
# CHAPTER 6:

# TRANSPORTATION

## WORKING DRAFT (9/8/23)

This document is presented in its current form as a preliminary draft for informational purposes only. It is intended to provide an overview of the proposed content and the direction of the Comprehensive Plan. Please note that this draft is subject to further editing, revisions, and updates.

A public meeting is scheduled for September 23rd, during which community feedback will be solicited and considered. Following this meeting, the document will undergo additional refinement based on the input received. This refinement process may include the incorporation of photos, graphics, and other visual elements to enhance clarity and understanding.

As a result, the information contained in this draft may evolve, and new content may be added or modified to accurately reflect the goals, aspirations, and needs of the community. We encourage all stakeholders to provide comments, either in written form or at the Public Workshop, as your input will play a vital role in shaping the final version of the Comprehensive Plan.

We appreciate your understanding of the dynamic nature of this planning process and your active participation in creating a comprehensive plan that best serves the interests of our community.

# 6 TRANSPORTATION

The goal for transportation is simply to provide for moving people and goods to and around the Island, with reasonable convenience and cost, and to do so safely, and without conflict with other objectives, including concerns for environmental, visual, and aural quality of the Island. Recreational uses of the Town's roads must be acknowledged and kept safe for residents and visitors alike.

This chapter outlines specific and measurable goals and objectives for the transportation system. These goals may include improving road conditions, enhancing public transit options, increasing accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, reducing traffic congestion during peak periods, and promoting sustainable transportation alternatives.

By addressing these topics, Shelter Island can chart a course towards a more efficient, safe, and sustainable transportation system that caters to the unique needs of its residents and changing mobility trends. It is important to ensure that transportation infrastructure can adapt to evolving needs while maintaining the Island's identity and sustainability.

# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

## Roadways are controlled by multiple jurisdictions.

The Town is responsible for the vast majority of the road miles, but there are also state and county roads as well as village and private roads. Overall, the Town-controlled roads are adequately maintained and have generally improved in the last five years due to a renewed effort to repair roads. Maintenance efforts are still needed to address the remaining deteriorated roads as well as ongoing needs. The Town must lobby the state and county to address the maintenance and improvements of the roads in their jurisdiction.

## Ferries are an essential component of daily life.

The North Ferry and South Ferry are Shelter Island's only connections to the mainland. Without ferry service, residents, visitors, and businesses on the Island would face significant challenges. The ferry companies have been responsive to Island needs in connecting to off island transit options and are dependable in their operation. They have grown their capacities with the increased demand over the past 40 years and have already planned for and continue to institute responses to the sea level rise.

## Vehicular traffic has grown, and more transportation options are needed, especially to make it easier for people to work on the Island.

Vehicular traffic has increased approximately 20% per decade over the past 40 years. This may not be sustainable given the congestion that already exists in the Heights. While traffic volumes tend to be lower than surrounding areas, congestion can be high during peak seasonal periods, in particular when the ferries disembark and bring a wave of traffic. As noted below, the lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, public transportation, and on-island affordable housing adds to vehicular traffic in as much as commuting distances are increased. Further, workers without transportation walk from the ferries along road shoulders, an undesirable condition from a safety standpoint.

# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

## Roadway safety remains a priority, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists.

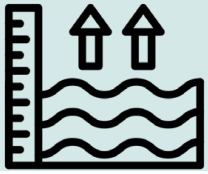
The Town has a small, but significant, number of motor vehicle crashes that result in injury and, rarely, fatality; annually, there have been more pedestrian/bicycle accidents since 2016 than there were before. This is a significant issue that needs to be addressed. Meanwhile, motor vehicle accidents have not increased, drunk driving arrests are trending down over the last decade, and parking tickets have remained steady. However, there is a perception among some residents that speeding is a problem and that speed limits should be lowered.

## Bicycling and walking is popular, but the lack of adequate infrastructure is a concern.

Although its small size and relatively flat terrain makes Shelter Island highly suitable for bicycle transportation, roads are often narrow and lack dedicated bicycle infrastructure. This can lead to accidents and conflicts between bicyclists and motor vehicles. Meanwhile, because roads lack sidewalks and sometimes have narrow shoulders, some residents are not able to safely walk from their homes to destinations or for recreation or exercise.

## The Island's transportation network is vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding

Numerous roads on Shelter Island are subject to flooding. This is likely to increase with climate change. Additionally, work is needed on an ongoing basis (i.e., reconfiguring of land areas and ramps) to ensure that rising sea levels do not impact ferry service.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## ROADWAY NETWORK

The figure below illustrates the Town's roadway network. The 59.3 miles of road are owned and maintained as follows: 49.5 miles are Town- or privately owned, 5 miles are County, and 4.8 miles are NY State-owned roads. The Village of Dering Harbor owns and maintains approximately 3 miles of village roadway.

Shelter Island's one State Road, Route 114, is also designated as New York State Bicycle Route 114. It runs from the North Ferry to the South Ferry and includes the ferry routes themselves. A portion of Route 114 is owned by the Shelter Island Heights Property Owners Corporation with an easement from the State. The Island has five designated Suffolk County Roads.

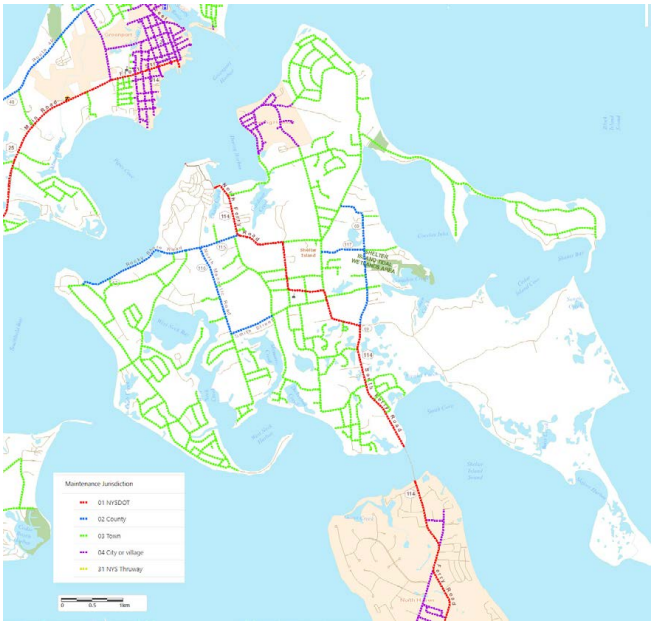



FIGURE 5: ROADWAY MAINTENANCE JURISDICTION

*Source: New York State Roadway Inventory System Viewer*

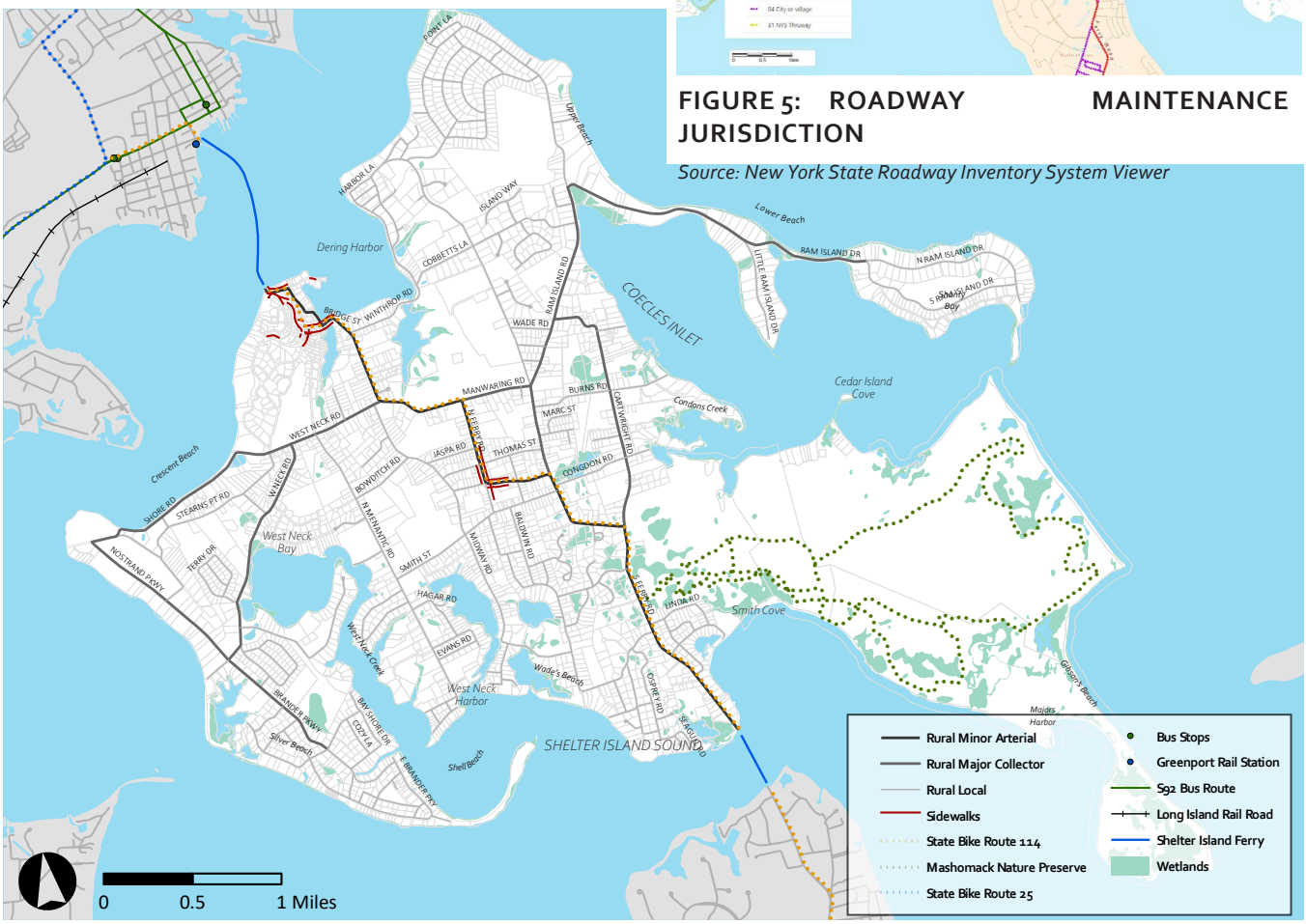



FIGURE 6: ROADWAY NETWORK

*Source: MainStreetGIS,LLC., Suffolk County GIS, and Microsoft*

*Map prepared by Dodson and Flinker, Inc. and Larissa Brown + Associates, LLC*

## Traffic

The map below shows the average annual daily traffic as of 2021 according to the NY State DOT (i.e., Route 114). The data is only collected for roads controlled by the state. The data's utility is limited but can provide a general understanding of how many roads are used and how traffic patterns change over time.

Ferry data provides a clearer picture of how traffic has increased in the past 40 years. As shown in the table below, vehicular traffic on ferries has grown approximately 20% per decade, which has necessitated multi-million-dollar investments by both ferry companies in vessels and infrastructure to meet the demand. For instance, in 1982 South Ferry had only about 25 employees and operated two 9-car and one 12-car vessels. The average age of the vessels was 46 years. Currently, the company employs more than 50 people and operates four 15-car boats and one 12-car boat. The oldest of the 15-car boats was built in 1998 for $1.2 million, and the newest in 2020 at a cost of $3.5 million. Payroll, infrastructure, inflation, and countless related higher costs have followed the traffic increases. North Ferry has experienced the same.

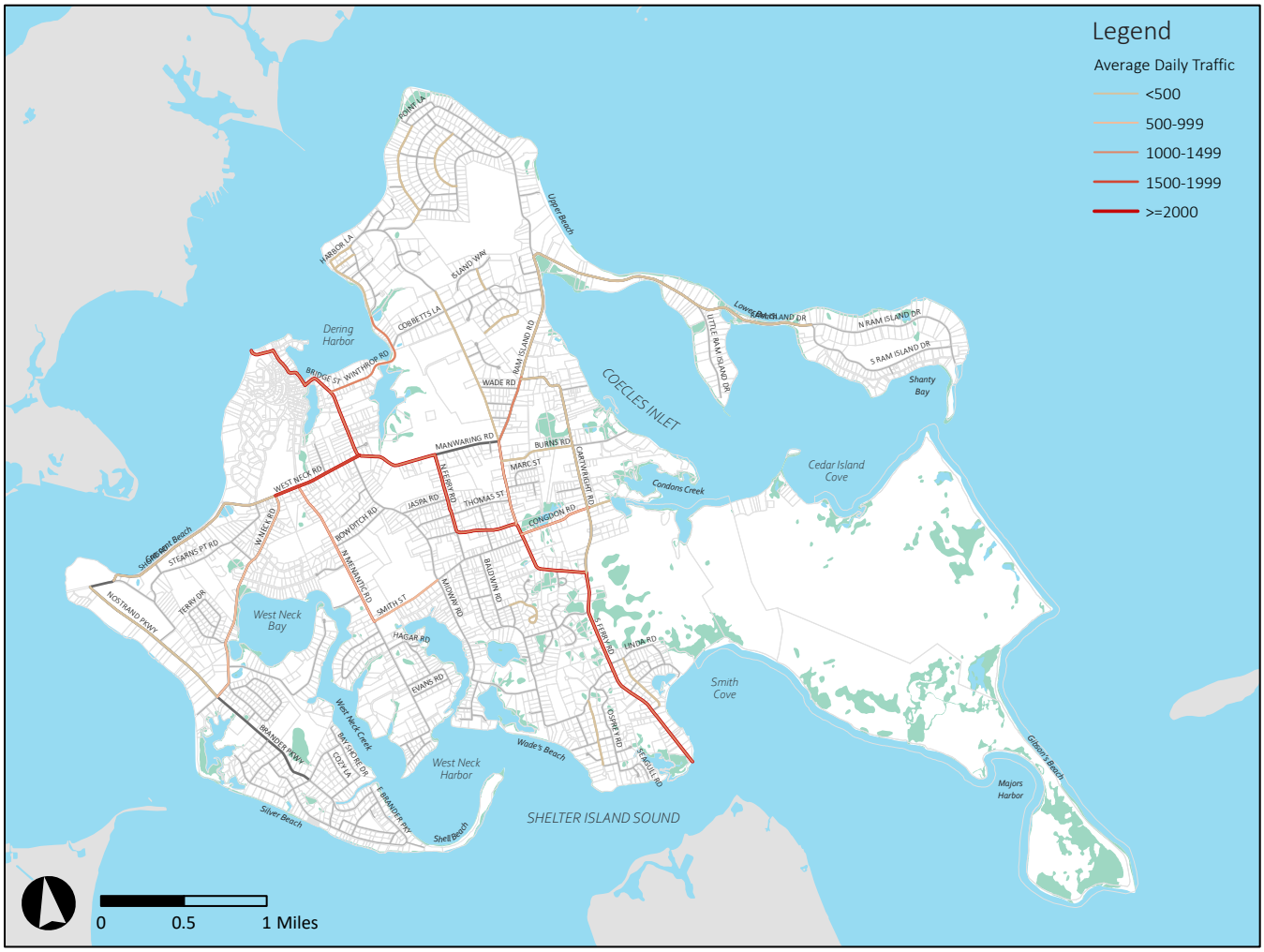



**FIGURE 7: AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC**

*Source: MainStreetGIS,LLC., New York State Department of Transportation*

*Map prepared by Dodson and Flinker, Inc. and Larissa Brown + Associates, LLC*

| | 1982 | 1992 | 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|
| North Ferry | 380,000 | 464,000 | 878,000 |
| South Ferry | 282,000 | 466,000 | 818,998 |

**TABLE 13: CAR TRIPS PER YEAR**

*Source: 1994 Comprehensive Plan and Ferry Companies (2021)*

## Motor Vehicle Crashes

Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) data compiled by the Shelter Island Police Department shows an average of 117 crashes per year between 2011 and 2021. In addition, there has been an average of just under 30 deer-related crashes per year, representing a quarter of the total crashes. The chart indicates that, while crashes are down from their highest levels of 2012-2013, the number has been on a general upward trend since 2015.

Drunk driving incidents have steadily decreased in the last 10 years. Nationally, drunk driving, as measured by fatalities, has been steady since 2011 with an uptick in 2021. Shelter Island has been doing better than the nation in this area of traffic safety.[1]

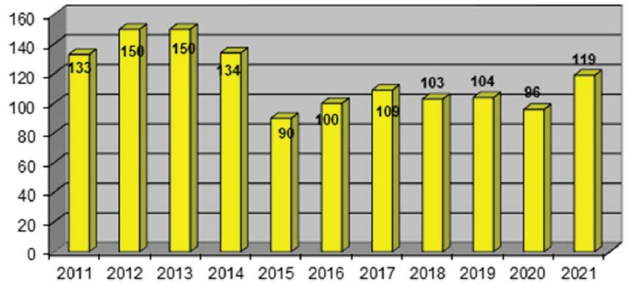



**CHART 21: MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS (MVA) TOTALS**

*Source: Shelter Island Police Department*

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes

Although the numbers are low overall, the Shelter Island Police Department data for bicycle and pedestrian accidents involving injury show that there have been more accidents, on average, since 2016.

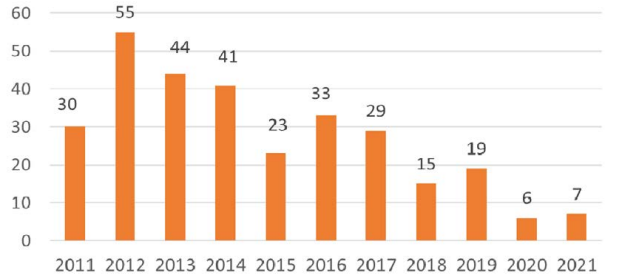



**CHART 22: DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED CITATIONS**

*Source: Shelter Island Police Department*

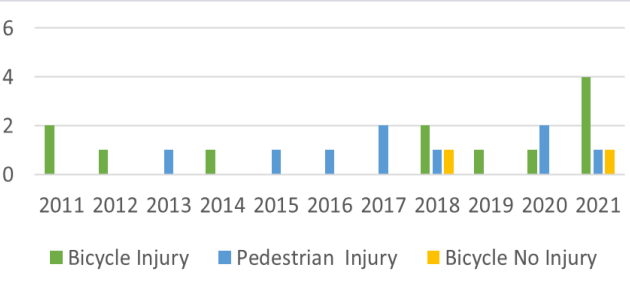



**CHART 23: BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS**

*Source: Shelter Island Police Department*

1 Data collected from crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov

## Road Maintenance

The Shelter Island Highway Department is responsible for day-to-day road maintenance of most streets, including patching potholes; street sweeping and clearing of roadsides, catch basins, and sumps; repairing curbs and sidewalks; and winter snow plowing, sanding, and de-icing. The Shelter Island Heights Property Owners Corporation and the Village of Dering Harbor are responsible for the maintenance of their own roads.

In 2019, the Town Engineer initiated a program to assess Town-owned roads with help from summer engineering interns and the Cornell Local Roads Program (CLRP). CLRP provides training, technical assistance and information to municipal agencies responsible for the maintenance, construction and management of local highways and bridges in New York State. The resulting study evaluated the condition of all Town-owned roads on a scale of 0 to 100. Overall, the Island's roads were rated at 74, compared with a rating of 63 made in 2015. This improvement was credited to a steady pace of repair over the prior five years, including a 2020 repair budget of $307,000. However, the study found that 23 Town-owned roads, amounting to 7.2 miles, have deteriorated to the point that they will need to be completely reconstructed.

The Shelter Island Heights Property Owners Corporation also relies on the CLRP to help prioritize annual repaving work on its network of private roads, undertaken by private contractors.

The Town has access to the NYS Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS), established by the NYS Legislature in 1981. The funding is based on lane miles and is collected as part of the gasoline tax. As much as 68 cents per gallon is collected and redistributed. The funding allowance for Shelter Island in 2022 was $174,000.

Given the inconsistent funding stream for paving projects and the perceived lack of public support for increasing the $132,000 budget line for paving which has been held steady at least since the 2020 budget, it has been difficult to fix a plan for road re-surfacing. In addition, the argument for prioritizing road resurfacing has rested on the fact that if roads are left too long, they require a rebuild from the substrate up, which is a significantly larger and more costly project. Historically, the Town has chosen to repave rather than rebuild, even when the condition of the road may have required rebuilding.

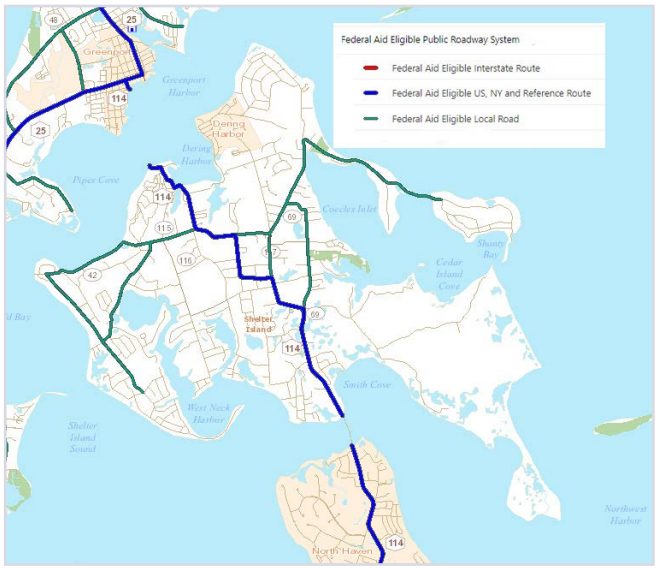



**FIGURE 8: FEDERAL AID ELIGIBLE ROADS**

*Source: New York State Roadway Inventory System Viewer*

In discussions with the Highway Superintendent and the Town Engineer, it was noted that the funding stream for road re-paving is consistently inconsistent. It is recommended that the Town develop and adopt a 5-year plan that recognizes the need for flexibility depending on funding and conditions. This plan should be extended and updated at least every other year.

Several roads, as shown on the map above, are "federal-aid eligible roads." Federal-aid highway funding is planned and distributed based on a multi-year plan, the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), which is created by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC).

## Roads & Flooding

According to the 2020 Suffolk County Hazard Mitigation Plan, numerous roads on Shelter Island are vulnerable to flooding (see list below.) Identifying these vulnerable areas is key as climate change is likely to increase the frequency and severity of flooding, both from sea level rise and increased intensity of precipitation events. Increased precipitation becomes a problem when development regrades and reduces the availability of natural drainage areas. The impact of extreme tides and long-term sea level rise was identified in the town's Emergency Management Plan and is an ongoing project of the Town and the ferry companies. Bulkheads were raised 12 inches at South Ferry, and plans have been

| Coastal Flooding Exposure | Rainfall Flooding Exposure |
|---|---|
| • North Ferry Terminal<br>• South Ferry Terminal<br>• Bridge Street<br>• West Neck Road @ Terry Drive & Westmoreland Drive<br>• Ram Island Road @ Sheep Pasture & Gardiners Bay Drive<br>• 1st Causeway<br>• 2nd Causeway<br>• 3rd Causeway<br>• End of Congdon Road | • Clark Place (area)<br>• Valley Road<br>• Linda Road<br>• Osprey Road<br>• Smith Street from Midway to Rte 114<br>• Midway Road @ North Jaspa<br>• Midway Road (south)<br>• West Neck Road @ Nostrand Parkway<br>• All of Silver Beach (high water table)<br>• Emerson Lane @ the dead end<br>• Hay Beach (area)<br>• Big Ram (area)<br>• North 114 meets South 114 near the medical center<br>• Menantic Road from Smith Street to Bowditch Road<br>• Crescent Beach (by bath houses)<br>• Congdon Road between Rte 114 and North Cartwright Road has been closed twice due to flooding since 2000 |

**TABLE 14: ROADS WITH FLOOD EXPOSURE**

*Source: Suffolk County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2020)*

made to increase the length of platforms from 24 feet to 30 feet to improve vehicular access to and from the ferries. Improvements are under way at the North Ferry and include extending and raising ramps.

Flooding and even ordinary stormwater can harm the waters in and around Shelter Island from a water quality perspective. EPA and DEC initiatives designed to curtail runoff into surface waters include the following: Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4), Storm Water Management Program (SWMP), and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP). These efforts are crucial if pollutants are to be reduced and the aquifer recharged. The Town must complete in the near future the upgrading of storm sewers to prevent runoff from reaching surface waters. This issue is discussed further in Chapters 7 and 10.

## SHELTER ISLAND FERRIES

Shelter Island is served by two independent ferry companies. North Ferry Company is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Shelter Island Heights Property Owners Corporation, while the South Ferry is a family-owned company. An ad hoc Town committee, the Ferry Study Group, assists in reviewing ferry services. In 2019, this committee was involved in establishing 5 a.m. service on the North Ferry to enable better connections to train and bus service in Greenport.

North Ferry operates boats between Shelter Island and Greenport continuously between 5 a.m. and midnight, 365 days per year. In addition, the ferry provides an average of 22 after-hour emergency trips per year.

Volume statistics for 2021, as reported by North Ferry, were:

- 1,294,500 passengers (down from 1,451,000 in pre-pandemic 2019)
- 823,869 cars (driver and passengers included above in passengers)
- 53,719 trucks (driver and passengers included above in passengers)

The trip is just under 1 nautical mile and takes about 15 minutes. Boats generally arrive for unloading and loading 15-20 minutes apart, depending on the time of day and demand, at three active docking areas on the Shelter Island side and two on the Greenport side. The company operates four relatively new ferry boats, with capacity for 25 cars each.

Greenport vehicles and passengers board at the Greenport multi-modal transportation hub, which is on land leased from the Long Island Railroad. The Ferry is accessed by roadways owned by the Village of Greenport and New York State. Ferry access from Shelter Island is on roads owned by the Shelter Island Heights Property Owners Corporation.

The ferries are capable of operating during high winds, including hurricanes. However, extreme high and low tides may interrupt ferry service when the tide exceeds the vertical range of the ramps. Due to sea level rise, minor flooding has become more frequent, and North Ferry has raised one of the landing areas in Greenport, as well as extended the length of the ramp. This redesign will be replicated on three more slips at both ports in the coming years.

North Ferry is one of the largest employers on Shelter Island, with approximately 50 employees, including 32 regular captains that not only operate the vessels but also rotate deckhand duties, five staff in the office, and three engineers. North Ferry also has several pursers who do not operate vessels as well as seasonal and casual (fill in) staff.

South Ferry operates boats between Shelter Island and North Haven Village in the Town of Southampton. A single crossing takes approximately 5 minutes, with boats departing every 10 - 12 minutes. The first boat from Shelter Island departs daily at 5:40 a.m. The last boat departs North Haven at 11:50 p.m., year-round. The last boat service is extended to 1:50 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays from Labor Day until the third weekend in June and is offered daily from the third Friday in June through the Sunday of Labor Day weekend.

Ownership of the South Ferry by the Clark family dates to the early 1700s, when a rowboat was used to transport people and cargo to and from Shelter Island. Unlike North Ferry, South Ferry owns the landings on both sides of the channel. The west slips at both terminals are on South Ferry land, while the east slips are in the Route 114 right-of-way.

Due to rising tides, the Company has begun building replacement bulkheads and docks at least a foot higher than previously and plans to extend the existing ramps 6 feet in anticipation of continued tide increases.

South Ferry regularly operates four boats during the summer season with a fifth on standby. Since 1997, the Company has built four 101-foot steel vessels that carry up to 15 cars and can accommodate any size truck that is legal on the roads. Prior to 1997, the last boat the Clarks built was a 65 foot-wooden vessel in 1926 capable of just six cars and no large trucks. From 1960 until 2002, the Company used old, refurbished, high-maintenance smaller boats until revenues allowed the construction of the state-of-the-art new vessels.

The current fleet has improved carrying capacity and is capable of operating in extremely high winds, as demonstrated during Hurricane Sandy in 2012. With the winds at a steady 93 miles per hour South Ferry, in coordination with Shelter Island and Sag Harbor Emergency Services, transported a woman experiencing a life-threatening event across the channel to a waiting ambulance. There have been interruptions and delays due to storms and ice, but in more than 70 years there has not been a day when South Ferry failed to operate.

## SIDEWALKS AND WALKING PATHS

### Sidewalks

Most areas of Shelter Island are rural in character, with no sidewalks in residential areas. Roads often have small shoulders, with approximately 10 feet of Town-owned right-of-way extending on either side of the roadway. This shoulder is typically grassy and maintained by the Town Highway Department. In some cases, vegetation extends almost to the roadway edge, obstructing passage by pedestrians and, at times, a safe line-of-sight for vehicles and pedestrians alike. Sidewalks are present in and around the Town Center area and Shelter Island Heights.

### Walking Paths

There are a number of walking paths and trails in the Mashomack Preserve, ranging from 1.5 miles to 11 miles, which are very popular. There is also a one-mile wheelchair accessible trail at Mashomack. Sylvester Manor is open from April through October for walking on three trails: the Woodland Walk, the Creekside Loop and the Farm Walk. Five of the Town preserves have walking trails: Bunker Hill County Park, Mildred Flower Hird Nature Preserve, Old Lima Bean Fields, Sachem's Woods, and Turkem's Rest Preserve. In addition, people walk on sidewalks in Shelter Island Heights and the Center, or along road shoulders. A more detailed discussion of walking paths can be found in Chapter 8: Parks, Open Space, and Waterways.

## BICYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

In addition to residents and workers who use bicycles as a means of transportation, Shelter Island is a popular destination for recreational cycling, with many day-trippers visiting from the South and North Forks to bicycle around the Island. While bicycling is common, infrastructure tends to be inadequate. There are no dedicated bicycle lanes or shared-use trails anywhere on the Island, which results in the need for bicyclists and motor vehicles to "share the road." Bicycles are not permitted on the trails in Town preserves, Sylvester Manor Trails, or on the Mashomack trails.

New York Route 114 is a designated bike Route, running north to south on and off the Island and connecting Greenport to East Hampton, for a total distance of 15.35 miles. However, while this is a posted route, there is no dedicated bike lane or shoulders to make it comfortable and safe for bikers to share the road with motorists.

## OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

### Public Transportation

While there is no public or private-sector bus or rail transportation on the Island, the Town's Senior Services Department operates a handicapped accessible bus to transport seniors to various locations on the Island as well as shopping trips and cultural excursions off Island. Volunteer drivers also transport seniors to and from medical facilities and doctor's offices on- and off-Island.

Off-island, the North Ferry connects to a multi-modal station in Greenport with access to the Long Island Railroad station, Hampton Jitney motor coach, and Suffolk County S92 Bus Line. At the South Ferry, the North Haven terminus is a stop on the Suffolk County Bus 10A route.

### Taxi and Ride Sharing Services

There is one company providing taxi service on Shelter Island as of June 2023. Off-Island limousine services also provide options for Islanders for off-Island transportation needs. In addition, there are residents who offer taxi-like service locally and to the airports or Riverhead. Volunteers provide seniors rides to medical appointments on and off island through the senior center.

### Truck Access/Delivery Services

All goods and many services must be transported by way of the North or South ferries. Both ferry companies operate multiple boats capable of accommodating the size and payload of the largest over-the-road trucks. As trucks exit the North Ferry boats onto Route 114, they encounter narrow residential streets and a difficult left turn from Grand Avenue as 114 makes a 90-degree bend onto Chase Avenue. New York Avenue has also been identified as problematic for truck access and, as such, is prohibited for use by vehicles with a registered gross vehicle weight over 24,000 lbs. The access from South Ferry is more direct. Route 114 is less congested in the southern part of the Island.

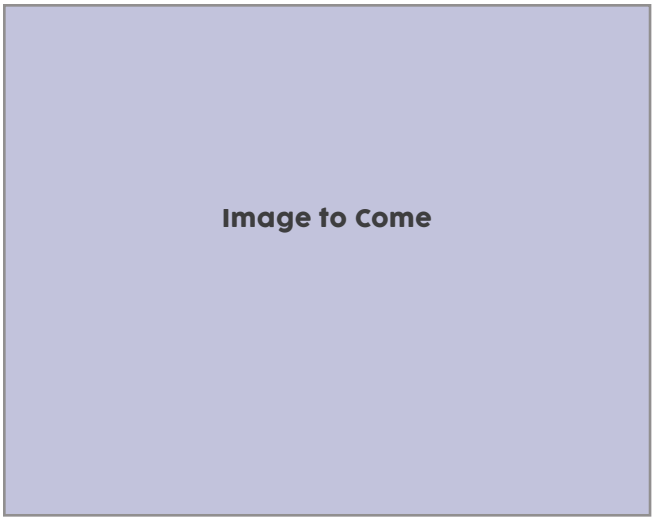
## Recreational/Commercial Waterways Traffic

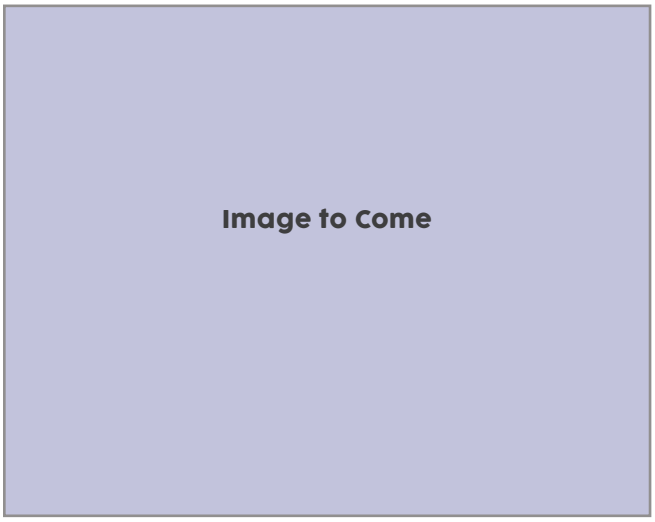
Shelter Island waterways are frequented by recreational boaters/sailors, commercial and recreational fishermen, water taxis, launches, charter boats, and paddlers of all stripes. Each of these users are an integral part of Shelter Island's economy and identity. These activities are discussed further in Chapter 8.

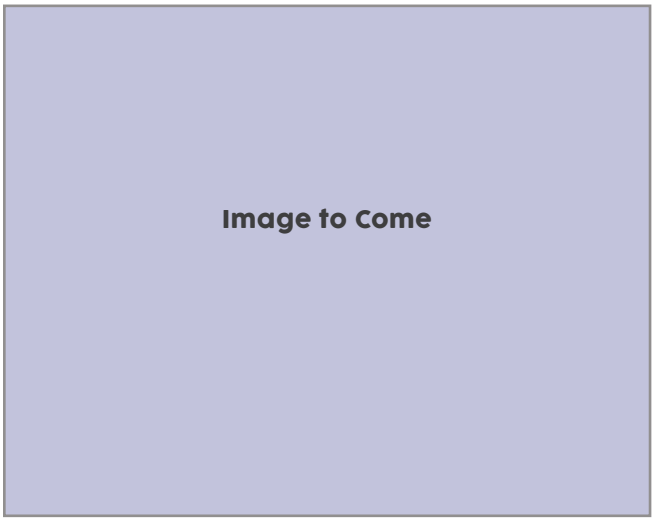
## Air and Seaplane Access

Though not heavily used, the Island accommodates small aircraft at the Town-owned Klenawicus Airfield, a 1,700-foot grass landing strip. The field was acquired by the Town in 2010 and is maintained by the Shelter Island Pilots' Association.

Multiple commercial aviation companies provide seaplane service to Shelter Island from New York City. Thus far, seaplanes have arrived at and departed from Crescent Beach. Restrictions on seaplane access by the Town of East Hampton in 2021 have reportedly resulted in increased arrivals of seaplanes on Shelter Island, with passengers calling a taxi to complete their journey across the South Ferry to the Hamptons Recommendations having to do with seaplanes are provided in Chapter 8: Parks, Open Space, and Waterways.



# GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

## *Goal 6-1:* Design "Complete Streets" that are safe for all modes, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

### Adopt a Complete Streets Policy to encourage roadways that are designed for all users.

A Complete Street Policy would require the Town to consider the convenience and mobility of all users when developing transportation projects on local roads. The Complete Streets Act (Chapter 398, Laws of New York) also requires state, county and local agencies to consider these improvements for transportation projects that receive state and federal funding.

Complete Streets balance the needs of drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, emergency responders, and goods movement based on local context. Complete Street improvements make streets safer, more comfortable and livable for all users. A complete street may include sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions/bump outs, narrower travel lanes, and roundabouts or other traffic calming designs.

### Consider an Island-wide speed limit of 30 mph to ensure the safety of all street users.

The Town should study whether it would be feasible to lower traffic speeds without impacting capacity. This could be studied in specific locations or Island-wide on local roads. It is recognized that Suffolk County and NYSDOT have jurisdiction over their own roads. The speed limit should also be codified in the municipal code to help with clarity and enforcement.

### Conduct a sidewalk study to determine where improved safety will enhance walking.

A sidewalk improvement study would help to identify priority areas for sidewalks. One potential opportunity is creating a network of sidewalks throughout the center of Town and down to the IGA and from North Ferry to the four-way stop at New York Avenue & West Neck Road and then down to Crescent Beach. Priority areas should be near points of interest that generate pedestrian traffic such as parks, community centers, commercial areas, and schools. This study could identify priorities in the short-, medium-, and long-term, with anticipated costs. It could also identify opportunities for funding sources, potential partnerships, agreements, or easements needed for private property, and other short- and long-term maintenance needs.

### Pursue grant funding to develop a dedicated bicycle lane on Route 114.

While this roadway is a NYS designated bicycle route, the roadway width is insufficient for an on-street bike lane. Many portions of Route 114 have inadequate or no road shoulders, which create hazardous conditions for all who share the roadway. Nevertheless, the road is frequently used by bicyclists as it is the main corridor to access destinations throughout the Town as well as to travel to and from the North and South Forks. Dedicated bike lanes can be found on Route 114 in North Haven/Sag Harbor.

In April 2023, the Police Department requested that NYS DOT evaluate different options for bike lanes, which could include a bike lane or shared lane depending on available width. NYSDOT responded that the project is beyond their current capital program given the scope of the project which would require right of way acquisition, relocation of utilities, removal of vegetation, and reconstruction of driveways. However, the Town

can still pursue this project under a NYSDOT Highway Work Permit as a local project, and it may be eligible for Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) grant funding. The Town should pursue this funding to assess the feasibility and costs of this potential project.

## *Goal 6-2:* Identify ways to facilitate traffic flow and improve the efficiency of the roadway network

### Study impact of ferry traffic on local roads.

The vehicular traffic on Shelter Island's ferries can vary depending on the time of year, day of the week, and specific events or holidays. During the peak tourist summer season, weekends, and major holidays, traffic on the ferries can be heavy and comes in waves as ferries arrive. The Town should conduct a study of the ferry traffic to ascertain the percentage of traffic that is residents, tourists, day trippers, and bridge travelers (people traveling between the South and North Forks. This could be done with Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) which can help to determine origin and destination or possibly with in-person surveys done on the ferry. This would allow an evaluation of the "bridge" traffic from ferries that increase the number of vehicles on the roads. The perception is that these vehicles often divert from the primary roads (cut through) and frequently speed. Many of the local roadways lack the design / capacity to handle the additional traffic.

The Town may consider design solutions to slow down traffic and spread it out so that intersections do not become overwhelmed each time a ferry comes in. For example, roundabouts, when designed and implemented correctly, can help distribute traffic more efficiently compared with traditional intersections with traffic signals or stop signs. However, it's important to note that roundabouts work differently from traditional intersections, and their primary goal is to improve traffic flow, safety, and reduce congestion rather than aiming for equal distribution of traffic in all directions.

Another consideration is limiting on-street parking at Island choke points. This is most problematic in the Heights. The Town should study this area and other choke points to relieve intermittent congestion.

## *Goal 6-3:* Continue to maintain and invest in roadways

### Incorporate shoulders along roadways where feasible

The Town should study roads where it may be possible to restore and/or establish the right-of-way/shoulder along its roadways. These strips provide much-needed space for pedestrians and bicyclists and are also needed for vehicular emergency access and snow storage.

### Address maintenance of vegetation along roadways

Many intersections have been losing sight lines due to vegetative encroachment. In 2023, the Town adopted legislation which expressly prohibits obstructions such as hedges and other vegetation in the right-of-way. Most rights-of-way around the Island are about 10' wide. Proper plant placement would be ½ the width at maturity plus 10 feet from the edge of the paved road. In theory, a mature tree or shrub would only reach the property line.

### Improve roadway maintenance and develop a capital plan

The Town needs to develop a 5-year capital improvement plan for maintaining/resurfacing roadways. This document will help to prioritize roadways and ensure that ongoing maintenance needs and infrastructure investments are accounted for in the budget to keep road networks safe, functional, and in good condition. This plan should be re-evaluated and updated at least every other year.

## *Goal 6-4:* Continue to monitor helicopter, airplane, and seaplane traffic to ensure their presence doesn't impair quality-of-life on the Island.

### Monitor air traffic and address regulations as needed

The Town should continue to monitor helicopter, airplane, and seaplane traffic considering possible changes to East Hampton Airport and explore limiting/eliminating sea plane activities in all inland waters and restricting take offs/landings to outside waters.

### Develop and adopt a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)

The LWRP is a planning tool sponsored by New York State which allows municipalities to guide and control development, land use, and other activities along their waterfront areas. The LWRP establishes local policies which are then supported by the state when adopted. Adopting a plan would help to gain better control of water traffic in the waters surrounding Shelter Island and would thus play an important role in regulating and controlling seaplane activities. This recommendation is discussed further in Chapter 8.

## *Goal 6-5:* Improve both on- and off-Island transportation options

### Explore a passenger-only launch service to and from Greenport.

This service would facilitate early morning travel (for example, the 4:30 am Hampton Jitney) and late-night returns. This option would be faster and cheaper to operate compared with the existing ferry during off-hour periods when existing ferry service is limited.

### "around-the-island jitney" service

A jitney or shuttle service could serve as an essential transportation option to meet the unique needs of tourists, visitors, and residents. The Island experiences seasonal population influxes, creating challenges of traffic congestion, parking shortages, and environmental impacts. The shuttle service would also provide alternative transportation options to older residents or others who choose not to use a car. A well-designed jitney or shuttle service could theoretically drive from ferry to ferry, stopping at destinations along the route.

### Explore the possibility of providing

## *Goal 6-6:* Improve the resilience of the transportation network

### Reduce stormwater runoff along roadways

Reducing stormwater runoff along roads is essential to prevent pollution from entering surface waters and managing potential flooding. Stormwater runoff carries pollutants such as oil, sediment, litter, and chemicals from roads and adjacent areas into water bodies, impacting water quality. These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. It is recommended that the Town adopt a policy to collect runoff waters in roadside catch basins before these waters can reach the shoreline as part of the MS4 effort increasing aquifer recharge especially in vulnerable areas. Some strategies to consider include the following:

- Green Infrastructure, including rain gardens, bioswales, and vegetated swales: These features help capture, slow down, and naturally filter stormwater, allowing it to be absorbed by the soil or evaporate.
- Roadside Vegetation: Plant native trees, shrubs, and grasses alongside roads to create vegetative buffers, which absorb and filter stormwater runoff while also preventing soil erosion.
- Permeable Pavement: This allows rainwater to infiltrate through the surface, reducing runoff. It can be particularly useful for parking lots and sidewalks.
- Rainwater Harvesting: Rain barrels or cisterns can be used to collect and store rainwater for later use (i.e. irrigation).
- Redirecting Runoff: Constructing curb extensions, diversion berms, or other structures can help redirect runoff into vegetated areas, where it can be absorbed by the soil.
- Detention and Retention Basins: These facilities temporarily store excess stormwater during heavy rain events, reducing the intensity of runoff into water bodies.

### Address the Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan and search for funding

One of the recommendations in Chapter 10: Utilities, Sustainability, and Resilience, is to continue to implement the Towns hazard mitigation plan. This plan includes measures to reduce risks to roadways, in particular, those roads that serve as evacuation routes. It is necessary to have functional roadways during an emergency event to allow emergency responders, medical personnel, and essential service providers to reach affected areas quickly. Implementing risk reduction measures on vulnerable roadways can help prevent or minimize damage, thereby significantly lowering the cost of repairs and the recovery process. This plan also identifies potential impacts of sea level rise on the ferry terminals and ramp heights to ensure safe, emergency ferry travel during all-weather conditions. Terminals at times are prone to flooding restricting access.

Click Here to Submit Your Comments