

Transportation and Complete Streets

The purpose of the transportation plan is to provide for safe, convenient, economic, and energy efficient transportation systems that respect the integrity of the natural environment and rural character, including the maintenance and necessary development of roads, public transit options and facilities for pedestrians and bicyclers.

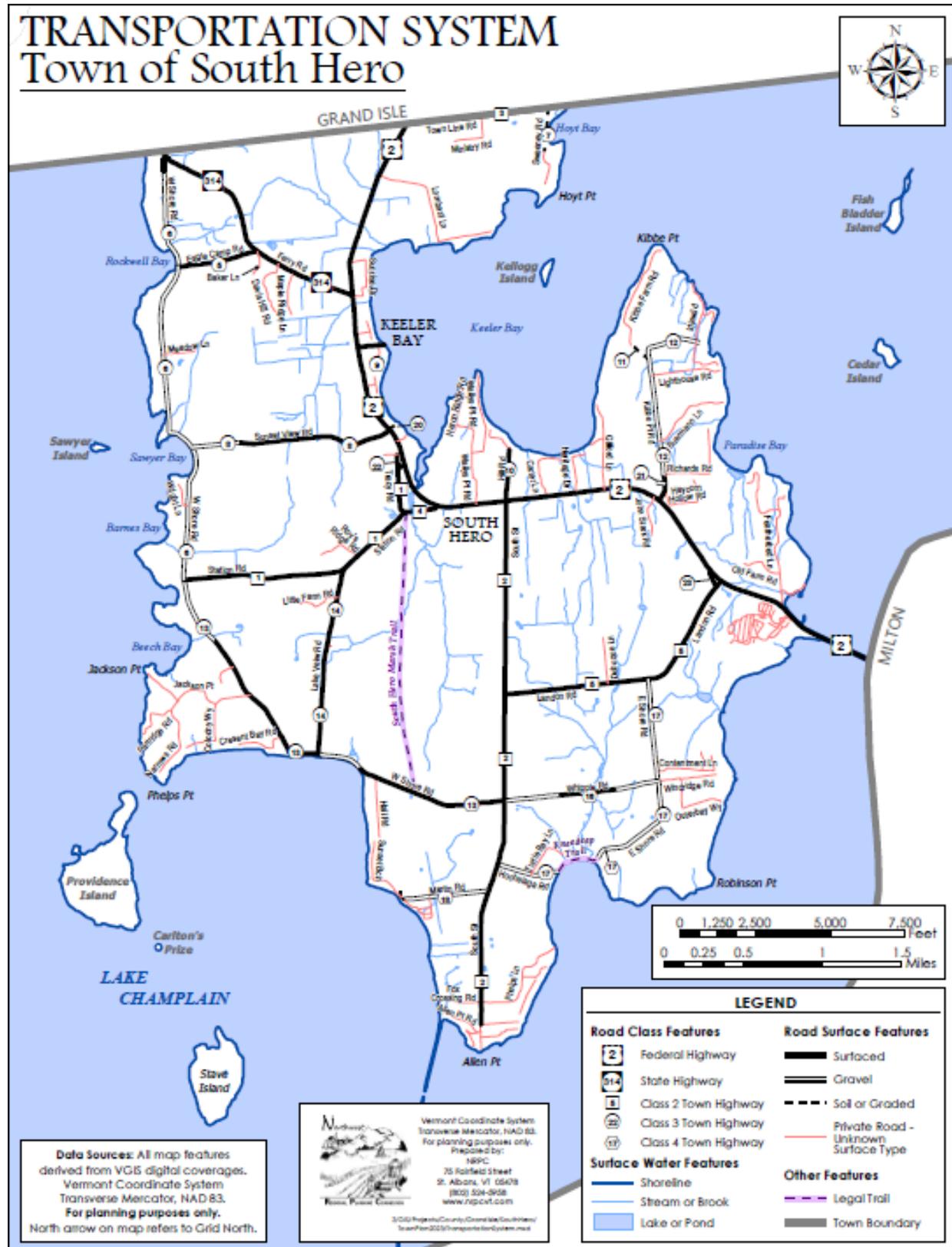
Roads & Vehicle Traffic

The town maintains 26 miles of town roads with the use of town owned equipment, a full-time road foreman and 2 other full-time employees. The Selectboard appoints a Road Commissioner who directs the work done by the road crew. The budget is set by the Selectboard and supported by taxes and approximately \$55,000 in state aid. Approximately 12 town roads are paved and 10 are gravel. The decision to pave a gravel road is currently balanced between maintaining a rural aesthetic, slower speeds, the convenience of blacktop and the availability of funds.

U.S. 2, a Federal Highway, traverses for about five and a half miles along the western and northern side of the town. There is also state highway, VT 314, connecting US 2 to the ferry in New York State (just over a mile in South Hero). Vermont Agency of Transportation completes actual and estimated traffic counts. The count shows an increase in traffic on Route 2 from 2019 to 2021 based on an actual count, from 8,837 to 9,156. It estimated a decrease in 2020, likely reflecting less travel during the pandemic. The northern mile of Route 2 and 314 are showing a decrease from 2019 to 2021, but it is based on estimated counts.

			2019		2020		2021	
US2	Grand Isle Town Line	MM 1.158	6111	E	5176	E	5172	A
US 2	MM 1.158	Milton Town Line 5.573	8837	A	7485	E	9156	A
VT314	Route 2 intersection	Grand Isle Town Line 1.592	3242	E	2746	E	3111	E

There are a large number of privately owned and maintained roads in the Town. The Town provides services on town highways only. New private roads and upgrades to support new development are required to comply with the Town's road standards. The Town is not in the practice of accepting new town roads and is not obligated to, regardless of whether the private road is in compliance with town road standards.



In response to the Municipal Roads General Permit implemented as a result of the Vermont Clean Water Act (Act 64, 2015) to reduce stormwater runoff and erosion on local roads, South Hero has accessed and will continue to seek funding through the Agency of Transportation Grants In Aid Program to complete stone lined ditches and other important road improvement projects that improve stormwater management and the resiliency of local roads.

Travel to Work and Commuting

The majority of workers living in South Hero (over 60%) travel to work in Chittenden County, with only 9% remaining in South Hero for employment. As a result, over 60% of commuters have over a 20-minute drive.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

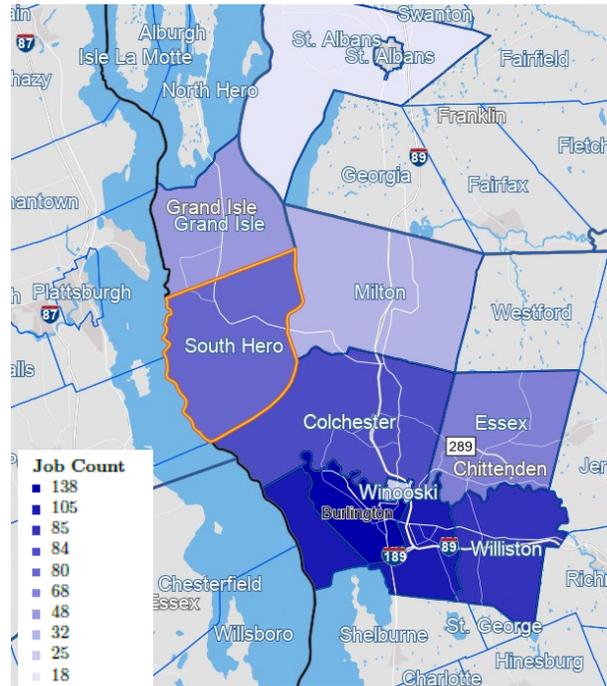
South Hero is committed to ensuring a complete streets approach with roadway projects in the town. In the village specifically, this will mean the design and construction of improvements for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. In the rural areas of town, appropriate context sensitive solutions that factor in all users of the road will be employed.

South Hero's roads attract a significant number of pedestrians and bicyclists. There is 4,398 feet of existing sidewalk along the north and south sides of Route 2 in the center of South Hero Village, there are no other dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities (other than off road trail networks). 1,604 linear feet of sidewalk were added since 2017. The village is committed to expanding the network of pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

South Hero's appeal as a destination for visitors who want to spend a day exploring by bike has been amplified by the Local Motion Bike Ferry, which brings 250+ cyclists into South Hero on weekend days in the summer (200+ during the

Work Destinations, 2019

<https://onthemap.ces.census.gov>



Why Complete Streets?

🚲 Streets that accommodate all users are safer for everyone, including automobile drivers and passengers.

🚲 Complete Streets can provide greater mobility and accessibility to those without a car.

🚲 Complete streets can offer a choice for less costly modes of transportation, which has economic benefit to individuals or families.

🚲 Active travel (walking and bicycling) can improve health and provide needed daily exercise.

🚲 It is more efficient to accommodate all modes at the planning and design stage, rather than retrofit after the fact, and correct safety issues for non-automobile road users.

Adapted from Complete Streets: A VT Guide for Municipalities, VT Dept. of Health, 2012

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week). In 2021, the Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corporation received a Vermont Outdoor Recreation Collaborate grant to:

- Better manage and grow cycling and pedestrian activity in the Town of South Hero,
- Reduce friction between cyclists, motorists, residents, and local businesses in South Hero, and
- Maximize the economic impact of cycling and pedestrian traffic on the South Hero economy.

This project will result in a plan for townwide improvements for bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, connection and etiquette.

Specific to South Hero Village and Keeler Bay Village, the Town has received a grant from the VT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program to develop a scoping study for streetscape improvements in those locations

Pedestrian access in the villages was an important priority to residents responding to the South Hero Town Plan Survey. 90% of respondents supported the vision of safe pedestrian crossings and 83% supported the vision of a walkable village with connected and well-maintained safe sidewalks. In an open-ended question about what residents would like to see changed in South Hero, 14% referenced bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Throughout the community engagement process for the plan update, residents referenced walkability within the villages as well as bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between the villages as an important goal.

that calm traffic, improve pedestrian safety and the overall design of the streetscape for pedestrian and bicycle users. This scoping study will start in 2023.

Additionally, South Hero Land Trust (SHLT) and the SH Recreation Commission have developed several public access trails, and are now working on a linked network of pedestrian and cycling trails that will connect local parks and beaches to the downtown.

Community Transportation

Commuter Parking. There is one park and ride lot in South Hero on the east side of Route 2 north of Keeler Bay. Park and ride lots allow commuters to access car and vanpool options to save vehicle miles traveled.

Senior and Special Needs Transportation. C.I.D.E.R., an acronym for Champlain Islanders Developing Essential Resources, is a local organization dedicated to providing transportation services to seniors and people with disabilities in order to help them remain independent. [Pull in info from CIDER meeting with PC]

Public Transportation. There are no regional public transit routes that directly service South Hero, nor does the Town provide any public transportation for its residents (other than the services offered by CIDER). The closest transit stop is located at the Chimney Corners Park and Ride in Milton, which provides service on Green Mountain Transits Milton Commuter (Route 56) or the St. Albans Link Express (Route 96) to Winooski and Burlington. **Add information on future goals**

As part of the South Hero Town Plan Survey, roughly half of residents stated they would or were unsure of if they would use public transit. The most common reasons for wanting to use public transit were for appointments and transit connections. Almost 2/3s of those interested in using public transit were only interested in occasional use. Micro-transit or other flexible public transit options may be able to address these public transit needs.

Ferries. The Lake Champlain Transportation Company provides year-round ferry service between the town of Grand Isle and Plattsburgh, New York. The ferry dock is located on VT 314, which is an important link for the ferry traffic traveling to US 2 and I-89.

Air and Rail. Amtrak provides passenger rail service out of the St. Albans and Burlington depot on the Vermonter line which extends down to Washington, D.C. via Boston. A new route was added in 2021 with service to New York City. The Burlington International Airport in South Burlington, the Plattsburgh International Airport in Plattsburgh, and the Trudeau Airport in Montreal provide air service to the region. There is one privately owned airport, Allenholm Airstrip, and one identified water airstrip, West of Stave Island.

Goals & Objectives

1. Continue to maintain town roads in good condition as money and natural contingencies allow, with emphasis on the safety of all users thereof and in compliance with State regulations.
2. Continue to improve the condition and availability of scenic trails and paths throughout the Town.
3. Improve access for pedestrians to village resources and businesses.
4. Encourage ride sharing by establishing a Park-and-Ride facility in the Town.
5. Promote bicycle traffic safety by working with the State AOT and tour groups to improve road conditions, design and rider behavior.

Strategies

1. Continue to maintain its 26 miles of roads in compliance with State regulations.
2. Continue a process of road improvements as money permits.
3. Improve Town roads in a way that will not alter the scenic quality of roads identified in the Special Island Environment Committee's inventory.
4. Promote non-motorized transportation plans for implementation, through sidewalks, trails and multi-use paths. In addition to connecting the Town's two Village Centers together, include safe non-motorized routes to school, town government, recreation facilities and neighboring towns.
5. Support regional cooperation on trails development.
6. Private roads to seasonal homes are not necessarily appropriate for year-round access. When conversions of seasonal homes to year round occupancy are proposed, ensure that adequate all

season access is provided for the occupants as well as for emergency vehicles as part of the approval process for conversions.

7. Continue to participate in planning efforts related to route 7 and 78 byway designation, and consider the recommendations of the 2006 Lake Champlain Byway Corridor Management Plan.
8. Establish a "Park-and-Ride" facility in the Town by the end of 2016.
9. . Promote bicycle traffic safety by working with the State AOT and tour groups to improve road conditions, design and rider behavior.
10. Traffic control on U.S. Route 2 should be considered and be a joint effort of Town, County and State.