

Alburgh

Plan

2024-2032

Draft



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Alburgh Planning Commission

Donna Boumil, Tyler Shannon, Renee Creller, John Chesarek,
Danielle James Choiniere Brian Tjelta

Alburgh Selectboard

Jim Hokenberg, Russell Duchaine, Damien Henry, Alexander
McCracken, Elliot Knight

Authority

The town of Alburgh is authorized to prepare and adopt a Municipal Plan under Chapter 117, Title 24 VSA (Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act). The intent of the law is to encourage a municipality to “engage in a continuing planning process that will further several stated goals.” The act also states that municipal plans must be re-examined, updated and re-adopted every five years. Municipal planning is therefore an on-going process, one that considers how the town is developing, what its current needs are and what changes should be made to move the town toward its goals.

A town plan is intended to clearly state the goals of the town, its current and foreseeable issues, the resources it has available and the process the town intends to take to achieve the desired future. The legal framework that supports town planning includes some requirements that support these aims. Section 4382 of the Act identifies twelve particular subjects that must be included in a municipal plan and are used to guide the content of this plan.

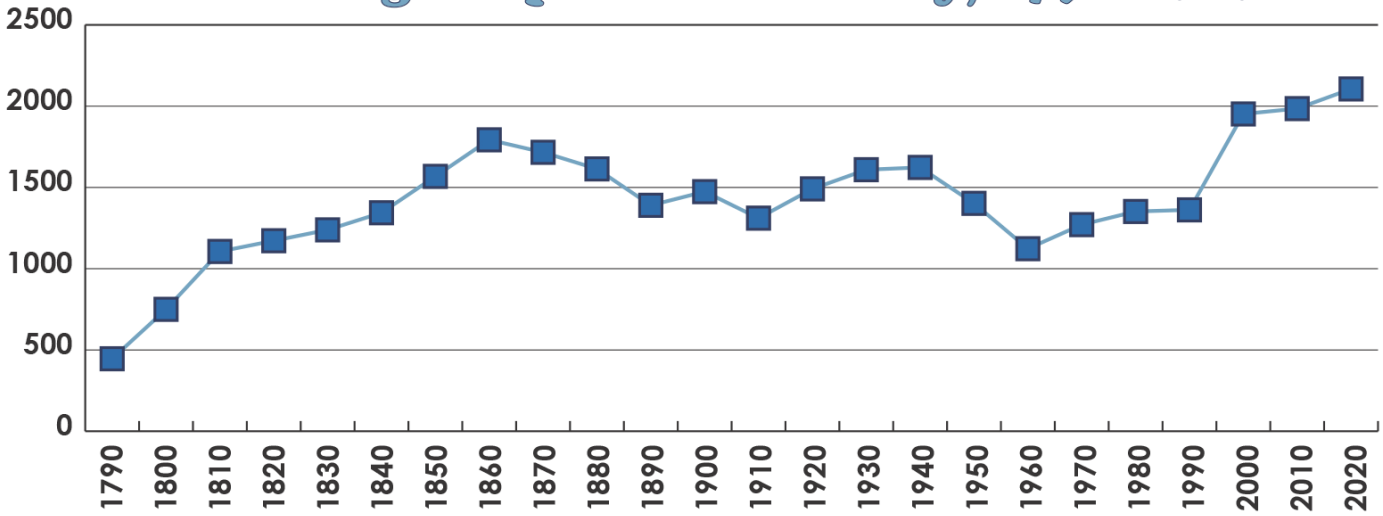
*Photo credits: Carol Berhman, Laura Limoge, former PC members and NRPC staff
Cover Photos: Welcome sign, 4th of July parade, broomball tournament*

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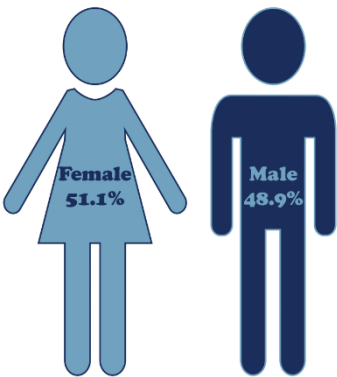
Population & Demographics

Alburgh Population History, 1790 - 2020

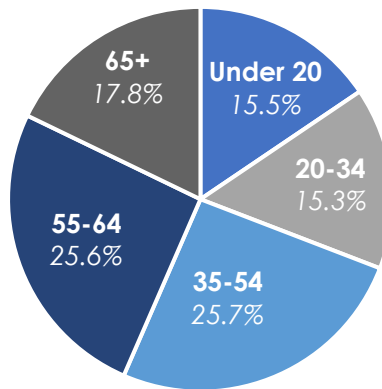


Alburgh Median Age: 50.1
Vermont Median Age: 42.9

Alburgh Population by Sex



Alburgh Population by Age



Alburgh Households



With related children under 18



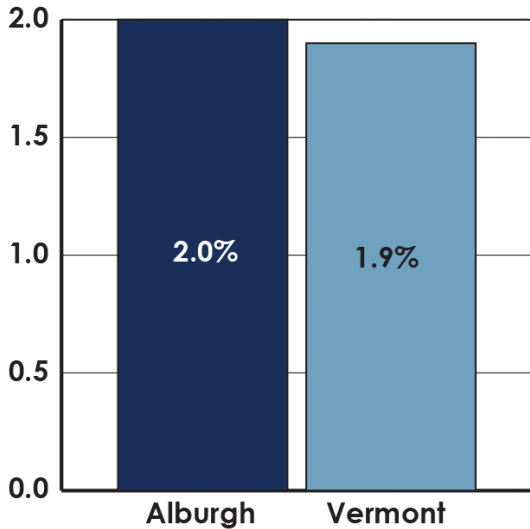
Without related children under 18

Alburgh Educational Attainment - 2018

| Educational Attainment | % |
|---|-------------|
| Less than 9 th grade | 0.9% |
| 9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma | 7.2% |
| High school graduate (includes equivalency) | 38.8% |
| Some college, no degree | 14.0% |
| Associate's degree | 10.1% |
| Bachelor's degree | 14.3% |
| Graduate or professional degree | 14.6% |
| Total | 100% |

DATA SOURCE: 2018 American Community Survey and U.S. Census

Unemployment Rate - 2023

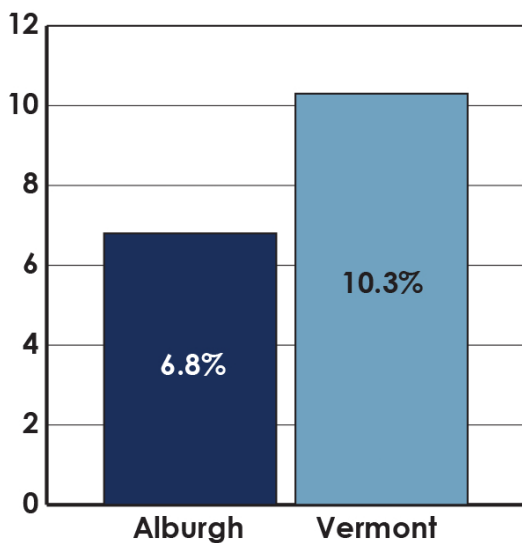


Employment - 2022

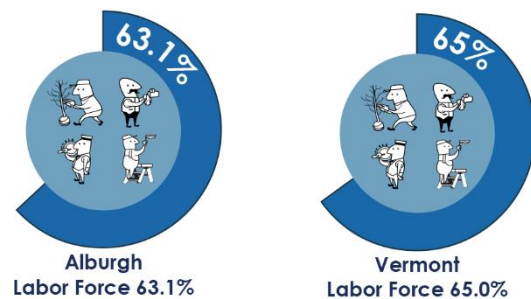
| Employment Type | 2022 | % of change from 2021 |
|---|------|-----------------------|
| Private Owner Establishments | 56 | 1.8% |
| Goods Producing Domain | 14 | -6.7% |
| Natural Resources and Mining Supersector | 2 | 0.0% |
| Construction Supersector | 10 | -16.7% |
| Manufacturing Supersector | 2 | 100.0% |
| Service Providing Domain | 43 | 4.9% |
| Information Supersector | 2 | 0.0% |
| Financial and Activities Supersector | 5 | 150.0% |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 1 | 0.0% |
| Professional and Business Service Supersector | 13 | 18.2% |
| Administrative and Support, and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 6 | 20.0% |
| Education and Health Services Supersector | 2 | 0.0% |
| Healthcare and Social Assistance | 1 | 0.0% |
| Leisure and Hospitality Supersector | 4 | -20.0% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 3 | -25.0% |
| Others Services, except Public Administration Supersector | 3 | -25.0% |

DATA SOURCE: 2022 Vermont Department of Labor

Poverty Line 2021



Labor Force



Median Family Income - 2018



Chapter 1. Purpose, Goals and Action Plan

The purpose of this town plan is to provide a guide for the future development of the Town of Alburgh. The town plan is a way for residents to share common ideas about our future. The plan describes the goals of our town, what we hope it becomes in the future and how we will work together to get there.

Goals, policies and objectives from the 2011 Town Plan have been reviewed and modified. Additional policies and objectives have been added to the plan based on citizen input and Planning Commission discussion. Accomplishments since the last plan are shown in the implementation report in Chapter 8.

The Planning Commission developed and distributed a survey in October 2023 that provided feedback from residents on their vision for Alburgh (results are summarized in appendix A). This survey was advertised on the Front Porch Forum (www.frontporchforum.com) and on the Town's website (www.alburghvt.com).

Based on the results of the survey the Planning Commission identified four high priority implementation items and a strategic action plan as shown below. For each of these items, the Planning Commission and other community members will implement a plan for action that includes an inventory of assets, an identification of needs and a prioritized list of tasks. Additional information about plan implementation is included in Chapter 8.

Priority Implementation Actions

Capitalize on Lake Champlain as a key community asset: The recreation, tourism and ecological values of Lake Champlain are essential components of the quality of life in Alburgh. Public access for residents and visitors is needed in order to fully realize the Lake's potential. The PC will inventory existing municipal lands and existing potential public access areas and work with community leaders to prioritize an approach to funding and developing public access to Lake Champlain.

Build upon the rail trail and VAST trails to create a trail network: Recreation opportunities for residents will improve overall community health and improved trail opportunities will provide an additional draw for visitors. Walking, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, cross country skiing and snowmobiling are some of the activities the community can support. The PC will inventory the current trails in the community, identify key connections that are needed and work



with community leaders and property owners to develop a trail network expansion plan.

Improve the quality of existing and future development in the community: Ensuring new development respects adjacent properties, the character of Alburgh and the future vision is a key component of a successful future. Community members have also expressed support for improving the condition of existing housing in the village and addressing buildings that are vacant and/or in poor condition. The PC will work with the community to prepare a basic development plan that will provide basic guidance for the location and quality of new development and will examine options for a demolition ordinance to require maintenance or demolition of vacant buildings.

Expand economic development opportunities by providing services for tourists: In order to encourage visitors to come to Alburgh and stay for the day or overnight, additional visitor services are needed. The PC will work with existing business and property owners to explore opportunities for publicly accessible lodging and/or camping areas. The PC will also identify ways to encourage bed and breakfasts and other micro-enterprises that will provide income for residents and support tourism based economic development.

The PC supports the state's efforts to complete parcel mapping statewide as the resulting information will assist the PC in achieving success in these strategic priorities. In addition to the priority action items, the following goals, policies and objectives will apply to future planning, growth and development in Alburgh.

Population, Housing and Economic Development

Goals:

Support an economically vibrant Village District that includes a mix of small to medium sized retail and commercial businesses and residential uses in a densely developed area. Have a selection of stores that sell items and provide services that meet the needs of local residents and support local businesses.

Build an economy based on businesses that provides healthy working conditions for local people, pay good wages and that minimally impact the environment.

Sustain a vibrant agricultural economy that builds on the proud history of Alburgh farmers and prepares the way for future generations to continue farming in town.

Provide high quality housing for all Alburgh residents and ensure that such housing is available and affordable to all income levels.

Ensure that adequate health care is available and affordable to all town residents.

Maintain and improve Alburgh's attractiveness for tourists and seasonal residents.

Policies:

P-A Economic development will be compatible with the character and natural environment of Alburgh.

P-B Alburgh supports the development of a variety of quality housing types, especially housing for the elderly, affordable to a range of income groups.

P-C Encourage small to medium sized businesses to locate in the Village.

P-D Support the conservation of agricultural lands.

- P-E Encourage development of safe and affordable childcare.
- P-F Support value-added activities on local farms, including such things as small to medium food processing, farm stands, farmers markets and use of products grown on local farms.
- P-G Encourage businesses that provide tourist facilities to locate in town.
- P-H Promote activities that facilitate socialization among Alburgh's full-time residents.

Objectives:

- P-1 Seek to attract restaurants or other year round dining options to Alburgh.
- P-2 Explore options for rehabilitating buildings on Main Street including grants and loans and regulations.
- P-3 Work with the Health Center and other agencies and non-profits to provide services for Alburgh residents including but not limited to a pharmacy, a drugstore, and dental care.
- P-4 Work with local civic groups and committees to develop a marketing and communications strategy for Alburgh that will highlight the town's assets with the purpose of attracting commerce and tourism.

Natural and Cultural Resources and Land Use

Goals:

Maintain high quality water supplies and improve those areas where water quality of the lake, ground water and surface waters of Alburgh has been impaired.

Protect sensitive natural and historic resources, including Alburgh's extensive wetland habitat, for future generations.

Ensure that the town's substantial farm soils are available for agriculture for generations to come.

Discourage development in identified flood hazard areas and river corridor areas. If new development is to be built in such areas, it shall not exacerbate flooding and fluvial erosion.

Protect and restore floodplains, river corridors, and upland forest areas that attenuate and moderate inundation flooding and fluvial erosion.

Encourage emergency preparedness and response planning.

Maintain economically and environmentally sound farms in Alburgh.

Preserve and protect scenic resources, including significant scenic roads, waterways and views, and important landscape features of the town.

Ensure that development in Alburgh is compatible with existing land uses and that new development occurs at a pace compatible with the provision of municipal services.

Ensure that development occurs in areas where it will not negatively impact water quality and that it occurs only in those areas where soils are capable of supporting it with

adequate depth to bedrock, stability and which do not have high water tables.

Policies:

- N-A Support the conservation of agricultural lands and natural resources with a variety of strategies including purchase of development rights and local policies that encourage conservation.
- N-B Encourage and support efforts to improve public access to Lake Champlain.
- N-C Encourage and support efforts to improve facilities for users of Lake Champlain in all seasons.
- N-D Encourage and support efforts to improve Lake Champlain water quality.
- N-E New development along the lakeshore, including the conversion of seasonal camps to year-round use, must ensure that wastewater is managed properly so that there is no negative impact on water quality and that minimum state standards for wastewater disposal are met.
- N-F Discourage the subdivision of land into “spaghetti” lots, parcels of land that are exceptionally long and narrow.
- N-G Protect water quality by limiting development in Wellhead Protection Areas, wetlands and along streambanks.
- N-H Protect Lake Champlain water quality by supporting implementation of Vermont’s statewide shoreline development regulations and encouraging best management practices.
- N-I To provide for the wise and efficient use of Vermont’s natural resources and to facilitate the appropriate extraction of earth resources and the proper restoration and preservation of the aesthetic qualities of the area.

Objectives:

- N-1 Review current Flood Hazard Zone District standards for compliance with National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) minimum standards. Consider adopting higher standards and incorporating River Corridor regulations.
- N-2 Adopt the most up-to-date Vermont Road and Bridge Standards.
- N-3 Develop and adopt a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) for the Town and Village. Support implementation of high priority projects as identified in each plan.

Utilities, Facilities and Services

Goals:

To ensure that Alburgh’s infrastructure has adequate capacity to meet current needs and planned growth in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Support a high quality, sustainable recreational system based on the use of Alburgh’s natural and cultural resources.

Ensure the safety of the town’s residents by maintaining a high quality of emergency services.



Alburgh Community Center Garden

Support excellent childcare, educational and vocational training opportunities in adequate facilities for Alburgh's children and promote lifelong learning in both public and private facilities.

Encourage a high quality health care system that is accessible and affordable to all town residents.

Ensure that Alburgh residents have year-round public access to Lake Champlain including beach access and safe and easy access to boat launch facilities.

Ensure that residents of all ages and visitors have access to outdoor recreational and educational facilities.

Save money and reduce environmental impacts by decreasing the overall energy consumption within the town through conservation and efficiency.

Promote the appropriately sited development of local renewable resources.

Encourage energy efficient and energy conserving patterns of land use

Promote better high speed communications access.

Policies:

- u-A Support future expansion of the village sewer and wastewater treatment system.
- u-B Support planned expansions of both the Village, Alburgh Springs and South Alburgh fire district 2 water systems
- u-C Encourage and support bicycling-based tourism by addressing the need for safer bicycle routes, by improving existing and developing new bicycle facilities and infrastructure (bicycle routes, bathrooms, bike racks) and similar activities in Alburgh.
- u-D The town should be prepared to accept donations of recreational land, including purchases of land offered at price below market value.

u-E Encourage and support efforts to improve public access to Lake Champlain.

u-F Encourage efforts to improve water quality of Lake Champlain to create more desirable conditions for recreational purposes.

u-G Encourage the development of a dry hydrant whenever a new public lake access site is developed or upgraded.

u-H Encourage land use patterns that promote energy conservation, such as encouraging passive solar design, cluster development and the use of vegetation for winter wind buffers and summer shading.

u-I To encourage energy efficiency in the construction and renovation of new and existing structures.

u-J Support increased public transit routes that reduce the need for single occupancy vehicle trips.

Objectives:

- u-1 Work with solar power companies to provide energy for Alburgh Community owned buildings.
- u-2 Regularly update the Emergency Management Plan for the town, including an Emergency Rapid Response Plan and an Emergency Operations Plan.

Transportation

Goal:

Provide and maintain a safe, convenient and functional transportation network for vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and other recreational use within the Town.

Policies:

- T-A The Town and the VT Agency of Transportation should work more closely together early in the development and design of state highway projects.
- T-B New construction or major reconstruction of roads and highways in Alburgh should provide paths, tracks or wide enough shoulders for use solely by pedestrian or other non-motorized means of transportation, when economically feasible and in the public's interest.
- T-C Encourage the development of efficient transportation systems that offer alternatives to the single-passenger vehicle.
- T-D Encourage the development of efficient and convenient public transportation systems.

T-E Private roads must be upgraded to town road standards for safety and access before the Town will consider taking over the road.

T-F Support efforts to expand bicycling and bicycling infrastructure in Alburgh.

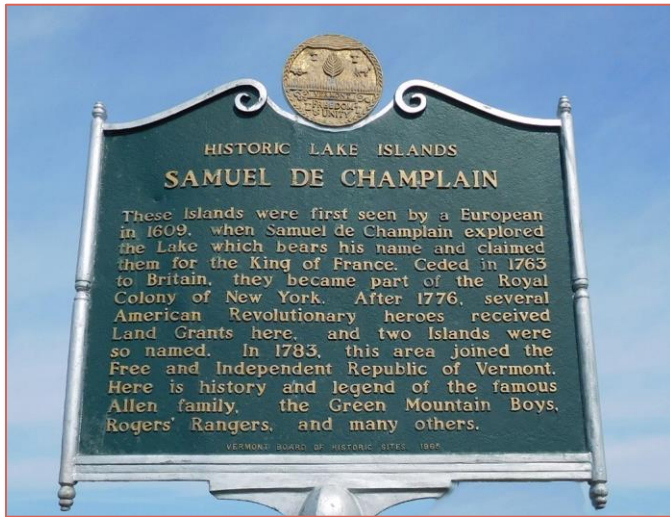
Objectives:

- T-1 Pursue funding for projects that can construct and enhance pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Alburgh. Support efforts to develop bicycle facilities and infrastructure (bicycle routes, bathroom, bike racks) in Alburgh.
- T-2 Improve the portion of the Rail Trail located in Alburgh so that it is appealing to a variety of users.
- T-3 Advertise the Alburgh Park and Ride Lot on websites like "Way To Go" and in other digital media.
- T-4 Encourage the development and use of energy conserving transportation systems including but not limited to bicycling, park and ride lots, and public transportation.
- T-5 Support additional public transit routes in Grand Isle County.



Green Mountain Transit

Chapter 2. The Past and Present



Historic Marker

The First Settlers

Abenaki people have lived around the Missisquoi Basin for thousands of years. The first permanent European settlers of Alburgh were British Loyalists. They arrived starting in 1783, which was the year that the Revolutionary War ended. Upon reaching Alburgh they believed that they had reached Canada. When the exact location of the Canadian-US border was established, they found themselves in what was to be called Alburgh. Since they had cleared their land and liked the area most did not go on to Canada. Ira Allen, who was granted all of Alburgh, was kind to them and allowed them to remain on their land and charged them very little for this.

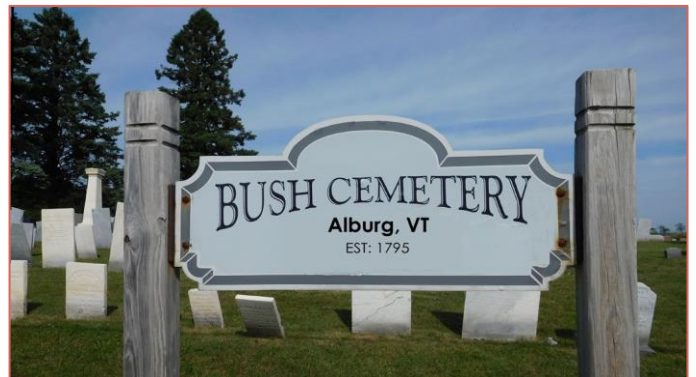
The War of 1812

Alburgh found itself in a very precarious position when the British tried to invade and takeover the new country once again. Lake Champlain was the avenue of invasion and much of this was fought along and on Lake Champlain.

Alburgh's location where the Lake enters Canada made it a real "hot spot." The Loyalist settlers had to now defend themselves from the very British for whom they once fought. The Alburgh Militia was formed and met at the home of Samuel Mott, their leader. The Samuel Mott homestead is the stone house at the south end of Alburgh Village.

The First Railroad

The year 1850 saw the opening of the first railroad to cross Alburgh. It ran east and west entering at East Alburgh and crossing a second bridge to Rouses Point, NY. Soon after its opening posters were seen in the East Alburgh Station offering free transportation and free land in the West. By this time Alburgh was crowded with the large families of the early settlers and many took advantage of the land in the West. Some of the states that they went to were Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, Kansas and others. Descendants of Alburgh's early settlers are still found everywhere in the Western United States.



Alburgh Springs

The new railroad opened Alburgh Springs as a resort area where the mineral waters were sold as a cure for just about any ailment. Alburgh Springs became a little "Boom Town." Houses, stores and hotels sprang up as fast as they could be built. One quite lavish hotel became the focus and served all the needs of visitors from far and near. Carriages from the hotels met every train

during the summer months to carry people to the Springs.

Schools



Shortly after Alburgh became an organized Town in 1792 schools were established. By the early 1800's Alburgh had about 10 schools. "Smart" students were selected by teachers to become future teachers. Sometimes they were appointed as a teacher right after graduation from the 8th grade.

There was an Academy at Alburgh Springs in the mid-1800's which was Alburgh's first high school. Alburgh High School opened in 1939 and became the center of activities for many years. The school is currently pre K-8 and is known as the Alburgh Community Education Center.

The Second Railroad

The Rutland Railroad opened in 1900. This was an event as important to the development of Alburgh as the opening of the first railroad. This railroad ran from Rutland, VT to Ogdensburg, NY with Alburgh almost exactly halfway between the two places.

Alburgh became a terminal where train crews changed and repair shops were located. This new railroad created what is now the Village of Alburgh.

Alburgh Village

Within a few years of the opening of the Rutland Railroad many homes, churches and places of business were constructed by and for the railway workers. The center of business in Alburgh now shifted to Alburgh Village from the former growing communities of Alburgh Springs, East Alburgh, Alburgh Center and South Alburgh. By 1920 Alburgh Village had four grocery stores, two hotels, three churches, a Railroad YMCA, a department store, a bakery and several other places of business.

Alburgh as a Summer Community

Alburgh's many miles of fine lake shore property and the Lake itself have been and remain Alburgh's greatest asset. Various places such as Alburgh Center, South Alburgh and others became little communities of summer residents. The value of lakeshore properties remains high and building continues.



More Recent Times

The Rutland Railroad shut down in about 1963 and the tracks were torn up. This was probably the most troubling thing that ever happened to the Town since so many Alburgh residents depended on the railroad for their livelihood.

Some residents found it necessary to go elsewhere for jobs but, somehow, others arrived and no real drop in population resulted. The fine bridge connecting Alburgh to the State of New York, opened in the 1990's and encourages further development of the Town.

Preserving Historic Sites

Alburgh has two sites on the National Historic Register, the Rutland Railroad Pumping Station and the U.S. Inspection Station at Alburg Springs. Additionally, there are 162 sites on the state register and potential archeological sites. The Town encourages preservation of these sites.

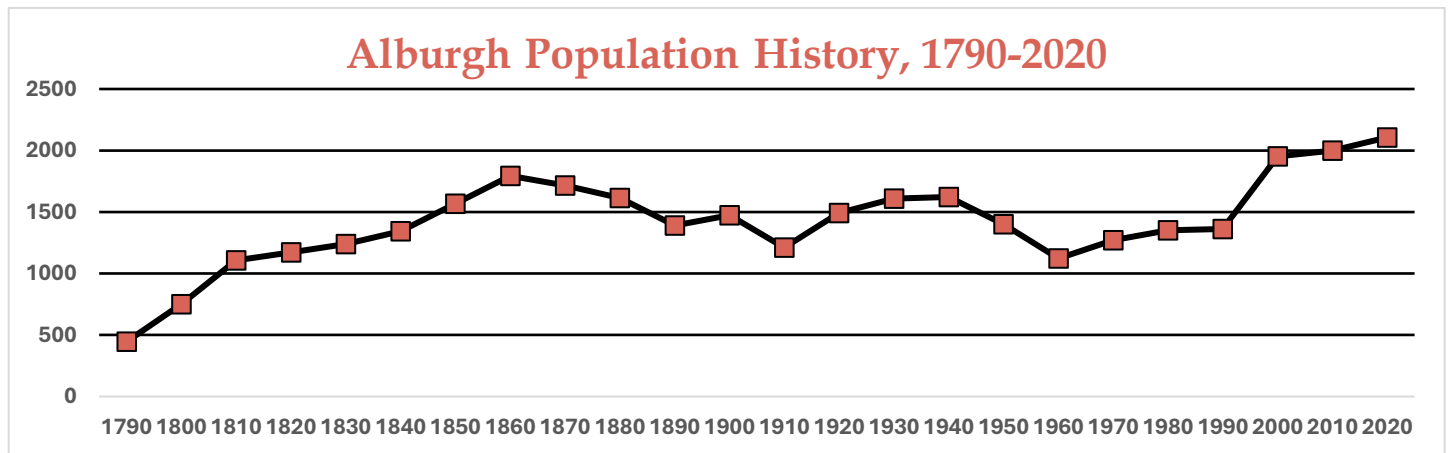
Chapter 3. Population, Housing and Economic Development

Population

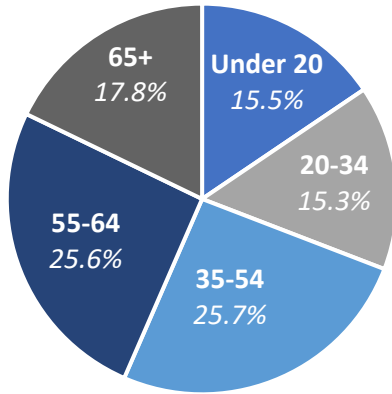
The first settlers of Alburgh arrived in 1791. The population of the town steadily increased until it hit its early peak in the mid-1800s, like many other Vermont towns. The year 1850 saw the opening of the first railroad to cross Alburgh. Soon after its opening, posters were seen in the East Alburgh Station offering free transportation and free land in the West. By this time Alburgh was crowded with the large families of the early settlers and many took advantage of the land in the West, leading to a decrease in the population. In the early 1900s, Alburgh’s population began to increase rather than decrease like many other towns in Vermont. This was due in part to the opening of the Rutland Railroad in 1900 which encouraged economic growth in the town. The population continued to grow until 1940 when the population again began to decline.

Since 1960, the population has been steadily increasing with the most dramatic growth occurring between 1990 and 2000. During this decade, the population had the fastest growth rate (43%) since the 1800s. *It is important to note that it is believed the 1990 US Census undercounted Alburgh’s population.* When a more accurate account was completed in the 2000 Census, it dramatically expanded the number of people recorded as living in the town compared to the low report in 1990, which may have contributed to the very high rate of growth recorded between the two periods. Today, Alburgh has a greater total population than ever before in its town history.

From 2010 to 2020, around 90% of the growth in population was the result of new residents moving into Town. Past attempts to project the future population of Vermont municipalities have been inaccurate due to low population estimates. However, if current trends continue Alburgh will continue to slowly grow as a result of new residents moving into Town.

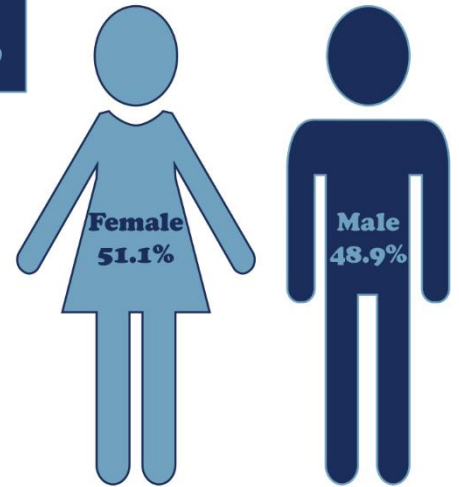


Alburgh Population by Age



Alburgh Median Age: 50.1
Vermont Median Age: 42.9

Alburgh Population by Sex



The median age of Alburgh residents is 50.1 years, compared to the state median of 42.9 years. Alburgh’s median age has risen from 40 to 50 over the last 20 years as Alburgh’s population continues to age.

Just under half of all residents in Alburgh are ages 55 or older, roughly in line with county averages. The number of children and young people in Alburgh has decreased in the last 10 years.

Alburgh is split fairly evenly between men and women and its citizens are likely to be long term residents of the community. According to population estimates in 2022 92% of Alburgh residents lived in the same home as they did in each of the previous year.

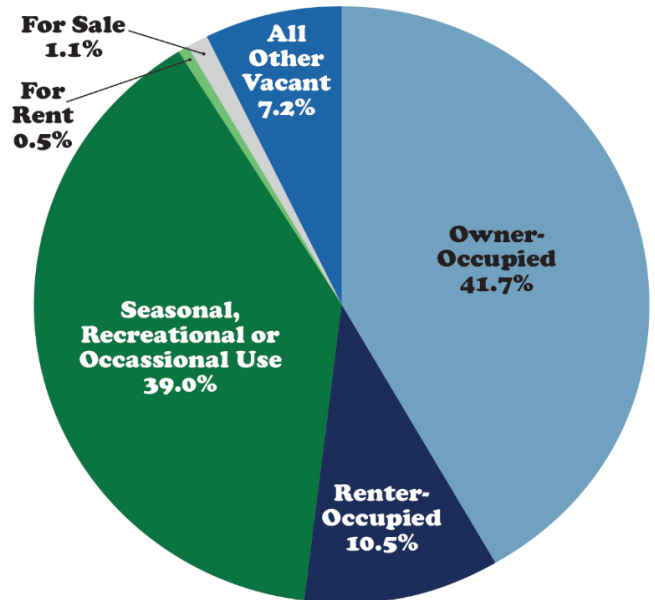
Housing

According to the 2020 US Census Alburgh has 1,463 housing units. Less than one half of those are owner occupied and approximately 40% are seasonal dwellings. Currently, Alburgh’s vacancy rate for owner-occupied units is 1.1% and for rental units is .5%. These vacancy rates are below what is considered a healthy housing market average vacancy rate.

Low vacancy rates have likely contributed to the difficulty finding affordable housing.

Alburgh has a very large share of seasonal homes accounting for 39% of total units. This is high compared to 15% for Vermont as a whole, but it is consistent with the rate for Grand Isle County, which is 37%.

Alburgh Housing Distribution - 2018



Seasonal visitors must be seen as an asset to Alburgh because they bring residents without adding children to the capital school system. However, too many seasonal visitors may detrimentally affect Alburgh’s sense of community, because they are absent from the area for a good portion of the year. The number of seasonal dwellings has increased 7% in the last 10 years.

Vermont has the second oldest housing stock in the nation (“Between a Rock and Hard Place,” 2003). Roughly ¼ of all housing in Alburgh was built before 1950, slightly less than the state average. The deteriorating condition of some of the properties in Alburgh has been a concern raised by many residents. In the 2023 survey, 88% of residents supported efforts to address vacant properties in the Village and when asked what they liked least about living in Alburgh, 22% mentioned distressed buildings.

Affordability

Between 2000 and 2020, the number of households in Franklin and Grand Isle County grew 18%. Meanwhile, growth in regional housing stock slowed significantly as a result of the 2008 recession and is only beginning to pick back up. When the housing stock is in

short supply, rents are driven up, further perpetuating the cycle.

Rental housing is considered affordable if a household making 80% of the median income in the Burlington-South Burlington MSA (Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle Counties) would spend no more than 1/3 of their income on the median rent. Rental housing is generally considered affordable in Alburgh.

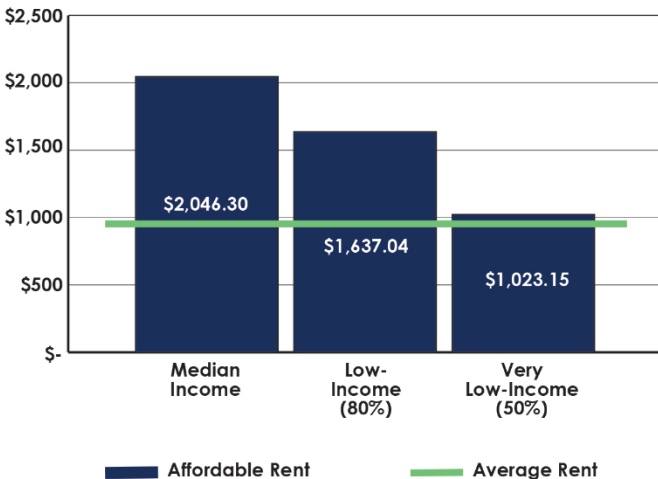
However, average incomes for residents of Alburgh and adjacent communities are lower than the overall tri-county area. The housing wage is the wage needed to afford a two-bedroom apartment at fair market rent. Grand Isle County is combined with Franklin and Chittenden Counties for data related to housing costs. The housing wage for Grand

Isle County for a two bedroom home is \$31.06, higher than the statewide housing wage. The Alburgh median household income is \$62,462, less than the housing wage. Families with children are especially likely to have challenges with finding housing as they may need larger apartments and homes.

The average home sale price in Alburgh in 2022 was \$225,000. Those making the median income in the tri-county area could afford the median home, however lower income households could not afford to purchase a home.

An inadequate number of affordable homes have been an issue plaguing Alburgh, Grand Isle County and Vermont State for many years. 20% of homeowners and 37% of renters are considered cost-burdened because they spend more than 30% of their income of housing.

Rental Affordability



Alburgh Households



With related children under 18



Without related children under 18

Housing Types

Smaller units, multi-unit structures, accessory dwelling units and manufactured homes can all provide more affordable options. For instance, adding an accessory dwelling unit to an existing home provides a new rental unit and can reduce the housing costs for the homeowner. Alburgh has a good supply of manufactured homes, which make up about 20% of all housing units in the Town. However, just 6.6% of all housing units are multi-unit. Increasing the number of multi-unit dwellings will likely support housing affordability. Alburgh supports efforts to expand housing options provided that they meet the goals and policies of this plan.

Affordable Housing Projects

Alburgh is home to two affordable housing projects that help to alleviate the difficulty finding affordable housing.

Alburgh Family Housing - is owned and managed by Champlain Housing Trust. Currently, Alburgh Family Housing provides for 13 units; five two-bedroom, 6 three-bedroom and two four-bedroom units. Rental assistance for all of these units comes from the Section 8 New Construction/ Substantial Rehabilitation Program. Through this initiative, housing developers are funded to build new housing specifically reserved for low-income tenants. Further, it can be used to rehabilitate a building in need of repair or convert a building to housing. Housing units created through this program are given project-based rental subsidies that stay with the apartments they support (www.housingdata.org).

Pine Manor - is also owned and managed by Champlain Housing Trust. Currently, they manage 16 units; fourteen one-bedroom and two two-bedroom. All of these units are occupied by elderly persons. This is a positive sign, because this is one demographic area identified as being in need of attention.

All rental assistance for these units is also provided for under the Section 8 New Construction/ Substantial Rehabilitation Program (www.housingdata.org)

Economic Development

Alburgh has a total workforce of 1,062 residents. Educational services, and health care and social assistance is the top employment sector for residents at 32.8%; with manufacturing as the second highest sector at 13.3%. Median income in Alburgh remains lower than the state as a whole.

In 2023 Alburgh's average unemployment rate was 2%, similar to the state as a whole.

Alburgh is similar in many ways as compared to Grand Isle County and Vermont. Alburgh is slightly more diverse the county. The median household is significantly lower than both the county and the state, and the percentage of families living below the poverty line is higher. The percentage of people who are college graduates is also lower than the state as a whole.

With incomes in Alburgh continuing to lag behind state averages, economic development is of major importance to the residents of Alburgh. Economic development can support higher wage employment that reduces poverty and increases residents' incomes.

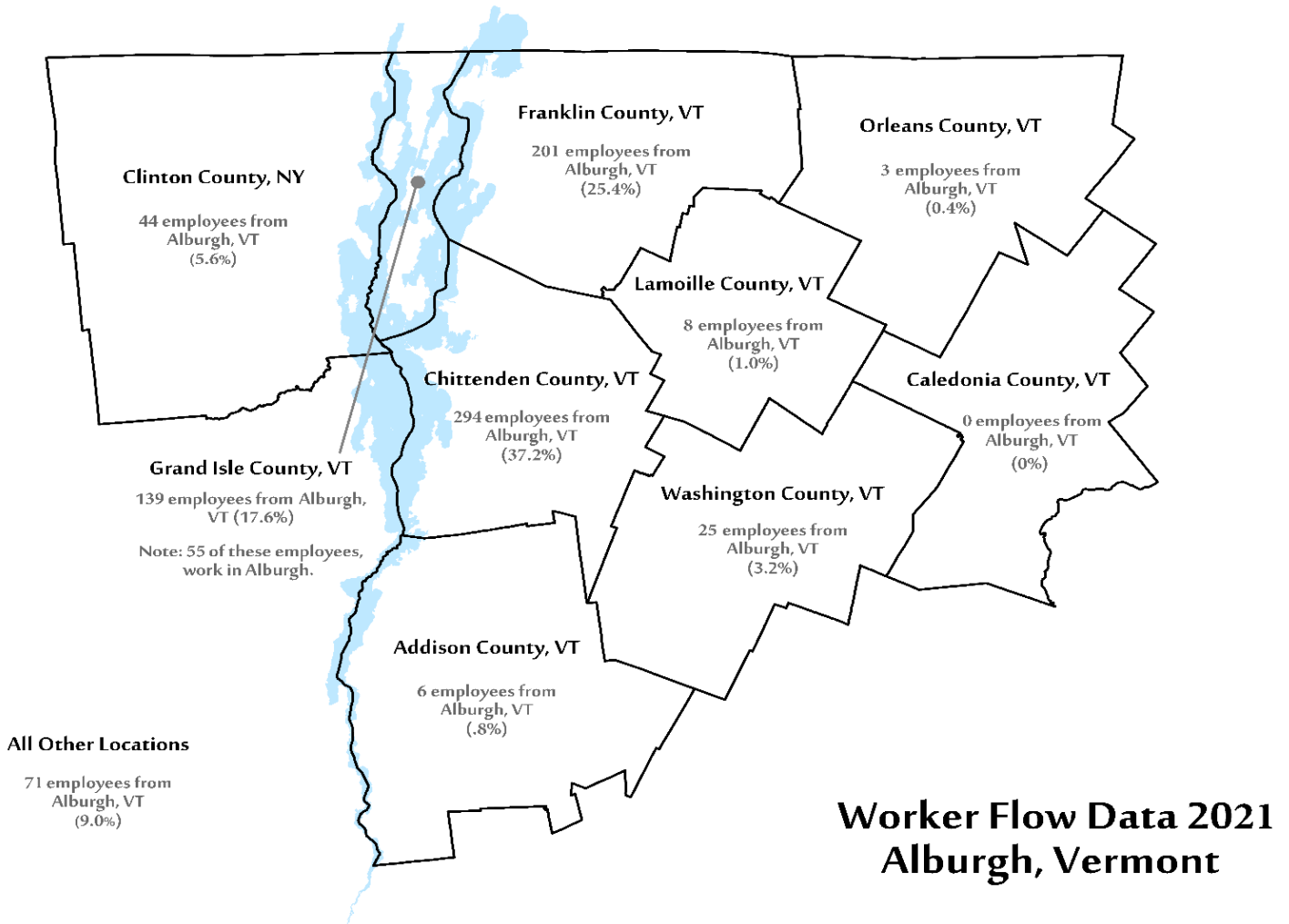
Alburgh provides employment for 198 individuals, 55 of which are Alburgh residents. On the whole Alburgh is a net exporter of labor. Just over one-third of the town's commuters go to work in Chittenden County and a quarter work in Franklin County.

Alburgh Plan 2024

The town has undertaken some significant economic development efforts in the past several decades. In the early 2000s, the Town developed an industrial park adjacent to the Village. Businesses currently residing in the Business Park include: Beeline, Rowley Fuels Inc. a fuel oil distributor, the Alburgh Health Center, a crematorium and the municipal highway garage.

The Industrial Park has faced several challenges, including presence of wetlands on many of the sites, lack of marketing, and lack of utilities such as natural gas. As a result, the Industrial Park Board has disbanded and no further development is planned.

In addition to the Industrial Park, Alburgh's economic advantages include proximity to both Montreal and Burlington. The Town is also known for some annual as well as weekly activities that bring people to town. Annual events such as the International Fire Training School bring 300-400 people to town, while local auctions offer a great diversity of items, attracting an influx of visitors that provide opportunities for other local entrepreneurs. Challenges to economic development include a need for labor force training, sewer capacity challenges, no high school and no access to natural gas.



Chapter 4. Natural and Cultural Resources and Land Use

The University of Vermont conducted a natural resource inventory of Alburgh in 1990. This inventory provided much of the information contained in this chapter. Additional information was gathered from Vermont Center for Geographic Information databases as well as local knowledge. Natural resource information is displayed on the *Natural Resource* map included in the Appendix.

The Town of Alburgh contains approximately 29 sq. miles of land, or 18,560 acres. The town is relatively flat with rolling hills. The high point in the town is 240+/- feet with large low-lying areas where wetlands have formed.



The Alburgh Peninsula lies within the Champlain Lowlands Sedimentary Basin, composed of materials deposited during the last glacial period, approximately 10,000 years ago. The Town is underlain primarily by layers of shale and limestone. Over the years shale has been excavated at a number of sites in the town, although no commercially exploitable deposits of either shale or limestone has been found. Natural gas is also present in these formations but exploratory efforts have failed to locate economically

attractive reserves. A significant drilling effort in 1966 drilled to a depth of 5,000 feet, but failed to find significant reserves of natural gas. Several gravel mining operations exist in Town.

Alburgh contains large areas of prime agricultural soils- approximately 35% of the town is made up of agricultural soils.

The climate of Alburgh is influenced by the proximity of Lake Champlain, the Green Mountains and the Adirondacks. The lake significantly moderates the climate, extending the growing season to 160 days, much longer than most places in Vermont. Prevailing winds are generally from the south with frequent shifts to the north in the winter. Winter snows are light relative to most places in Vermont. (FIS, 1980)

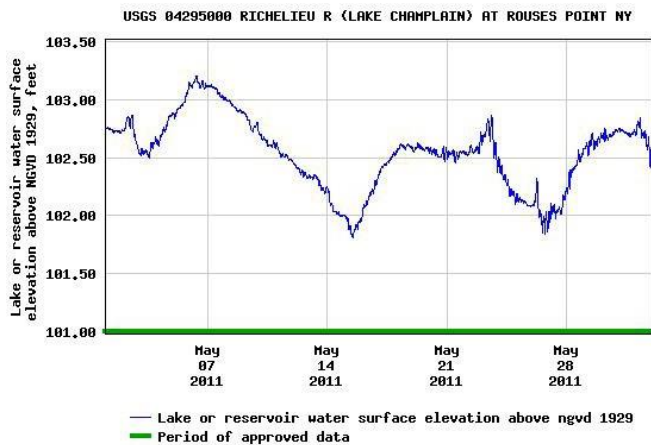
Flood Resilience

The Town and Village of Alburgh lie within the Champlain Islands sub-basin of the “Northern Lake Champlain Direct” watershed. Several small streams and wetland complexes drain into Lake Champlain. Flooding is the most common natural hazard within the community. The lake shoreline areas of the Town and Village of Alburgh are subject to periodic flooding caused by high water levels in Lake Champlain. In addition, there are other areas, including tributaries to the lake such as Mud Creek and wetlands that have been designated as within the 100 year floodplain.

Historically, the high lake levels have occurred in the months of March through May. The ten highest recorded lake levels occurred in 1869, 1903, 1936, 1976, 1983, 1993 (2 record highs), 1998 and 2011. Flooding in the community has been caused primarily by high levels of Lake Champlain and the consequent erosion of the bank materials along the shore.

| Federal Major Disaster Declarations in Grand Isle County | |
|--|--|
| DR-160 (Nov. 27, 1963) | Drought, Impending Freeze |
| DR-164 (March 17, 1964) | Flooding |
| DR-397 (July 6, 1973) | Severe Storms, Flooding, Landslides |
| DR-990 (Apr. 24 - May 26, 1993) | Heavy Rain, Snowmelt, Flooding |
| DR-1201 (Jan. 6 - 16, 1998) | Ice Storm |
| DR-1784 (July 18, 2008) | Severe Storms, Tornado and Flooding |
| DR - 1995 (Apr. 23 - May 9, 2011) | Severe Storms and Flooding |
| DR-4163 (Dec. 20-26, 2013) | Severe Winter Storms |

The maximum elevation observed at USGS gaging station No. 04295000 on the Richelieu River (Lake Champlain) at Rouses Point, New York for the period of record from March 1871 to September 2015, is 103.2 feet on May 6, 2011. This record was caused by excessive rain in the region which caused severe floods across northern Vermont and the Champlain Valley. A federal disaster (DR- 1995) was declared for Addison, Chittenden, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille and Orleans counties on June 15, 2011.



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines a floodplain as an area of land adjacent to lakes and streams that is subject to recurring inundation or high water. Flooding can occur in two ways: inundation and fluvial erosion. Inundation flooding is when water rises and covers the adjacent low-lying land. It is the type of flooding targeted through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the type of flooding that causes the most damage in Alburgh. There are several areas of floodplain in Alburgh including along the shoreline of Lake Champlain.

The Town and Village of Alburgh have adopted land use regulations for special flood hazard areas, as defined by FEMA on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents and to allow the community to participate in the NFIP. It is important to note that the existing FIRMs were published on March 16, 1981 and the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) was published in September 1980. While this information is the best available, the hydrology that these maps are based on has not been updated and therefore does not account for shifts in shoreline or effects of development since 1980 in these areas.

Development within floodplains may have damaging consequences. Development may obstruct the natural flow of water or displace soil and raise base flood elevations. One strategy to mitigate potential encroachment and flood losses is to prohibit development below the base flood elevation or set an elevation from which development is prohibited. The base flood elevation for Lake Champlain is 102 feet above sea level.

The State of Vermont has recently implemented a statewide buffer regulation on all Lakes greater than 10 acres (including Lake Champlain). The Shoreland Protection Act prohibits new clearing and development within 100 feet of the mean water level of the Lake (95.5 feet above sea level) and places limits on clearing and development from 100

to 250 feet from the mean water level. The intent of the regulation is to limit bank erosion, to protect shoreland habitat, and to improve water quality.

Fluvial erosion is the second type of flooding. Fluvial erosion is the destruction of river and stream banks caused by the movement of rivers and streams. This can range from gradual bank erosion to catastrophic changes in a stream or river channel location and dimension during flood events.

To identify areas prone to fluvial erosion hazards, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resource has identified River Corridors in all Vermont municipalities. River Corridors are based on the individual conditions of streams and rivers including topography and the existence of public infrastructure. River Corridors are not mapped for streams that have a watershed of less than 2 square miles. Instead, the Agency has created a 50 foot buffer on each side of a stream (measured from the top of bank or top of slope) with the intention of protecting stream stability and natural flow. Mud Creek is the only stream in the community to have a mapped River Corridor. All other rivers and streams in the community have a watershed area less than 2 square miles and are therefore unmapped and are subject to the 50 foot buffer requirement.

River Corridors regulations currently apply only to Act 250-related land development and land development not regulated by municipalities (like agriculture). Municipalities may adopt River Corridor maps and regulation to apply to all local development. Adoption may have potential financial benefits to the Town in the event of federally declared natural disaster due to changes in how the State Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund (ERAF) is administered.

Planning for future flooding and other disaster events is important to ensure that a community is resilient. The Town or Village of Alburgh should develop local hazard mitigation plans to help plan for future

disaster events. Completion of a local hazard mitigation plan can help a community identify potential hazard risks to the community. Local hazard mitigation plans can also identify projects in the community that can decrease the effects of potential hazards, such as the replacement of culverts or buyouts of properties with repetitive flood risk. Approval of a local hazard mitigation plan by FEMA may also lead to increased grant opportunities for communities to implement identified projects and enable communities to gain access to additional state and federal mitigation funding.

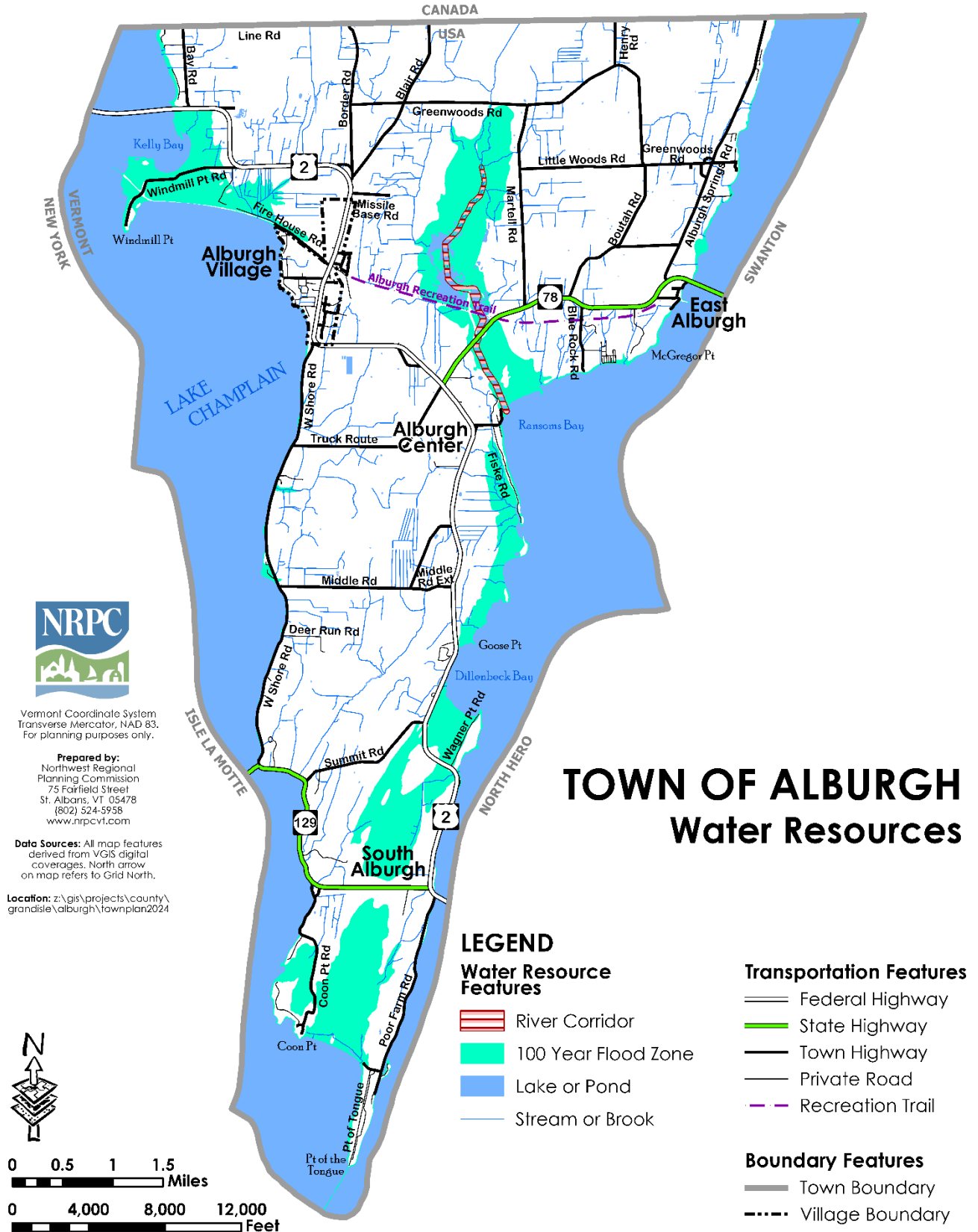
Important Resources

Groundwater - Groundwater mapping is an expensive and difficult undertaking. No such effort has been undertaken in Alburgh but data from the logs of well drillers provides some indication of the groundwater status. Well-log data collected since 1966 generally suggests a consolidated bedrock aquifer. This is supported by reports of generally low-yielding wells and a sulfur taste in many drilled wells in town.



Lake Champlain

Surface Waters and Wetlands - Lake Champlain is a key resource for the Town which attracts residents and visitors. Unfortunately, too much pollution is reaching the Lake, largely from surface water runoff. Alburgh supports efforts to eliminate all pollution of Lake Champlain.



Vermont Coordinate System
Transverse Mercator, NAD 83.
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Northwest Regional
Planning Commission
75 Fairfield Street
St. Albans, VT 05478
(802) 524-5958
www.nrpcvt.com

Data Sources: All map features
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coverages. North arrow
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grandisle\alburgh\townplan2024



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Feet

The town has two significant streams, Sucker Brook and Mud Creek as well as many intermittent streams and drainage canals that flow into Lake Champlain. Large and extensive wetlands are present throughout the town, accounting for 5,146 acres, or 27% of the town excluding Lake Champlain. These calculations are based on VCGI wetlands maps, which maps wetlands listed in the National Wetland Inventory.

Air Quality - Air quality is generally high throughout Vermont, especially in rural communities such as Alburgh. Motor vehicles are the largest source of air pollution in Vermont, which can create localized areas of poor air quality where traffic is congested. Air quality can also be impacted by weather patterns which carry pollutants from other areas. All efforts should be taken to maintain good air quality in Alburgh.

Scenic Resources - A scenic view is a publicly accessible area where an important and characteristic open vista may be viewed by the public. Scenic views may be from public roads, public recreation areas and from the lake. There are many scenic views in Alburgh, although the Town has not identified specific viewsheds.

Wildlife and Habitat - Alburgh's extensive wetland system provides significant habitat for many wildlife species. Data from the Nongame and Natural Program (NNHP) of the Vermont Dept. of Fish and Wildlife identified 41 sites in town with state or federally endangered, rare or threatened species or natural communities in 1997. Included in this list are 21 vascular plants, 9 vertebrate habitats and 11 natural communities.

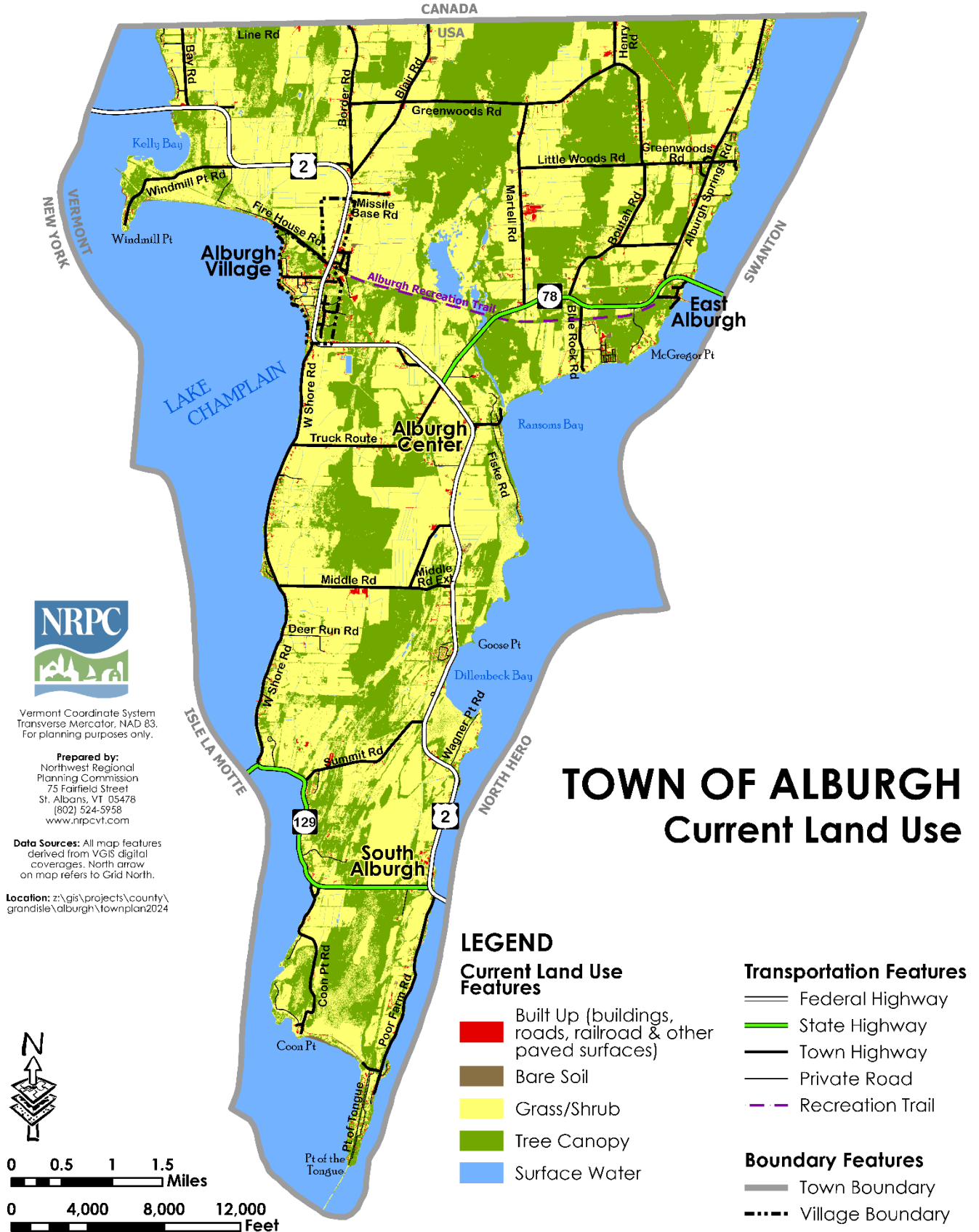
The town's mapped deeryards are located on the southern end of the peninsula and include 463 acres. Deeryards provide winter habitat where deer can find both food and shelter from winter snow and wind.

In addition to preserving specific species, maintaining large unfragmented blocks of habitat preserves wildlife habitat and supports traditional Vermont activities such as forestry, hunting, and recreation. Even low-density residential development can fragment these areas, threatening their health, function and value. The majority of Alburgh's largest habitat block is protected by the Mud Creek Wildlife Management Area.

Current Land Use

The total area of the town includes a significant portion of Lake Champlain, giving the town a total area of approximately 30,410 acres. Of this total, approximately 18,946 acres are contained within the shoreline of the town. Within this area the two main land cover types are forest land and agricultural lands. Approximately 7,214 acres, or 38% of the town is covered by forestland, either deciduous, coniferous, mixed forest or forested wetland. Agricultural lands account for an estimated 8,356 acres, or 44% of the town's land area. The remaining land area includes built-up lands and roadways.

Alburgh is rich in agricultural resources, though over time the number of active farms remaining in the town has dwindled. According to the Census of Agriculture, there were 34 operating farms in Alburgh in 1997. (Baker et al., 2002) The 2002 Ag Census lists just 18 farms for the town. This represents a significant loss of farms, with over 47% of the town's farms ending their production between 1997 and 2002.



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 Planning Commission
 75 Fairfield Street
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Traditionally, dairy farming has been and continues to be a very important sector of local agriculture. One third of agricultural producers in Alburgh reported that they produce dairy products. However, over the past ten years, dairy farm numbers have decreased significantly in Grand Isle County and the state. Information on dairy farm numbers over time for the town of Alburgh is not available past 2002, in 2017 there were just 15 dairy farms in the entirety of Grand Isle County.



Alburgh Farmland

In contrast to the open lands of the interior, Alburgh has a distinct pattern of built-up areas. Alburgh Village is the largest cluster of mixed use buildings in town, consisting of a variety of residential, retail and commercial uses. Immediately adjacent to the Village is the Alburgh Business Park.

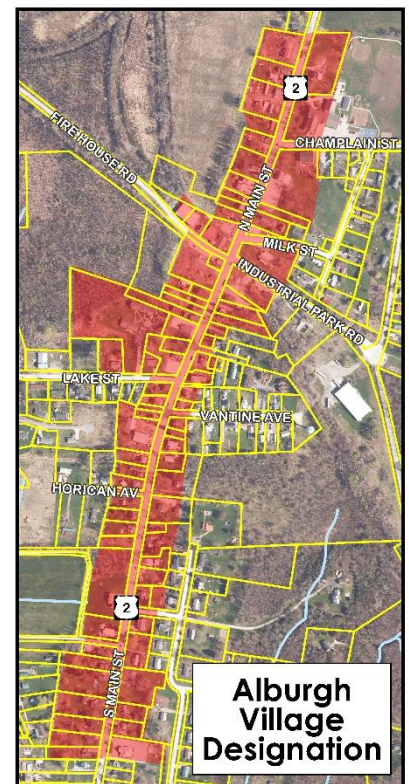
The Village is not the only high density area in town. Reflecting past history, Alburgh contains a number of high density clusters around the town, notably in East Alburgh, Alburgh Springs, and Alburgh Center. Alburgh's more recent history as a vacation destination has led to extremely high density development along much of Alburgh's shoreline. Structures along the shore tend to be built on very small lots and reducing the impact of this development on Lake Champlain's water quality is a challenge.

There is also an extensive amount of conserved land in town. Alburgh Dunes State Park occupies a 789 acre piece of land at the southernmost section of the town. The Vermont Land Trust and other conservation groups have also purchased conservation easements on an assortment of agricultural lands in town. These conserved lands can be seen on the *Proposed Land Use* map.

Village Designation

The Alburgh Village Center was designated on January 2008 as a way to support the revitalization of the existing traditional village center and has since been renewed several times.

The Village Center is composed of an interconnected core of residential, civic, religious, and commercial buildings arranged along Route 2/Main Street and the adjacent areas.



This designation supports the goals of the community by gaining access to several benefits such as receiving priority consideration for state grants, access to tax credits, priority consideration for state building and general services when leasing or constructing buildings, and allows for the creation of a special assessment district within the Village Center to use funds for operating costs. The Village Center also aligns with the statewide planning goals of compact development and maintaining the historic settlement pattern as stated in 24 V.S.A. § 4302. Improving the village center is an overall goal of the community as expressed in the priority implementation actions.

Proposed Land Use

Future land use in Alburgh was based on a combination of existing land uses, desired growth areas, conserved lands and underlying natural resource characteristics. Using these criteria, proposed future land use was divided into eight general land use categories. The land use categories are described below and the general boundaries are illustrated on the map titled *Proposed Land Use*.

As part of the 2023 survey, respondents were asked if they supported development regulations in the Village and in the Town. 51% of respondents supported regulating development in the Village, while 36% of respondents supported regulating development throughout the Town. These mixed results show that there is a need to further study whether or not to adopt development regulations.

Village Core District - The Village Core District is the historic center of Alburgh Village. A mix of high density commercial, civic, and residential uses exist in this district. Development in this district shall be pedestrian-friendly and shall complement the character of the village which includes multi-

story structures, minimal setbacks from the street, and a grid network of public streets. Commercial uses should be of a scale compatible with residential development.

Village Residential District - The Village Residential District contains centrally located neighborhoods within walking distance to the Village Core. This district is intended to contain mainly moderate-density residential uses. Residential development in this district shall provide for a variety of dwelling types and for the needs of people of all income levels and ages. The district may also contain commercial and civic uses that do not compromise the district's primarily residential character. Development in this district shall be pedestrian-friendly and shall complement the character of the village including its historic settlement pattern. Efforts to retain and improve the quality and vitality of neighborhoods through restoration of deteriorating buildings shall be encouraged.

Shoreland - This land use category includes all land within 300' of mean high water that is not either in the Village/High Density category or either Conservation Land A or B. The intended land uses in this category are residential, recreation, conservation uses. Protection of Lake Champlain water quality is a high priority and development should seek to minimize impact on the lake. Existing land uses in these areas are grandfathered.

To protect lake water quality a 50 foot undeveloped and vegetated buffer strip is required for new development, measured from the high water mark of 99 feet above sea level.

Commercial Area - This land use category covers the areas designated for commercial development. Commercial development includes land uses such as small gas stations, gift shops, retail stores, farmers' markets and Park & Ride facilities. Currently, the Commercial Area is situated at the "Four

Corners” located at the intersection of Rt. 78 and Rt. 2. The boundaries of the area are 350 feet from the road centerline in all directions, forming a diamond pattern extending 350 feet from the intersection.

Industrial Area – This land use category follows the lines of the existing Industrial Park in Alburgh Village. Land uses included in this district include light and heavy industry, manufacturing and commercial uses. All uses must be compatible with the residential and commercial nature of the adjoining Village area.

Agriculture and Low Density Residential Area – This land use category extends 300 feet on either side of all town and state- owned roads. It does not include land that is in either the Village/High Density areas, the Commercial area, the Industrial area or Conservation Lands A and B. Intended land uses in these areas include low density residential development and agriculture.

Conservation Lands A – This land use category includes lands that are unsuitable for residential, commercial or industrial development because of natural resource limitations, primarily wetland¹². No further residential, commercial or industrial development should occur in these areas. Primary land use is wildlife habitat and

recreational uses compatible with the sensitive environment of this area. Such uses include hunting, bird-watching and hiking.

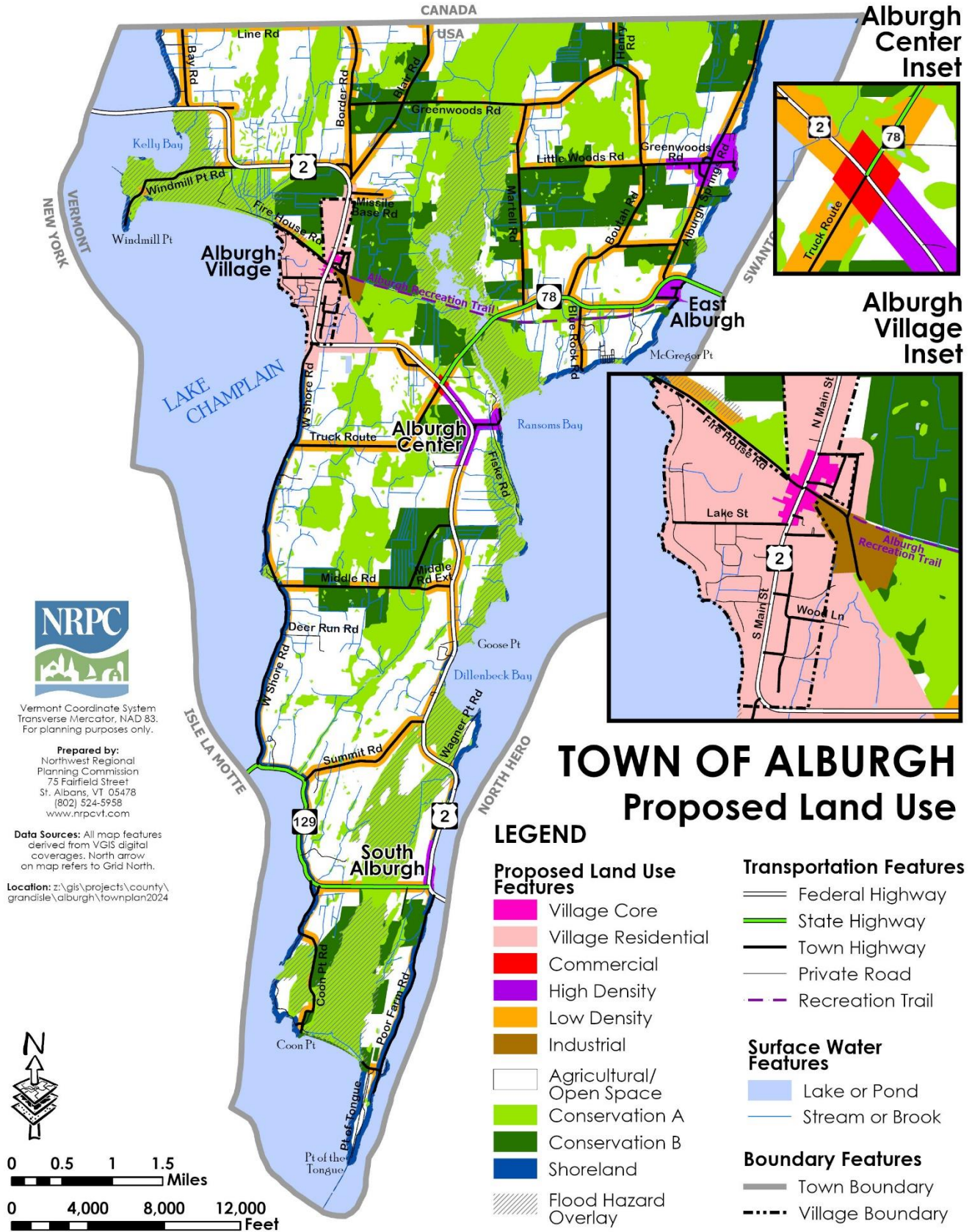
Conservation Lands B - This land use category includes lands that have been conserved by federal, state or private non-profit groups. These lands include prime agricultural soils working farmlands, important wildlife habitat, and shore land areas.

Development on these lands should be minimal, limited by the conservation restrictions and/or management plans that place conservation of agricultural soils, wildlife habitat, water quality or low impact recreation as their primary aim.

Agriculture and Open Space – This land use category includes all lands not included in other categories. The majority of these lands is in agricultural use and should remain available for agriculture. Lands in this category are distant from existing roads and development could entail increased costs to the town if municipal services are extended into these areas. Primary use of the lands should be agriculture and recreational open space. Residential development in this district should be clustered to avoid impacting agricultural operations. Conservation of these lands is strongly encouraged.

¹¹Wetlands were determined based on the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps. These maps were developed from color infrared aerial photos flown between 1975 and 1978, U.S. Geological Service topographic maps and other mapped and text data. The data was digitized by the Vermont Center for Geographic Information and released in 1996. Wetlands less than 3 acres in size were not included in this dataset. This information was

the best computerized data available that could be accessed by the Planning Commission at the time this Plan was developed. These wetland maps were developed for planning purposes only. Questions regarding official wetland boundary determinations should contact the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Water Quality Division, Wetlands section, (802) 244-6951



Vermont Coordinate System
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Miles

0 4,000 8,000 12,000
Feet

TOWN OF ALBURGH Proposed Land Use

LEGEND

Proposed Land Use Features

- Village Core
- Village Residential
- Commercial
- High Density
- Low Density
- Industrial
- Agricultural/
Open Space
- Conservation A
- Conservation B
- Shoreland
- Flood Hazard
Overlay

Transportation Features

- Federal Highway
- State Highway
- Town Highway
- Private Road
- Recreation Trail

Surface Water Features

- Lake or Pond
- Stream or Brook

Boundary Features

- Town Boundary
- Village Boundary

Chapter 5. Utilities, Facilities and Services

Education

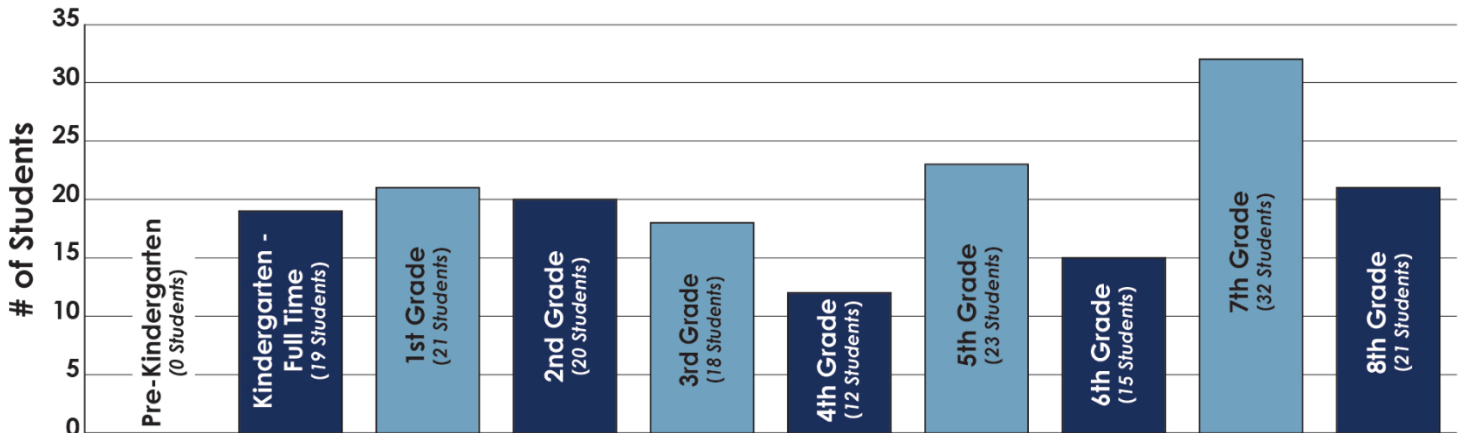
Alburgh only has one local school, the Alburgh Community Education Center. It currently serves 199 students grades K-8. Below is a table showing all the schools in Grand Isle County and the number of students.

| Grand Isle County Enrollment | | |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|
| | 2012 | 2022 |
| Alburgh Community Education Center | 181 | 199 |
| Folsom Education and Community Center | 112 | 148 |
| Grand Isle Elementary School | 203 | 143 |
| Isle La Motte Elementary School | 34 | N/A |
| North Hero Elementary School* | 57 | 72 |

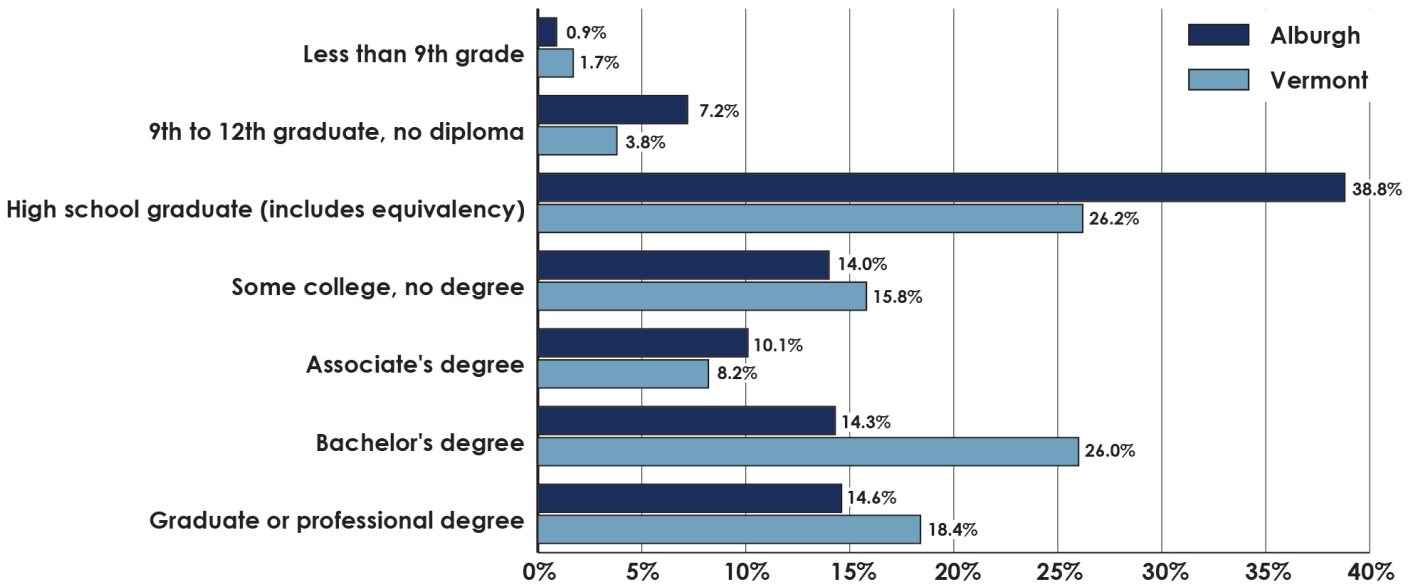
**Isle La Motte students primarily attend North Hero Elementary School which accounts for the significant increase.*

| Student Information | School | SU/SD | VT |
|---------------------|--------|-------|-----|
| Attendance Rate | 87% | 89% | 89% |
| Truancy Rate | 5% | 5% | 7% |
| Promotion Rate | 95% | 98% | 99% |

Alburgh Community Education Center Enrollment



Educational Attainment - 2018



Alburgh Educational Attainment - 2018

| Educational Attainment | % |
|---|-------------|
| Less than 9 th grade | 0.9% |
| 9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma | 7.2% |
| High school graduate (includes equivalency) | 38.8% |
| Some college, no degree | 14.0% |
| Associate's degree | 10.1% |
| Bachelor's degree | 14.3% |
| Graduate or professional degree | 14.6% |
| Total | 100% |

DATA SOURCE: 2018 American Community Survey and U.S. Census

Grand Isle County does not have a high school and students are sent to high schools outside of the county.

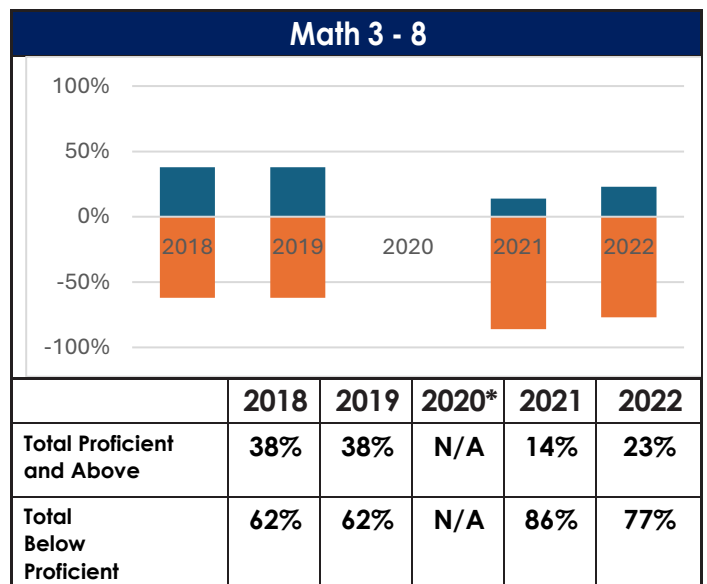
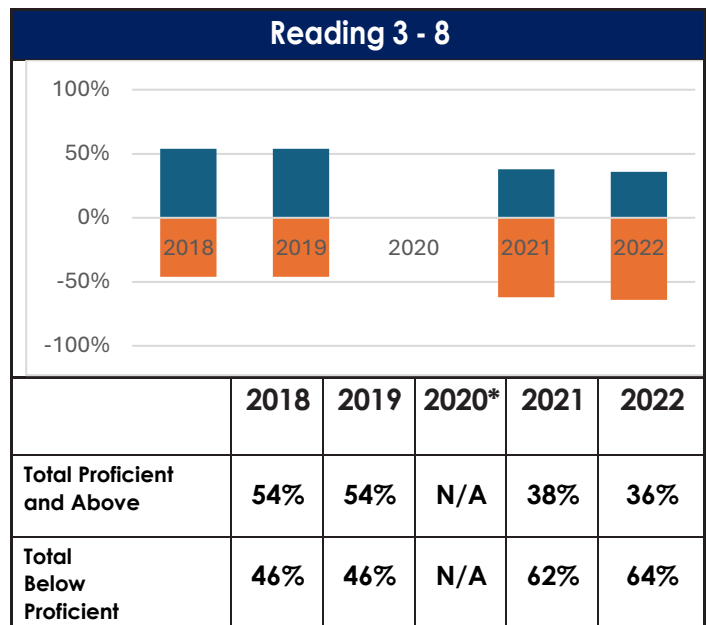
Alburgh has a higher percentage of residents with only a high school diploma than the state as a whole. This makes adult learning opportunities a priority for the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact on academic performance across Vermont and continues to have lingering effects today. In Alburgh, students' proficiency in Math and Reading dropped by 16-20 percentage points during the pandemic. While Math scores improved from 2021 to 2022, Reading scores continued to decline.

Elementary and middle level mathematics assessments test on core concepts to see if the student understands mathematical processes, ideas and skills. Elementary and middle level reading assessments cover basic understanding of reading, where students must demonstrate the ability to comprehend a variety of materials, analysis and interpretation of reading, and where students must demonstrate the ability to analyze and interpret what they read.

It is important to note that testing is only one way to examine a school's effectiveness and a student's educational success. They are used as one of many tools to determine how to adjust and improve curriculum and teaching over time to ensure the most successful students.

Alburgh Community Education Center has many creative programs to serve students and connect to the community and the world. Students perform plays and songs at Pine Manor and the Senior Center, participate in innovative programs such as the Whooping Crane migration project. Special grant funds help to cover the costs of many of these programs.



*Data from 2020 is not available due to the low number of students tested during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Child Care Facilities

Childcare can be a growing concern for existing and prospective families, whether it means finding quality services or securing the costs of services. Having high-quality

childcare available is a critical component of supporting a stable workforce.

In recent years, Vermont has recognized a statewide childcare crisis, with a growing lack of affordable and high-quality options for families. Vermont advocacy group Let's Grow Kids estimates that over half of toddlers, infants, and preschoolers in Grand Isle County have no access to high-quality childcare, and that over 100 additional slots are needed to meet demand.

According to State data, Alburgh has two registered childcare homes. The neighboring community of North Hero has one licensed home care provider, while Swanton has a combined total of nine licensed homes and centers. The 2017-2022 American Community Survey estimates that there are 132 children from birth to age 9 living in Alburgh. Data on unregistered childcare options is not available.

A new nonprofit full-day facility, the Alburgh Family Clubhouse, is slated to start construction in 2024. When completed, the center will provide full-day care for a maximum of 62 children from birth to fifth grade. Alburgh supports this project and other efforts to increase the quality and quantity of childcare available in the region.

Emergency Services

A very important part of the community is the Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department, Inc, which provides fire protection for the community of Alburgh. It was first organized in 1968 as an independent self-governing organization and has continued to ably service the community since then. In 2022, to address a shortage in volunteers, rescue operations were split into Alburgh Rescue Inc. (AR), a separate organization with paid staff. As of 2023 AR has 25 members, including 7 EMTs. Together, AVFD and AR serve as the primary emergency service for Alburgh and Isle la Motte and provide mutual aid to communities in Grand Isle and Franklin

Counties, and nearby communities in New York and Quebec.



Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department

The fire department also helps Alburgh's economy by hosting the Annual North Country International Fire School, which brings in around 400 people every year. This helps in boosting sales at local shops while improving the safety of communities in Vermont and Canada.

In 2022, AR responded to over 400 rescue calls. and the fire department responded to over 100 fire calls from Alburgh as well as other Grand Isle County towns and New York communities. While the number of fire calls is consistent with previous years, the number of rescue calls has increased in recent years. The creation of Alburgh Rescue will improve the town's ability to address this increase in rescue need.

In 2023, voters approved a ballot measure to provide \$300,000 of funding to Alburgh Response, which will go toward staffing. The Fire Department is funded by a variety of sources. In 2022 40% of the fire department's revenue was from the town, slightly higher than previous years due to vehicle replacement and equipment costs. Other income sources are fund raising, the Fire Department Auxiliary, donations, and reimbursements for services and grants.

Because of the size of Alburgh's population, it does not have its own police services and instead is serviced by the Grand Isle Sheriff's department and the Vermont State Police. From June 2022-July 2023 the Grand Isle Sheriff's department responded to 520 incidents in Alburgh, comprising 29% of calls for service in the county. The overwhelming majority of calls were for non-violent crimes or other emergencies. This number is consistent with previous years.

Water Supply

Approximately 35% of Alburgh's population is served by two municipal water systems, Alburgh Village Water and South Alburgh Fire District 2. The water source for both is Lake Champlain and after treatment the water is delivered to the users. The water treatment plant currently has two filters, with an agreement between the two water districts that a third filter will be added if the system reaches 85% capacity. Together, the two systems are currently at about 60% capacity.

Alburgh Village Water is planning to construct a new water tower serving the village. South Alburgh Fire District 2 is securing easements for an 8-mile "Phase 2" water line extension along Middle Road and Route 2 to serve South Alburgh residents. Construction is expected to begin in Fall 2024 and complete by the end of 2025. This extension will replace current private systems which rely on wells or drawing directly from the lake and have significant water quality issues.

An additional Phase 3 extension would connect all remaining South Alburgh residents to the municipal water system. South Alburgh Fire District 2 has plans to obtain exploratory grant funding for initial studies and design of this phase.

Alburgh is also served by the Alburgh Fire District 1 water system, which serves 27 houses in the Alburgh Springs area. Short-

term priorities for this system are the installation of a generator backup system and an alternate intake system for low-water events. The District has obtained a forgivable loan from the state and has engaged an engineering firm to complete these projects. Additional priorities are installing isolation valves and fixing a break-prone area near Greenwoods Road. Longer term issues include the potential for expanding the customer base in the Springs, recruitment of personnel to replace those at retirement age, and transitioning management to the Selectboard (or creating a broader Alburgh Water Management District).



Wastewater Treatment

Alburgh Village is served by its own wastewater treatment facility. The design capacity for the facility is 130,000 gallons per day. As of 2024, the system is at capacity and new connections are not being granted. Capacity issues are due to excess flow entering the system, which is far higher than expected based on the number of connections. A project is underway to identify and address the source of the excess flow to raise wastewater capacity.

Solid Waste

Alburgh is one of the 19 member communities that comprise the Northwest Vermont Solid Waste Management District (NWSWD). The Town of Alburgh operates a transfer Station that is available for the use of

Alburgh and Isle La Motte residents and businesses. The station collects trash, recycling, food scraps, household refuse, and construction debris, all of which are sent to NWSWD facilities for processing. The NWSWD also collects Household Hazardous Waste by appointment in Georgia. The cost of operating the Alburgh transfer station has been cited as an issue, and the town is currently exploring transferring operations to the NWSWD. All long-term solid waste planning is managed by the NWSWD as outlined in the district's most recent Solid Waste Implementation plan.

Municipal Buildings

A leased Town Office building was constructed in 2004 in front of the Fire Department building which was constructed in 2003. The Alburgh Town Clerk's Office that was once in the same building as the Alburgh Town Library was moved into the leased building, freeing up more space for both the Library and the Clerk's office.

The library is run mostly by volunteers with the help of the town, donations, and grants. The library is supported by paid staff and a significant volunteer effort. About 75% of the library's income comes from the town with the rest from grants, fund raisers and donations. (VT Department of Libraries, 2022)

Communications

Currently Alburgh is not served by a cable company. People generally use conventional and satellite access television.

The local landline telephone service is provided by Consolidated Communications, with access to a variety of long distance providers. AT&T and Verizon also have cell coverage throughout the area. Home internet service is available through VTel Wireless and Consolidated Communications, as well as various satellite providers.. Alburgh is part of Northwest Fiberworx, a municipal

organization with the mission of expanding fiber internet infrastructure in the region.

Residents of the town are able to access a variety of high kilowatt radio stations transmitting from Burlington and St. Albans as well as from New York and Canada.

Alburgh is served by two papers, the St. Albans Messenger and the Islander, which cover news in the local community.. Additional coverage is provided by statewide papers including Seven Days and the Burlington Free Press.

Recreation

Alburgh is a town rich with recreational opportunities. Triangular in shape, the town is bordered on two sides by Lake Champlain and the town's population swells in the summer with people coming to enjoy Alburgh's lakeshore. In the winter ice fishing draws many outdoor enthusiasts, including many Canadian visitors. Many people access the lake from private land along the lake. Public access to the lake includes three public access points owned by Vermont Fish and Wildlife. Major public recreation facilities include the Alburgh Dunes State Park and the Alburgh Rail Trail. Smaller recreational facilities open to the public include the Alburgh Community Park behind the Senior Center which includes an ice rink during the winter months.



Broomball tournament at the ice rink

Equestrian events have been growing in popularity in the area in last few years and are a big attraction.

The 2015 Community Survey rated Lake Champlain as one of the most popular and valuable parts of Alburgh and identified lake access as a key future need.



Equestrians

Industrial Park Road Parcel

In 2020, the Town of Alburgh received a Municipal Planning Grant from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development. This project focused on recreational opportunities on a town-owned 90-acre wetland parcel located just east of the Alburgh Village Center, adjacent to the Alburgh Recreational Rail Trail.

Results of the study were compiled in the 2020 Recreation Master Plan, which maps out 1.25 miles of proposed hiking trails for the parcel. The plan includes three phases for trail build-out, starting with the simplest and cheapest trail. As of 2024, the Planning Commission is actively seeking grant funding to construct Phase 1 of the trail network. When complete, the project will provide access to wetland trails within walking distance of Alburgh Village Center, and connections to the Alburgh Recreational Rail Trail.

Alburgh Dunes

Alburgh Dunes, comprising a 789 acre tract at Alburgh’s southern tip, became a state park in 1996. In 2022, the park was expanded by 164 acres after the Nature Conservancy purchased property from a private landowner. The expansion protects an additional 4,800 feet of shoreline.

In 2023, the Alburgh began a pilot program to provide free admission to the park for town residents. The pilot uses \$10,000 in federal American Rescue Plan Act funds, which is expected to keep the program funded for 2-3 years. Once existing funds are depleted, the town will evaluate the program’s effectiveness and decide whether to continue funding it.

The park is currently limited to day use only. The beach at Alburgh Dunes is among the finest in the State, and the entire park is a showcase of natural history and ecological diversity. A bike route along the “beach road” parallels the lakeshore, and the park boasts 1 ½ miles of walking/hiking trails as well. This old road pre-dates VT 129 and was the preferred route between Isle La Motte, the Alburgh Tongue, and North Hero in the days before VT 129 provided a dry travel way through the extensive wetland north of the beach. The beach and dune system between this wetland and the lake comprise a true barrier island, geologically similar to formations found along ocean coastlines. The sand comes from a layer of glacial till, the soil that was left atop low bluffs southeast of the beach when the last glacier melted. The bluffs have eroded over thousands of years and lake currents have transported the sand, eventually forming the beach in this pocket between two rocky points. In the summer and late fall when lake levels are lowest, prevailing southerly winds blow the sand back from shore, forming dunes as a barrier between the lake and marsh. These dunes, however slowly,

continue to migrate back into and over the wetland.



Alburgh Dunes State Park

Alburgh's dunes were altered before the area became a state park. Portions of them were bulldozed for sand to replenish the beach. Fencing was placed around the dunes to minimize human disturbance and allow the dunes to eventually repair themselves, and to protect rare plants. Two of these plants, Champlain Beach Grass and the low-growing Beach Pea, are remnants from an earlier era when Lake Champlain was an inland estuary of the Atlantic Ocean. "Isostatic rebound", a slow rising of the earth's crust once freed from the massive weight of overlying glaciers, has lifted the lake to a present elevation of about 100 feet above sea level. Thousands of years of rain and snow runoff have flushed out the seawater.

Alburgh Rail Trail

The Alburgh Rail Trail is a 3.5 mile path that follows an abandoned railroad corridor. The trailhead is in the Alburgh Industrial Park across from the Town Offices. The Trail entrance is unmarked, so first time users look for a black cinder track heading away from the village. The path crosses slightly rolling terrain through farmland and the Mud Creek State Wildlife Area to the shore of Lake Champlain in East Alburgh. The cinder and gravel surface allows for year round activities and the maximum grade of 3%

provides relatively easy cycling. For safety and maintenance considerations, only non motorized uses are permitted, such as hiking, biking and horseback riding with the exception of motorized wheelchairs and snowmobiles. In fact, the Alburgh Rail Trail is part of the Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) snowmobile trail network and is frequently used by snowmobiles during the winter.



Alburgh Rail Trail

The Rail Trail is part of a larger network of bike routes that is being developed for Grand Isle County. The pamphlet Bicycling the Lake Champlain Islands was first published in 1999 and is available for free. The Lake Champlain Bikeway principal route passes through Alburgh on Route 2. In addition to the main route the Grand Isle Advisory Committee to the Lake Champlain By-Ways Committee identified 2 bike routes in Alburgh. The first incorporates the Alburgh Rail Trail and covers an 11.7 mile loop east of Alburgh Village. The second

trail, located in the south end of the town, covers a circuit of 9.3 miles and links Alburgh with North Hero. A shorter version of this bike route is a 5.8 mile loop entirely within Alburgh. This route takes advantage of the state park, traveling the “beach road” parallel to the lakeshore. During the summer months cyclists can take advantage of picnic areas at the historic railroad pump station on Lake Street and the area at the Alburgh Golf Links. A map of local walking and bicycle trails is available on the Town website.

Alburg Golf Links

Alburg Golf Links is a public golf course located on Route 129 in Alburgh. Its links style 18-hole course includes views of the lake and lakeshore. Alburg Golf Links is open seasonally and draws tourists and visitors to the community. Alburg Golf Links also has seasonal dining and a club house that is available for functions and events.

Public Lake Access Areas

Public access to Lake Champlain is available at a number of sites in town. The VT Dept. of Fish and Wildlife maintains public access areas at Dillenbeck, West Shore, Kelly Bay and at the Alburgh Dunes State Park. In addition, the town owns a 10 acre natural area in East Alburgh with 500 feet of lakefront.

Energy

Energy production is essential to human society and at the same time has the potential for detrimental environmental impacts. The challenge for the future will be to reduce energy consumption in general and to shift demand from the more harmful energy sources toward those that are renewable and have a low overall environmental impact. Energy conservation is an important step in developing a comprehensive energy plan for the future of Alburgh.

Energy Resources, Needs, Scarcities, Costs and Problems

The following subsection reviews each sector of energy use (thermal, transportation, electricity) and electricity generation in Alburgh.

Thermal Energy

Table 5.1 shows an estimate of current residential thermal energy demand in Alburgh, based on data from the American Community Survey (ACS 2018-2022). The data shows that 59.5% of households in Alburgh depend on fuel oil, down from 67% in 2011-2015. Wood, as a primary heating source has also reduced

Table 5.1 Current Alburgh Residential Thermal Energy Use

| Fuel Source | Alburgh Households (ACS 2018-2022) | Alburgh % of Households | Alburgh - Household Square Footage Heated | Alburgh BTU (in Billions) |
|--------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Natural Gas | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| Propane | 115 | 13.9% | 198,544 | 12 |
| Electricity | 110 | 13.3% | 209,440 | 13 |
| Fuel Oil | 492 | 59.5% | 883,264 | 53 |
| Coal | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| Wood | 41 | 5.0% | 78,064 | 5 |
| Solar | 24 | 2.9% | 45,696 | 3 |
| Other | 45 | 5.4% | 79,344 | 5 |
| No Fuel | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 827 | 100.0% | 1,494,352 | 90 |

from 20.5% in 2011-2015 to 5.0% in 2018-2022. Electricity as a primary heating source has increased from 0.0% in 2011-2015 to 13.3% in 2018-2022. This increase is predicted to continue as heat pump technology continues to improve and fuel prices continue to rise. The nearest natural gas pipeline is located in Rouses Point, New York and is not likely to be extended to Alburgh in the future. Alburgh encourages efforts to weatherize homes and convert to more efficient and renewable forms of energy such as cold climate heat pumps, geothermal heat and high efficiency wood stoves.

Estimates for commercial and industrial thermal energy use are more difficult to calculate due to the lack of accurate information available. Table 5.2 provides an estimate of total commercial energy use (thermal and electricity). The estimate is based on data from the Vermont Department of Labor (VT DOL) and the Vermont Department of Public Service (VT DPS). The number of commercial establishments within Alburgh has increased since 2017 so the total commercial energy use has gone up, but it is assumed that individual businesses are not using more energy than they used to. It is assumed that the majority of the energy use, 43.5 billion BTUs per year, is used as thermal energy for commercial uses.

| Sector | Current Electricity Use in Alburgh – 2021 (kWh) | Current Electricity Use (in Billion BTUs) |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Residential (kWh) | 8,866,883 | 30.26 |
| Commercial and Industrial (kWh) | 4,119,412 | 14.06 |
| Total (kWh) | 12,986,295 | 44.31 |

Electricity Use

Table 5.3 shows 2021 electricity use in Alburgh per data available from Efficiency Vermont. Alburgh’s total electricity use has increased since 2017 from 12.4 million kWh to about 13 million kWh per year. While this means more electricity is being used, this may be because more households use electrified technologies such as electric vehicles and heat pumps that reduce overall energy use and emissions. Alburgh’s average residential usage is lower than the average residential kWh use in the region, though this is probably influenced by the large number of seasonal homes in Alburgh. Alburgh is served by one electric utility: Vermont Electric Cooperative. Alburgh encourages efforts to conserve electric energy.

| | Commercial Establishments in Alburgh (VT DOL) | Estimated Thermal Energy BTUs per Commercial Establishment (in Billions) (VT Dept. of Public Service) | Estimated Thermal Energy BTUs by Commercial Establishments in Alburgh per year (in Billions) |
|--|--|--|---|
| Municipal Commercial Energy Use | 60 | 0.725 | 43.50 |

Transportation

Table 5.4 contains an estimate of transportation energy use in Alburgh. NRPC estimates that Alburgh residents drive personal vehicles approximately 18.7 million miles per year, up from 15.8 million miles in 2017. Alburgh residents’ gasoline spending has also increased, from \$1.9 million to \$3.3 million. This calculation does not include expenses for commercially owned and operated vehicles. Increased remote work, carpooling, walk and bike infrastructure could help to reduce vehicle miles traveled, and combined with electric vehicle usage, could help reduce transportation costs for residents. Electric vehicle use has been increasing over the past few years and is only projected to continue at a faster rate as electric vehicle prices continue to fall and gas prices remain high. More compact development and access to public transit can also reduce transportation energy costs for residents.

| Table 5.4 Current Alburgh Transportation Energy Use | |
|---|--------------|
| Total # of Passenger Vehicles (ACS 2018-2022) | 1,586 |
| Average Miles per Vehicle (2019 - VTrans 2021 Energy Profile) | 11,772 |
| Total Miles Traveled | 18,670,392 |
| Realized MPG (VTrans 2021 Energy Profile) | 19.3 |
| Total Gallons Used per Year | 967,377.82 |
| Transportation BTUs (in Billions) | 116 |
| Average Cost per Gallon of Gasoline in 2024 (AAA) | 3.46 |
| Gasoline Cost per Year | 3,343,257.76 |

Electricity Generation

There is currently .51 MW of electricity generation capacity from renewable generation facilities located in Alburgh. This capacity results in approximately 625 MWh of electricity generation per year. All of this generation is from net-metering solar facilities. The amount of electricity generation in Alburgh is roughly equal to the annual electricity use of about 93 households in Vermont based on information available from the U.S. Energy Information Administration (6696 kWh per VT household per year).

| Table 5.5 Existing Renewable Energy Generation in Alburgh | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Source | Generation (in MW) | Generation (in MWh/year) |
| Solar | 0.51 | 625 |
| Wind | 0 | 0 |
| Hydro | 0 | 0 |
| Biomass | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 0.51 | 625 |

Map B.3 shows the location of all electricity generators in Alburgh with a capacity greater than 15 kW.

Many properties in Alburgh have access to electric transmission and three-phase distribution lines. These types of lines are used to transmit large quantities of electricity and are needed to serve large industrial users and commercial centers. The ease of access to this type of infrastructure in Alburgh may make development of renewable energy facilities easier and more cost-effective than in other surrounding communities with more existing grid infrastructure. However, past constraints on transmission and three-phase distribution lines within the Northwest Region have impacted the viability of renewable generation projects in Alburgh. Alburgh supports efforts to increase grid transmission capacity so that the Town and its residents can benefit from the development of renewable energy resources.

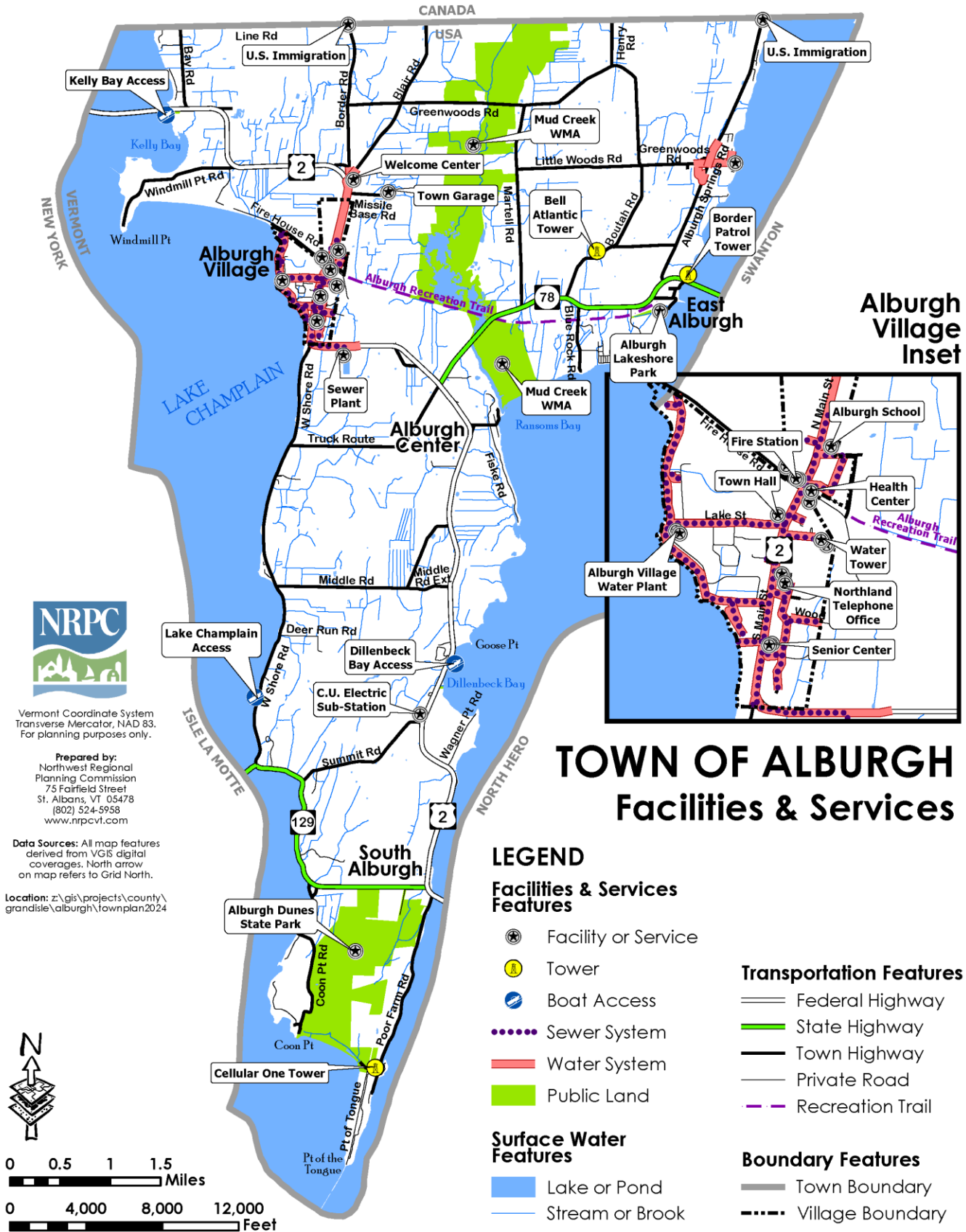
Map B.2 shows the electricity transmission and three-phase distribution infrastructure in Alburgh. The map shows transmission and three-phase distribution lines in the town generally along state highways (US 2 and VT 78). There is also a three-phase distribution line to Isle La Motte along Summit Road.

Energy and Land Use

Land use and energy are closely related. Land resources are used in the production, transport, and disposal of energy products. Efficient new development means more than just well-constructed buildings utilizing the best technology. Development that is clustered together provides for greater efficiency. Fewer miles of road are needed to connect the homes or commercial buildings, school buses and snow plows travel smaller distances, and electric utility lines need not extend as far. Alburgh encourages clustering of development.

Equity and Affordability

Reaching Alburgh's energy goals will bring both environmental and economic costs and benefits. The equity issues related to who will bear those costs is of continuing concern to Alburgh. A just energy transition requires that all residents have equitable access to the benefits and costs of the energy transition. The efficiency of green technologies offers savings for consumers as seen with electric vehicles, electric heat pumps, newer appliances, residential solar, etc. These technologies often require upfront investment, making them more difficult to access for residents with lower income. Low-income workers in Vermont also tend to work in industries that are more susceptible to the effects of climate change such as tourism and agriculture and are often disproportionately impacted by natural disasters like flooding. Equity for all residents will be considered in every decision about energy.

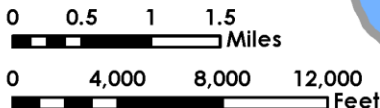


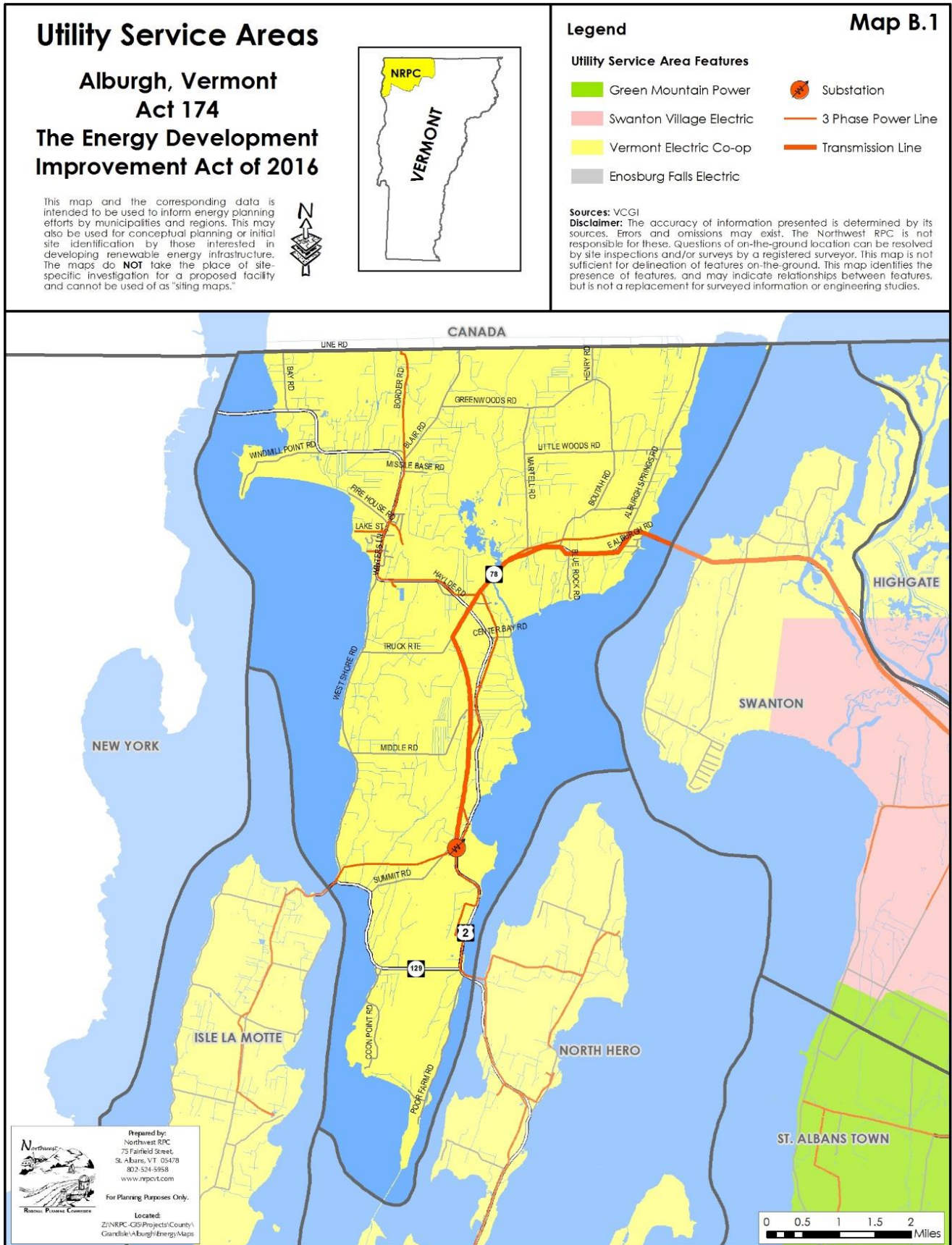
Vermont Coordinate System
Transverse Mercator, NAD 83.
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Prepared by:
Northwest Regional
Planning Commission
75 Fairfield Street
St. Albans, VT 05478
(802) 524-5958
www.nrpcvt.com

Data Sources: All map features
derived from VGIS digital
coverages. North arrow
on map refers to Grid North.

Location: z:\gis\projects\county\
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Transmission & 3 Phase Power Infrastructure

Alburgh, Vermont
Act 174
The Energy Development Improvement Act of 2016

This map and the corresponding data is intended to be used to inform energy planning efforts by municipalities and regions. This may also be used for conceptual planning or initial site identification by those interested in developing renewable energy infrastructure. The maps do **NOT** take the place of site-specific investigation for a proposed facility and cannot be used as "siting maps."



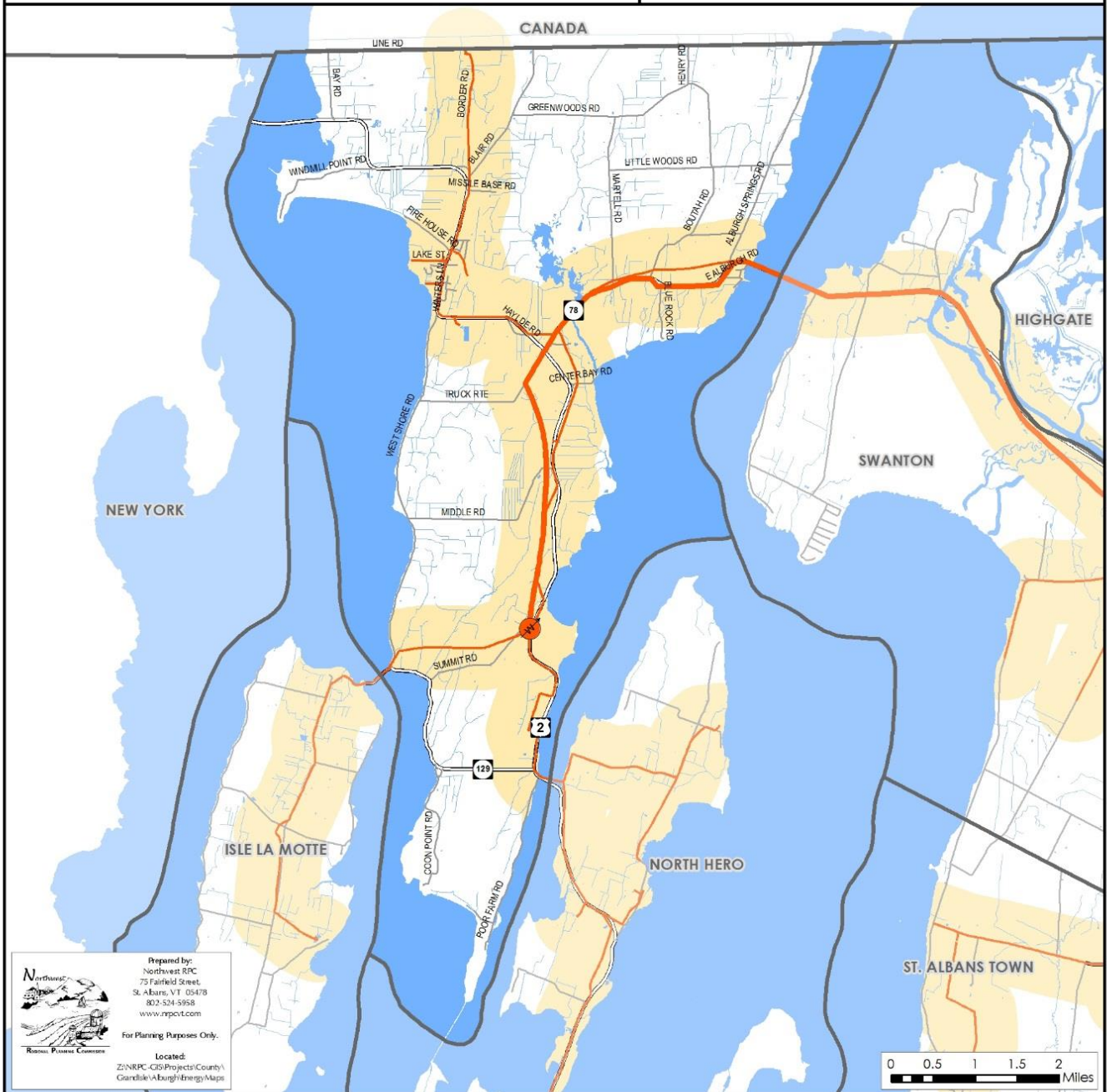
Legend

- Substation
- 3 Phase Power Line
- Transmission Line
- 1/2 Mile Buffer (3 Phase Power Line & Transmission Line)

Map B.2

Sources: VCGI

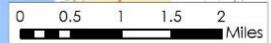
Disclaimer: The accuracy of information presented is determined by its sources. Errors and omissions may exist. The Northwest RPC is not responsible for these. Questions of on-the-ground location can be resolved by site inspections and/or surveys by a registered surveyor. This map is not sufficient for delineation of features on-the-ground. This map identifies the presence of features, and may indicate relationships between features, but is not a replacement for surveyed information or engineering studies.

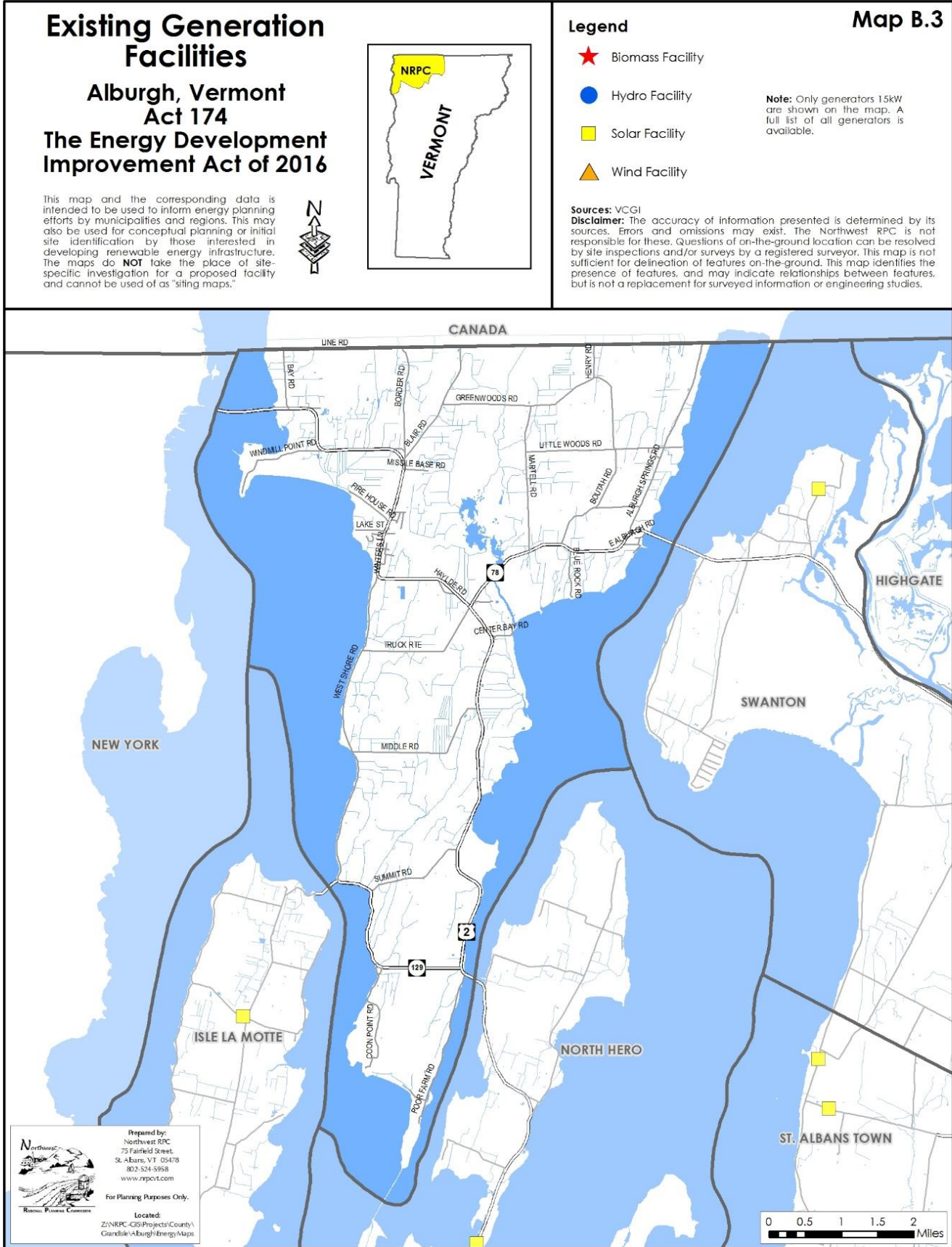


Prepared by:
Northwest RPC
73 Fairfield Street,
St. Albans, VT 05478
802-524-5958
www.nrpcvt.com

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Chapter 6. Transportation

Alburgh is located at an important crossroads in the surrounding regional transportation network. US Route 2 provides access to the rest of Grand Isle County and New York State, and VT Route 78 provides access to Franklin County via the Missisquoi Bay Bridge. Together, Route 2 and Route 78 provide the only fixed vehicular access between northern Vermont and New York State. This corridor is part of the Vermont Truck Network, which designates certain state roads in the Vermont transportation network as routes upon which trucks up to 53’ in length can travel without obtaining a permit. Truck traffic makes up 11% of all traffic along Routes 2 and 79, which is double the statewide average of 5-6%.

These regional routes are also locally important. Route 2 comprises the Main Street of Alburgh’s village center, where most community facilities and services are located. Sidewalks along the quarter-mile section from Peterson Place to the Community Education Center were replaced in 2018, but a further need has been identified for greater traffic calming and better pedestrian infrastructure along Route 2. In 2024, over 90% of surveyed residents supported a pedestrian-friendly vision for the Village Core and Village Residential districts, but only 50% of residents felt safe walking in town.

The 2019 Alburgh Village Master Plan contains plans for streetscape improvements along Route 2 to enhance the pedestrian right-of-way and spur private investment in village businesses. Plans include street re-alignment, sidewalk improvements, additional crosswalks, and the addition of street trees. Any major improvements to Route 2 will first require the road to be converted from the state highway to a Class I town highway. A cost analysis shows that this

| Grand Isle County Class Roads | | | | | |
|---|---------|----------|-----------|----------|-------|
| TOWN | CLASS I | CLASS II | CLASS III | CLASS IV | STATE |
| Alburgh | 0 | 10.71 | 31.46 | 1.72 | 17.80 |
| Isle La Motte | 0 | 7.89 | 10.41 | 0.12 | 0.41 |
| North Hero | 0 | 9.42 | 8.66 | 0.10 | 9.34 |
| South Hero | 0 | 7.63 | 14.42 | 0.09 | 7.38 |
| Grand Isle | 0 | 9.31 | 18.23 | 1.04 | 10.18 |
| <i>Source: VTrans Town Highway Maps</i> | | | | | |

will not increase road maintenance costs for the town.

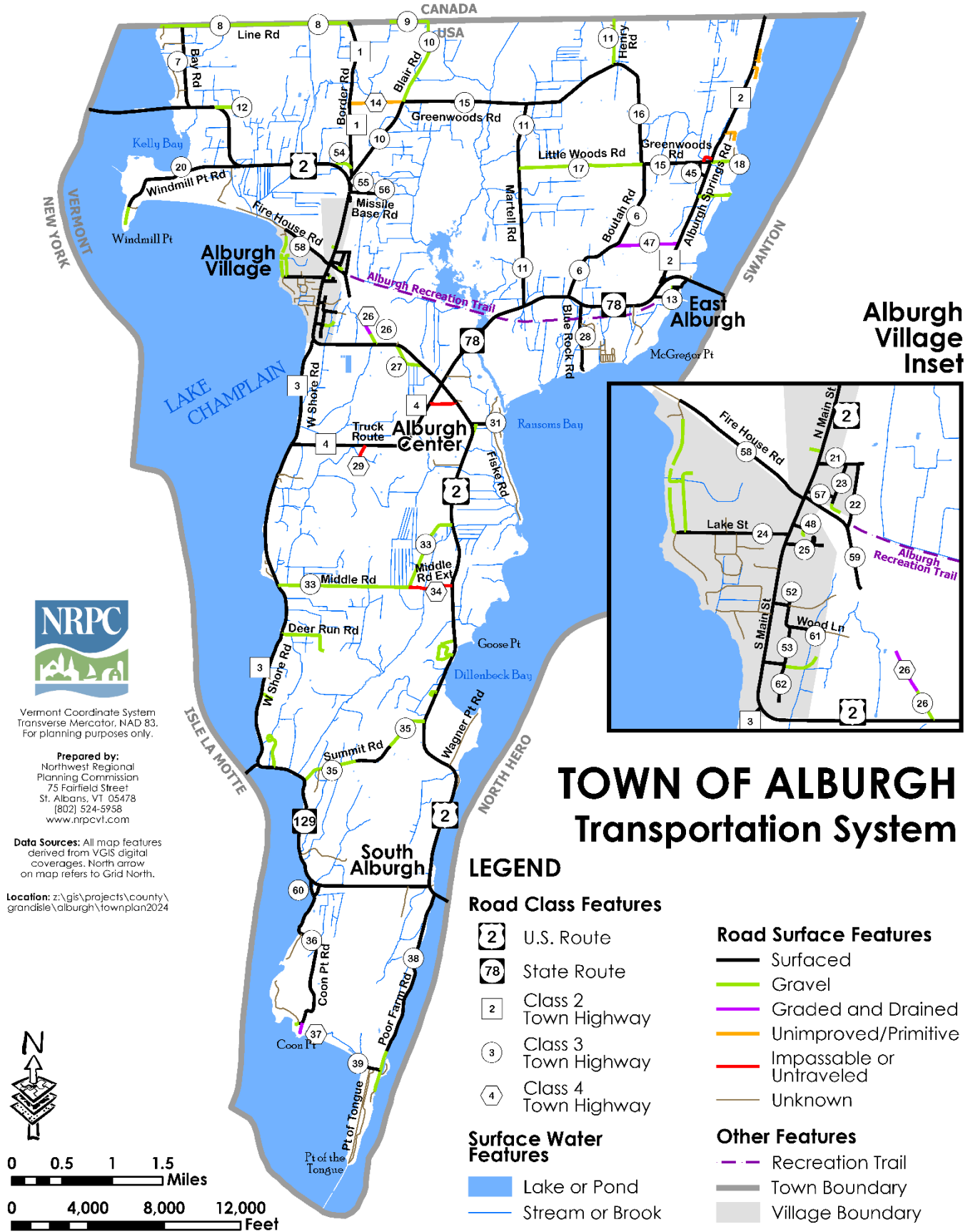
In addition to the improvements proposed in the Village Master Plan, crossing Route 2 is a particular short-term concern due to the high speed and volume of traffic, especially truck traffic. The town is currently exploring installing flashing beacons at pedestrian crossings along Route 2, including at the Community Education Center. These beacons would alert drivers to crossing pedestrian traffic, increasing pedestrian visibility and reducing wait times.

There is also an opportunity for greater bicycle connectivity in Alburgh. Like much of the surrounding area, Alburgh sees a large amount of bicycle tourism in the summer months, including cyclists who ride across the border from Quebec. There are two mapped on-road bicycle routes in Alburgh as part of the Champlain Islands Bikeways. However, dedicated bicycle infrastructure is currently limited to the 3.5-mile Alburgh Rail Trail, and only 20% of surveyed residents feel safe biking in town. The town supports

efforts to make cycling safer for residents and more appealing for tourists by enhancing the bicycle network.

As of 2024, 80% of state road pavement miles are in Good or Fair condition. In addition to state routes, Alburgh is also served by a network of paved and unpaved local roads. Over 70% of public roads in Alburgh are locally maintained. These roads generally receive less traffic and are used primarily by local residents. All state and locally owned bridges in Alburgh are currently rated as structurally sufficient by VTrans.

From 2017 to 2022, 90% of Alburgh residents drove to work alone. Reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips is a key aspect of reducing road congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. The town has a dedicated Park and Ride lot on Route 2 just south of the Four Corners intersection with Route 78, which is marked on the state Park and Ride map. However, this lot is not well marked with signage, and the extent to which it is utilized for carpooling is unclear. Only 5% of Alburgh residents carpoled to work in 2022 (US Census American Community Survey).



Vermont Coordinate System
Transverse Mercator, NAD 83,
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Location: z:\gis\projects\county\
grandisle\alburgh\townplan2024



0 0.5 1 1.5
Miles

0 4,000 8,000 12,000
Feet

TOWN OF ALBURGH Transportation System

LEGEND

Road Class Features

- U.S. Route
- State Route
- Class 2 Town Highway
- Class 3 Town Highway
- Class 4 Town Highway

Surface Water Features

- Lake or Pond
- Stream or Brook

Road Surface Features

- Surfaced
- Gravel
- Graded and Drained
- Unimproved/Primitive
- Impassable or Untraveled
- Unknown

Other Features

- Recreation Trail
- Town Boundary
- Village Boundary

Public Transportation

Green Mountain Transit (GMT) is responsible for public transit for Grand Isle County. GMT operates a fixed-route bus service from Alburgh to Georgia via Highgate, Swanton, and St. Albans. The service runs once from Alburgh to Georgia in the morning and once again in the opposite direction in the evening. Increasing the frequency of this route would be useful for Alburgh residents. Additional service along the Route 2 Corridor would be beneficial for Alburgh and Grand Isle County.

The Alburgh-Georgia GMT route connects with other fixed route services in St. Albans, providing access to Burlington, Richford, and the St. Albans Downtown Shuttle.

In addition to GMT’s fixed-route bus services, Champlain Islanders Developing Essential Resources (CIDER) also receives funding from GMT to provide Elderly and Disabled transportation services. CIDER provides rides to medical appointments, trips to the grocery store/pharmacies, and other support services that allow elderly and disabled individuals the assistance required to continue to live in the

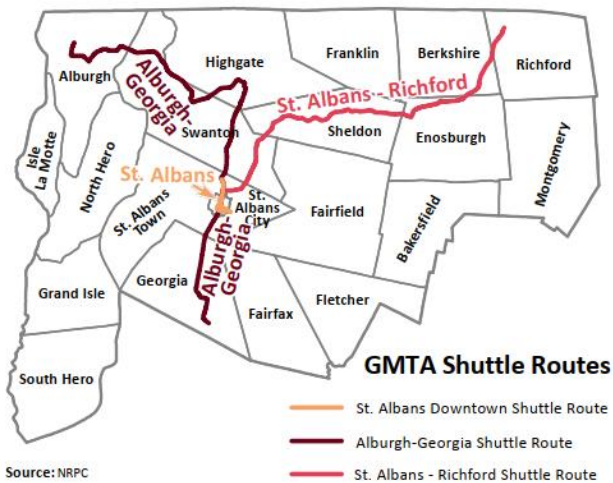
islands – what CIDER refers to as a “neighbor-helping- neighbor” ethic.

Other Transportation Systems

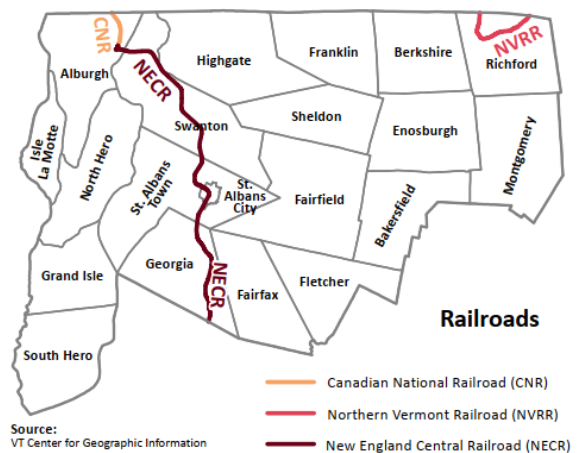
The Canadian National Railway (CNR) operates freight traffic from Alburgh Springs to Canada. This three-mile segment is the only Class 1 railroad in Vermont. Class 1 railroads are the largest rail operators.

Alburgh residents have access to regional rail service via the St. Albans Amtrak station. Amtrak provides daily passenger rail service from St. Albans, VT to Washington, DC via the Vermonter and from Rouses Point to Montreal and New York via the Adirondack. The region is also served by the Franklin County State Airport, located in Highgate. Passenger air travel is available at the Patrick Leahy Burlington International Airport in South Burlington.

GMT Transit Routes



Northwest Region Railroads



Chapter 7. Compatibility with Neighboring Towns and the Region

Compatibility with Neighboring Towns

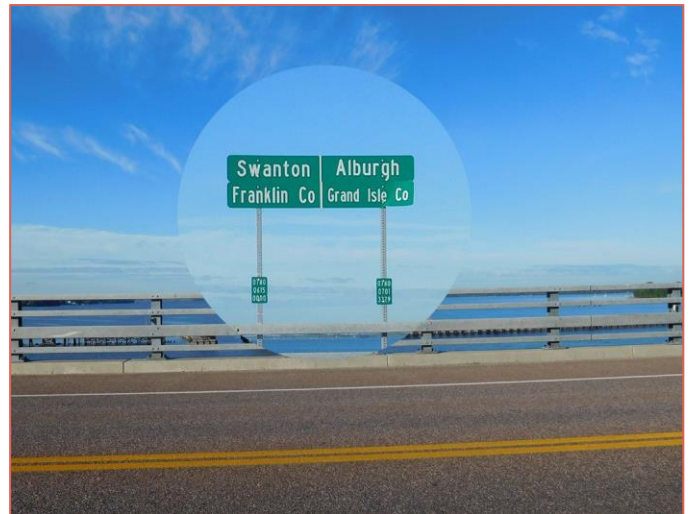
Within Grand Isle County Alburgh is separated from the two adjoining towns by Lake Champlain. The Town of Isle La Motte is in the process of adopting a Town Plan. The Town's proposed rural agricultural district is compatible with the shorelands district of Alburgh, The Town of North Hero has a locally adopted and regionally approved municipal plan and zoning regulations. Alburgh's plan is compatible with North Hero's and shares an interest in seeing improvements to the Route 2 corridor.

The Town of Swanton shares a border with Alburgh in the middle of the Lake. A common land link between the two municipalities is the Missisquoi Bay Bridge. The Swanton Town and Village Plan was adopted in 2021. Across the lake the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge and agricultural areas are visible from Alburgh's shores. Planned land uses for Alburgh and Swanton are similar and compatible which should result in a seamless landscape surrounding Lake Champlain and Missisquoi Bay.

Compatibility with Northwest Regional Plan

The Alburgh Town Plan is compatible with the Northwest Regional Plan, adopted in 2023. The Alburgh Town Plan seeks to conserve sensitive natural areas, maintain the town's agricultural economy and broaden its economic base. Due consideration is given to protection of environmental resources, such

as wildlife, water quality and conservation of agricultural soils. Consistent with the Regional Plan, the Town Plan supports improvements to the local transportation system that include safety and reduction in energy use. The Town Plan also provides for improvement in the quality and availability of affordable housing.



Marker on the Missisquoi Bridge

The Town Plan describes a pattern of future land use that is consistent with the general goals of the Regional Plan, including the designation of compact high density districts and the conservation of environmentally sensitive lands. The Town Plan identifies Alburgh Village as a high-density district, which is in keeping with the Regional Plan's designation of the Village as a growth area. Implementation of the Alburgh Town Plan would provide a wide range of regional benefits in keeping with the goals of the Northwest Regional Plan.

Chapter 8. Implementation Report

The table below outlines the key plan objectives, their current status and a recommended action.

| Population, Housing and Economic Development | | | | |
|---|---|---------|---|---------------------|
| Plan Objective | Discussion | Status | Action | Responsible Party |
| Collaborate with Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Association (LCIEDC) to provide information and resources to local businesses. | To support further economic growth of Alburgh, the Town should provide resources and information to current or prospective business owners on available incentives and resources. | New | Meet with LCIEDC | Planning Commission |
| Coordinate with local businesses to support housing for seasonal workers. | During the summer season Alburgh population grows and it is difficult for workers to find housing for seasonal jobs. | New | Hold meeting with local businesses | Planning Commission |
| Natural and Cultural Environment | | | | |
| Plan Objective | Discussion | Status | Action | Responsible Party |
| Develop planned trail system on the Industrial Park parcel. | The Alburgh Industrial Park gifted the Town a 90-acre parcel off Industrial Park Road which is primarily wetlands. In 2020-2021 the Town developed a trail plan for the parcel. | Ongoing | Seek grants to develop the trail network. | Planning Commission |
| Add trail maps and information on parks/beaches to the Alburgh Town website. | There is not currently one easy place to access information about recreation opportunities in Town. | New | Gather maps and information to be added to the website. | Planning Commission |

| Land Use | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---------------------|
| Plan Objective | Discussion | Status | Action | Responsible Party |
| Conduct more education and discussion on possible development regulations. | As part of the 2018 Village Master Plan effort, the Planning Commission developed initial draft Village Zoning Regulation. In 2023, the Town survey had mixed results regarding municipal development regulations. There is a need for more education and discussion on possible development regulations. | Outstanding. | Consider applying for Municipal Planning Grant to conduct outreach on development regulations. | Planning Commission |
| Utilities, Facilities and Services | | | | |
| Plan Objective | Discussion | Status | Action | Responsible Party |
| Build a new multigenerational center that would serve the recreational and educational needs of seniors, adults, teens and children. | A senior center has been opened, but there is still a need for a youth/community center. | Successful reopening of the senior center, additional youth options still needed. | Coordinate with Alburgh Clubhouse, Fire Department and Senior Center to discuss resources | Selectboard |
| Maintain a Emergency Management Plan for the town, including an Emergency Rapid Response Plan and an Emergency Operations Plan. | Adopted, continue to maintain | Completed. | Regular updates required. | Selectboard |
| Transportation | | | | |
| Plan Objective | Discussion | Status | Action | Responsible Party |
| Advertise the location of the designated Park and Ride at the “4 Corners” area at the intersection of Routes 2 and 78. | One sign is present, but it is difficult to see from the roadway. | Still a priority | Examine options to expand signage. | Planning Commission |

Appendix A. Survey Results

Appendix A is on file and available at the Alburgh Town Office.