

FERRISBURGH TRAILS AND TRAVEL

MASTER PLAN



**This master plan was developed with 2023 municipal planning grant funds,
administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development**

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Introduction

As a central community within the “Vermont Western Corridor” Ferrisburgh has always been a part of a major transportation corridor. Today, the emphasis of the system is upon the Vermont Rail System for freight, as well as the local road network, and US Route 7, the town’s primary highway for truck and automobile traffic. With limited public transportation, Ferrisburgh residents must rely primarily on the use of private automobiles. Through community feedback over time, Ferrisburgh residents have consistently indicated that safe and connected pedestrian and biking trails are important to them not only as alternative transportation but to integrate physical activity into one’s daily routines.

Benefits of Trails

By investing in and maintaining paths, trails, and biking routes, we enhance our community’s well-being while connecting with broader environmental and economic goals. Informed by insights and data from the Vermont Departments of Health and Transportation this is a vital initiative for Ferrisburgh. Regular physical activity is essential for maintaining overall health and

In town-wide surveys conducted in 2004, 2013, and 2022, a high percentage of respondents listed expanded access to safe walking, biking, and multi-use non-motorized trails as important to them

(Town Plan, p. 56)

incorporating walking or biking into daily routines can significantly contribute to a healthier lifestyle. Data shows that physical activities like walking and biking reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

The infrastructure that supports non-motorized transportation also fosters community cohesion, bringing people together in shared spaces and promoting social interaction. It offers safe routes for children to travel to school, contributes to a welcoming town ambiance, enhancing overall quality of life.

TRAILS & TRAVEL MASTER PLAN

The Process

Purpose + Need Statement

The **purpose** of developing a Trails and Travel Master Plan is to create a sustainable, living document based on an ongoing inventory and analysis of existing, past, and proposed trails; trail networks and bike routes; and community outreach, stakeholder input, and user feedback.

This Plan will serve as a resource for residents, regional neighbors, and visitors, promoting the town's recreational assets, cultural, and historical sites, as well as local and regional alternative transportation networks while implementing the goals of walkability, safety, and economic vitality for Ferrisburgh Center.

This plan will be a guide for the Ferrisburgh Trails Committee, local officials, and boards to advance the goal of planning and implementation of a town-wide trail and travel network. The plan will also serve as a resource and educational tool for potential local and visiting users interested in these recreational assets.

Needs

- ❖ An accessible and inclusive trail system that is designed for multiple uses and users.
- ❖ A comprehensive inventory of the extent of public lands for the development of trails.
- ❖ Safe travel routes for commuters and schoolchildren.
- ❖ Walkable and Bikeable routes in the Village Center for all users.
- ❖ To support the revitalization of the Village Center.



Existing Conditions

The FTC began its work developing an inventory and analysis of existing trails, road routes, legal trails, and potential new routes. Beginning in the winter/spring of 2024, the FTC met monthly, field checked existing and potential trails and continued its conversations with the community and landowners. Through this outreach, key points of interest within the town of Ferrisburgh were identified.

The work of the FTC focused on:

- ❖ Understanding each significant trail/ network and anticipated uses.
- ❖ Listening to community feedback regarding access, parking, and connectivity issues and concerns.
- ❖ Identifying natural resources and constraints; soils, slopes, wetlands, streams.
- ❖ Mapping existing on-road bike routes.
- ❖ Identifying potential stakeholders including landowners.



The Purpose and Need statement and existing conditions map was shared with the public March 2024 at Town Meeting Day, June 2024, at the Taste of Summer event, and Nov 2024 at Voting Day. There was enthusiastic engagement at each event.

Existing Conditions Map



The Existing Conditions map highlights the major hubs in the greater community of Ferrisburgh; the Village of North Ferrisburgh and Ferrisburgh Town Center, both commuter/travel links and multiple recreational, natural resource and cultural destinations. Existing trail networks can be seen accessing Little Otter Creek and the Town Forest. On-road bike routes crisscross the town, connecting residential hubs with popular destinations. The map clearly illustrates how VT Route 7 prohibits a cohesive townwide system.

Survey and outreach feedback consistently indicated the community’s desire for more trails and routes connecting neighboring towns, a network of accessible walking routes within the Village Center and a connected, safe trails system for all residents

Travel and Trails Master Plan

The Plan

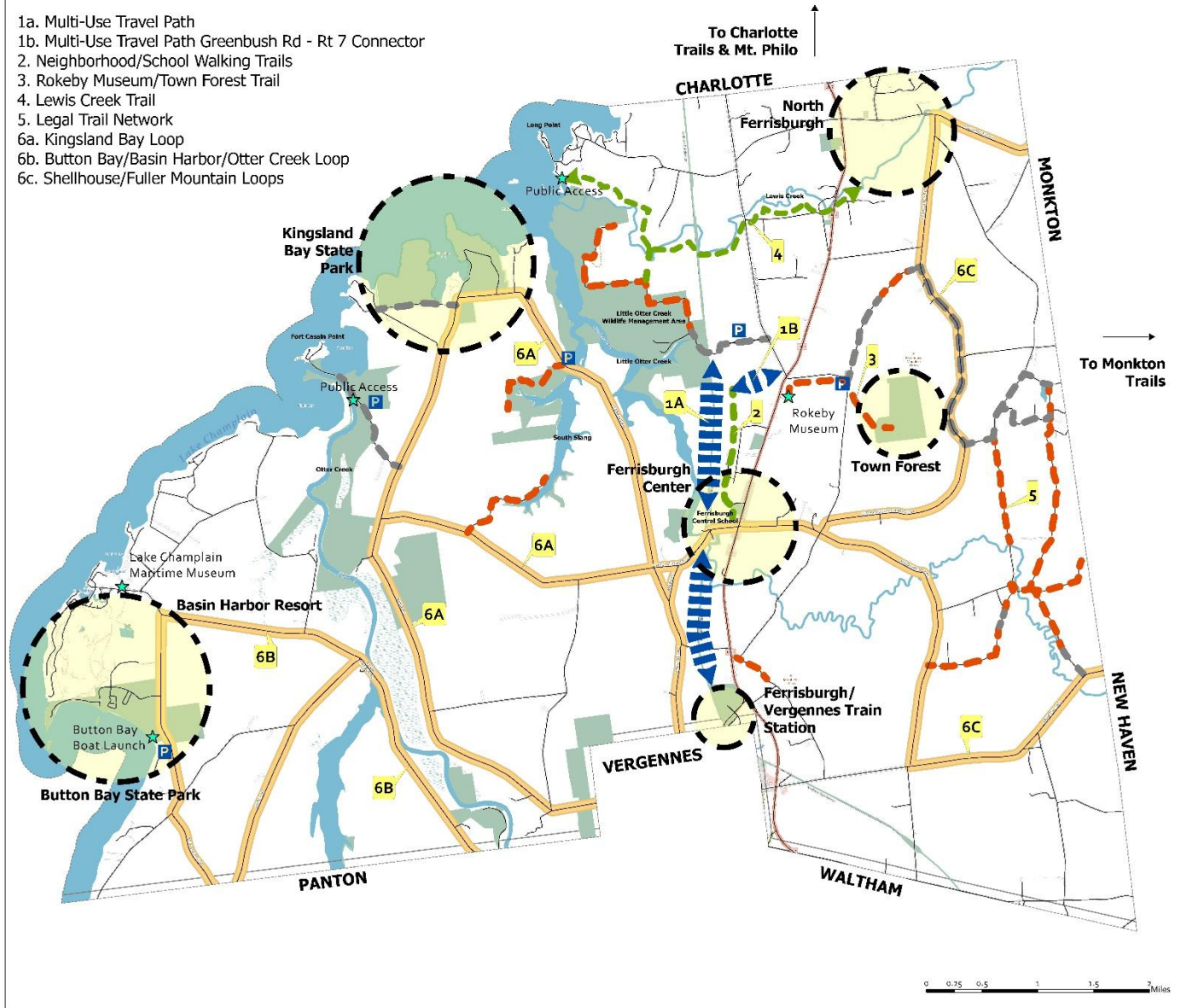
Informed by an analysis of existing conditions and feedback from the community and stakeholders, the FTC developed the following objectives to inform the master plan map and implementation program.

- ❖ Prioritize safe, accessible, and connected sidewalks and trails throughout Ferrisburgh Center Village, connecting neighborhoods with the school and other amenities.
- ❖ Create a safe off-road trail/bike route link from Greenbush Road to Ferrisburgh Center Village and south to the Ferrisburgh-Vergennes Railway system.
- ❖ Respect ecological sensitive areas in the development of new trails.
- ❖ Create a comprehensive inventory of public lands for the development of trails and work to encourage private landowners to allow the development of public trails on their property.
- ❖ Utilize class 3 and 4 roads and Legal Trails whenever possible to expand neighborhood-based trails.
- ❖ Prioritize on-road bike routes to Button Bay and Kingsland Bay State Park.
- ❖ Ensure that trails and on-road bike routes are well marked.
- ❖ Connect to existing systems, including multi modal hubs; Monkton, Vergennes and Charlotte trails and bike systems; Triangle Bike Loop and Lake Champlain Byways routes.
- ❖ Develop printed and an online trails map.
- ❖ Create trail linkages to historic, cultural, and scenic points of interest.
- ❖ Establish a legal framework that allows landowners to permit trail use without concern for liability.

POTENTIAL ROUTES AND TRAILS ON THE MASTER PLAN MAP APPEAR ON THE NEXT PAGE.
ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, EACH ROUTE IS DESCRIBED ALONG WITH
HOW IT MEETS THE GOALS OF THE PROJECT AND BENEFITS THE COMMUNITY

Potential Routes & Trails

- 1a. Multi-Use Travel Path
- 1b. Multi-Use Travel Path Greenbush Rd - Rt 7 Connector
- 2. Neighborhood/School Walking Trails
- 3. Rokeby Museum/Town Forest Trail
- 4. Lewis Creek Trail
- 5. Legal Trail Network
- 6a. Kingsland Bay Loop
- 6b. Button Bay/Basin Harbor/Otter Creek Loop
- 6c. Shellhouse/Fuller Mountain Loops



Ferrisburgh Trails & Travel Master Plan



- ★ Points of Interest
- P Parking
- Multi-Use Travel Path
- Existing Class 3 & 4 Roads
- Potential Routes
- Legal Trails and Existing Walking Trails
- Prioritized On-Road Bike Loops
- Destinations
- State & Town Owned Lands



Goals and Benefits

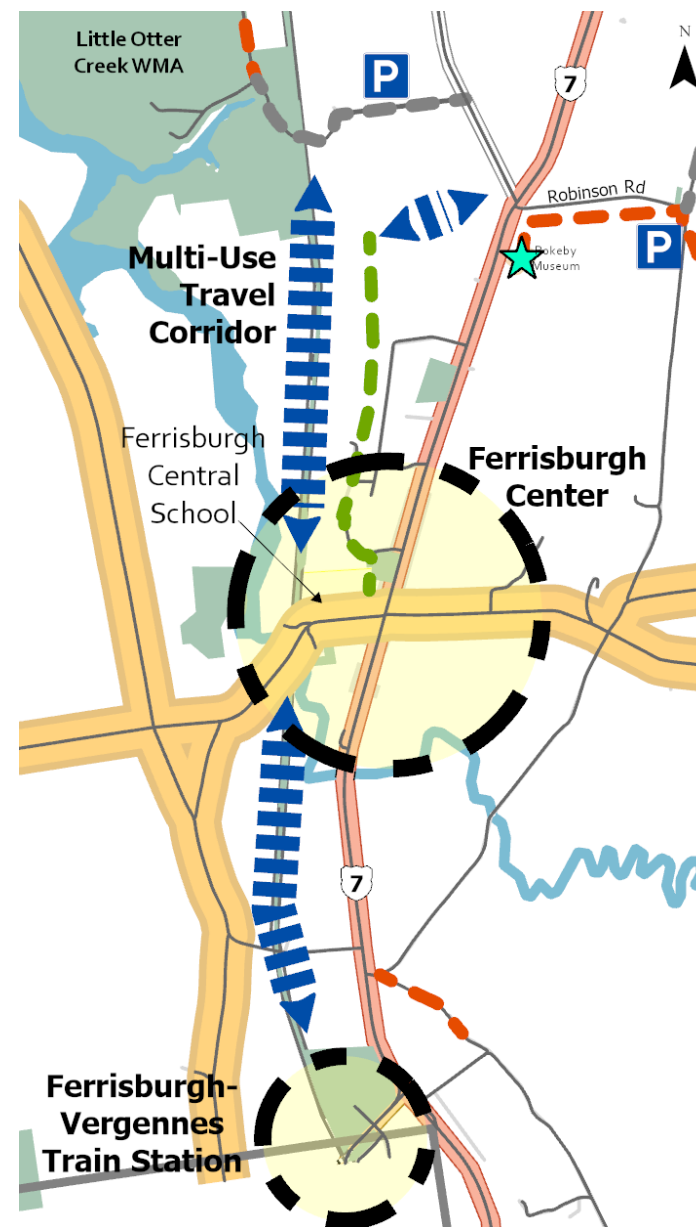
1 - A-B Multi Use Travel Corridor

DESCRIPTION

An accessible, multi-use pathway that connects key locations in Ferrisburgh without utilizing Route 7. This route would link Little Otter Creek Management Area, Rokeby Museum, Ferrisburgh Town Center, Ferrisburgh-Vergennes Train Station, and additional destinations. Possibly utilizing VELCO/ utility right of way lines.

BENEFITS:

- ❖ Provides off-road north-south connection for commuter biking from Greenbush Road to Town Center and train station.
- ❖ Safe biking routes for children to Ferrisburgh Central School.
- ❖ Access for birders and hikers to Little Otter Creek Management Area.
- ❖ Alternative route for Champlain Bikeway users to avoid Route 7.
- ❖ Winter options for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.
- ❖ ADA accessible to all non-motorized users and abilities.



2 – Neighborhood & School Walking Trails

DESCRIPTION

A network of safe and accessible sidewalks and trails throughout Ferrisburgh Village Center for all ages and abilities.

BENEFITS:

- ❖ Connect neighborhoods with the Ferrisburgh Central School, and Village Center, municipal services and amenities.
- ❖ Improve pedestrian access throughout the Village Center with accessible paths and/or sidewalks.
- ❖ Support the installation of a signalized crosswalk at the Route 7 intersection.



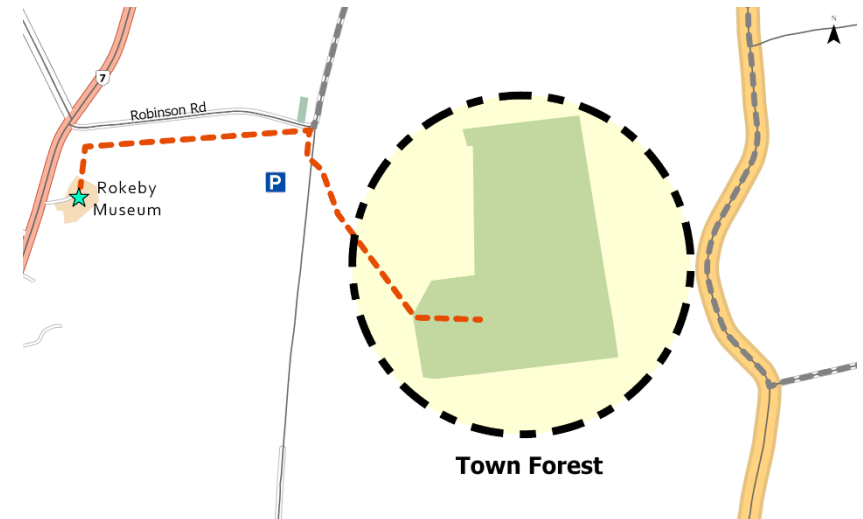
3 - Rokeby Museum/ Town Forest Trail

DESCRIPTION

A trail network connecting the existing trails at the Rokeby Museum, the trail to the Town Forest, and adjacent legal trails.

BENEFITS:

- ❖ Links these important historical and natural resources.
- ❖ Provides parking and informational signage for the Town Forest.
- ❖ Provides birding locations and natural history education.



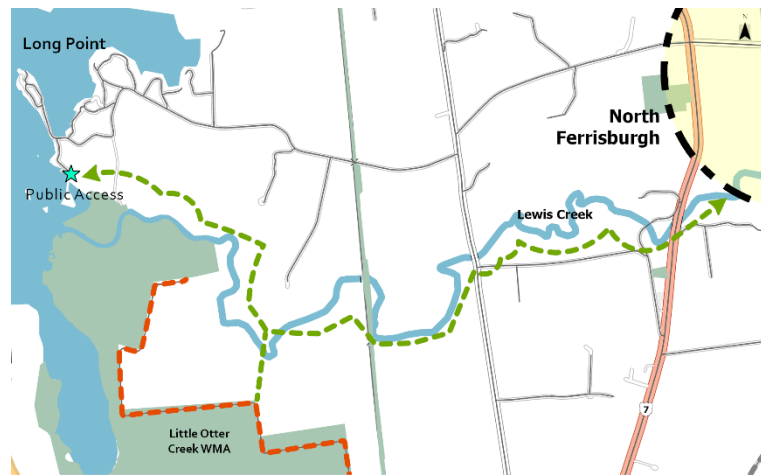
4 - Lewis Creek Trail

DESCRIPTION

A walking trail along Lewis Creek connecting Long Point / Little Otter Creek Wilderness Area with North Ferrisburgh and Charlotte trails. To protect the banks from erosion and avoid damage to the natural vegetation, the trail will be set back from the Creek's edge.

BENEFITS:

- ❖ An access to Lewis Creek for anglers.
- ❖ A trail connection to Long Point's public access to Lake Champlain.
- ❖ Key spots for birding.
- ❖ A scenic trail with small elevation changes along Lewis Creek.
- ❖ A connection to the potential N-S corridor via existing walking trails.



5 - Legal Trail Network

DESCRIPTION

Identify and incorporate legal trails and class 3 and 4 roads into a walking trail system. The town of Ferrisburgh has the greatest number of legal trails in the region. Developing these trails is a practical strategy to expand and connect routes in Ferrisburgh with neighboring communities' trail networks.

BENEFITS:

- ❖ Connections to Monkton walking trails and to the Town Forest via Robinson Road.
- ❖ During the winter, these trails offer options for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.
- ❖ Legal trails and 3 and 4 roads expand other walking and gravel cycling routes.
- ❖ Fostering opportunities for neighborhood interaction and connections.
- ❖ The trails already exist.



6 - Prioritize Safe On-Road Bike Routes

DESCRIPTION

Improve wayfinding and safety conditions for prioritized on-road bike routes and existing regional byways.

BENEFITS:

Increased safety for cyclists and motorists when travelling on these popular routes.

- ❖ **6A - Kingsland Bay Loop:** a local favorite, offering beautiful views of the Adirondack and Green Mountains, flat, paved terrain, and limited car traffic. *(11.3 miles, does not include E-W crossroad)*
- ❖ **6B - Button Bay/ Basin Harbor/ Otter Creek Loop:** another largely flat route with limited traffic that can be extended to connect with Vergennes. *(11 miles)*
- ❖ **6C - Shellhouse/ Fuller Mountain Loops:** a widely popular route with experienced cyclists. Extensive rolling hills with some significant inclines and beautiful views across farm fields to local mountains. Limited traffic, but many drive well over the posted speed limit, making this route also an area prone to accidents. *(16.5 miles)*

According to the 2016-2024 Town Plan, several of the most popular biking loops in the area are also on roads noted as “transportation safety concerns,” due to their large number of accidents.

(Town Plan, p. 51)

IMPLEMENTATION

Category	Implementation Actions	Responsible Party/ Partner	Timing	Complexity
Outreach and Education	Coordinate with Ferrisburgh Central School to inaugurate participation in walk/bike to school day.	Ferrisburgh Central School	on-going	low
	Promote the concept of the Multi-use Travel Corridor.	Ferrisburgh Trails Committee (FTC)	on-going	low
	Begin the formation of 'Friends of the Trails'-group of trail maintenance volunteers.	Ferrisburgh Trails Committee (FTC)	on-going	low
	Develop and coordinate programs offering community informational forums and events.	Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission, Recreational Dept. and School, Rokeby Museum	on-going	low
	Identify landowners who may be interested in public trails on their property.	FTC	on-going	low
	Host educational events for youth and underserved populations.	FTC	on-going	low
Policy and Planning	Integrate Trail Master Plan into the new Town Plan, including its goals, objectives, and implementation actions.	Ferrisburgh PC	current	medium
	Create a FTC work plan, prioritizing and identifying trail development goals, 1-5 years. Review each year.	FTC	year 1	medium
	Gather pertinent documents regarding easement agreements from other towns. (Middlebury, Charlotte, White River Junction)	FTC	year 1	
	Develop a simple and informative document regarding rights and responsibilities for landowners and town regarding trails.	Ferrisburgh SB, FTC	year 1	medium
	Create a document identifying grant and funding opportunities, existing and potential FTC partners.	FTC, Walk-Bike Council of Addison County	year 1	medium
	Create a comprehensive inventory of public lands for the development of trails and work to encourage private landowners to allow the development of public trails on their property.	FTC	on-going	medium
	Secure a memorandum of understanding (MOU) from the Ferrisburgh Selectboard for future support of trail maintenance and development.	FTC, Ferrisburgh SB	year 1	medium
	Develop an on-line trails map.	FTC/ Consultant		high

Category	Implementation Actions	Responsible Party/ Partner	Timing	Complexity
FTC Trail Projects / Development	Build Maiden Trail. Legal trail extending from Robinson Road.	FTC	current	medium
	Maintain entrance to the western side Kingsland Bay.	Friends of the Trails	on-going	low
	Work to have our on-road bike routes included in established cycling organizations' maps and online platforms; Champlain Bikeways, State of Vermont Biking Page, Triangle Bike Loop.	FTC	year 2	low
	Inventory safety concerns and signage needs for priority on-road bike routes.	FTC, Town	year 2	medium
	Rokeby-Town Forest Trail	Rokeby Museum, Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission	on-going	medium
	Lewis Creek Trail	Private Landowners, Conservation Commission	year -3-5	high
	Develop a maintenance plan for exiting town trails.	Friends of Trails	on-going	low
	Work with the community to plan and designate an official trail/path network within Ferrisburgh Center Village, connecting neighborhoods with the school and other amenities.	FTC, Private Landowners	year 3-5	medium
	Create a safe trail/bike route link from Greenbush Road to Ferrisburgh Center Village and south to the Ferrisburgh-Vergennes Railway system.	FTC, Local Motion, Private Landowners	year 5-10	High
	Create a Legal Trail system in Ferrisburgh.	FTC, Town, Private landowners	on-going	low
	Apply for Bike/ Pedestrian grants to support the implementation of trail projects.	FTC	on-going	low



A community's investment in non-motorized infrastructure has proven to be a boost to the local economy, attracting tourism, fostering local business patronage, and increasing property values. Visitors and potential new residents are drawn to communities with well-maintained trails and paths, seeing them as more livable and dynamic

ABOUT FERRISBURGH

The Town of Ferrisburgh comprises roughly 61 square miles or 39,000 acres of land in the Lake Champlain Valley. It is ranked as Vermont's ninth largest town in the area. Like much of the Champlain Valley, the town's landscape is generally flat to rolling, with hilly areas, fine forestlands, and extensive areas of excellent, productive agricultural soils. Ferrisburgh is well watered by the Lewis, Little Otter, Dead and Otter Creeks; it also has large areas of ecologically significant wetlands. Ferrisburgh enjoys the longest shoreline frontage of any Vermont town bordering Lake Champlain, 21 miles. Ferrisburgh has a wealth of natural resources and recreational assets and is a popular destination for local and visiting outdoor enthusiasts.

Bordered to the north by Charlotte, the east by Monkton and New Haven, and Vergennes, Waltham and Pantton to the south, existing cycling routes provide regional connections as well as access to local recreational destinations. The Triangle Bike Loop connects Vergennes with Bristol and Middlebury with multiple on-road routes. The Lake Champlain Bikeway bisects the town of Ferrisburgh, north-south with a spur out to Button Bay State Park.

Ferrisburgh is home to the Rokeby Museum and the Maritime Museum on Lake Champlain, both important cultural resources in the region. The town also offers a variety of restaurants, food venues, and lodging.

Natural Resource Areas

Wetlands

Ferrisburgh has some of the highest quality wetlands in New England. The Otter Creek complex, comprising Otter Creek, Little Otter, Lewis and Dead Creeks, provides necessary habitats for native brook trout, bass, numerous bird species, and other wildlife. Additionally, the wetlands along Otter Creek are home to many rare state plants. Providing safe access to these

areas, while guaranteeing protection and conservation, should be a priority. Collectively, the wetlands within the Otter Creek Complex, including the Little Otter Creek Wildlife Management Area, comprise some 4,000 acres of high-quality Class II wetlands.

Creeks and Rivers

Lewis, Otter, and Little Otter Creeks, are significant spawning areas for many aquatic species and are known to offer some of the best fishing in the region.

Maintaining and enhancing public access, while protecting against erosion, are important town goals (TP p 56). Lake and river access areas include Fort Cassin, Lewis Creek, the Town Beach, South Slang, Button Bay, and Kingsland Bay, many of which have both official and unofficial trails.



Photo credit: Robert Coleburn

Lake Champlain

The Lake is the 6th largest freshwater lake in the continental USA. The deepest point on the lake, 400 feet, is off Long Point. Ferrisburgh has 21 miles of shorelines along the lake, providing majestic views, as well as incredible swimming and hiking opportunities. These areas are also ecologically significant habitats for state rare, endangered, and threatened species which warrant enhanced protection from trampling. The shoreline is also part of a lake-wide canoe and Paddlers' Trail, with two campsites located in Kingsland Bay and Button Bay State Parks.

Town Forest

The Elizabeth Robinson Town Forest, willed to the town in 1962, comprises roughly 121 acres. It is managed by the Ferrisburgh Conservation Commission with the goal of preserving the forest as a surviving remnant of the Champlain Clayplain Forest for future generations. In 2024 the Conservation Commission achieved a key goal of establishing approximately 3 miles of marked trails to and through the forest from a parking area on Robinson Road. Expansion of additional trail networks is planned.



Lake Champlain



Hiker in Town Forest

Recreational Trails / Bike Routes

Biking Routes

The roads of Ferrisburgh offer bikers numerous options for recreation. Paved routes range from flat areas near the lake, to hilly and moderately strenuous elsewhere in the town. They all offer stunningly beautiful views of the Green and Adirondack Mountains, as well as rolling pastures and farmlands. A portion of the Champlain Bikeway bisects the town, although no 'official' loops and route maps through Ferrisburgh currently exist. Area residents identified many additional popular routes deserving of better mapping and signage. Despite safety issues related to high traffic volume and speeds, US Route 7 is used by cyclists commuting north-south through Ferrisburgh. At present there is no alternative route.



Bikers on Route 7 in Ferrisburgh

Walking Trails

There are many wonderful and well-used walking trails in Ferrisburgh. Both state parks have miles of trails within their borders. Ferrisburgh town has the greatest number of Legal Trails (town rights-of-way no longer in use) in the county. Little Otter Creek Wildlife Management Area has an extensive path from the parking area at Greenbush Road west to Lake Champlain. Many unofficial routes exist throughout town such trails to fishing spots along Lewis Creek or cross lot paths to school. Neighborhoods may have their own network of paths connecting adjoining neighborhoods.



Walking Trails

VAST Snowmobile Trail

Trail # 7 of the VAST system runs through many miles of private and public land in the town. Portions of this trail cross the Town Forest.

Equine Trails

Ferrisburgh has several farms that offer horse boarding and riding. A network of privately managed trail systems currently exist. There is a desire to see expanded public routes throughout the town connecting horse farms and accessing recreational areas. The historic photo below portrays campers at the Ecole Champlain, now Kingsland Bay State Park



Old Postcard of campers at Ecole Champlain



Vast trail

State Parks

Ferrisburgh is home to two beautiful State Parks with access to Lake Champlain.



Kingsland Bay State Park & Town Beach

This 264-acre park sits on the shores of Lake Champlain. There are two walking areas to explore. The formal eastern part of the park features a beautiful cliffside trail around McDonough Point.

The less developed western portion is accessible from the Ferrisburgh Town Beach. In the fall of 2024, a new walking trail was constructed, improving the wayfinding and redirecting the trails away from sensitive habitats and eroding shorelines.

Both Kingsland Bay and Button Bay State Park are part of the Lake Champlain Paddlers' Trail, offering camping sites accessible by canoe and kayak.



Recreational access for all ages



Improved walking trails on the western portion of Kingsland Bay

Button Bay State Park

A 253-acre park along the shores of Lake Champlain offers some 2 miles of flat trails through the park, as well as unofficial connections to Basin Harbor and Lake Champlain Maritime Museum.

This state park has many recreational offerings, swimming, boating, tennis, cabins, tent and RV sites, picnic areas, and playgrounds. Walking trails access Button Point, offering stunning views of Button Island, Ship's Point, and south down the Lake. The Button Point Nature Center is located within the State Park grounds.



(c) vtstateparks.com



Pavillion



Button Bay Nature Center

Historical and cultural resources

Rokeby Museum and Grounds

The museum is situated on 90 acres with more than 2 miles of hiking trails featuring a beautiful waterfall, massive oak trees, and field views. The museum aims to connect visitors with the human experience of the Underground Railroad and the lives of many generations of Robinsons who lived on the property from 1793 to 1961. The Rokeby Museum is on Route 7, north of Ferrisburgh Center.



Photo credit: Robert Coleburn

Lake Champlain Maritime Museum

Located adjacent to the Basin Harbor Resort on Lake Champlain, the museum documents the maritime history and maritime archaeology of the Champlain Valley and is working closely with Abenaki and other indigenous leaders and community members to appropriately represent all people and cultures with our audiences. The museum also offers numerous summer camps, expeditions and learning opportunities for youth, as well as adult and youth rowing and sailing classes. Buildings, grounds, and adjacent forests along the lake can be explored from the property.



Rokeby Museum Property



Maritime Museum

Ferrisburgh Historic Village Center

Ferrisburgh Center is home to the 1840 Union Meeting Hall. This unique gothic-style brick building with multi-paned windows has been used as a community gathering space since its construction. In 1843, Frederick Douglass gave a famous speech here, in conjunction with Ferrisburgh's local abolitionists movement, denouncing racism and slavery in the United States. Ferrisburgh Town Offices, built in 1868, originally the Congregational Church, became the Grange Hall in 1949. In 2004 the Town moved its offices into the beautifully renovated building.



Union Meeting Hall

Resort and Commercial Destinations

Located on the shores of Lake Champlain in Ferrisburgh, the Basin Harbor Club's charming, historic architecture, and picturesque setting, is a regional and national resort destination. Basin Harbor is a locally owned, family-run lakeside resort. The family owners are dedicated to preserving the beauty of the land and providing a resort for generations of guests. The resort offers a range of lakeside accommodations, from guest rooms to cottages, on a 700-acre campus. The resort has two great dining options, Ardelia's and the Red Mill.



Basin Harbor Club



Ferrisburgh Town Hall

Ferrisburgh's Restaurants and Specialty Foods

There are many eateries and shops along Route 7 through Ferrisburgh. Dakin Farm, famous for local smoked meats and maple products, and Cookie Love, known for homemade cookies and ice cream, are popular destinations for locals and tourists.

Starry Night Café is a regional fine dining destination. The Owners of Gilfeather's Fine Provisions, located in Ferrisburgh Center, are in the process of renovating the historic Methodist or 'Brown' Church, investing in the revitalization of the village.



Starry Night Cafe



Cookie Love



Dakin Farm



Gilfeather's

THE FOUNDATION OF THE PLAN

Ferrisburgh Trails Committee

To encourage recreation in town, including public access to Lake Champlain, Otter Creek, Little Otter Creek and Lewis Creek, walking trails, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobile trails, bicycle paths, boating, and parks.

Town Plan, Land Use Section, Goal B

In December 2021, as an implementation action of the Ferrisburgh town plan, the Selectboard established an eight member Ferrisburgh Trails Committee (FTC). All appointees, active members of their community, as well as hikers, cyclists, and outdoor enthusiasts, are familiar with the town's recreational potential. In April 2022, the FTC developed the following mission statement and objectives.

Mission Statement + Objectives

Establish, maintain, and promote trail systems within the town, connect to surrounding networks, and enhance the well-being and safety of the public while cultivating the spiritual fabric of Ferrisburgh.

- **Identify and catalog** existing public and private trails in Ferrisburgh, ensuring accurate records and accessibility information.
- **Create and distribute comprehensive maps** for public trails and privately-owned trails with landowner consent, prioritizing usability and public awareness.
- **Promote regular maintenance** of trails and recreational routes by establishing a volunteer-based “Trail Stewards” program and organized trail work groups.
- **Advocate for safe pedestrian pathways** connecting neighborhoods to Ferrisburgh Central School and the community center, fostering accessibility and recreational opportunities.



Committee Members from left to right: Laura Fair, Robert Coleburn, Barry Estabrook, Anne Cohn, Courtney Kanetsky. Not pictured: Amanda Crocker

Initial Work and Outreach

Kingsland Bay Trail Improvements

In July 2022, contact was made with Lisa Thornton of the Vermont Forest, Parks and Recreation Department about improving the trail system on the western side of Kingsland Bay State Park. In the fall of 2024, the State and the Youth Conservation Corps completed their work on the western portion of Kingsland Bay State Park which is accessible from the Town Beach. This team built a sustainable trail loop, closing unauthorized trails, thus protecting shoreline, rare species, and wetlands. (photos)



Resting after trail work



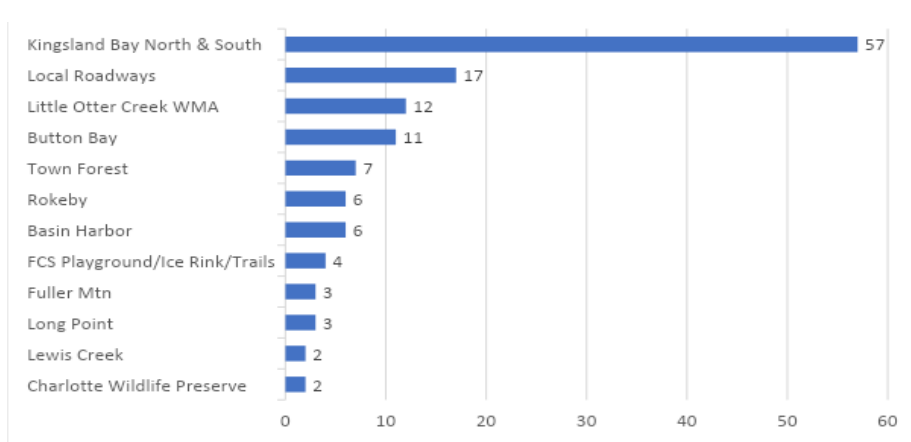
Tabling at Ferrisburgh Day

Trails Survey

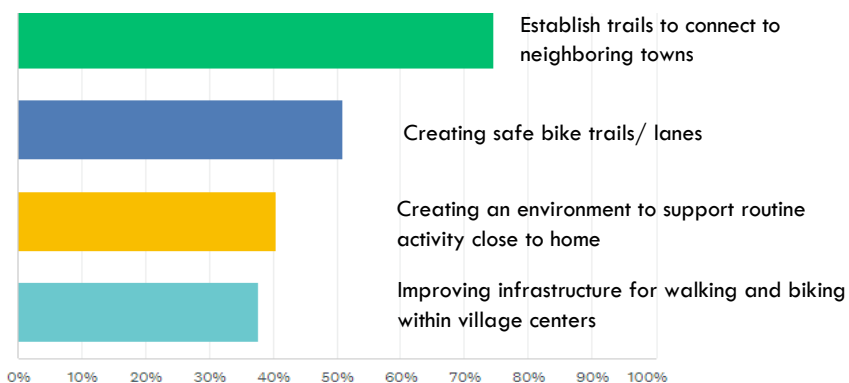
In the Fall of 2022, the FTC began public outreach with a table at the Ferrisburgh Day celebration. The FTC also compiled a survey to receive feedback from the community. The initial survey was distributed over three months through multiple distribution channels receiving over 100 responses. The goal of the survey was to get a sense of favorite recreation locations, top priorities for improving trail and recreation opportunities, and to understand barriers to outdoor recreation in Ferrisburgh.

The FTC **survey** results were collected, tabulated, and published. Below are the main takeaways from this outreach.

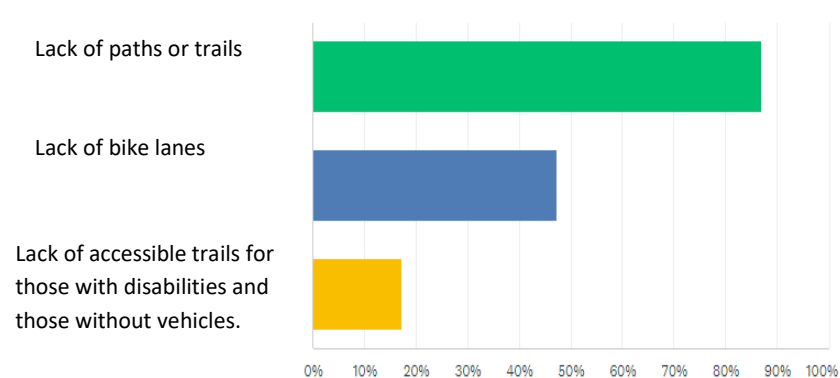
What is your favorite location?



Which of the following would you consider a high priority for improving bike and pedestrian connectivity in Ferrisburgh?



What are the barriers to outdoor recreation in Ferrisburgh?



Municipal Planning Grant

Based on community feedback and survey results, the FTC began to develop a trails master plan. The committee identified and mapped existing trails as well as outlined locations for possible future walking and biking trails pursuant to town plan goals. Another goal of the master plan was to study on-road bike routes and their role as alternative transportation, locally and regionally. In November 2022, FTC applied for a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to fund hiring a consultant on this project. In April 2023, the FTC was awarded funding for the development of the Trails and Travel Master Plan.

Throughout the master plan process, the town has been immersed in multiple planning and revitalization efforts. The Town Center Committee is working on renovating the Union Meeting Hall and updating the Village Green; the town received a transportation grant for pedestrian improvements, including a crosswalk on Route 7 connecting Ferrisburgh Central School and adjacent neighborhoods, and a region-wide transit study is in process, developing a master plan for Ferrisburgh Center looking at needed housing and future transportation options.

During this time, the Planning Commission has been updating the municipal plan, and the groups have been able to collaborate on future land use issues.



Site walk with consultants working on the Transit Oriented Design Master Plan and Ferrisburgh Planning Commission Members.

CONCLUSION

The Ferrisburgh Trails and Travel Master Plan represents a comprehensive effort to enhance the town's recreational, cultural, and transportation infrastructure. By prioritizing safe, accessible, and connected trails and bike routes, the plan aims to improve the quality of life for residents, attract visitors, and support economic vitality.

The initiative reflects the community's desire for alternative transportation options, increased physical activity, and better access to natural and cultural resources.

Through community outreach, surveys, and collaboration with stakeholders, the Ferrisburgh Trails Committee has identified key objectives, including the development of multi-use travel corridors and neighborhood walking trails. The plan emphasizes ecological preservation, safety improvements, and the integration of trails into the town's historical and cultural landmarks.

The plan aligns with broader municipal goals, including revitalizing the Village Center, enhancing pedestrian infrastructure, and fostering community cohesion.

Ferrisburgh's abundant natural resources, historical sites, and recreational assets provide a strong foundation for this initiative. By investing in non-motorized infrastructure, the town is poised to become a more livable, dynamic, and environmentally conscious community, ensuring long-term benefits for residents and visitors alike.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To learn more about this Plan and the Ferrisburgh Trails Committee or to volunteer (we are always looking for new members), please contact:

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Many thanks to the following Committee members for their diligent hard work on the Ferrisburgh Trails and Travel Master Plan: Laura Fair, Robert Coleburn, Barry Estabrook, Anne Cohn, Courtney Kanetsky, Amanda Crocker, and Consultant Katie Raycroft-Meyer.