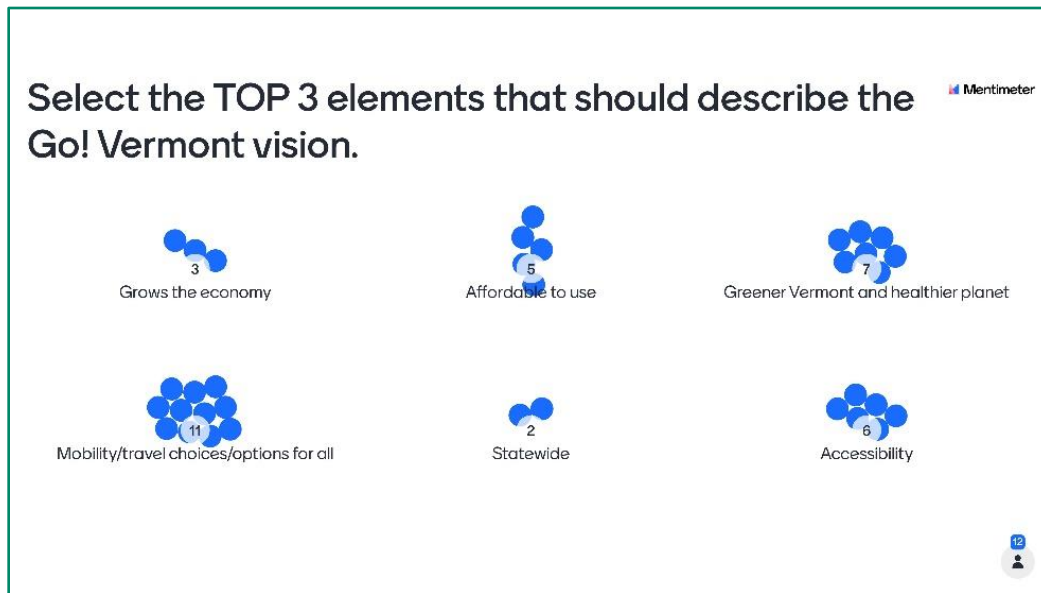


Figure 2 Stakeholder Input on Program Vision

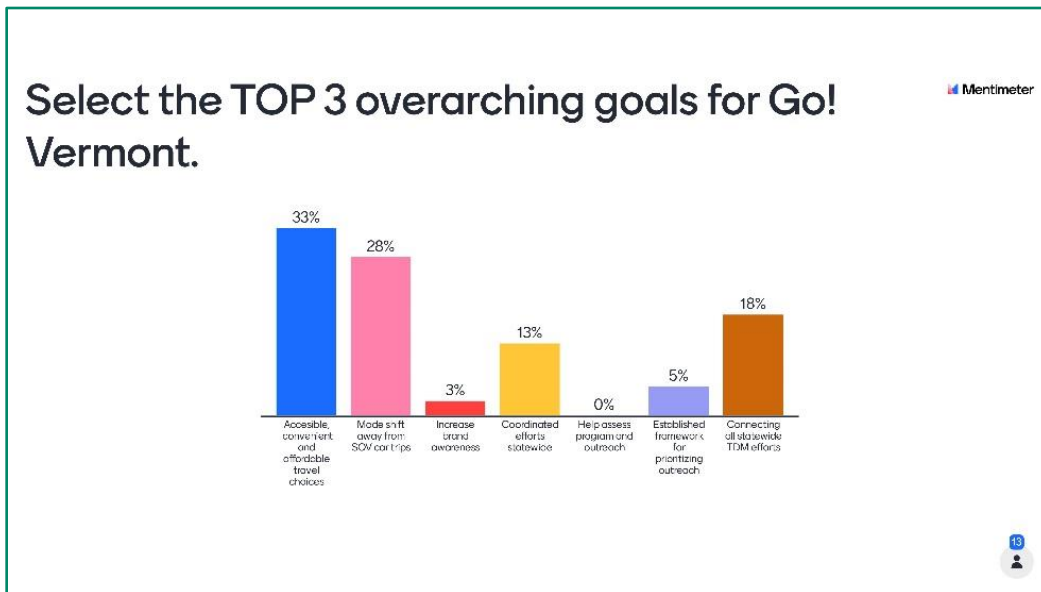


Figure 3 Stakeholder Input on Program Goals

3.5.2 Go! Vermont Member Input

In February 2023, a short three-question survey was sent out to the Agile Mile database of commuters to better understand the impact of the program on Vermonters, how the program should support Vermonters, and the importance of goals for the program. With 244 commuter responses in less than a week, the commuter feedback aligned with the input received from the stakeholder meeting.

Table 3. Commuter Survey Results

How does Go! Vermont impact your travel behavior?

I am reducing my environmental impact through my transportation choices	41.8%
I know where to get information about my transportation options	41%
I know what my transportation options are	31.6%
None of the above	24.6%
I take advantage of the Green Rewards available through the program	24.2%
I save money on transportation costs	23%
I receive Go! Vermont information through my employer	16%
I spend less time on transportation	4.1%

Source: Go! Vermont Agile Mile Survey

The top 3 ways Go! Vermont should support Vermonters:

- 1. Be a statewide transportation resource*
- 2. Support a Greener Vermont and healthier planet*
- 3. Educate about travel options for all*



Figure 4 Commuter Input on Program Goals

4. Go! Vermont Vision and Goals

The Go! Vermont strategic plan is a comprehensive document that outlines a long-term vision for reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips and supporting sustainable transportation options across the state of Vermont. The plan recognizes that transportation is a critical component of daily life, and that it plays a significant role in shaping the economic, social, and environmental well-being of communities. By prioritizing environmentally friendly travel options such as public transit, bicycling, walking, and carpooling, the plan aims to create a more efficient, equitable, and coordinated transportation system that meets the needs of all Vermonters. This plan was developed through a collaborative process that involved input from a wide range of stakeholders, including transportation providers, TDM partners, and current Go! Vermont members. Ultimately, this Strategic Plan represents a bold and ambitious vision for a more sustainable future and provides an actionable roadmap for achieving it.

Go! Vermont traditionally has not had a clear vision, mission, and goals that align with those of VTrans' or the other organizations who support TDM efforts in Vermont. Through a series of stakeholder input opportunities, Vermonters helped to shape a new vision and goals for the program tied to the existing mission.

The vision statement for Go! Vermont is focused on the long-term aspirations and goals of the program. It is concise and inspirational and describes the future direction and purpose of the program.

The new vision incorporates the VTrans vision, how existing Go! Vermont members will use the program in the future to impact their travel behavior, and how the TDM stakeholders around the state work together to support future Vermonters in their travel choices.

Vision Statement

To cultivate a vibrant, healthier, and environmentally conscious Vermont through mobility choice and innovative travel resources.

The new Go! Vermont vision statement illustrates the link between transportation and other factors like economic vibrancy, social well-being, and climate change. The vision statement recognizes an ideal future state that supports Vermonters to make informed travel choices and support mobility for everyone.

MISSION STATEMENT:
TO REDUCE THE COST AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF TRANSPORTATION BY IMPROVING ACCESS TO GREEN TRAVEL OPTIONS, INCLUDING A CLEARING HOUSE AND ONE-CLICK RESOURCES.

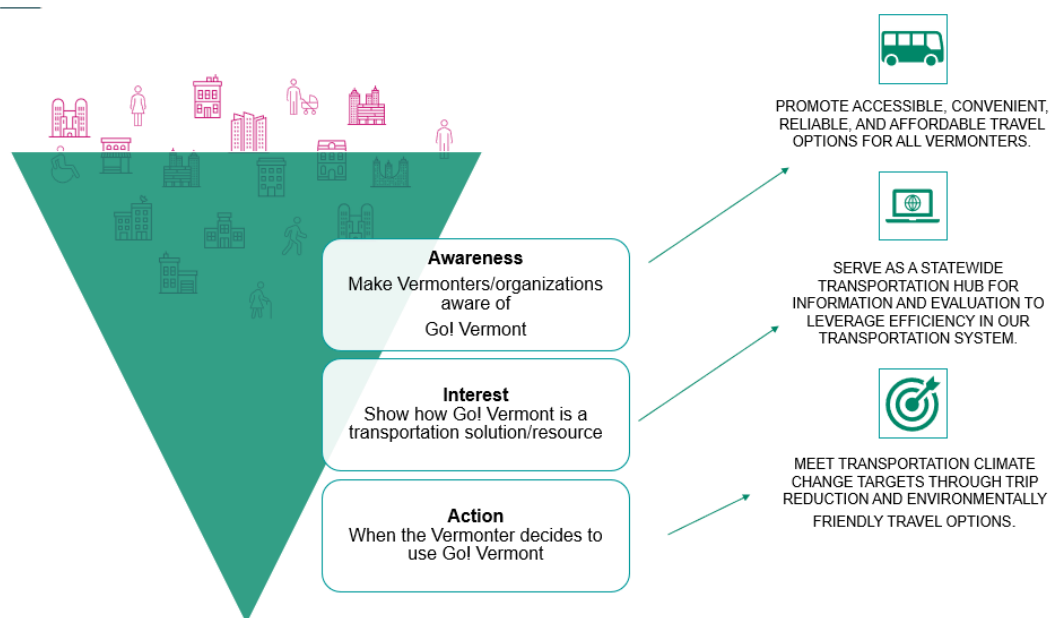
The mission statement describes the day-to-day work of Go! Vermont. It serves as guide for decision-making for future programming. Go! Vermont's new goals further break down the vision and mission into actionable steps. They provide

focus and direction in planning resources and efforts and encourage performance measures.

GO! VERMONT GOALS

1. PROMOTE ACCESSIBLE, CONVENIENT, RELIABLE, AND AFFORDABLE TRAVEL OPTIONS FOR ALL VERMONTERS.
2. SERVE AS A STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION HUB FOR INFORMATION AND EVALUATION TO LEVERAGE EFFICIENCY IN OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.
3. MEET TRANSPORTATION CLIMATE CHANGE TARGETS THROUGH TRIP REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY TRAVEL OPTIONS.

The new goals for the program also align with the decision-making process for both organizations and individuals. Traditional sales methodologies aim to influence the customer's awareness of the product or service, the interest in considering a transaction to access the service, and the action of using or buying the service. Aligning the goals to this process allows for a holistic approach to the strategies laid out in the plan.



5. Go! Vermont Strategic Plan

The following section identifies specific strategies and actions that Go! Vermont and its partners should undertake to deliver the program's newly defined vision, mission, and goals. The strategies are organized in X topic areas that include:

- **Environmental Impact:** Focusing on meeting the VMT reduction through the climate action plan, Go! Vermont should start setting targets for the program and TDM partners to reduce VMT, support the state's emphasis on electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, and focus on trip recording as a data source to evaluate program effectiveness.
- **Statewide Planning & Coordination:** With many organizations supporting TDM efforts across the state, the program would benefit from greater coordination through annual planning, contract alignment, data collection efforts, and standard outreach approaches.
- **Outreach and Incentives:** To complement the marketing efforts, Go! Vermont's outreach efforts should continue to support all modes including walking and biking, focus on specific areas where we can influence VMT reduction, document our process and progress in a uniform fashion, and consider incentives outside of the Agile Mile trip planner to encourage behavior change.
- **Customer Service:** Leveraging Go! Vermont as a clearinghouse of information on travel options, program improvements to the customer service channels and their accessibility will help get information to the public more efficiently.
- **Transit:** Supporting the state's goal to increase ridership to pre-pandemic levels, Go! Vermont can support specific strategies to promote transit on specific routes, coordinate with the multiple microtransit services being launched across the state and build out tools that break down the barriers to trying and using transit.
- **Trip Planner:** An important tool for not only trip planning, but also recording green trips, the trip planner has additional capabilities and functions that Go! Vermont could use to increase engagement and trip recording in the online platform.
- **Marketing:** Updating support materials to enhance the outreach effort, while focusing campaign and promotion efforts on awareness and action will help Go! Vermont meet its overarching vision for the program.

To inform the program workplan, the final section also indicates a timeline for implementation by labeling the strategies as short-, mid- and long-term.

5.1 Environmental Impact

The Vermont Climate Action Plan aims to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, help protect Vermont communities and landscapes from the greatest risks of climate change and create new clean energy industry and jobs.

Transportation is the leading producer of GHG emissions which requires Vermont to undertake significant and equitable changes to ensure the impacts of climate change are mitigated as much as possible. The climate action plan has set legal emissions reduction requirements of 26% below 2005 levels by 2025, 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80% 1990 levels by 2050.¹ Go! Vermont has a responsibility to contribute to these reduction targets both through VMT reduction and supporting the electrification of vehicles and buses when needed. The focus on supporting electric vehicles also aligns with VTrans' strategic objectives to increase light-duty EVs and EV incentives.

One of the most important pieces of the plan is the guiding principles for a just transition. When working towards both goals established by the climate action plan and Go! Vermont's program goals, it is important to "move at the speed of trust", "develop supports for workers, families, and their communities", and "prioritizing the most impacted first."²

Metrics to Reflect Influence on Behavior Change

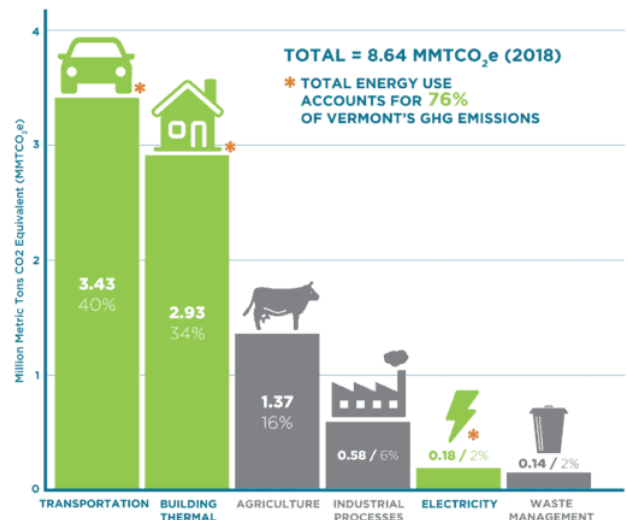
To illustrate the role of Go! Vermont and its partner's influence on behavior change, the program team should develop a strategy to ensure that it is capturing data on how these funded programs across the state influence travel behavior choices. Go! Vermont and its partner organizations should create measures for specific actions to evaluate effectiveness and guide future programming and implementation. For example, external surveys may be one way to capture this data, also annual data collection from Agile Mile participants or other repositories of traveler information.

Workplace EV Charging

To increase EV adoption in Vermont, access to charging infrastructure is vital. We know many vehicles and bicycles sit for eight hours a day at workplaces. Just like employers offer pre-tax commuter benefits as a strategy to encourage transit and vanpool ridership, employers can support EV adoption by exploring EV infrastructure for cars and bikes. The role that Go! Vermont can play in this space may include the following:

- Evaluate the need for charging: Employers may not be aware of existing or planned EV ownership to determine quantity and location for charging stations.
- Explore charging options: Go! Vermont could serve as a connector bringing employers to the charging station manufacturers as well as any incentives that may exist to install charging.

Vermont's GHG emissions by sector, 2018



Source: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Vermont Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Forecast (1990-2017), 2021.

Figure 5 Vermont GHG Emissions

¹ (Vermont just adopted a Climate Action Plan. Here's how it says we should reduce emissions., 2021)

² (Vermont Climate Action Plan Summary, 2021)

- Consider incentives: The Go! Vermont program could offer incentives to individual employees to encourage use, incorporate incentives into the existing Agile Mile platform, or consider offering incentives direct to employers.

EV Vanpools

The Go! Vermont program offers a generous vanpool incentive through the Commuter Co-Op program. While Commute with Enterprise has limited EV vanpool options today, we anticipate their fleet to grow in the future, as well as additional companies entering the EV vanpool market. That said, Go! Vermont should consider an EV vanpool subsidy to encourage adoption. The subsidy could be tiered to encourage existing vanpool groups to transition to an EV vanpool and encourage new EV vanpool formations targeting environmentally minded employers across the state.

EV Carshare

According to the Agile Mile trip planner, CarShare Vermont is the only carshare service currently in Vermont. CarShare Vermont's fleet is currently half electric and as a self-funded program, the lack of long-term funding mechanisms for growth in their fleet is challenging. Carshare is an important mobility option allowing individuals without access to a personal vehicle the ability to use a car without some of the barriers a traditional rental car comes with. It also helps reduce car dependence, encouraging great use of alternative move use. Here are some steps to consider when promoting an EV carshare program as one of Go Vermont's strategies:

- Identify potential users: Determine the target audience for the carshare program. This could include commuters who do not own a personal vehicle, people who are interested in reducing their carbon footprint, or residents of a specific neighborhood or community.
- Highlight the benefits: Emphasize the benefits of using an EV carshare program, such as reduced transportation costs, reduced emissions, and increased convenience. It may also be helpful to highlight the benefits of carsharing in general, such as reduced traffic congestion and parking demand.
- Partner with local organizations: Partner with local organizations, such as employers, universities, or community groups, to promote CarShare Vermont when conducting direct to business outreach.
- Offer education and training: Offer education and training to potential users, including information on how to reserve and use the carshare vehicles, as well as instructions on how to charge the EVs. This could be done through a train the trainer model.
- Monitor and evaluate the program: Monitor the usage of CarShare program and evaluate its impact on transportation demand and emissions reduction.

Agile Mile Trip Recording Campaign

As demonstrated through the recent uptick in Community Driver inquiries and high survey response rate of Agile Mile members to inform this Strategic Plan, Vermonters are helpful to others and are willing to lend a hand (or car or time) to help someone in need. Creating a shared trip reduction or pollution reduction goal for the state could be a powerful campaign to increase trips recorded in the Agile Mile platform. Other TDM programs have launched similar campaigns like Metro Atlanta's Million Air Challenge and the Drive Less Connecticut challenge, relying on a collective impact to meet the campaign's goals.

5.2 Statewide Planning & Coordination

With so many moving parts and organizations contributing to Go! Vermont's success, it is important there is coordination and planning to ensure everyone is working towards fulfilling the overarching program goals. Coordination and planning also ensures the work of Go! Vermont is being distributed appropriately across partner organizations to adequately cover the desired tasks and activities. Too much effort devoted to one type of promotion leads to gaps in other areas. To achieve this level of coordination and distribution, standardized approaches should be implemented.

Coordinated Annual Workplan

A coordinated workplan should be developed each year between VTrans and the organizations leading marketing, outreach, and customer service for Go! Vermont. The workplan should align with the Go! Vermont strategic plan and include a program schedule, specific tasks, and goals. Regular workplan check-ins should also be scheduled on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. The annual workplan should be shared with TDM partners and identify ways to engage the partners on promotions, messaging, and outreach activities. A calendar year workplan will allow for ample planning and updates to any contract renewals or revised scopes of work.

TDM Opportunity Prioritization

The TDM Opportunity Score was calculated using an index of factors including vehicle ownership, weekday VMT, total trips, income and employment, population and more, with all factors weighted equally. Counties with very high TDM scores relative to the full state have residents or workers with higher propensities to utilize or benefit from TDM interventions. This prioritization should be further fleshed out to inform the *Outreach Implementation Guide*. Certain strategies or audiences should be identified as targets in specific counties. Additionally, a coordinated approach with other TDM partners should be considered to ensure a holistic approach to TDM programming and avoid duplication of efforts.

Standardized Outreach Approach

Multiple organizations throughout the state conduct TDM outreach using different methods and strategies. Go! Vermont itself has three entities conducting outreach on behalf of the program. A standardized approach will create a uniform message, strengthen the brand, and create consistent metrics. A standard outreach guide should include the following elements:

- Lead Generation/Prospecting – coordinate direct-to-business outreach efforts so there is no overlap, develop a list of businesses and organizations to target and the associated strategies to identify decision-makers and potentials points of contact.
- Lead Conversion – develop a sales strategy to support the introductory meeting with a potential partner and confirm messaging and tools to support lead conversion.
- TDM Consultation – organizations likely have different levels of engagement or effort they are willing to devote to the partnership. An internal guide can assist categorizing organizations based on their level of intended effort and the mix of programs and strategies that Go! Vermont has to offer to maximize the partnership.
- Process & Documentation – a standardize process should document the typical steps and decision points, like when an organization agrees to become a member of Go! Vermont or implement a new TDM program at their worksite. Another recommendation in the strategic plan is a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool to provide a uniform way of capturing partner data and activities.

Monthly Data Collection

To effectively monitor the effectiveness of Go! Vermont and its partner programs, it is important to collect accurate and comprehensive data on a regular basis. Here are some ways to improve the monthly data collection for Go! Vermont:

- Redesign the monthly survey for comprehensive data collection. Standardizing data collection for ongoing outreach activities focused on a blend of outputs and outcomes will be important to track activity and behavior change activities. Additionally, as partners work on initiatives or engage in modal promotions, the data collection tool should capture data from different activities, such as event surveys, transit data (when available), and program usage.
- Regularly analyze the data to identify trends and patterns. This will help to adjust go! Vermont programs and improve their effectiveness.
- Share the data with stakeholders, such as city officials, transportation agencies, and community groups. This will help to build support for TDM in Vermont and demonstrate their effectiveness.
- Use the data to make informed decisions about funded programming. For example, if the data shows that a particular program/event/effort is not effective in reducing SOV travel, adjust the program or consider discontinuing it.

Standardize External Surveys

Go! Vermont and its partner organizations are often conducting surveys of travelers, employers, and other audiences. When the TDM organizations standardize their external data collection efforts, we can create more consistency, efficiency, reliability, and comparability. The survey efforts could rely on a few standard questions, still allowing each organization to customize their surveys as needed. The standard questions should focus on understanding mode change from drive alone travel, influence of TDM programs for behavior change, benefits of using travel options, and brand/program awareness. The immediate benefits for this standardization include:

- Asking some of the same questions to allow for comparison and trend analysis.
- Creating time savings by having a standard set of questions.
- Reducing bias by asking respondents the same question in the same way across surveys.
- Allow for comparison at multiple levels including across regions in the state, year over year and against industry benchmarks.

MTI Grant Sustainability

Making grant programs sustainable requires careful planning, implementation, and monitoring. Some strategies for Go! Vermont to consider include:

- Develop clear goals and objectives: Establish clear goals and objectives for the grant program and ensure that they align with the overall mission and strategy of Go! Vermont.
- Focus on outcomes: Emphasize outcomes rather than outputs when evaluating the success of the grant program. Outcomes will differ based on the grant program and should be developed collaboratively.
- Monitor and evaluate the program: Establish a system for monitoring and evaluating the grant program and use this information to make informed decisions about program design and implementation. Data collection will help identify areas where improvements can be made and ensure that the program remains effective, equitable and sustainable.

- Foster collaboration: Encourage collaboration between grant recipients and other stakeholders. Collaboration can help build support for the MTI programs and promote sustainability by ensuring that the program is responsive to local needs and priorities.
- Encourage grantees to seek diverse funding sources: This can help ensure that the program is not overly reliant on a single source of funding and can adapt to changing funding environments.
- Consider long-term impacts: Consider whether the specific grantee programs are sustainable over the long term and whether the initiatives can be scaled up or replicated in other locations or contexts without the use of MTI funds.

By focusing on sustainability, the MTI grant program can have a lasting impact and contribute to positive social, environmental, and economic outcomes.

Revise Partner Contracts

As VTrans adopts the new strategic plan for Go! Vermont, there will be new policies and procedures for the TDM partners in the state to adhere to including external survey standardization and monthly data collection and reporting, at a minimum. When the partner contracts are negotiated, changes in the Go! Vermont program should be incorporated into the new contracts to align the state's TDM efforts.

5.3 Outreach & Incentives

Go! Vermont outreach to organizations and individuals builds program awareness and use of travel options. Even though certain travel modes are better for trip and emissions reductions, it's important that the program remain mode neutral and avoid a one-size-fits-all approach. For example, encouraging a manufacturer/logistics company to implement telework programming would not be appropriate or effective in trip reduction or building Go! Vermont's value to the organization. Additionally, employers in rural areas may not have suitable transit options for employees, so carpool and vanpool formation would be more appropriate for that organization. Messaging and tools must be created in a way to provide flexibility and customization to meet the needs of the commuters and organizations served.

Conducting in-person and virtual outreach, combined with strong marketing strategies and tactics will set up Go! Vermont for success in meeting its VMT goals. The strategies outlined in this section relate to improving the effectiveness of outreach activities, consider the best ways to target specific travel options, and illustrate how incentives and other tools can improve the effectiveness of outreach.

Outreach Implementation Guide

While the Standard Outreach Approach focuses on how we target, contact, recruit and maintain partners for Go! Vermont, the Implementation Guide should organize the programs resources to the different audiences. The ideal partnership with a transit agency should look different than the ideal relationship with employers. The Outreach Implementation Guide should include:

- Outreach Analysis – leveraging the background data collection for this strategic plan, conduct a county analysis for each county in Vermont to determine TDM opportunities and associated resources and programs to support the outreach process.
- Outreach Territory – if multiple organizations continue to conduct outreach, confirm service areas for efficiency of time and to avoid duplication of efforts.
- Employer Approach – outline the services best suited to employers and ways to engage their employees. Consider rural businesses and large employers as subsets of this

audience (see *Rural Business Outreach* and *Large Employers + State Agencies* strategy)

- Community Organizations – this category could include many subsets like non-profits, chambers of commerce, municipalities, and others. Relying on these organizations to amplify the messages for Go! Vermont, confirm the right tools and resources are in place.
- Transit Agencies – the crossover between the transit agencies and Go! Vermont is apparent, but the program lacks a guide on best practices to working with transit agencies and opportunities for cross-promotion.

Annual Events

The TDM industry often supports annual events and activities throughout the year like Earth Day, Bike to Work Day, and Car Free Day where there is an obvious connection to using travel modes other than driving alone. Through the annual workplan, coordinated across the organizations that support Go! Vermont, the team should take comprehensive look at these types of annual events and potential level of effort by each supporting organization. Not all events can be supported by large ad-buy budgets or in-person events all over the state, but there are definite opportunities to enhance marketing messages with outreach efforts and vice versa. For example, the Park Your Carbon promotion in Vermont could rely on in-person outreach events or include a community toolkit for organizations and municipalities to host their own events. Additionally, there are annual events that TDM Partners support and Go! Vermont could strengthen its support for partners in their efforts.

Balance Employer & Community Outreach

As illustrated in the TDM Program Matrix, the current coverage of audiences is well distributed, but ensuring an equitable distribution of coverage over time is important. With quantifiable metrics in place for Go! Vermont to support including VMT reduction and increase in transit ridership, the program should use a decision matrix to ensure an equitable balance of outreach activities. At times, there may be an imbalance of focus on community events to support Vermonters without reliable transportation. A decision matrix can use multiple factors to determine the best way to support events and activities while preserving program resources for outreach activities that will help Vermont meets its environmental goals.

Large Employers + State Agency Focus

While Go! Vermont supports all travelers, large employers and state agencies represent nearly untapped audiences. There are many employers across the state that support hybrid work, offer pre-tax benefits, and are environmentally-minded where Go! Vermont could not only capture their employee's current commuting behaviors in Agile Mile but could also support commute behavior change for those who currently drive alone. Go! Vermont should conduct an analysis of employers across the state plus existing activity within state agencies and then implement an outreach effort targeting these audiences with a new partner goal.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Many TDM program use a customer relationship management (CRM) software to track and document program data. This central location can house company information, transportation amenities, contacts, previous interactions, planned activities, and organize all these data points into useful reports and dashboards. This would benefit Go! Vermont for tracking of employer partners, contact attempts, current contacts, participation in promotions and campaigns, and house critical information in the cloud rather than in personal e-mail inboxes or on computer

hard drives. A CRM helps the organization maintain consistency when staff turnover or new organizations support outreach efforts for the program.

Rural Business Outreach – Materials & Strategies

To ensure the Go! Vermont program is deployed across the state, a focus on rural businesses will ensure statewide coverage and address the rideshare gap uncovered through the TDM Program Matrix. A subset of the outreach implementation guide should include guidance on customizing the program for rural businesses and identify any additional materials or strategies to support successful outreach. Using the TDM Opportunity analysis, areas with very high TDM scores relative to the full state have residents or workers with higher propensities to utilize or benefit from TDM interventions. Rural counties with the highest scores include Windham and Rutland, great places to start with this effort.

Try-It Campaigns

A try-it day campaign is a coordinated effort of marketing and outreach to encourage a specific audience to try a new travel option. The audience could be specific to an employer or municipality or target specific Vermonters. Tips on successful try-it days include:

- Explain the benefits of new travel options. For example, if they try biking to work instead of driving, they will save money on gas, get exercise, and reduce their carbon footprint.
- Provide resources and information on how to plan to use the new mode of transportation on the specific promotion date. This would include existing Go! Vermont resources like the trip planner as well as outreach events to encourage pledges or agreement to participate.
- Challenge people to try the new mode of transportation for one day or one week and make it a fun challenge with incentives or rewards.
- Follow-up with those who participate to identify barriers or opportunities and encourage on-going participation to hopefully lead to sustained mode shift.

Incentives Best Practice Review

The Go! Vermont program relies solely on the Agile Mile diverse incentive offering through its exclusive partnership with Entertainment. These ongoing rewards serve as a valuable loyalty program to maintain participation over time but are not suited for sign-up or behavior change incentives. Incentives may be ideal to support special promotions like Park Your Carbon to encourage new registrations. Team members could distribute one-time incentives to new registrants at employer- and community-based events and could explore opportunities like instant rewards through the app. Go! Vermont should conduct an incentives best practice review looking at other TDM programs' use and marketing of incentives and effective incentives for other programs serving Vermonters, focusing on the types of incentives and how they are distributed.

Incentives Pilot

Building off the Incentives Best Practices Review, Go! Vermont should pilot some incentive programs at varying stages of the behavior change continuum, focusing on first time mode shift and expansion of mode shift in terms of frequency of use and trip types. As some of the TDM funded partner programs offer their own incentives to their members, Go! Vermont should include geofencing in the pilot incentive programs for eligibility and marketing purposes. Agile Mile has a diverse incentive offering through its exclusive partnership with Entertainment, and these are provided at no additional direct cost to Go! Vermont. These ongoing rewards serve as

a valuable loyalty program to maintain participation over time. By dedicating resources to new members, the Go! Vermont team would anticipate utilizing special promotions like Park Your Carbon to encourage new registrations. Team members could distribute one-time incentives to new registrants at employer- and community-based events and could explore opportunities like instant rewards through the Go! Vermont app.

Incentives Tied to Annual Events

Go! Vermont and its partners promote annual events with varying levels of effort. For example, Park Your Carbon and Car Free Day are often marketing-led events encouraging local organizations to support with their own events. However, the direct connection of these annual events and their marketing support are not correlating back to the environmental goals of Go! Vermont in increasing transit ridership and reducing VMT. As Go! Vermont develops its annual campaigns and promotions, an incentive program specific to these annual events will serve as a strategy to support the effectiveness of the annual events, supplementing the existing marketing ad buys and help the program strive to meet its environmental goals.

Carpool EV Incentive

An EV carpool incentive program can encourage people to adopt more sustainable transportation options and make an even greater impact on carbon emissions. Currently, Agile Mile members can designate the type of vehicle they drive, which would be important for trip recording verification. Here are other considerations for launching this pilot incentive program:

- Confirm Go! Vermont's objectives of increasing EV carpooling for which trip types and set goals for adoption.
- Determine the target audience and the communication channels. There may already be Go! Vermont members who do not have their vehicle information properly recorded in Agile Mile who are carpooling in an EV, but not documenting their trips accordingly. Partnerships with Drive Electric Vermont and other municipalities may be helpful to reach the audiences of travelers who already have EVs.
- Decide on what type of incentive will motivate people to participate. Possible incentives include financial rewards or gift cards, free charging coupons, or additional Agile Mile points.
- Establish clear guidelines for participating in the program, such as minimum number of carpoolers, frequency of carpooling, and eligibility criteria. Communicate the guidelines to potential participants through marketing materials.

Commuter Survey

The 2021 transportation survey with over 5,600 responses provided typical commute modes, external influences on transportation choice, and awareness of Go! Vermont, among other topics. Conducting travel surveys on a regular cadence, every three years for example, will help VTrans and the Go! Vermont partners understand commuting patterns for policymakers and transportation planners, including where people are commuting to/from, the modes of transportation they are using, and the times of day they are commuting. This information can inform decisions about transportation infrastructure and public transit services.

The survey can also measure the effectiveness of transportation initiatives such as the introduction of a new microtransit service or the existing transportation guides. Surveys can identify areas for improvement in the transportation system and existing Go! Vermont services. For example, if a large percentage of commuters report difficulty accessing public transit

information, VTrans and the transit agency partners across Vermont can prioritize improvements to providing traveler information.

5.4 Customer Service

Customer service is an important function in helping individual travelers utilize the transportation system. The customer service functions for Go! Vermont currently rely on providing information through phone call and email support. Providing additional customer service options and streamlining the current options will provide a better experience for individuals using Go! Vermont.

Phone Tree

The Go! Vermont customer service phone line receives over 40 calls and inquiries each month. Many of these calls involve a handoff to another organization in the state like a transit agency for the community driver program or to the Vermont Public Transportation Association for individuals looking to book rides. The customer service function could operate more efficiently with a more sophisticated phone tree enabling the handoff of phone calls to the correct agency or prepping the caller with more information to expedite the customer service process. Redirecting calls digitally would improve the customer service experience however callers would always have the option to speak directly to an individual.

Text Message Support

Traditional customer support is provided through phone call and email support. According to Pew Research Center, 97% of Americans have a cellphone and 85% have a smartphone³. Text message support can be an additional customer service channel to serve Vermonters. The benefits of text message support mimic that of email including sending URL links to and allowing real-time interactions and reduction in response time. A short message service (SMS) customer information strategy could lend itself to future AI integration as well to streamline support and enhance the experience for the end user.

Customer Service Accessibility

Providing support for all Vermonters important, including those who may be accessing our programs and services with assistive technologies. Like the Limited English Proficiency assessment conducted by Talitha Consults, the Go! Vermont website, materials, and customer service practices should go through an accessibility assessment to ensure that all Vermonters can access the programs and tools available.

5.5 Transit

Pre-COVID-19, transit in Vermont logged roughly 4.5 million trips annually. Currently that number is hovering around 3.5 million trips annually. While transit likely cannot serve all Vermonters, transit still is one of the more efficient modes of transportation used to carry groups of people. Continuing to stay on top of the transit trends, work towards identified ridership goals outlined in the VTrans Strategic Plan, and effectively promote new and existing transit services in coordination with the transit agencies, VPTA, and VTrans should be important actions that Go! Vermont takes in coordination with the TDM partners and transit agencies across the state.

Return to Transit Fares

When the pandemic began in March 2020 the elimination of transit fares in Vermont shortly followed. All transit agencies in the state continue to operate fare free while three agencies

³ Website Accessed 3-27-2023. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile/>

(Rural Community Transportation, Advance Transit, and SEVT's MOOver) had been operating for free prior to the pandemic. Green Mountain Transit (GMT) is planning to return to paid transit fares on July 1, 2023 in their urban corridors while remaining free in the rural areas. Coordination with GMT and other stakeholders will be key for a successful rollout of fares. Go! Vermont customer service staff should be briefed and provided updates on transit fare prices, reduced fare programs, and the different fare payment options. Return to transit fares is also a good time to remind Vermonters about the trip planner and transit app features.

Corporate Pass Program

A transit corporate pass program can offer many benefits to both employers and employees from cost savings to guaranteed revenue to agencies (carshare or transit), removing as many barriers as possible for people to choose sustainable forms of transportation can help Vermont reach its transportation climate goals. The program should explore the opportunity for organizations and employers to buy bulk passes at a discounted rate as a strategy to increase transit ridership while removing a barrier to starting to ride transit. A pilot program could be tested in one market with a target group of organizations. This pilot could even coordinate with transit fare integration efforts in the Agile Mile app.

Increase Transit Ridership

Increasing transit ridership in a rural state such as Vermont can be a challenging task, but there are several strategies that can be employed to encourage more people to use public transportation. VTrans has established a goal of returning to pre-COVID ridership by 2025, a goal that will require an additional one million trips. Below are some ideas of how Go! Vermont can help VTrans reach its transit goals:

- **Improve and Expand Transit Service:** Providing reliable and convenient transit service is essential to attracting riders. This can involve increasing the frequency and coverage of transit routes, aligning stops with times that could contribute to high ridership (beginning/end of shift, end of school, etc.), and adding new services such as transit vehicle bike racks that can support e-bikes, and park-and-ride facilities.
- **Targeted Marketing and Outreach:** Conducting marketing and outreach campaigns to promote the benefits of public transit can help to increase awareness and attract new riders. This can involve targeted advertising in local media, social media campaigns, and outreach to schools, businesses, and community organizations.
- **Partner with Employers and Institutions:** Partnering with employers and institutions such as universities and hospitals to provide transit passes or shuttle services can help to increase ridership. This can be a cost-effective way to provide transit services to a large number of people.
- **Coordinate with Regional Transit Agencies:** Coordination with regional transit agencies can help to create seamless connections between different transit systems and the Go! Vermont program. The better the coordination the easier it will be for riders to travel across the state.
- **Promote Transit-Oriented Development:** Encouraging development around transit hubs can help to create more convenient and attractive destinations for transit riders.

Overall, a combination of these strategies can help to increase transit ridership in a rural state such as Vermont. It's important to tailor these strategies to the specific needs and challenges of the specific region and/or employer in question, and to engage stakeholders such as transit agencies, businesses, and community organizations in the process.

Microtransit Promotions

Microtransit services are on-demand, flexible transportation options that operate on a smaller scale than traditional public transit services. As these new services are introduced, they will need support from promotions and marketing campaigns to increase awareness and ridership. Here are some strategies for promoting microtransit services:

- Offer free or discounted rides: Offer a limited-time promotion where riders can enjoy free or discounted rides on the microtransit service. This can be an effective tool for Go! Vermont to recruit new riders and use marketing and communication channels to convert them into regular users.
- Partner with local businesses: Partner with local businesses to offer discounts or other promotions to customers who use the microtransit service. This can help build awareness of the service and encourage people to use it for their daily transportation needs.
- Use social media: Use social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to promote the microtransit service and share news and updates. Consider using targeted advertising on these platforms to reach specific demographics or neighborhoods.
- Host events: Host events that showcase the microtransit service, such as a launch party or pop-up ride event. This can help generate buzz and excitement around the service and encourage people to try it out.
- Provide education and training: Provide training and education to residents and businesses about how to use the microtransit service. This can help demystify the service and make it more accessible to potential riders.
- Work with local media: Work with local media outlets to get coverage of the microtransit service. This can include pitching stories to local newspapers, television stations, and radio stations.
- Build partnerships: Build partnerships with community organizations, local government agencies, and other stakeholders to promote the microtransit service. This can help build support for the service and increase ridership over time.

A successful microtransit promotion strategy will use a combination of these tactics to increase awareness and ridership of the service, and help people see it as a convenient and reliable option for their transportation needs.

First/Last Mile Solutions

First/last mile solutions refer to transportation solutions that address the challenge of getting people and goods to and from their final destinations, often the connection from a transit stop to a destination when the distance is too far for walking. The solutions to bridge this gap can include a variety of modes, such as micro-mobility options like electric bikes and scooters, ridesharing or car-sharing services like Uber/Lyft and CarShare Vermont, and public transportation systems. The first/last mile challenge is particularly relevant in rural areas, where residents may live or work in areas that are not easily accessible by public transportation. By providing alternative transportation options that can quickly and easily get people to and from their final destinations, first/last mile solutions can help reduce congestion, improve air quality, and make rural areas more livable and accessible. Vermont has and is working on many first/last mile solutions including microtransit, carshare, bikeshare, e-bike lending libraries, among other initiatives. Due to the state's rural landscape, Go! Vermont should continue to stay on top of first/last mile solutions to better connect individuals to transit and other transportation options.

Travel Training

Travel training can be an essential tool for promoting independent travel for people with disabilities, new Vermonters or older adults who may face challenges navigating transportation systems. While travel training is historically geared towards transit it doesn't have to be. Organized group rides, personal trip planning, and bike rodeos are also examples of travel training. Below are a few reasons why travel training is an important Go! Vermont strategy:

- **Increased Independence:** Travel training can help individuals with disabilities or older adults to become more independent and self-sufficient, allowing them to travel to work, school, medical appointments, and other destinations on their own.
- **Improved Confidence:** With proper training, individuals can gain confidence in their ability to navigate transportation systems, leading to increased community involvement and a sense of accomplishment.
- **Enhanced Safety:** Proper travel training can help individuals learn how to safely navigate the transportation system, including boarding and disembarking buses, reading schedules, and identifying landmarks or landmarks to ensure they get to their destination safely. Travel training can also teach rules of the road and walking/bicycle safety basics to individuals who may need a refresher or may not be aware of local rules and regulations.
- **Reduced Social Isolation:** By learning how to use the transportation system, individuals can expand their social circles and engage in activities outside of their immediate surroundings.

Corridor Specific Promotions

Corridor specific promotions are a useful tool for creating brand awareness and helping people better understand their transportation options. Selecting a corridor that is perhaps launching a new or seasonal service (microtransit pilot, bike share, transit route) and is servicing a Vermont employer or community agency allows Go! Vermont to simultaneously increase brand awareness and help with the success of the initiative. Our TDM Opportunity Score (section 3.4) has identified Chittenden, Rutland, and Windham counties as having the highest potential TDM program impact. As Rutland County has historically had less direct Go! Vermont involvement than Chittenden and Windham counties, we would suggest a first corridor specific promotion occur in Rutland.

Transit Royale Messaging

VTrans has made significant investment in the Transit app providing all Vermonters with Royale status. This is an excellent benefit for Vermonters allowing them to track their buses real time. All outreach events should include information about the transit app and all partner websites should include information about it as well.

5.6 Trip Planner

The trip planner is an important tool for Go! Vermont as a mechanism for aggregating travel impact data and serves as the primary way to measure the contribution to the state's climate action goals. With the existing trip planner, Agile Mile, serving many purposes including multi-modal trip planning, trip tracking, rewards program, impact reporting, and more, the TDM efforts around the state should be using the platform to its fullest extent. While some of the success of the platform relates to marketing its functionality and the importance of tracking trips highlighted in the business-to-general audience section 5.7, there are also features of the existing platform that the Go! Vermont program could better utilize and promote. The caveat for this section is that Agile Mile is the current platform for Go! Vermont's trip planning and tracking, however, through future procurement this could change. Should that change happen, the Go! Vermont

team should evaluate the functionality and opportunity of the new tool and its ability to support Go! Vermont in its missions and goals.

Trip Planner Communications Strategy

With the existing trip planner and rewards platform, Agile Mile, the Go! Vermont program has multiple ways to communicate to existing members in the database. Typically, our outreach efforts in Agile Mile rely on email and app push notifications as it relates to existing campaigns like Park Your Carbon and Caring Commutes. The program could be segmenting audiences in Agile Mile with specific messages as it relates to the overall goals. For example,

- Triggered emails for employers or along specific transit routes or services
- Commuter Leaderboard
- Changes to fares for transit service
- Announce new microtransit pilot
- Personal stat emails

Events/Destinations

One functionality within Agile Mile that the Go! Vermont program has used, but not leveraged fully, is the events and destinations trip planning function. Working with Agile Mile, Go! Vermont should consider the following:

- Analysis of current usership and trip posts
- Inventory of existing destinations and trip plans conducted
- Guidance for destination organizations on how to incorporate Go! Vermont trip planner into their own communications regarding transportation
- An event planner toolkit describing how event planners can use the trip planner for their events, the type of information needed to create an event and how to promote the tool to their event attendees

Fare Payment Integration

While transit in Vermont is currently fare free, it is not likely that all transit across the state remain fare free long-term. Agile Mile is currently integrating the functionality for fare booking and payment through the system, but it is not standard for all the transit agencies in Vermont. Go Vermont also can deep link and collect fare payment for microtransit services such as those operated by VIA. As this functionality is implemented across the platform, Go! Vermont should consider a communications strategy to users in Agile Mile, direct to business in the service area impacted, and consider building custom reports to track usage.

Passive Trip Logging

The Agile Mile platform integrates with many other trip tracking tools like Strava, MapMyRide, and others. Eventually, travelers will be able to enable passive trip tracking through Agile Mile, providing more accurate data tracking and potential integrations with Guaranteed Ride Home. Go! Vermont should open this feature to members and take an active role in the messaging, communications, and launch of this new feature. The program may consider a marketing campaign, pilot incentive to encourage adoption, and even a commuter challenge.

5.7 Marketing

Increasing brand awareness is critical for Go! Vermont moving forward. Brand awareness will help to continue building and maintaining a positive reputation that the brand has already established. It will also attract new Vermonters and tourists to Go! Vermont programs and resources allowing them to find and use the transportation programs available to them. When people are familiar with a brand, they are more likely to trust, use, and remember it for future travel needs. Brand awareness should be established across the board at community, employer, and stakeholder levels with a cohesive and targeted approach.

Material Refresh - Employer, Traveler, Mode-specific

Go! Vermont offers materials on its website including transportation guides, campaign and mode-specific items, and employer documents and promotional materials. The pandemic changed traveler priorities and commuting habits while Go! Vermont's focus has shifted more heavily towards GHG emissions. With these changes in mind, the team should conduct a material audit to consider revisions and enhancements. In addition, an annual review of the resource page analytics will show the popularity of resources and indicate gaps in useful materials to be distributed digitally or through in-person events. All materials should be tagged for accessibility and the design should consider users with visual impairments and limited English proficiency.

Brand Awareness Promotion

To promote brand awareness for Go! Vermont, a comprehensive marketing campaign should be developed that targets individuals, businesses, and organizations across Vermont. With the creation of a new vision and goals for the program, this could be a good opportunity to drive awareness of the resources and services available through Go! Vermont. Things to consider when developing this campaign include:

- Messaging that targets specific audiences, such as commuters, residents, and businesses. The messaging should focus on the benefits of reducing drive alone behavior, such as reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality, and saving money on transportation costs. The promotion could also explore highlighting specific elements of the program as well including Guaranteed Ride Home, the trip planner, and the rewards program.
- Messages will likely encourage travelers to visit the Go! Vermont program website, which should make it easy for individuals and businesses to sign-up and participate in the program.
- Community engagement through events will also help educate Vermonters about the programs and provide educational resources to participants.
- Media planning and strategy to coordinate the best channels for each target audience

Social Media Pilot

VTrans currently manages all the social media accounts for Go! Vermont including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Posting is sparse and could benefit from a pilot on one channel to test messaging, target audiences, and effectiveness. A social media pilot on Instagram would typically involve creating a test or trial campaign to evaluate the effectiveness of a new strategy or approach on the platform. Here's a general outline of what such a pilot might look like:

- Before launching the pilot campaign on Instagram, it's important to define the goal which could be to increase engagement, grow the following, drive traffic to the website or trip planner, or something else entirely.
- Based on the agreed upon goals, develop the types of content and frequency of posts. This might include a mix of photos, videos, stories, and reels.
- Identify the target audience and be sure to align content with their interests and preferences. Instagram offers a range of targeting options, including demographics, interests, behaviors, and location.
- Depending on the scope of the pilot campaign, allocate budget for advertising and be clear on the expected return on investment.
- Monitor the metrics regularly and adjust the approach as needed. Once the pilot is over, take a close look at the data to determine what worked and what didn't. Use these insights to refine the strategy and determine feasibility of long-term social media engagement.

Agile Mile Registration Campaign

Once Vermonters are aware of Go! Vermont, we want to encourage them to engage with the trip planner/recording trips elements of Go! Vermont to help meet our air quality goals. Documenting a customer journey to identify specific improvements as well as how to promote/encourage through a one-time campaign or ongoing marketing efforts. Other considerations to support an increase in Agile Mile registrations include:

- Review the Agile Mile landing page: A well-designed landing page can attract users and encourage them to sign up. Use persuasive headlines, compelling images, and clear calls to action.
- Offering incentives like additional sign-on points, discounts, or exclusive content can encourage users to register. Make sure the incentives align with Vermonters needs and preferences, especially those who may be currently driving alone regularly.
- Optimize the website and app for search engines so that users can easily find and discover the landing page. Use relevant keywords, meta descriptions, and alt tags on the website and app store listings.
- Offer timely and responsive customer support to users who have questions or issues with the system. This can help build trust and encourage users to recommend the app to others.
- Leverage existing members to grow the database through referral promotions.

Agile Mile Trip Planning Campaign

Currently Vermonters can engage with the trip planner two ways – through the landing page without creating a profile to identify transportation options and through a member account when they are logged in. A thoughtful marketing effort around both functionalities and the benefits of each would be helpful in encouraging more self-service, increased registrations, and ultimately a change in travel behaviors to using more sustainable options.

6. Strategies by Timeline

The purpose of the 5-year strategic plan is to position Go! Vermont to meet its future vision, to cultivate a vibrant, healthier, and environmentally conscious Vermont through mobility choice and innovative travel resources. This long-term plan and the implementation of specific strategies will be incorporated into future annual workplans with the following timeframes in mind:

- Short-term (by 2025)
- Mid-term (by 2028)
- Long-term (beyond 2028)

	Short-term (by 2025)	Mid-term (2025-2028)	Long-term (2028-beyond)
Metrics to Influence Behavior Change		X	
Workplace EV Charging			X
EV Vanpools		X	
EV Carshare		X	
Agile Mile Trip Recording Campaign	X	X	X
Coordinated Annual Workplan	X	X	X
TDM Opportunity Prioritization	X		
Standardized Outreach Approach	X	X	X
Monthly Data Collection	X	X	X
Standardize External Surveys		X	X
MTI Grant Sustainability		X	
Revise Partner Contracts	X		
Outreach Implementation Guide		X	
Annual Events	X	X	X
Balance Employer & Community Outreach	X		
Large Employers + State Agency Focus	X		
Customer Relationship Management (CRM)		X	
Rural Business Outreach – Materials & Strategies		X	
Try-It Campaigns		X	X
Incentives Best Practices Review		X	
Incentives Pilot		X	
Incentives Tied to Annual Events		X	
Carpool EV Incentive		X	
Commuter Survey		X	
Phone Tree	X		
Text Message Support	X		
Customer Service Accessibility	X		
Return to Transit Fares	X		
Corporate Pass Program		X	

Increase Transit Ridership	X		
Microtransit Promotions	X	X	
First/Last Mile Solutions		X	
Travel Training		X	
Corridor Specific Promotions	X	X	X
Transit Royale Messaging	X		
Trip Planner Communications Strategy	X		
Events/Destinations		X	
Fare Payment Integration		X	
Passive Trip Logging	X		
Material Refresh - Employer, Traveler, Mode-specific	X		
Brand Awareness Promotion	X	X	X
Social Media Pilot		X	
Agile Mile Registration Campaign	X	X	X
Agile Mile Trip Planning Campaign	X	X	X

7. 18-Month Workplan

The short-term actions outlined in this strategic plan focus on immediate actions to align program efforts across the street to create efficiencies in program implementation and support the state's climate action goals. The 18-month workplan will align future workplans with the calendar year, rather than VTrans' fiscal year so that planning efforts are never hindered or impacted by contractual timelines.

Strategies	2023						2024											
	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Coordinated Annual Workplan	█	█																
Phone Tree		█	█	█														
Text Message Support											█	█	█					
Customer Service Accessibility															█	█	█	
Monthly Survey Update		█	█	█														
Revise Partner Contracts	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Carpool EV Incentive											█	█	█	█				
Incentives Best Practices Review															█	█	█	
Business Material Refresh			█	█	█	█												
Traveler Material Refresh											█	█	█					
Mode-Specific Material Refresh																█	█	█
Brand Awareness Promotion	█	█	█	█														
Agile Mile Registration Campaign																		
Agile Mile Trip Planning Campaign																		
Agile Mile Trip Recording Campaign																		
Balance Employer & Community Outreach		█	█	█														
Annual Events	█	█																
Outreach Implementation Guide																		
TDM Opportunity Prioritization			█	█	█	█												
Return to Transit Fares (July 1, 2023)	█	█																
Transit Royale Messaging																		
Microtransit Promotions	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Increase Transit Ridership	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Trip Planner Communications Strategy																		

