

North Hero Town Plan Community Meeting

June 10, 2026

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Before there can be zoning regulations, there must be a town plan.

Before there can be a town plan there must be some degree of understanding of the town's past and its present.

Without this, any planning for the future would be without substance, subject to change for no other reason than somebody wanting to do something regardless of its impact on neighbor, community, environment or economy.

North Hero Town Plan Community Meeting

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Welcome!

Please sign in, get settled and take some food!

Before there can be zoning regulations, there must be a town plan.

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Funding for the Town Plan

With the assistance of NRPC, we applied for and received a Municipal Planning Grant through the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development

Estimated cost of update	\$19,420
Amount of grant	\$17,478
Town match (10%)	\$1,942



Agenda

- Presentation (20 minutes)
 - What is a Town Plan and why is it important?
 - Project schedule & focus
 - North Hero context, history & recent achievement
 - Community data & key trends
- Small-group breakout: Vision (30 minutes)
- Report out: Vision themes (30 minutes)
- Wrap up (10 minutes)

What is a Town Plan?

The Town Plan is a planning document that guides the town's decisions around zoning, infrastructure and more.

Town plans reflect the vision of the community for the future of the town and identify what steps are needed to achieve that vision.

Input from town residents informs the vision & goals of the plan.

Why is the Town Plan important?



Sets community vision & goals for future of Town



Enables the Town to continue to update its zoning bylaw & all zoning bylaw updates must conform to the Town Plan



Town Plans are considered in Act 250 (state land use permit) and Section 248/248a (Energy/Telecommunications CPG) proceedings



Eligibility for certain grants

Project Schedule



Project key themes

Themes that Town Plans generally focus on include:



Climate Resilience



Housing Access &
Affordability



Protecting Natural
and Scenic
Resources



And more

Since we need a Town Plan that fits the specific needs of our community, this list will be expanded as we hear more from you!

Context, History and Recent Achievements

NORTH HERO, VERMONT — MAJOR EVENTS TIMELINE (1609–2026)

- Colonial origins and founding (1609–1789)
- 19th-century civic build-out (1790–late 1800s)
- Modern era — decline, recovery, and stewardship (1900s–2026)

NORTH HERO, VERMONT — MAJOR EVENTS TIMELINE (1609–2026)

- Colonial origins and founding (1609–1789)
 - From Champlain's claim of Lake Champlain through the British Blockhouse Point fortification
 - The 1779 "Two Heroes" charter, first European settlers in 1783
 - The 1789 inaugural Town Meeting
 - North Hero's earliest century established its colonial and civic foundations.

NORTH HERO, VERMONT — MAJOR EVENTS TIMELINE (1609–2026)

- 19th-century civic build-out (1790–late 1800s)
 - South Cemetery, four school districts, the first schoolhouse, store, post office, and jail, the Grand Isle County Courthouse (1824–1825)
 - The late-1800s railroad and ferry service
 - Turned the town into a functioning county seat

NORTH HERO — MAJOR EVENTS TIMELINE (1609–2026)

- **Modern era — decline, recovery, and stewardship (1900s–2026)**
 - After the early-1900s resort boom, population fell from 1910–1950
 - Population rebounded through the 1960s–1990s, and continued expanding from 2000–2020
 - Today's planning prioritizes historic preservation and sustainability, with North Hero still the shire town of Grand Isle County in 2026.

NORTH HERO — MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

2020 - 2026

Town Office & Administration Efficiency

- **Modernized IT and Security:** townwide IT solution with a new vendor, cybersecurity best-practices compliance, digitized zoning records, and 100% hybrid meetings.
- **Restructured Operations and Facilities:** moved into a newly acquired building, restructured the Town and Lister offices, new hires, and a new website.
- **Strengthened Governance and Compliance:** COVID and ARPA response, ethics training reporting, ADA compliance for grants, policy and ordinance reviews, updated delinquent tax rules, and expanded cemetery procedures for natural burial

NORTH HERO — MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS 2020 - 2026

Library

- Story Walk
- Word Garden
- Library Strategic Plan
- Book Shed
- The Life in the Islands Story Project – recordings of people's lives here



NORTH HERO — MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS 2020 - 2026

Town Water

- Water Filter Added to Plant
- Plan & Built Water Storage Tank
- Waterline Replacement Planning
- \$2.3 Million in Grants for Water Improvements



NORTH HERO — MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

2020 - 2026

Town Garage & Fire Station

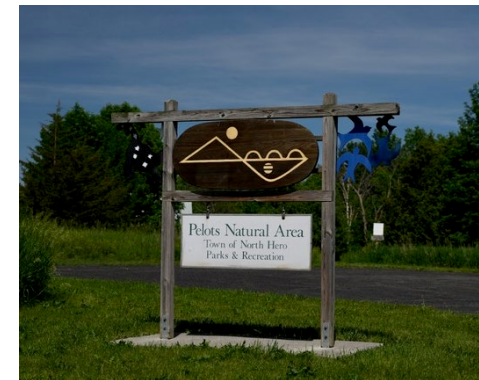
- Fire Station & Public Works Garage Replacement Planning , Construction Begun



NORTH HERO — MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

2020 - 2026

- **Parks & Recreation**
- **Camp Ingalls**
 - Long House ADA upgrades, new roof and paint, memory garden, Story Walk, bat house, and ongoing trail and invasives stewardship.
- **Children's Camps**
 - Multiple camps with currently 100+ children signed up for Summer 2026
- **Pelots Nature Area**
 - Developed and installed interpretive signage and information for visitors
 - Repurposed the old rail bed into a town trail which has improved access to the public beach at the north end
- **Residents Passes to Nearby Vermont State Parks**
 - From 130 to 200 people obtain them each year



NORTH HERO — MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

2020 - 2026

Village Character

- North Hero House, Hero's Welcome and Shore Acres changed ownership – but retained village character

Community Data and Trends

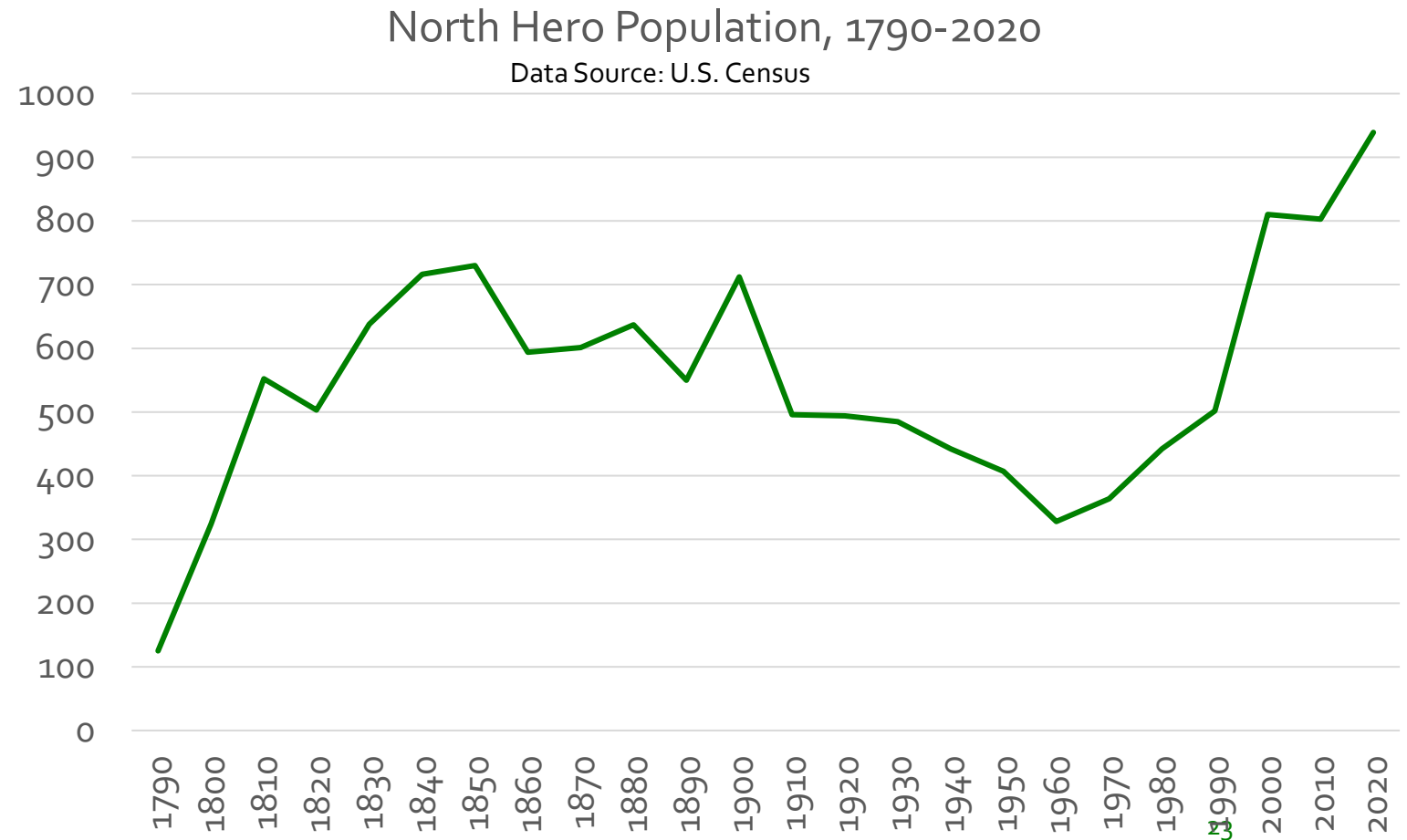


What Data Informs Us?

- Population
- Household Demographics
- Age
- Housing Data
- Employment & Income
- Local Economy

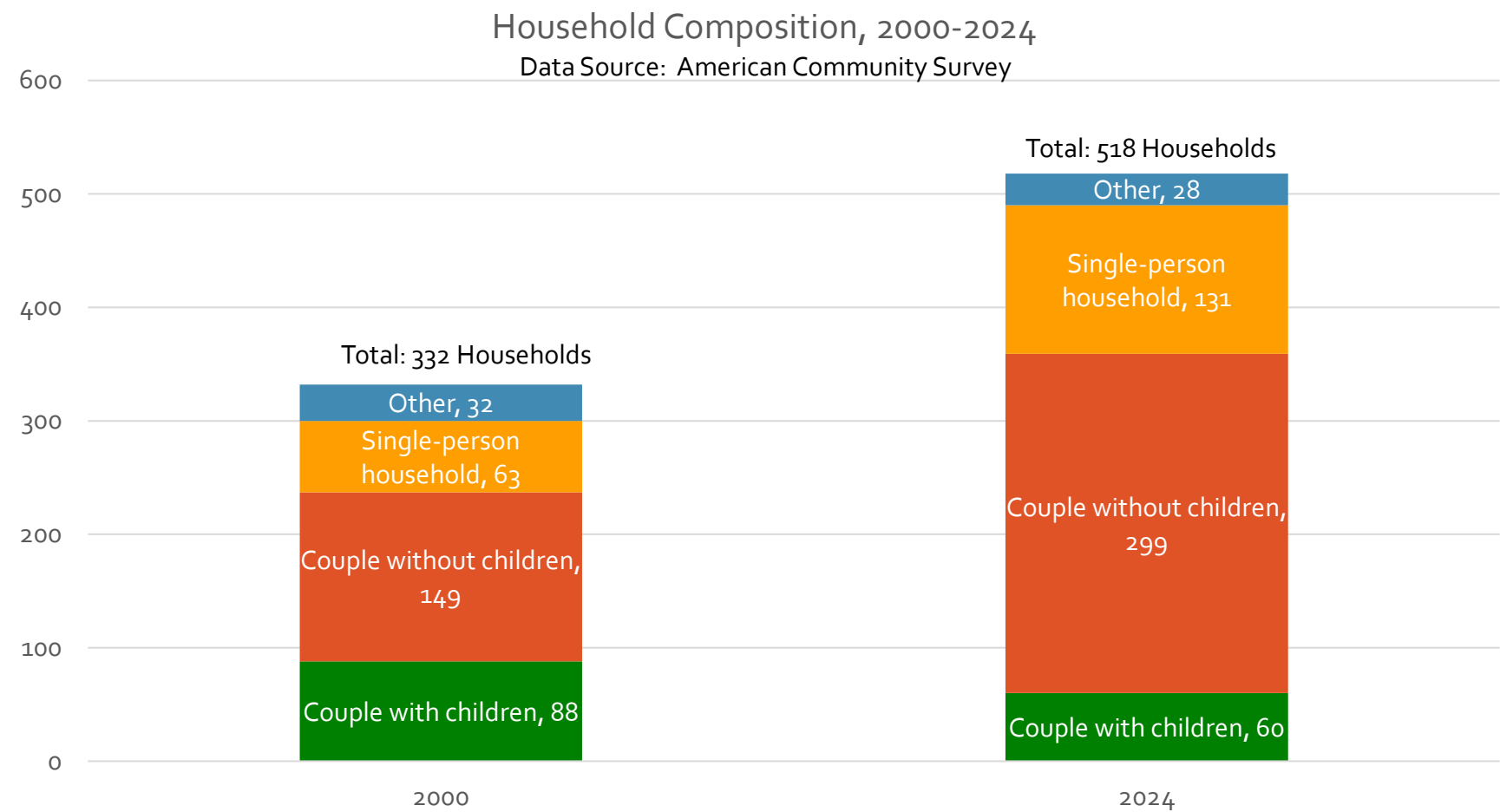
Population Trend

- This only counts full-time residents
- 939 residents in 2020
- Population grew since 2010



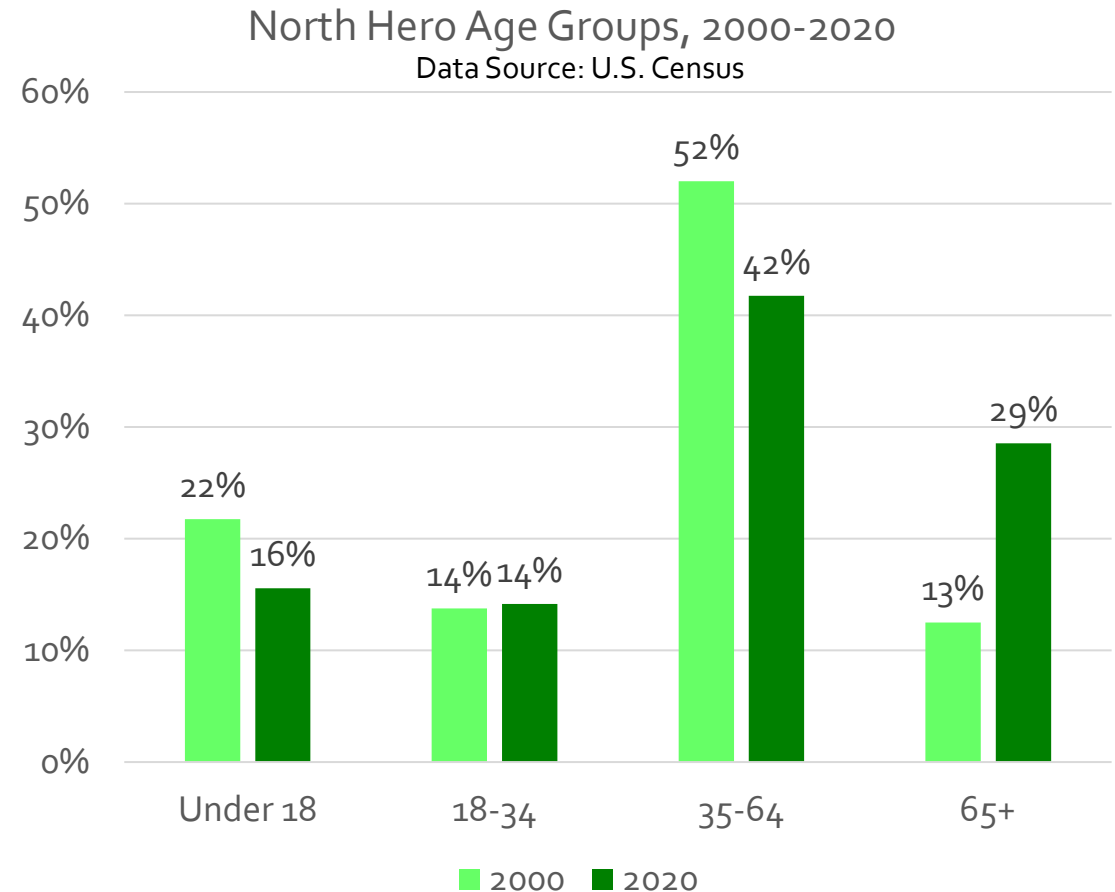
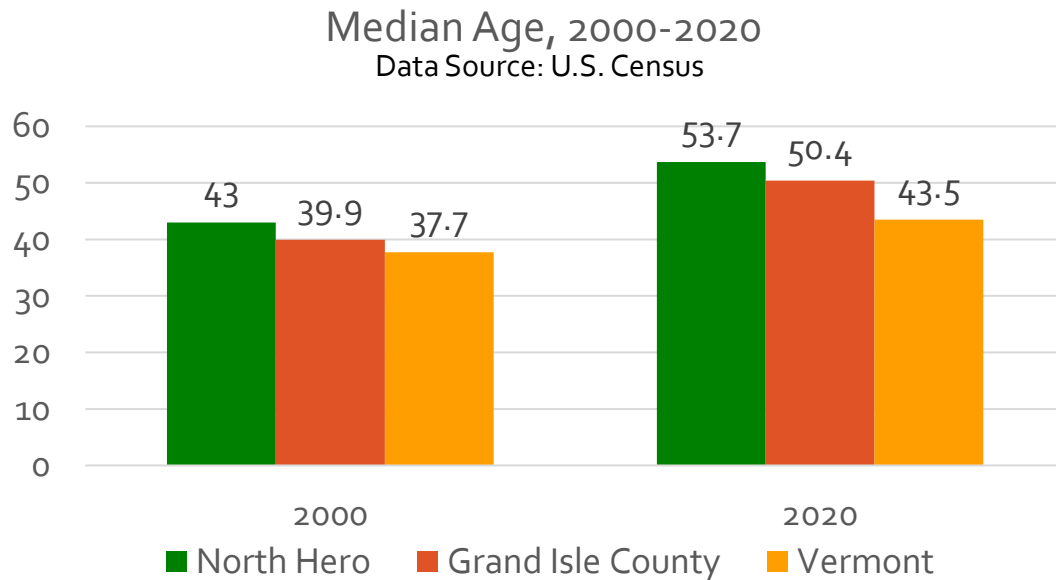
Households

- 2024 Average household size: 2.44



Age groups

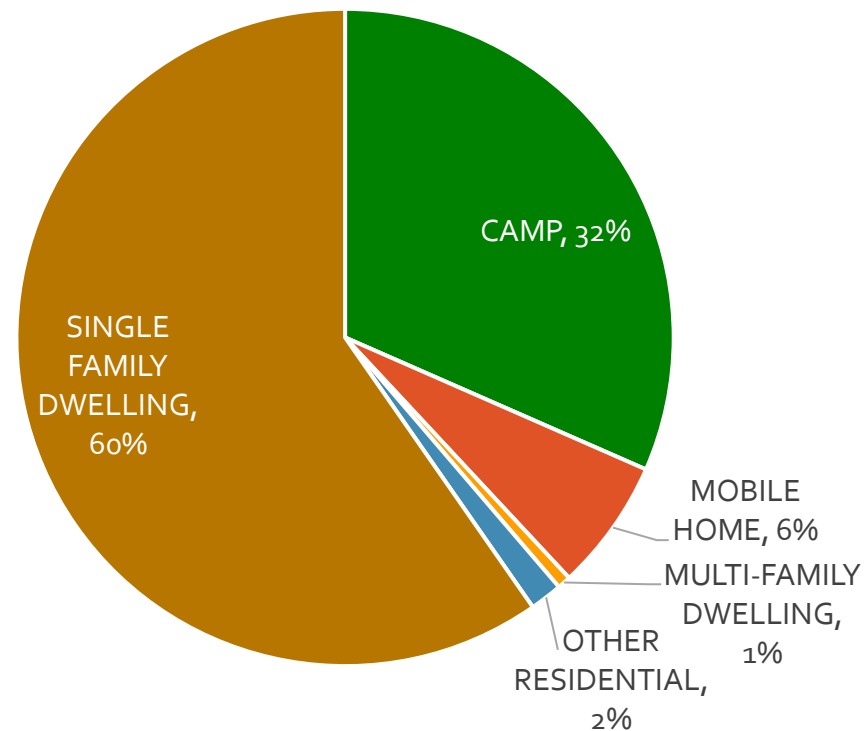
- North Hero is older on average than the county and the state
- Median age has increased everywhere in the past 20 years



Housing Stock

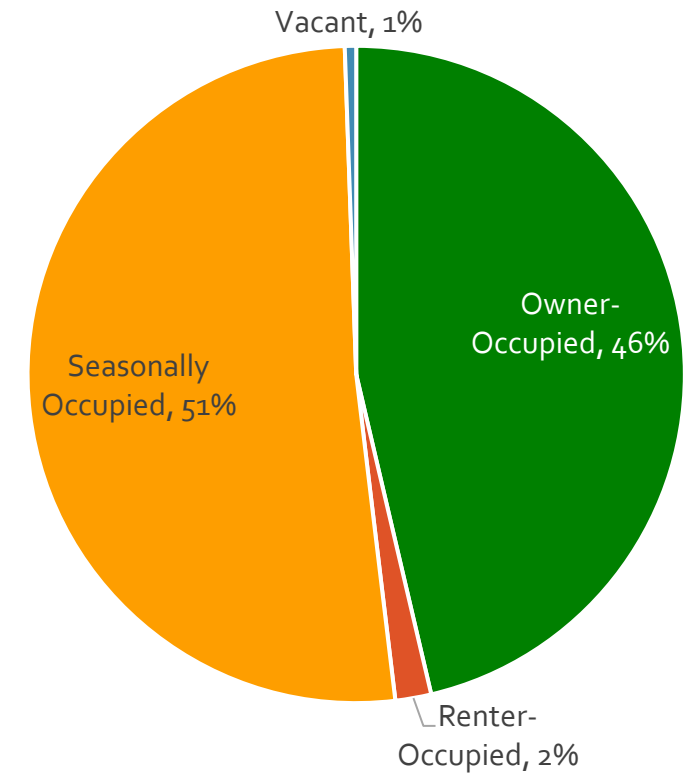
- E911 data: Based on physical units
- ACS data: Based on occupancy
- Very little year-round housing for renters

Housing Units by Type, E911



Data Source: Vermont E911 Data

Housing Occupancy, 2024 ACS

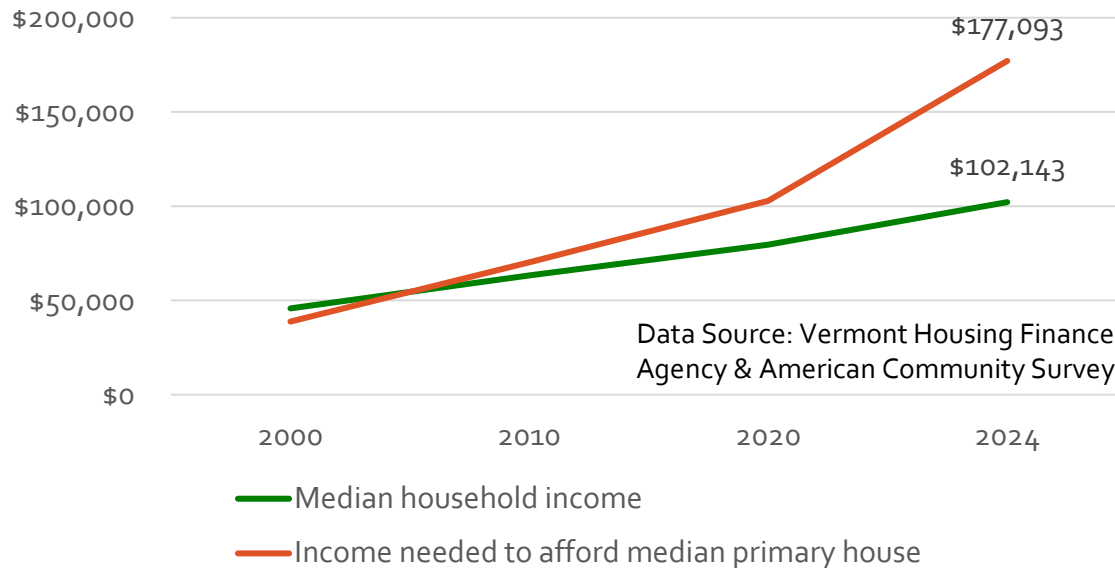


Data Source: American Community Survey

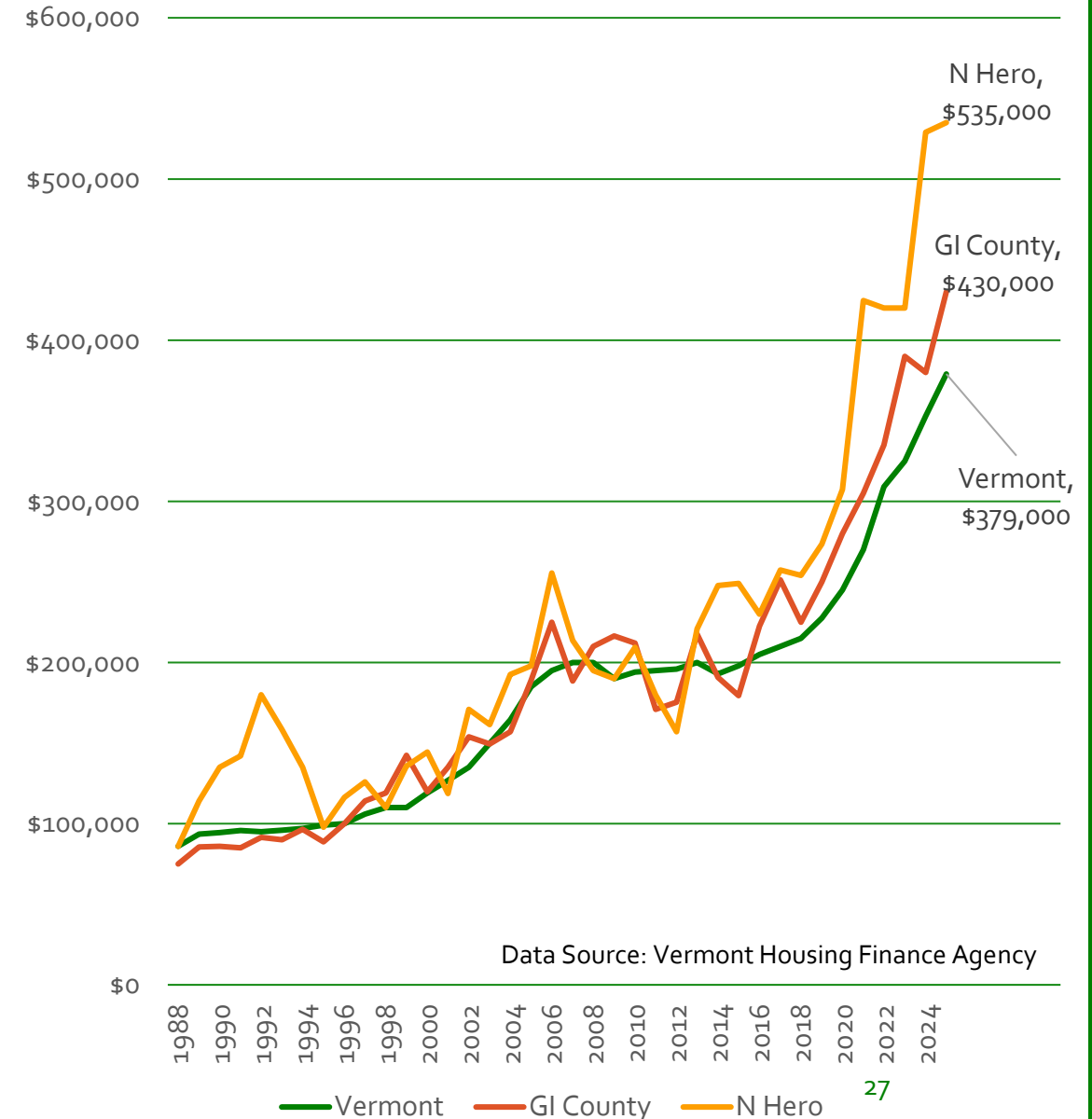
Housing Affordability

- 41% of homeowners with a mortgage are cost burdened

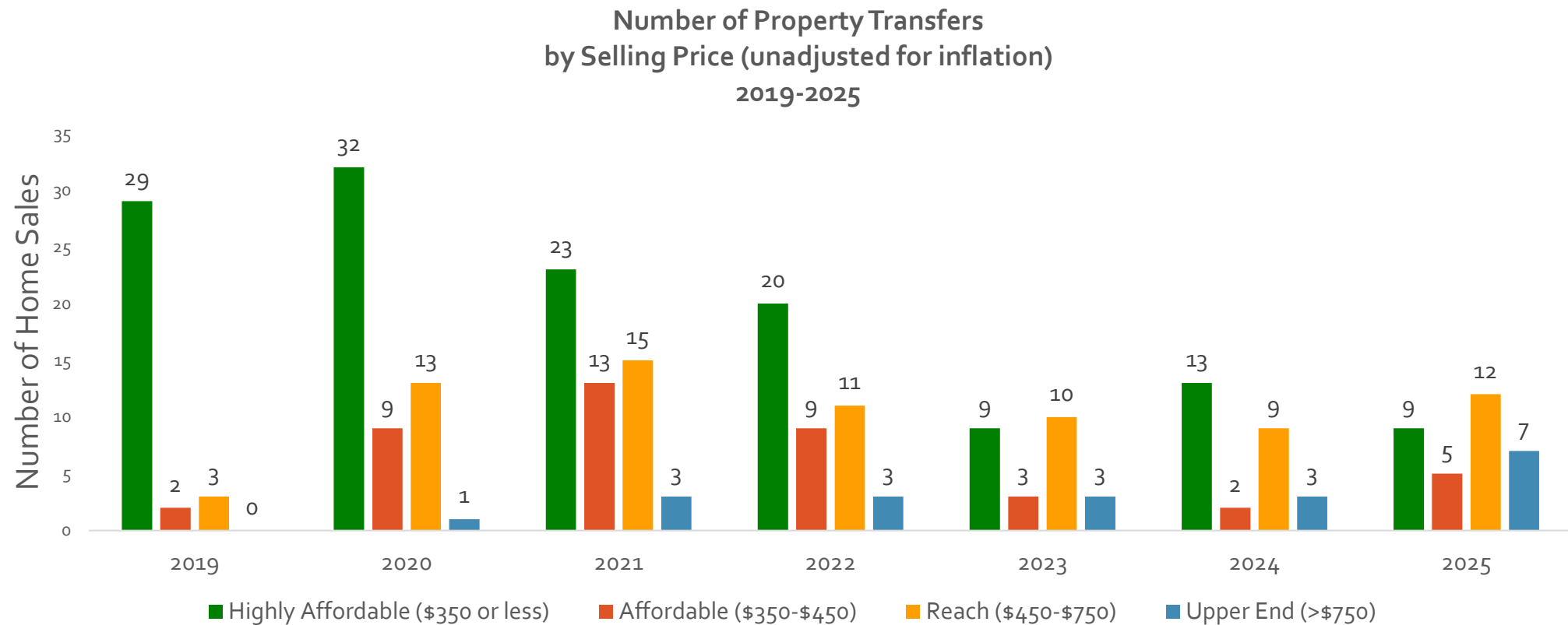
Housing Affordability, North Hero



Median Primary Home Sale Price by Year

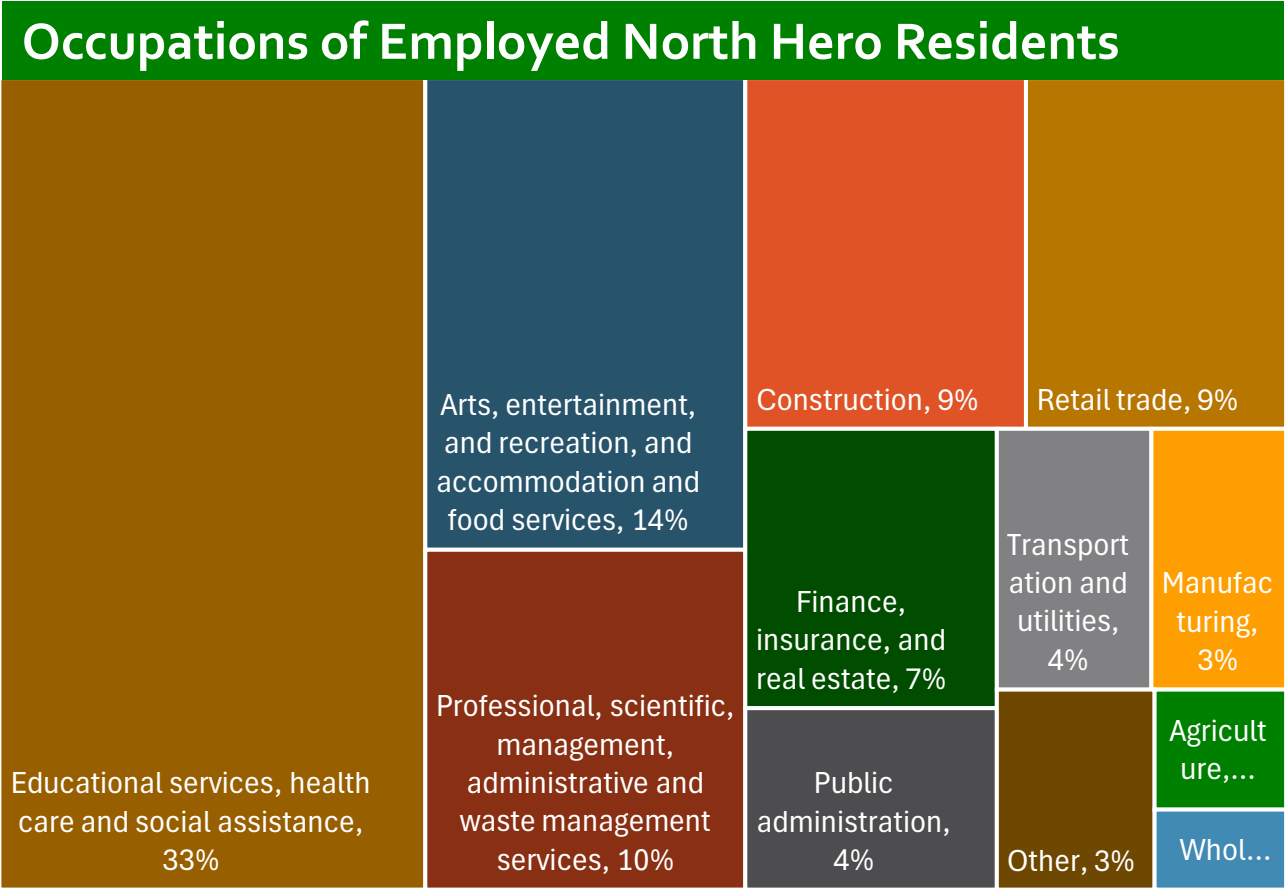


Residential Sales 2019 - 2025

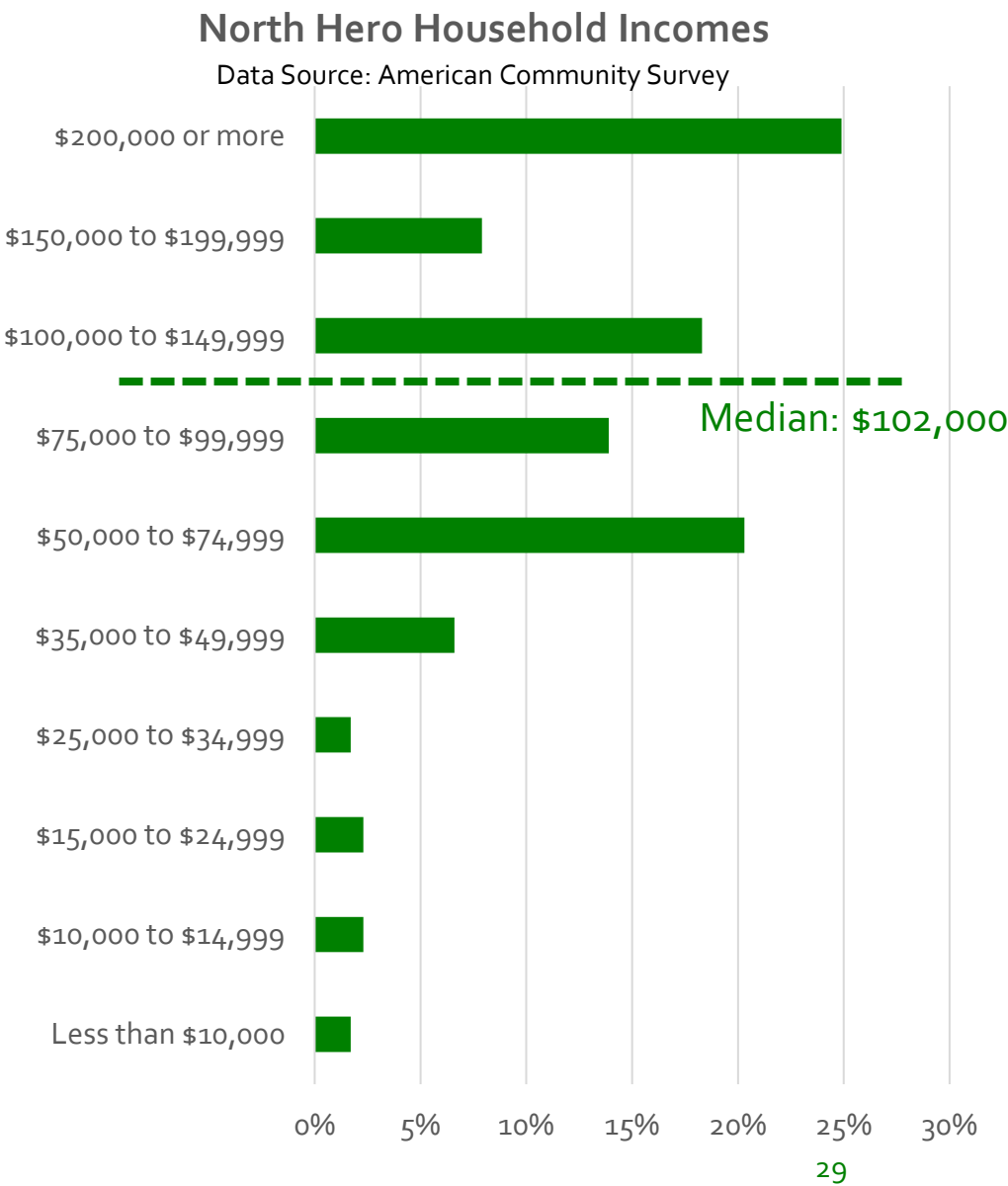


Employment and Income

- 595 residents are currently employed (63%)
- Education, healthcare and social assistance is the largest area of employment for residents



Data Source: American Community Survey



Businesses

- North Hero has 56 businesses with a total of 156 employees
- Note: Farms are not included in these statistics

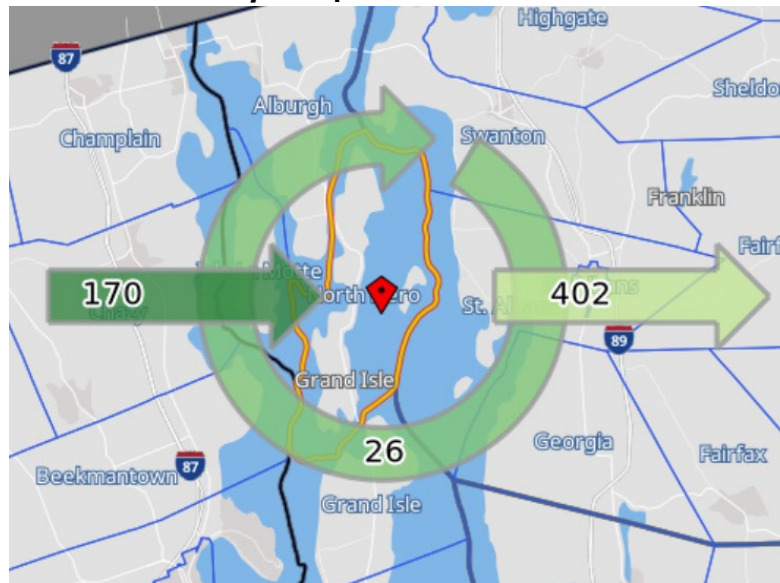
North Hero Businesses			
Industry	Businesses	Employees	Average Wage
Construction	4	10	\$55,084
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (including retail)	7	31	\$39,036
Professional and Business Services	21	26	\$77,695
Leisure and Hospitality	9	66	\$37,327
Other services	15	24	\$51,968

Average Wage: \$52,000

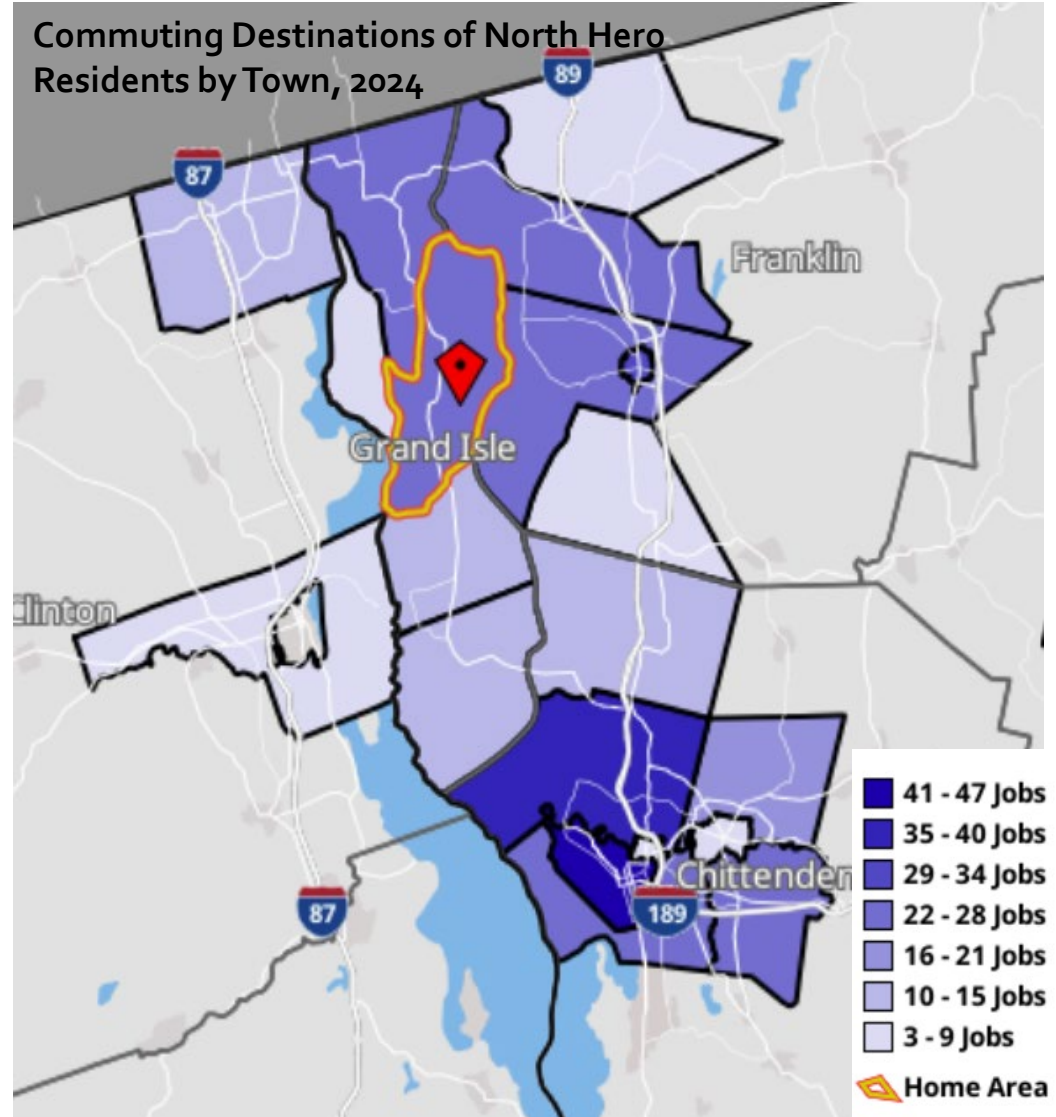
Commuting

- Most people who work in North Hero do not live here
- Many residents commute to Chittenden County for work

Inflow/Outflow, 2024



Data Source: US Census OnTheMap



Data Source: US Census OnTheMap

Discussion

Small-group Breakout (30 minutes)

In your group, discuss the following:

- What's a place in North Hero that you really like?
- What is most important to you about North Hero that you would like to preserve for the future?
- What would you like changed or improved for the future?
- What are some challenges / things the town might have to address in the future?

In 30 minutes, we will come back together and share some of our answers.

Vision Priorities Poll (30 minutes)

Priorities from our discussion be written on the posters around the room.

Everyone gets three stickers of each color.

If you agree with a priority, place a sticker to cast your vote:

- Blue sticker: I would like this to happen
- Green sticker: This needs be done to maintain the identity, health and/or welfare of our community

After this is done, we will have a list of our shared vision themes and priorities.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

- Upcoming Outreach:
 - Focus groups on specific topics
 - Community Survey
- Plan drafting begins in the Fall, public is invited to attend
- Please sign in if you haven't already to stay involved!



Project website:
bit.ly/NorthHeroPlan

Thank you for coming!