Town of Wells, Maine
Comprehensive Plan Update

Submitted To:

Comprehensive Plan ~~Improvement Task Force~~Update Committee
Wells, Maine

Submitted by:

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In Cooperation with:

Town of Wells Planning Department

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Part 1 – Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Wells is a publicly adopted document that states what the citizens of Wells want to achieve for their community over the next decade, and how they intend to achieve it. What the citizens want to achieve is captured in the Vision and then further identified ~~are known~~ as "policies", and ~~how they intend to achieve itare know~~ the steps they will take together to make this vision a reality are known as "implementation ~~programs~~strategies".

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PURPOSE AND USE

The Comprehensive Plan's purpose is to document ~~the Town's commitment~~ the direction and actions needed in Wells to achieve ~~a~~ the town's vision for the future (*See Part 2 Chapter 1 for the Vision*). The Comprehensive Plan reflects a long-range (e.g., ten year) view of future issues and opportunities. Issues are identified, projected and options selected to set a course of action. These decisions are the basis for the policies and implementation ~~programs~~strategies identified in this Plan.

The adopted Plan is used by citizens, elected officials, Town Committees, business investors, and others. They use it to help make daily decisions about the issues and opportunities that shape the Town's physical, social and economic development. It is used to establish the legal foundation for several implementation programs and activities including, but not limited to the Town's land use regulations. While the Comprehensive Plan is not a zoning ordinance, land use regulations must be consistent with the Plan.

In addition, the Comprehensive Plan's purpose is to implement Maine ~~State Planning Law~~Growth Management Act (M.R.S.A. Title 30-A, Chapter 187) and related state and regional development policies.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Comprehensive Plan is organized into four parts: Introduction, Policies and Implementation Strategies, Implementation Program, and Appendix.

Part 1: Introduction

This ~~part~~ section describes the Plan's purpose, use, planning process, and plan adoption.

Part 2: Policies and Implementation Strategies

This ~~part~~ section addresses key ~~decision~~ issues facing the ~~Town~~ town and new opportunities, and ~~(e.g., population growth, land use, transportation, community appearance, economic development, housing, etc.)~~ identifies implementation actions that will be pursued.

Part 3: Implementation Program

~~This program describes the different types and purposes of actions available to achieve the policies.~~ This section organizes the many implementation actions identified, assigns primary responsibility, and determines the level of priority.

Part 4: Appendix

This ~~part~~ section includes background research and analysis on various community development issues that provide the basis for the ~~adopted~~ identified policies and strategies.

The Comprehensive Plan is a living document. As ~~Town~~ town issues and opportunities change and decisions need to be made, the Plan must be reviewed and updated to reflect current policies and implementation programs. Therefore, comments and suggestions about the Comprehen~~-~~sive Plan are always welcome. The Town of Wells ~~has~~ will establish~~ed~~ a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee to take the lead on these efforts upon adoption of this Plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADOPTION

The Comprehensive Plan is adopted by the Citizens of Wells at a Town Meeting. Unlike other communities in the region, this is accomplished when the Comprehensive Plan is presented at the polls. In 2009 the Wells Town Meeting process became a secret ballot voting referendum rather than a traditional Town Meeting format. However, this process is still referred to as "town meeting".

The first Comprehensive Plan was written in 1963. In the 1980's a major effort was made to prepare a new Comprehensive Plan. It consisted of three volumes and was adopted November 5, 1991. A revision was adopted on November 3, 1993. The present Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2002 and amended in 2003 and amended with changes to allow for the new Transportation Center zone.

The plan adopted in 2002 was found by the Maine State Planning Office to be inconsistent with state Growth Management law. In response to these inconsistencies, the Town of Wells formed a Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force in 2003. ~~This plan represents work~~The 2005 Comprehensive Plan was completed by this Task Force. ~~in 2003 through 2005. It builds upon, incorporates, consolidates, reformats and updates prior Comprehensive Plan policies and implementation programs.~~ In 2016 efforts to update the 2005 Plan were not approved by the Comprehensive Plan Committee, and as a result were not presented for consideration by the citizens of Wells at the Town Meeting. A citizen initiated local ordinance titled Chapter 12 was adopted in 2019 to guide all future comprehensive plan update efforts in Wells, and to ensure that the 2005 Plan serves as the starting point. The Comprehensive Plan Update will be presented to the citizens of Wells for adoption at a Town Meeting.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The Comprehensive Planning process is an open process that encourages citizen participation, and is informed by state, regional, and local data and resources. This process is guided by a Comprehensive Plan Update Committee in accordance with the locally adopted ordinance Chapter 12.

State Planning Requirements

The Maine Legislature adopted the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act in 1988 and the Growth Management Act. The act requires that each municipality in the ~~State~~state, except those under the jurisdiction of the Land Use ~~Regulation~~ Planning Commission (~~LURC~~LUPC), developa local growth management program that guides the future growth of that community. The local growth management program must be consistent with State and regional goals and with the State's coastal policies.

Under the act, the local growth management program consists of two parts:

1. The preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan by the Town. This plan must comply with State requirements and must be reviewed by State and regional agencies prior to its final adoption.

2. The preparation and adoption of an implementation program that is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and carries out the goals and policies set forth in the Plan. State and regional agencies must also review this program.

The State law requires that Wells update its Comprehensive Plan. This update of the Town's Comprehensive Plan has been prepared to fulfill that requirement.

Town of Wells Town Planning Program

Based on the Maine State Planning requirements, the Town of Wells Planning Program includes the following phases/planning activities that may occur simultaneously depending on the issues/opportunities facing the Town:

Phase I - Issue /Opportunity Research and Analysis

Phase II - Alternative Plan Evaluation and Selection

Phase III - Comprehensive Plan or Amendments Adoption

Phase IV - Implementation Development Plans, Projects and Programs

Phase V - Annual and Five-Year Capital Budgeting

Phase VI - Monitoring and Evaluation

The results of this planning process are a series of interrelated Town plans including:

Comprehensive Plan – The comprehensive, long-range (e.g., ten-year), general plan that contains general policies to guide the physical, social and economic development of the Town. The Comprehensive Plan is reviewed and updated as needed.

Development Plans and Programs – Short-range, specific plans and programs for an area of Town (e.g., Town Center or Harbor), or functional activity (e.g., Transportation and Circulation or ~~Drainage~~ Open Space Protection) prepared and adopted to implement adopted Comprehensive Plan

policies. The Development Plans and Programs contain detailed design concepts and/or standards to guide the physical, social, economic development of the Town. In some cases, theDevelopment Plans and Programs will need to be adopted by ordinance to provide the legal basis for implementing the Comprehensive Plan (e.g., the Development Plan for Transportation and Circulation for requiring street dedications, easements, etc.). In other cases the Board of Selectmen or Planning Board may adopt Development Plans where they are providing a guide for development. Development Plans or Programs are prepared as needed and approved by thePlanning Board after a public hearing and updated as needed.

Site Plans – ~~Immediate, s~~Specific plans for a site or parcel of land that an Applicant proposes to develop. Site Plans require detailed information about the land use, location, development, traffic and circulation, parking, appearance, landscaping, drainage, etc. as described in the Town Land Use Ordinance. These plans are reviewed for ~~consistency with the Comprehensive Plan~~ compliance, any applicable Development Plans or Programs, Federal or State regulations, and Town Ordinances. The Staff Review Committee or Planning Board may approve ~~site~~ Site Plans after public meetings which may include a public hearing. Site Plans are prepared submitted, reviewed and may be amended as needed.

Subdivision Plans – ~~Immediate, s~~Specific plan for the legal division and development of a specific parcel of land. Subdivision Plans require detailed information about the street layout, lot size, grading, drainage, impact on water quality, and other information as described in the Town Subdivision Ordinance. These plans are reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, any applicable Development Plans or Programs, Town Ordinances and applicable State and Federal regulations. The Planning Board may approve subdivision Plans after a public hearing. Subdivision Plans are prepared and amended as needed.

Construction Plans – ~~Immediate, s~~Specific working drawings with detailed specifications for the implementation of an adopted Development Plan, Site Plan or Subdivision Plan. These plans could be for the construction or development of a street, building, park, etc. The Office of Planning and Development reviews construction Plans and Development for consistency with approved Development, Site or Subdivision Plans and other applicable ~~building and other~~ codes.

Comprehensive Plan Update Process

~~As stated above, this update of the Comprehensive Plan is the result of the Town of Wells' reaction to State Planning Office inconsistencies identified in the 2002 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force worked on this version of the plan in 2003 and 2004. The Task Force is comprised of citizens, selectmen and Town staff. The Task Force completed its work under the guidance of the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission, the Town's planning contractor.~~ This update process was led by the Wells Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) created by the Board of selectmen as identified in Chapter 12. The CPUC was composed of an engaged group of citizen volunteers who provided their time, energy, and knowledge by guiding and informing the creation of this updated Comprehensive Plan. Assisted by Town Staff and the selected consulting team, this process was governed by Chapter 12, a local ordinance that now regulates the update process for the Wells Comprehensive Plan.

Summary of Public Participation

As part of this comprehensive planning process, the Town of Wells developed a public outreach and engagement plan, and the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee hosted public outreach activities to identify community issues that matter to residents and community members. These events and online activities provided opportunities to gather feedback from the public on important local issues. The summary of results obtained through these outreach efforts are included in the Appendix in a Public Outreach Summary Report. Outreach mechanisms included:

- Mailings, social media posts, and tabling at a community event
- A project website and public feedback form
- Monthly meetings open to the public with two public comment periods at each
- Community Forum Event #1 - focusing on land use change since 2005 and future visioning
- Community Forum Event #2 - focusing on existing conditions and community issues
- Alternative Survey Option - for those unable to attend the second community forum
- Focus Groups - focusing on policies, strategies, and actions for a variety of topics
- Public hearings prior to adoption

Part 2 – Policies and Implementation Strategies

Chapter 1 The Vision for Wells

~~The Comprehensive Plan's Vision for Wells describes the overall features of what the citizensof Wells want their Town to be~~ This Vision for the Town of Wells was informed by the existing conditions analysis completed in 2021, and located in the Appendix of this Plan. It was then created with feedback and direction from the residents of Wells and the members of the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee. ~~like. The~~ This Vision ~~defines~~ addresses the overall character of the ~~Town~~ town in terms of its natural, social and built environment while recognizing the changing economy and the realities of climate change that local leaders and residents are facing. The intent of the Vision is to help visualize the Town of Wells have a clear image to work towards through the many implementation actions identified in this Plan.

THE VISION FOR WELLS

As a historic coastal New England community, the town of Wells contains valued natural resources including conserved forest lands, protected surface waters, an active harbor, a productive estuary supporting wildlife and fisheries, and several prized beaches. Over the past decade, Wells has worked to protect and steward this important network of natural resources while seeking to guide new development activity in ways that both preserve and enhance the community's distinct character.

As the community continues to transition to new types of economic activity and away from the land-based industries it relied on in the past, Wells remains a highly desirable place to live and work because of its welcoming people, network of protected open spaces, history, and coastal location. Together, the citizens of Wells are working to embrace new residents and economic opportunities, while making the community more resilient to the changing climate and coastal hazards. This has been accomplished through both new land use regulations and infrastructure investments. These changes are now guiding and informing new business and housing opportunities that add value and reinforce the character of the community. Quality municipal services with an emphasis on health, safety and sustainability, and an interconnected transportation system also contribute to the quality of life for residents, and continue to attract seasonal visitors.

Wells is a terrific community with great people and a great environment. The vision for Wells is to preserve and promote Wells' small-town historic traditional rural New England seacoast community character, appearance and values for a better quality of life.

If quality is conformance to a standard, then continually improving quality means continually setting and achieving higher standards for excellence in planning, design, development, service and operations. Citizens drive standards: their aspirations, expectations, their goals and policies.

Setting standards will enable Wells to:

- Retain and improving the quality of life.
- Promote economic opportunity.
- Promote health and safety.
- Promote educational opportunity.
- Promote environmental protection.

Vision Benefits

There are several benefits from this vision for Wells including:

1. Retaining Small Town Character and A Better Quality of Life.

The first benefit is retaining and promoting a better environment for business and living. Wells' economic base is tourism. Its attraction for tourist and residents alike is its historic and traditional New England seacoast and rural environment, character and appearance. This character and appearance is derived from Wells' architecture and rural environment. The architecture reflects the New England Colonial and Victorian styled wood homes, buildings, barns or barn like buildings painted in colonial colors that give Wells its unique character herein referred to as Traditional New England Style or the Wells Maine Style. This architectural Style also influences the design of signs, graphics, street lighting, paving and the other "built" features in the Town.

Similarly, the Traditional New England Style reflects the Town's unique setting on the seacoast/marine estuary and in the upland rural forested area. Tourists and residents alike are attracted to this town character and appearance. Thus, the vision is to preserve and enhance the traditional New England style small town character and appearance for everyone's benefit.

2. Improved Central Area

A second benefit is improving the central area of Wells in the vicinity of the Route 1/Route 109 intersection. This area forms the historic commercial heart of the Town and it will be enhanced with pedestrian and other transportation improvements that will protect its character and advance its livability.

3. Protecting Rural Areas and Neighborhoods

A third benefit is preserving and enhancing the rural areas (i.e. with agricultural, forestry and residential uses) and residential neighborhoods (i.e., with low, medium and higher density residential uses) of Wells. Neighborhoods will also be linked to other neighborhoods and to the central area by pedestrian and bicycle ways to promote off-road movement, open spaces, and scenic local and collector streets.

4. Beach Areas with Neighborhoods and Village Centers

A fourth benefit is protecting and enhancing the seacoast and adjacent marine estuary areas and residential areas with neighborhoods and neighborhood village centers. The areas will feature less vehicular traffic, public access and open spaces to protect natural ecologically critical areas. The village centers could include limited convenience services and public facilities suchas a fire station or park. The neighborhoods will also be linked to other neighborhoods and the central area by pedestrian and bicycle ways to promote off-road movement, open spaces, and scenic local and collector streets.

5. Open Space and Natural Ecologically Critical Areas

A fifth benefit is preserving and protecting land for recreation, tree growth and natural wildlife habitat, and, where appropriate, linking it by streams, pedestrian and bicycle paths and other ways.

6. Transportation Center (Maine Turnpike Exit 19 Area)

A sixth benefit is continuing to develop a mixed-use business area aimed at serving the customers or the new Wells Transportation Center with Amtrak "Downeaster" train service and Maine Turnpike (Interstate 95) Exit 19 access. As described more fully in Chapters 6, 7, &8 of this plan, land use and development policies and regulations will be prepared in order to promote the development/redevelopment of this area to serve travelers (tourists, residents, and others) at this transportation gateway to the Wells community. The Town will work with the Turnpike Authority and developers to effectively utilize the Transportation Center access road and the traffic signal at Route 109. Traditional New England style architecture will be promoted.

Chapter 2 – Population Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Population Policies and Strategies section includes goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to the amount and timing of population growth. The Land Use Policies and Strategies then address the location ~~of~~ and character of development to accommodate and regulate future population growth.

Wells' population growth is shaped in part by regional and national growth trends. An understanding of population trends within a community is important for developing policies to accommodate change, and will help Wells establish an appropriate direction for the future. Wells' population changes and characteristics are due in part to its geographic location. It is easily accessible from the Maine Turnpike, making it an attractive location for individuals to live in the town and commute to jobs in other communities~~elsewhere~~. Businesses in Wells also provide employment opportunities for individuals that live elsewhere in the region. ~~In addition,~~ Wells' waterfront location also makes it attractive to summer visitors who are a significant portion of Wells' seasonal population. See Appendix A for recent trends and analysis ~~of~~ related to the population and demographics of the community.

The population of Wells is increasing at a higher rate of growth than any other municipality in York County. From 2010 to 2020, the population increased by 26%. As the population of Wells increases it is also aging, and the median age of residents is now 52 years old. On top of this, the seasonal population in Wells is also increasing. The peak seasonal population of Wells is estimated to be 48,409, a 44% increase since 2004. These increases in seasonal and year-round population create a strain on infrastructure and over time change the character of Wells.

Goals

State Goal:

Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of ~~each~~ the community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl. ~~(Growth Management Act)~~

~~**Regional Goal:**~~

Wells Goals:

1. Manage the rate of residential and non-residential growth in a manner that maintains the Town's ~~rural~~network of open spaces~~, small town~~ and coastal community character, and is consistent with the Town's ability to accommodate it.

2. Provide opportunity for a variety of individuals to live in Wells including young families,

seniors, and people of diverse backgrounds and income levels. While ensuring that these new housing units do not deter from the character and function of the community.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Ensure that residential growth ~~in rural areas~~ is accommodated in suitable locations that are properly zoned, have appropriate environmental conditions and allow for provision of proper access and public services exclusive of water and sewer.

~~2. Provide opportunity for higher density residential development in areas that have appropriate community facilities and services, including public water and sewer.~~

2. Continue to monitor and manage the rate of residential growth to ensure that such growth does not unduly strain public facilities and services and does not damage the environment.

3. Encourage the creation and growth of commercial establishments and services designed to serve resident populations with childcare, youth programs and activities, family-oriented activities and entertainment, and senior programming and support.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

~~1. Limit population growth to 132 dwelling units per year set forth in the existing WellsResidential Growth and Land Use ordinances.~~

~~2.~~1. Direct the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to monitor and create a legal means to regulate the rate of growth and development. This does not mean to stop all new growth; rather, it means to direct new growth to appropriate areas of the community and over time reduce the impact and rate of growth so that it more closely matches the rates of growth of surrounding communities.

~~3.~~2. Identify available, allowable, and appropriate ~~Establish different~~ growth ~~limits~~ management strategies for areas identified as growth and non-growth areas in ~~the Future Land Use Plan~~this Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. ~~(see Chapter 6).~~

Implementation Strategies

~~1. Revise the zoning districts in Rural Areas and requirements for these districts as identified and described in the Land Use policies in Chapter 6 of this Plan.~~

~~2. Adopt the proposed zoning district changes and requirements for the higher density Growth Areas that are identified and described in the chapter on Land Use policies.~~

~~3. Amend the Residential Growth Management Program to support the~~

~~growth and non-growth designations in the Future Land Use Plan (see Chapter 6).~~

1. Establish a standing Growth Management Committee to review the ~~growth managementordinance~~ tools available for managing growth in the Town of Wells on an ongoing basis and make recommendations to the Selectmen. The previous Growth Management Committee was sunsetted in 2008 and if re-established should ~~The Committee shall consider~~ monitor regional growth trends, ~~similar~~ research and provide examples of ordinances and other growth management techniques ~~in~~ from surrounding communities, and consider the long-term capacity of Wells' municipal facilities and services.

2. Coordinate the growth and development related implementation strategies identified in this Comprehensive Plan to ensure that Wells also addresses other housing, development, natural resource, and land use objectives in keeping with the community's Vision for the future.

Chapter 3 - Natural Resources Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Natural Resources Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to the protection, conservation and development of Wells' natural resources. Natural resources for the purposes of this Plan include surface waters (including rivers, streams, ponds, estuaries, and coastal waters), wetlands, groundwater, wildlife and fisheries (and associated habitat), soils (including farmland soils), forestlands and timber, floodplains, and beaches (including sand dunes).

Natural resources contribute to defining a community's unique character. Wells' natural resources provide residents with a rich quality of life and many recreational opportunities. The continued presence of intact natural resources such as forests, farmlands, water bodies, and wetlands on the landscape is an integral component of Wells' distinct character, now and in the vision for the town's future. Protected natural resources mitigate the effects of visual and noise pollution from developed areas and transportation corridors. Natural resources are also an important consideration in estimating the Town's capacity for growth and development potential. Natural resources can provide both opportunities and constraints for growth. For example, steep slopes and wetlands are inappropriate for development while better drained, flatter areas are generally considered more suitable for development. The natural resource base of Wells is an important factor in determining local land use decisions.

See Appendix A for an analysis of Wells' natural resources, including critical resources. Critical natural resources are ~~those~~defined as natural resources with unusual and/or significant geological, biological, or hydrological features (Comprehensive Planning Manual: A Manual for Maine Communities). Under federal and/or state law, critical natural resources warrant protection from the negative impacts of development. ~~See Appendix A for an analysis of Wells' critical natural resources.~~

Goals

State Goal:

1. Protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers, and coastal areas. (Growth Management Act)

2. Protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas. (Growth Management Act)

~~**Regional Goals:**~~

~~1. Maintain and, where possible, improve the quality of our natural environment through actions that manage resources as a system rather than as local segments.~~

~~2.~~1. Work in collaboration with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan to address pressing local and regional management issues, including climate change and its impacts on coastal ecosystems and communities, development pressures, land use change impacts on coastal habitats, and water quality degradation. At the time of this comprehensive plan update, the current management plan is for 2019-2024, and will be updated regularly.

Wells Goals:

1. Assure the Town's natural features, including the marshes and wetlands, beaches, aquifers, critical wildlife habitats, and floodplains, that are truly environmentally sensitive areas and create a truly outstanding, but fragile, environment are protected from damage and preserved for future generations.

2. Enhance the Town's programs for protecting sensitive, natural resources through regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms.

~~2.~~3. Protect areas of Wells that are vulnerable to the increased flood risk accompanied by climate change impacts such as sea level rise and storm surge flooding, and enhance Wells' climate resilience by protecting and enhancing areas of the town that provide flood mitigation and floodwater storage ~~and to collaborate with regional and state agencies to develop proactive plans in response to these projected climate impacts.~~

~~3.~~4. Support programs for acquiring key land areas of environmental concern to provide for the protection of these resources, while compensating the property owner.

~~4.~~5. Work cooperatively with federal and state environmental regulators to enforce regulations that protect the Town and region's natural resources.

~~5.~~6. Develop land use controls that encourage these areas to be protected and permanently set aside as land development occurs.

~~6.~~ Protect the Branch Brook aquifer from potential sources of contamination by controlling land use in this area and maintaining the availability and quality of other existing and potential water supplies.

7. Allow the removal of mineral resources such as sand and gravel in a manner which minimizes the impact on these areas and surrounding neighborhoods, provides for the reclamation of these sites, and protects the groundwater from contamination.

8. Protect, manage, and support natural ~~resource~~ resource-based enterprises such as ~~agriculture, forestry, and mineral extraction.~~sustainable forestry and agriculture.

9. Place high value on the protection and long-term management of and education about the Town's ecological systems including soils, surface and ground water, wetlands, beaches, natural vegetation, and wildlife. The natural environment should be used as a guide to manage future growth recognizing that Wells' natural systems provide opportunities and

constraints for both conservation and development.

10. Assure ocean beaches continue to be a community resource.
~~10.~~11. Protect Wells against future climate threats to critical natural resources, marine resources, and freshwater resources.
12. Assure that natural resource conservation is not mutually exclusive of recreational usage and opportunity. The two should be collaborative.
~~11.~~13. Protect Well's skies against light pollution with the goal of creating dark skies.

14. Protect the Wells coastal marsh system's continued existence in the face of future inundation from coastal flooding and sea level rise by conserving adjacent upland for the purpose of future marsh migration.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

General

1. Encourage the use of environmentally sensitive areas and critical habitats in a manner that does not jeopardize the environmental value of their resource.
~~1.~~2. Ensure consistency of the Town's land use ordinances with the protection of Wells' natural resources and critical resources.

3. Allow the removal of mineral resources such as sand and gravel in a manner that minimizes the impact on these areas and surrounding neighborhoods, provides for the reclamation of these sites, and protects the groundwater from contamination.
4. Strictly enforce development regulations and setbacks aimed to protect natural resources, such as wetland and water course setbacks.

~~2.~~5. Consider population growth and increased development when planning for natural resource protection. Over-development can affect fragmentation of open space, threaten water resources, threaten wildlife habitat, cause tree removal, and impact wetlands, and as such, development and natural resource protection ~~and~~are linked.

6. Consider holding developers responsible for negative environmental impacts associated with building.
7. Promote and protect natural resource-dependent recreation opportunities (including walking, hiking, bicycling, kayaking, wildlife viewing, shellfish harvesting, and water-based activities), businesses, and industries with land use ordinances, open space rules, and natural resource protection planning. The balance between protecting and promoting natural resource access may also benefit from efforts to limit public and recreational access in some environmentally sensitive areas.

Beaches

1. ~~Assure~~ Ensure public access to the beaches for both residents and tourists while protecting the livability of the beach neighborhoods.

2. Manage the beaches in cooperation with property owners to control overuse, ~~providenecessary~~ provide~~ssary~~ facilities, and promote a wholesome family environment.

3. Maintain and protect the physical quality of the beach systems through activities such as cleaning, stabilization, and sand replenishment.

4. Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and local transit access to the beaches.

5. Create appropriate transportation links ~~(e.g. ferry~~ferries, ~~bridges, etc.)~~ between the Harbor, Wells Beach, and Drakes Island, such as ferries and water taxis.

Groundwater

1. Protect the quality of the groundwater in the Branch Brook Aquifer and in the Town's other sand and gravel aquifer areas that can be used for high volumes of domestic use by implementing and enforcing regulations that control the use, handling, and storage of hazardous materials.

2. Protect the quality of the groundwater in areas not served by public water and sewer by ensuring existing chemical limit standards set by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection are enforced and ensuring proper inspections of all septic system installations. Examples of such chemicals include nitrates and PFAS compounds.

~~2.~~3. Proactively support the state in addressing any PFAS contamination that is found to have occurred in Wells due to historic spreading of sewage residuals and other biosolids, or through septage spreading.

Surface Waters

1. Protect surface water quality by aggressively managing ~~point and~~ non-point source pollution including stormwater discharge.

2. Cooperate with surrounding communities and environmental non-profit groups to minimizethe potential for surface water pollution by inappropriate uses or activities.

~~2.~~3. Establish a long-term water quality monitoring program of surface waters in the Town to better understand threats to surface waters and identify action items needed to protect and/or restore water quality. Establish monitoring sites along Branch Brook, Depot Brook, Green Brook, Merriland River, Stevens Brook, and Webhannet River.

Wetlands

1. Protect and maintain the valuable functions of tidal and freshwater wetlands by minimizing the impact of development and allowing appropriate uses such as low impact recreation, wildlife habitat, and limited, controlled timber harvest.

2. Ensure protection of high value wetlands including vernal pools, through regulatory and non-regulatory implementation programs and place high value on these resources when designating growth and rural areas in Wells.

3. Protect land adjacent to wetlands, especially coastal wetlands, to allow marsh migration due to increased coastal flooding and sea level rise.

Soils

1. Base the density of development in areas outside public water and sewer service on the assimilative capacity of soils to accommodate onsite ~~waste water~~wastewater systems. ~~No lot size shall be less than 20,000 square feet if not on sewer and water if the Maine State Code changes.~~

Wildlife and Fisheries

1. ~~1.~~Ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of Wells' valuable wildlife habitat and fisheries through the use of regulatory strategies and ~~out reach~~outreach to governmental and non-profit organizations involved with natural resource protection and management.

2. Protect large habitat blocks to provide core habitat blocks that provide undisturbed habitat conditions required by many of Maine's species.

Floodplains

1. Collaborate with regional and state agencies, neighboring municipalities and states, and other key partners to develop proactive actions to address projected climate change-induced flood vulnerabilities and areas of resilience.
2. Guide future development away from flood-prone areas.

~~1.~~3.Manage floodplain areas to ensure the safety and welfare of those individuals withproperties in such areas.

~~2.~~4.Maintain and update comprehensive community flood hazard management policies and strategies~~.~~ (s~~S~~ee Chapter 15 and the Appendix).

3. Ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of Wells through the use of regulatory strategies and ~~out reach~~outreach to governmental and non-profit organizations involved with natural resource protection and management.

Education

1. ~~1.~~Work with schools and the community to promote education of environmental sciences and ecology.
2. Use the Fenderson Wildlife Commons and other locations for environmental education opportunities for students and the public in conjunction with the Wells Conservation Commission.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. Existing Land Use, ~~and~~ Subdivision, Floodplain Management, Hazardous Waste, Septage Effluent Disposal, and Solid Waste Ordinances.

Implementation Strategies

General

1. Through local land use ordinances, require subdivision or non-residential property developers to look for and identify critical natural resources that may be on site and to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.

2. Through local land use ordinances, require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to include the consideration of information regarding critical natural resources as part of the review process.

3. Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management, and/or regulatory efforts around shared critical and important natural resources and incorporate planning for increasing severity of climate impacts.

4. Pursue public/private partnerships to protect critical and important natural resources such as through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.

5. Distribute or make available information to those living in or near critical or important natural resources about current use tax programs and applicable local, state, or federal regulations.

6. Develop a long-range climate action plan for the Town of Wells that addresses natural resources (freshwater, marine, wildlife habitat, access to recreation, etc.), and plans for mitigating the effects of climate change. The plan should include reducing Well's carbon footprint, improving seawalls where appropriate, controlling erosion, addressing limits to coastal development, reducing pollution, encouraging smart designs of infrastructure,

7. Conduct regular investigations into the threats of climate change within the Town, especially along river/stream courses, marsh side, and frontal beach landscapes. Utilize the Town Engineer, professional expertise, and collaboration with neighboring towns. The results of said investigations will inform avoidance and mitigation planning efforts.
8. Enhance public stewardship and public education on importance of Town natural resources.

Beaches

1. Appoint a Committee to recommend specific implementation programs to ~~assure~~ ensure public access to beaches, manage beach use, protect the physical quality and create transportation links.

2. Establish a graphic inventory of all sand dunes ~~on the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS)~~to accompany the state sand dune boundaries file and update as new data becomes available. Ensure that any landowner with property on a sand dune obtain any necessary State permits prior to obtaining any local permits.

Groundwater

1. Revise the Aquifer Protection District of the Land Use Ordinance to incorporate a two-tiered zone for the Branch Brook Aquifer based on maps prepared by the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District (KKWWD) and adopt use and quality standards as identified in the Aquifer Protection section of the Land Use Policies and Strategies.

~~1.~~2. Extend aquifer protection zone around Branch Brook using groundwater modeling rather than a surface water buffer. Use the 200-day and 2500-day travel zones to establish the buffer.~~.~~

~~2.~~3. Continue to w~~W~~ork with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection and aquifer recharge through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.

~~3.~~4. ~~Review~~Amend the Aquifer Protection provisions of the Town's Land Use Ordinance to ensure that~~determine whether or not there~~ there is sufficient protection of the groundwater in the Town's sand and gravel aquifer areas. Where appropriate implement and enforce regulations that control the use, handling, and storage of hazardous materials in these areas.

~~4.~~5. Establish a program to ensure there is proper inspection of all septic system installations and monitor the performance of septic systems in/or adjacent to Resource Protection and Conservation Areas.

~~5.~~6. Maintain the current buffer around surface water bodies and wetlands in the Land Use Ordinance to prohibit septic systems and other uses with the potential to contaminate both the groundwater and the groundwater/surface water interface.

~~6.~~7. Enact public wellhead and aquifer recharge area protection mechanisms as necessary.

Surface Waters

1. Continually integrate the State of Maine Guidelines for Municipal Shoreland Protection, as may from time-to-time be revised, into the local land use regulations.

2. Ensure the Town shoreland zoning ordinance complies with Maine DEP guidelines.

3. As necessary, revisit and r~~R~~evise local subdivision and site plan review regulations, ~~where necessary,~~ to require current low impact development standards, stormwater management, erosion and sediment control and landscaping~~, including a reference to a suitable guidance document that requires currently accepted Best Management Practices such~~

~~as the *Maine Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook for Construction: Best Management Practices* by the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District, 1991 or *or Better Site Design: A Handbook for Changing Rules in Your Community* by the Center for Watershed Protection, 1998.~~ Standards consistent with: (1) Maine Stormwater Management Law and Maine Stormwater regulations (title 38 M.R.S.A §420-D and 06-096 CMR 500 and 502). (2) Maine Department of Environmental Protection's allocations for allowable levels of phosphorus in lake/pond watersheds. (3) Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program.

4. Continue local subdivision and site plan review regulations to provide for municipal inspection and enforcement of:

    - Erosion and sediment control plans.
    - Post-construction maintenance and operation plans, particularly for major developments or developments deemed by the Planning Board to have potential negative impacts to valuable natural resource or Resource Protection Areas.

5. When and where applicable, develop an urban impaired stream watershed management or mitigation plan to promote continued development or redevelopment without further stream degradation.

~~5.~~6. Continue the cooperative relationship with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to expand the water quality monitoring program with annual monitoring results and analysis made available to the Town.

~~6.~~7. Establish a process with adjacent communities to ensure the maintenance of water quality standards for surface waters that occur in more than one community such as Branch Brook, ~~and~~ the Merriland River, and the Ogunquit River.

~~7.~~8. Ensure that the water quality of Ell Pond is not degraded by working with the Town of Sanford to implement a consistent set of standards for water quality protection.

9. Amend Town ordinances to require a timber-cutting plan and permit.

10. Work with the Department of Public Works (DPW) to integrate water quality protection into their daily operations including the storage of sand and salt, culvert replacement, street sweeping, and garage operations.

~~8.~~11. Adopt or enhance water quality protection practices and standards for construction and maintenance of public and private roads and public properties that require their implementation by contractors, owners, and community officials and employees.

~~9.~~12. Obtain a description of each pond, river, and drinking water supply with the description of ecological value, threats to water quality or quantity with specific location(s) of threats, and documented water quality, a summary of present and past monitoring activities, and/or invasive species problems from the Department of Inland Fisheries and

Wildlife and/or the Department of Environmental Protection.

~~10.~~13. Work with the ~~Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and~~ Wells ~~Sewer district~~Sanitary District to m~~M~~inimize pollution discharges through ~~the~~ upgrading existing public sewer systems and the wastewater treatment facility.

14. Encourage landowners to protect water quality. Provide local contact information at the municipal office for water quality best management practices from resources such as the Maine DEP, Natural Resource Conservation Service, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation District, Maine Forest Service, and/or ~~Small Woodlot Association of Maine~~Maine Woodland Owners. Provide educational materials at appropriate locations regarding aquatic invasive species if applicable.
15. Rezone watercourse setbacks to increase the capacity of said features to accommodate greater rain volume and more frequent storm events, as the threat of storm surges increases ~~grows~~ due to climate change.
16. ~~Direct the selectboard to~~ N~~n~~egotiate greater protections of watercourse in the Branch Brook, Merriland River, and Webhannet River watersheds by purchasing development rights and easements from ~~form~~ willing landowners to extend protection beyond regulatory ordinances.

17. Consider regulating the use of chemicals, such as fertilizer and pesticides, that threaten the Town's water quality.
18. Improve access for fishing, kayaking, and canoeing in Wells.

Wetlands

1. ~~Establish a committee to~~The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee will review and assess the quality of current wetland management within Wells and, if deemed appropriate, ~~establish~~ propose guidelines for a local wetland regulation. If appropriate, base the regulation upon a classification system that incorporates hydrology,vegetation and wildlife and a definition that is consistent with current state and federal wetland regulatory programs. Consider no longer counting wetlands in the assessment of land for minimum lot requirements in new subdivisions, in order to prevent legal development of access roads through other wetlands. Report these findings to the Board of Selectmen ~~within six months of establishing such committee. Wetland guidelines~~and ~~should~~ ensure that any definitions be consistent with current state and federal wetland regulatory programs.

2. Establish a program to identify, prioritize and protect high value freshwater wetlands and land containing vernal pools. Protection should occur through regulation, education and cooperation, purchase, or conservation.

Wildlife and Fisheries

1. Identify and protect through the timber harvesting plan and permit, site plan and subdivision approval process, those areas of land designated by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) ~~Maine Department of Environmental Protection~~

~~(MDEP)~~ as "significant wildlife habitat. These areas should be revised based on MDIFW~~MDEP~~ updates and revisions of these habitat areas and performance standards.

2. ~~Retain the~~Review the appropriateness of currently designated buffers along rivers and streams in the Town's Land Use Ordinance to maintain the quality of these areas for wildlife and fishery habitat.

3. Within areas of Wells designated as Rural Use, seek to maintain large parcels of unfragmented lands and to ensure that wildlife habitats are connected by travel corridors through both regulatory and non-regulatory means.

4. Require all applications for subdivision, site plan review and timber harvesting to investigate and map the presence of any significant wildlife habitat and habitat for state rare or endangered species that may not have been previously mapped, such as vernal pool areas of the Tatnic Hills that provide habitat for Blanding's and spotted turtles and as established by the State of Maine on the site. Obtain necessary state approvals as a condition of subdivision plan and /or site plan approval.

5. Work cooperatively with Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to manage and protect high value habitat and areas for significant habitat and rare and endangered species.

6. Work with landowners with high value habitats on their property to protect these areas through education and cooperation, conservation and easements or purchase through a land holding entity.

~~6. Form a committee to study the creation of a land bridge over the Interstate 95 to provide a corridor for wildlife crossings and to connect recreational trail systems between the western portion of Wells and the coastal corridor.~~

Forest and Farmland Resources

1. ~~1. Amend~~ Update the Town ordinances to ensure a timber-cutting permitting is in compliance with the State of Maine Forest Service regulations ~~is obtained prior to cutting~~.

2. Work with forest and agricultural landowners to improve adaptive capacity and ability to respond to fluctuating water demands, especially as may result from predicted climate change impacts.

3. Amend Town land use ordinances to protect ~~critical~~ prime farmland soils.

4. Include agricultural and forestry operations into Town economic development planning efforts.

~~4.~~5. Continue to safeguard lands identified as prime farmland or capable of supporting commercial forestry.

Floodplains --See Chapter 15-Flood Hazard Mitigation Polices and Strategies

1. Continue to manage the use and development of the Town's inland flood hazard areas in accordance with state and federal standards.

2. Update current flood hazard standards and maps to be consistent with federal guidelines and the recommendations of the Flood Hazard Mitigation Polices and Strategies.

Chapter 4 - Marine Resources Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Marine Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to marine resources and the waterfront environment.

The marine environment of Wells covers most of the eastern portion of the Town extending inland as far as Route 1 and stretching along the Atlantic Ocean for over five miles from Kennebunk on the north to Ogunquit on the south. The majority of the oceanfront is characterized by a system of barrier sand dunes and beaches. Behind this dune system lies an extensive area of marshland fed by the Little River, Merriland River, Webhannet River, Ogunquit River, and numerous coastal streams. The water, plant and wildlife resources of this area are discussed in detail in the Natural Resources Policies and Strategies.

Goals

State Goal:

Protect the State's marine resources industry, ports, and harbors from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public. (Growth Management Act)

Relevant State Coastal Policies:

1. Promote the maintenance, development, and re-vitalization of the State's ports and harbors for fishing, transportation, and recreation. (Coastal Management Policy)

2. Enhance the economic value of the State's renewable marine resources. (Coastal Management Policy)

3. Support shoreline management that gives preference to water-dependent uses over other uses, that promotes public access to the shoreline and that considers the cumulative effects of development on coastal resources. (Coastal Management Policy)

Regional Goal:

Conrinue to ~~P~~partner with state and federal agencies and neighboring communities, and other key regional partners, to implement timely dredging and beneficial reuse of dredged material to support coastal resilience and beach nourishment. ~~(None specific to marine resources.)~~

Wells Goals:

1. Continue to assure public access to the beaches and Harbor in Wells while managing and maintaining these resources in the best interests of the community and adjacent landowners.

2. Work cooperatively with the State to manage and regulate the use of critical sand dune areas.

3. Assure the Wells Harbor remains a viable resource since the harbor plays an important role as both an economic and recreational resource for the Town.

4. Protect and restore recreational fishing and shellfishing in the Town's coastal waters and estuaries.

4.5. Prepare and plan for the inevitable impacts of climate change on Wells's marine resources through specific measures such as seawell improvements, limiting coastal development, higher boardwalks and piers, and revegetating shorelines.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Continue to assure the quality of the living environment in beach neighborhoods by managing the activities of beach goers, enforcing private property rights, and controlling access and parking.

2. Continue to ~~M~~manage the beaches in cooperation with private landowners to ensure this resource can be used in a manner that allows for maximum use by the beach goers while minimizing the impact to private property owners and protecting the natural plant and wildlife habitats that enhance the value of the beach.

3. Continue to ~~P~~protect the plant and wildlife habitat associated with the beach/dune and estuarine systems to ensure survival of the state's endangered and threatened species.

4. Continue to ~~S~~support the dredging of the harbor to maintain it as a suitable mooring area while minimizing the negative ecological impacts of dredging on recreational fishing and shellfishing opportunities.

5. Control parking and support facilities in the harbor and beach areas to allow continued use of the area for commercial and recreational boating and marine uses.

6. Encourage owners of marine businesses and industries to participate in state or federal clean marine~~a~~/boatyard programs.

6.7. ~~To p~~Protect, maintain, and, where warranted, improve marine habitat and water quality.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development**:**

1. Existing Land Use ordinance.

Implementation Strategies

1. ~~Revisit and u~~U~~U~~pdate as necessary the local ~~2013~~ Harbor Management Plan that addresses harbor location and use issues, jetty issues, marine resource protection, adjacent land use and public access. The updated plan should ~~be submitted to the Maine State Planning Office for approval and~~ become a part of the Comprehensive Plan.

2. Maintain the graphic inventory of all sand dunes on the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) and update, as new data becomes available. Ensure that any landowner with property on sand dunes obtain any necessary state permits prior to obtaining any local permits.

3. Continue to work with appropriate state agencies and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to manage ~~point and~~ non-point source pollution into the harbor and estuary to ensure appropriate water quality levels for shellfish harvesting and other marine recreation activities.
4. Maintain public access to the beaches, harbor and waterfront of Wells.
5. Public access to beaches should be carefully addressed to limit overcrowding of natural resources while also improve access points through ensure safety of stairs, making more handicap options, creating better bike access to beaches, better shuttling access to beaches, transportation for seniors to beaches, resident parking for beaches, and better sidewalks (such as on Mile Rd).
6. Reduce pollution impacting marine resources.
~~6.~~ Limit coastal development and building.
7. Establish guidelines for beach use for tourists, promote/enforce rules, monitor beaches.
8. Improve water-based recreational businesses and improve kayak access and public boat launches. Promote inland based water recreation activities to ~~toursits~~tourists as an alternative to the beach.

~~7.~~9. Continue to maintain Wells Harbor as an active harbor that provides access, service and mooring facilities for both commercial, marine-related vessels and recreational boats.

~~8. Review and implement the Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan.~~

~~9.~~10. Continue to work with the Department of Marine Resources and the DEP to ensure the viability of the recreational shellfish-harvesting program and prohibit any commercial harvesting.

11. Continue to work with local property owners, land trusts, and others to protect major points of physical, accessible, and visual access to coastal waters, especially along public ways and in public parks.

~~10.~~12. Provide information about the Working Waterfront Access Pilot Program and current use taxation program to owners of waterfront land used to provide access to or support the conduct of commercial fishing activities.

Chapter 5 - Historic and Cultural Resources Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Historic and Cultural Resources Policies and Strategies section describes the goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to Wells' historic and cultural assets. The Town of Wells has a rich history –its historic buildings, archaeological sites, railroad, maritime history, and more have attracted residents and visitors to the community and have helped shape the character and identity of the Town. The Town has 18 sites that are on the National Register of Historic Places and a number of other state and locally significant historic properties as well. Wells also has several unique historic sites that have cultural and ecological value including the Wells Reserve at Laudholm, and the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. See Appendix A for additional details on Wells' historic and cultural resources.

Goals

State Goal:

~~Preserve the State's~~ Protect to the greatest extent practicable the significant historic and archaeological resources in the community. ~~(Growth Management Act)~~

Regional Goal:

Create an awareness of the importance of identifying and preserving historic and archaeological resources.

Wells Goals:

1. Identify, map, ~~and~~ protect, and share significant historical and archaeological resources.

2. Preserve, protect, and maintain the quality of Wells' historical, cultural and archaeological resources while respecting and protecting landowner rights.

3. Educate Town citizens and visitors about Wells' historic and archaeological resources not just as individual buildings or sites, but as resources in a geographic, social and economic context.

~~3.~~4. Document and protect historic and cultural sites as the impacts of climate change and sea-level rise become more apparent.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Preserve and promote the historical and cultural character of Wells including historic buildings, sites and landscapes as well as roadways and natural features

of historic and cultural significance.

2. Identify, document and protect the Town's archaeological and pre-historical resources.

3. Ensure that development ~~in~~ along the Route One corridor, ~~and~~ in the central area of Wells (Route 1 and 109), and within other identified growth areas occurs in a manner that is consistent with and complimentary of the historical character of the community.

4. Provide educational opportunities for residents and visitors that "tell the story" of Wells history~~.~~, including appropriate signage and markers at mill sites, shipyard sites, etc.

5. Encourage owners of historic properties to apply for National Register status.

6. Ensure that new development respects the Town's historic and archaeological resources.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. Existing ~~Town Ordinances~~Land use Regulations.

Implementation Strategies

1. Seek Local Government Certification with the ~~State~~ Maine Historic Preservation Commission ~~Office~~ in order to be eligible for matching grants related to preservation planning and cultural resource protection. ~~to assist the work of the Wells Historic Preservation Commission~~.

~~1.~~ Re-establish and maintain the Wells Historic Preservation Commission to assist with implementation of these actions and collaborate with the Historical Society.

2. Continue to identify and document historic and archaeological resources for purposes of building a written and photographic record that can be used to maintain and protect these valuable community resources. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has noted that a comprehensive survey of Wells' historic above-ground resources needs to be conducted in order to identify other properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

3. Identify scenic historic landscape resource areas including agricultural lands and fields, rock walls, ~~etc.~~and other features that should be preserved as important cultural viewsheds.

4. Manage the "Gateways" or major roadway entrances into the Town of Wells to protect their historic community character and ensure that any new development is consistent with this character.

5. Continue and enhance the education and outreach program for both the residents and visitors to Wells about the Town's historic and archaeological resources. Annual historic walks, walking and driving tours and education ~~brochures~~ resources are examples.

6. Work with public and private groups to establish a permanent heritage trail that would include map and permanent markers for specific historic properties.

7. Encourage more property owners to place their properties on the National Register of Historic Places.

8. Strengthen requirements in the Land Use Ordinance regarding proximity to and impacts on historic and archaeological resources. For known historic and archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, use the local land use ordinances to require developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.

9. Adopt or amend the land use ordinances to require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.

~~8.~~10. Adopt design standards for all commercial zoning districts that are modelled after the existing design standards for the northern portion of the Route 1 Corridor and informed by the vision and purpose of each zoning district.

Chapter 6 – Existing and Future Land Use Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies to guide the location, intensity, and quality of land ~~usein~~use in Wells over the next ten years. According to the State Economist the population in Wells could reach 13,582 by 2038. To address this potential growth the Future Land Use Plan (Map 9) accounts for recent development trends, projections, the availability of infrastructure, and the Town's commitment to natural resource protection. The intent of this Future Land Use Plan is to guide the new residential and non-residential development primarily to the identified growth and transitional areas. The Town will also continue to support non-regulatory approaches to land conservation to ensure that additional natural resource areas are protected.

Goals

State Goal:

1. Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl. (Growth Management Act)

2. Safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources. (Growth Management Act)

~~**Regional Goal:**~~

~~(None specific to land use patterns.)~~

Wells Goals:

1. Growth does not exceed the capacity of municipal facilities and services.

~~1.~~2. Wells has a balanced pattern of land use that respects its diverse natural, cultural and historic resources.

3. ~~Encourage~~ Guide growth that is respectful of the Town's village, rural and beach/waterfront areas.

~~2.~~4. Growth ~~should be allowed~~management strategies should be employed to ensure growth is compatible with ~~in line with promoting long-term sustainability and~~ meeting ~~the Town's~~ a goal~~s~~ to reduce carbon emissions.

~~3.~~5. Impact of new growth on environmental, open space and fiscal resources is minimized.

~~4.~~1. ~~Growth does not exceed the capacity of municipal facilities and services.~~

6. The identities of the Town and its neighborhoods are maintained and enhanced.
7. Wells plays a role in achieving statewide climate change action goals such as enacting energy

efficient building codes and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Promote a general pattern of development that maintains and enhances the land use, character, and living environments of the Town including the high-density beach/waterfront area, the Route 1 mixed-use corridor, the suburban style neighborhoods and the farm and forest rural areas. To accomplish this policy the Town will:
   a. Identify areas for growth that would include residential areas and areas for mixed-use development where public infrastructure can service a ~~high~~ higher density of development;
   b. Restrict development in critical rural areas, near sensitive resource areas, and in areas prone to natural hazards;
   c. Encourage commercial and industrial uses in appropriate locations;
   d. ~~Encourage and~~ Ppreserve tourism-related industry ~~east of~~ along Route 1;
   e. Preserve beach/waterfront residential neighborhoods

2. Protect and enhance Wells' small-town rural character by ensuring that new development is consistent with the character of the Town, promotes amenities that reinforce the Town's character, protects the scenic value of the Town's beaches, marshes, rivers and rural roads, and protects historic areas of the Town.
   a. Development guidelines should be consistent with enhancing long term sustainability of natural resources, and addressing energy efficiency and renewable energy for heating and electricity.

3. Consider a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms to accommodate and control growth while protecting the Town's rural character and sense of community.

4. Monitor and manage the impacts of residential growth to ensure that such growth does not unduly strain public facilities and services or have an adverse impact on natural resources or critical natural resources. This includes studying alternative methods of managing growth and financing public improvements required by new growth, such as: a differential growth cap, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Impact Fees and other innovative planning tools such as Tax Increment Financing.

5. Encourage higher standards for infrastructure development in the Town's commercial and municipal center in the Route 1/109 area such as complete street designs.

6. Direct growth into areas designated in the Future Land Use Plan as growth or transitional areas.

7. Manage residential development outside of village areas to assure it is consistent with the character of Wells by:
   a. Adopting and revising land use regulations that recognize the capacity of natural and man-made systems within the Town;

b. Restricting development in areas where public facilities such as water, sewer, and roads are not available or are not adequate to service the development unless the services are upgraded; and
c. Requiring provision of open space and recreational lands as part of new, large subdivisions that are commensurate with the size of the development and that optimize opportunities to connect with town wide and regional open space and recreational resources.

~~8. Maintain and promote small-scale commercial activities and uses along the Route 1 Corridor assuring that expansion of existing commercial uses or development of new commercial enterprises adhere to the following guidelines (Pper the 2000 Corridor Plan adopted by the Town in April 2000)(or to newly established guidelines if a new Route 1 study is conducted):~~
~~a. Ensuring the scale and nature of the development is compatible with adjacent uses.~~
~~b. Encouraging signs that are consistent with the scale of the development and do not hinder views to the waterfront.~~
~~c. Instituting appropriate access management techniques to maintain a safe roadway system by minimizing curb cuts on major transportation routes.~~
~~d. Ensuring that US Route 1 remains with two travel lanes by promoting transportation alternatives and other traffic routes.~~

8. Work with the Maine DOT to complete a comprehensive corridor study of land use and transportation for Route 1.

9. Direct business and industrial growth and expansion to locations that minimize impact to the Town's natural and historical environment and adjacent neighborhoods by adopting and implementing guidelines for landscaping, buffering, building design, lighting, and parking.

10. Identify specific areas that could be zoned or re-zoned to accommodate light industrial or business development based upon the suitability of the area and access to arterial roadways.

11. Assure the long-term protection of land that is in forestry or agriculture through both regulatory and non-regulatory means.
a. Forest and land protection goals should include the benefit of carbon sequestration.

12. Continue to protect, manage, and enhance the Town's open space and resource conservation areas.

~~13.~~ Establish new and implement existing master plans for Town-owned lands to determine their most appropriate long-term uses.

~~14.~~13.

~~15. Examine feasibility of acquiring land for a potential future Maine Turnpike interchange in the Moody/Tatnic Road area.~~

14. Monitor and support state climate action goals and action items and enact changes to land use and development policies and regulations that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as energy-efficient building codes.

~~16.~~15. Designate distinct "critical rural," "rural" and "growth" areas based on the guidelines of Maine's Growth Management Act.

Critical Rural Areas
Critical rural areas encompass areas in the community that contain valuable natural, historic or visual resources that are in need of a higher level of protection.

Rural Areas
Rural areas include areas of the community that:

a. Consist of large, contiguous open spaces, farmland, and forest land;
b. Are relatively free of sprawling and strip development along roads; and
c. Are not physically suitable for accommodating future high density residential or commercial uses.

Growth Areas
Growth areas include areas in one of three categories:

1. Developed Areas – Areas that are essentially built out and will only experience incremental or infill growth in the foreseeable future.

2. Existing Growth Areas - Areas already designated as residential, commercial or industrial zones on the existing zoning map that have some capacity for future growth.

3. Transitional Areas – Areas that are not part of established residential, commercial or industrial areas on the existing zoning map that:
    a. Are located in proximity to existing residential or commercial areas of Wells;
    b. Are physically suitable for development or redevelopment;
    c. Contain sufficient area to accommodate planned growth and development; and
    d. Enable a compact, clustered, rather than sprawling, pattern of development.

~~Prioritize establishing and increasing pedestrian and bike infrastructure in the town to provide alternative, healthy means for residents as transportation costs increase. Specifically, plan for bike paths and sidewalks/walkways along the western side of the town within the route one corridor to provide means for residents in western Wells to shop and work, and parallel to the Route 1 corridor to allow coastal residents to walk and bike as an alternative to facing Route 1 traffic.~~

16. Recognizing that the Eastern Trail should be completed during the life of this Plan, encourage the connection of the Eastern Trail to Route 1.

17. Explore opportunities to develop a downtown district with density of residential units and services associated with a traditional downtown.

18. Consider measures to consider the needs of year-round residents to balance year-round population and tourists.

~~17.~~19. Plan for where to focus economic and commercial development in the town. Important components to include in the plan include how to support local businesses, where industrial use is allowed, where commercial land use should be focused, and how to create more year-round economic opportunities.

20. Support affordable housing and/or the rehabilitation of low-income and moderate-income properties through land use code provisions.
21. Support ~~providing~~senior housing for ~~the~~Wells' senior population through land use code provisions.
22. Consider the connectivity of land and trails among land use areas in Wells and fund conservation opportunities accordingly.
23. Consider sustainable transportation connectivity among land use areas in Wells and fund conservation and/or transportation projects accordingly.
24. Protect historical and archaeological resources through land use code provisions.
25. Continue to support the level of commitment necessary to provide needed infrastructure, especially in growth areas.

26. Continue to establish efficient permitting procedures, especially in growth areas.

Definition of Land Use Districts by Type

The following table lists districts classified as non-growth and growth areas in the Future Land Use Plan.

Non-Growth Areas		Growth Areas		
Critical Rural Areas	**Rural Areas**	**Developed Areas**	**Existing Growth Areas**	**Transitional Areas**
CR 1 – Fenderson Wildlife Commons	R1 – Rural Area Previously Defined	BB – Beach Business	RA – Residential A	T1 – Moody
CR 2 – The Heath/West Brook Corridor	R2 – Chapel Road Rural Extension	RB – Residential Beach	RC – Residential/ Commercial	~~T2 – Community College~~
CR 3 – Tatnic Hills/Mt. Agamenticus Area	DR – Developed Rural	RD – Residential Drakes Island	H – Harbor	T3 – Burnt Mill
CR 4A – Branch Brook Aquifer Travel Time <200 days		RD - Community College	GB – General Business	~~T4 – Hobbs Farm~~
CR 4B – Branch Brook Aquifer Recharge Area		RD -Hobbs Farm	LI – Light Industrial	T5 – Crediford Limited Commercial
CR 5A – Webhannet River Corridor			QM – Quarry Manufacturing	T6 – Limited Industrial
CR 5B – Merriland River Corridor			TC – Transportation Center	T7 – Downtown District

CR 5C – Ogunquit River Corridor				
CR 5D – Lower Branch Brook Corridor (not in Recharge Area)				
CR 6 – Existing Resource Protection Districts				
CR 7 – Existing Conservation Lands				
CR 8 – Subdivision Open Space				

Tools to Define Rural and Critical Rural Areas

The Town of Wells wants to protect its rural and critical rural areas in ways that respect the rights of property owners. As such, the base minimum lot size of 100,000 square feet (2.30 acres), or 40,000 square feet if located east of the Maine Turnpike and connected to public sewer -will remain intact throughout the Town's rural areas (Town Code, Chapter 145, Article V, 145-30). Instead of increasing the base lot size, there are four mechanisms being suggested to control the character of growth in the rural areas of Wells:

1. Stronger standards for clustering and open space preservation in rural subdivisions in areas where preservation of large undeveloped blocks is a priority. Stronger clustering standards would limit the visual and environmental impacts of development in such keyareas of Wells.
2. In areas where protection of water resources is a priority, wetland areas will be excluded from lot sizes, so the 100,000 square foot minimum will apply to a net lot sizeand not the gross lot size.
3. ~~Maximum allowable lot coverage in some proposed Critical Rural Areas (all impervious surfaces) will be reduced below the 20% coverage now allowed in standardrural areas.~~
4. ~~4.~~3. In areas with key water resources, land uses and septic systems will be limited tomitigate negative impacts on these resources.

~~In addition to these recommended zoning-related provisions, the Growth Management Committee will be tasked with examining other regulations and incentives to mitigate the impacts of growth in the rural and critical rural areas of Wells. This Committee will, within three years of this plan's adoption, develop alternative strategies that will replace the Town ofWells' existing system of growth management.~~

~~As outlined in Policy #4 and Implementation Strategy #7, these alternative strategies mayinclude: a differential growth cap, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Impact Fees and other innovative planning tools.~~

Maine's Growth Management Program (GMP) is a set of guiding regulations that were implemented to encourage orderly growth and growth planning. The program requires municipalities to form a comprehensive plan that includes defined section criteria and policy development based upon state goals. A comprehensive plan must include an actionable implementation strategy section. These guidelines are meant to assist with the uniform and controlled growth at the state, region, and town levels moving forward and allow for some level of standardization in comprehensive plans between municipalities. The states GMP requirements were used as a guide in the updating of the 2005 Wells Comprehensive Plan (Maine State Growth Management Program 2020).

Critical Rural Areas

In all critical rural areas, the base minimum lot size of 100,000 square feet will be kept intact. However, as discussed above, growth will be limited and controlled in these areas through a mix of regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms. The suggested Critical Rural districts and provisions for each are listed below.

Critical Rural 1 – Fenderson Wildlife Commons

Geographical Description – The area surrounding the Fenderson Wildlife Commons property,stretching from the growth area along Route 109 to the Perkins Town area. This area encompasses a large and contiguous block of mostly undeveloped land that abuts mostly undeveloped land in the Town of Sanford.

Land Use Standards

- Maximum lot coverage: ~~15~~20%
- ~~Required~~ Encourage 50% open space preservation for all new residential subdivisions
- ~~Where possible, new residential subdivision units shall be served by community water andsewer systems~~
- If property to be developed abuts an existing open space, the new open space must abut it
- No new roads will be accepted by the Town of Wells
- No private roads may result in the connection of two or more existing public or private roads
- Vegetated buffers must be maintained along existing public and private roadways

Critical Rural 2 – The Heath/West Brook Corridor

Geographical Description – An area beginning at the Wells Heath property along Routes 109 and 9A stretching along the West Brook Corridor into Perkins Town and along the proposed trail corridor connecting the Heath with Fenderson Wildlife Commons. This district includes amostly undeveloped corridor running several miles from the North Berwick town line to Route109.

Land Use Standards

- Maximum lot coverage: ~~15~~20%
- ~~Required~~ Encourage 50% open space preservation for all new residential subdivisions
- ~~Where possible, new residential subdivision units shall be served by community water andsewer systems~~
- If property to be developed abuts an existing open space, the new open space must abut it
- No new roads will be accepted by the Town of Wells
- No private roads may result in the connection of two or more existing public or private roads
- Vegetated buffers must be maintained along existing public and private roadways

Critical Rural 3 – Tatnic Hills/Mt. Agamenticus

Geographical Description – A series of undeveloped backland areas located south of Route 9and west of Hiltons Lane. This area contains several unfragmented blocks of habitat land, some of which abut other unfragmented blocks in the Town of South Berwick.

Land Use Standards

- Maximum lot coverage: ~~15~~20%
- ~~Required~~ Encourage 50% open space preservation for all new residential subdivisions
- ~~Where possible, new residential subdivision units shall be served by community water andsewer systems~~
- If property to be developed abuts an existing open space, the new open space must abut it
- No new roads will be accepted by the Town of Wells
- No private roads may result in the connection of two or more existing public or private roads
- Vegetated buffers must be maintained along existing public and private roadways

Critical Rural 4A – Branch Brook Aquifer Travel Time <200 days

Geographical Description – The portion of the Branch Brook Aquifer Recharge Area with a contaminant travel time of less than 200 days. This area includes the most critical locations inWells for protection of groundwater, as Branch Brook is the public drinking water source for the Town (as well as for Kennebunk and Kennebunkport).

Land Use Standards

- Developed portion of ~~C~~cluster developments are prohibited within the shoreland setback and aquifer protection district.
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%
- Require 400-foot septic system setback from Branch Brook
- Require 250-foot building setback from Branch Brook
- Establish controls over the use, handling, and storage of chemical or petroleum products
- Prohibit fuel sales
- Prohibit animal husbandry or agricultural uses that produce animal wastes

Critical Rural 4B – Branch Brook Aquifer Recharge Area

Geographical Description – The balance of the Branch Brook Aquifer Recharge Area that liesoutside the 200-day contaminant travel time zone.

Land Use Standards

- Developed portion of cluster developments are prohibited within the shoreland setback and aquifer protection district.
- ~~Cluster developments are prohibited~~
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%
- Establish controls over the use, handling and storage of chemical or petroleum products

- Prohibit fuel sales
- Prohibit animal husbandry or agricultural uses that produce animal wastes

Critical Rural 5A – Webhannet River Corridor
Geographical Description – A corridor along the Webhannet River stretching from the estuary, across Route 1 and west to the Boston & Maine Railroad right-of-way.

Land Use Standards
- Developed portion of cluster developments are prohibited within the shoreland setback and aquifer protection district.
- ~~Cluster developments are prohibited~~
- 250-foot building setback (200' under current zoning)
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%

Critical Rural 5B – Merriland River Corridor
Geographical Description – A corridor along the Merriland River, stretching from the estuaryto Route 109 where it joins the Heath/West Brook Critical Rural Area.

Land Use Standards
- Developed portion of cluster developments are prohibited within the shoreland setback and aquifer protection district.
- ~~Cluster developments are prohibited~~
- 250-foot building setback (200' under current zoning)
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%

Critical Rural 5C – Ogunquit River Corridor
Geographical Description – A corridor along the Ogunquit River from the estuary to the SouthBerwick town line.

Land Use Standards
- Developed portion of cluster developments are prohibited within the shoreland setback and aquifer protection district.
- ~~Cluster developments are prohibited~~
- 250-foot building setback (200' under current zoning)
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%

Critical Rural 5D – Lower Branch Brook Corridor (not in Recharge Area) Geographical Description – A corridor along Branch Brook beginning below the AquiferRecharge Area (at about where Route 1 crosses Branch Brook), running to the estuary.

Land Use Standards

- Developed portion of cluster developments are prohibited within the shoreland setback and aquifer protection district.
- ~~Cluster developments are prohibited~~
- 250-foot building setback (200' under current zoning)
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%

Critical Rural 6 – Existing Resource Protection Districts

Geographical Description – The existing RP district areas in Wells. Many of these areas fallwithin the borders of the newly defined Critical Rural areas but others, especially the Merriland, Webhannet and Ogunquit River estuaries are outside the Critical Rural areas. The purpose of these districts is to protect and preserve fragile environmental areas from intrusions that would upset ecological systems or pose as public health and safety problems (Town Code, Chapter 145, Article V, 145-32).

Land Use Standards

- Development is already severely restricted using present standards

Critical Rural 7 – Existing Conserved Lands

Geographical Description – The existing conserved lands in Wells. These include Town-owned lands managed for conservation, Town-owned conservation easements, as well as land trust properties and easements conserved in perpetuity.

Land Use Standards

- Development is already severely restricted under deeds or easements of conservation lands

Critical Rural 8 – Existing Subdivision Open Space

Geographical Description – The existing lands under subdivision open space in Wells. These lands are required to be held as open space, undeveloped, by Wells subdivision regulations.

Land Use Standards

- Development is already severely restricted by subdivision regulations

Rural Areas

All areas located outside of growth areas and critical rural areas will remain as standard rural areas to preserve the open, rural character of the land that correspond with the Town's existing Rural (R) zoning district. The dimensional and use standards already in place for the R district are recommended to remain intact. However, stronger standards for clustering in subdivisions are recommended to

better protect the character of these areas.

The existing R district will be reduced in size by the proposed Critical Rural and Transitional Areas. The only location where the R district is proposed for expansion is for a forested parcellocated on the north side of Chapel Road that is currently in the RC district. This area is one ofthe few large parcels located east of the Turnpike that is registered as Tree Growth in the Current Use Taxation program. Also, its location between York County Community College, the Route 1 corridor and the Town Hall/High School area makes it a potential future area for trails and green space.

The Developed Rural area comprises the Perkins Town section of Wells. While no changes are recommended to land use standards in this area, it was designated as such to recognize thefact that substantial suburban-scale development has already taken place here.

Developed Growth Areas

~~The developed areas of Wells consist of its coastal residential and business areas.~~ These areas correspond with the current boundaries of the Residential Beach (RB), Residential Drakes Island (RD) and Beach Business (BB) zoning districts. Although these areas are identified as growth areas, the supply of undeveloped land is extremely small, thus limiting the possibility of future growth. The existing dimensional and use standards for these three districts are recommended to remain the same to retain the intended New England family resort character and provide lodging facilities and other services to tourists and residents (Town Code, Chapter 145, Article V, 145-22-25).

Hobbs Farm in the Rural District, identified in 2005 as a Transitional Area, is now built out and has been changed to a Developed Growth Area.

The Community College area in the Rural District, identified in 2005 as a Transitional Area, is now built out and has been changed to a Developed Growth Area.

Existing Growth Areas

Existing Growth Areas correspond with established, non-rural zoning districts in Wells that have capacity for future growth. The purposes of Existing Growth Areas range from medium-density residential development to commercial or industrial uses (Town Code, Chapter 145, Article V, 145-21-29). No changes are recommended for the standards of these districts. There are seven existing zoning districts that fall within the Existing Growth Area definition:

1. Residential A (RA)
2. Residential/Commercial (RC)
3. Harbor Commercial (Harbor)
4. General Business (GB)
5. Light Industrial (LI)
6. Quarry Manufacturing (QM)

7. Transportation Center (TC)

- Existing dimensional and use standards for all of these districts are recommended to remain intact. In the two mixed-use areas (RC and GB), clustering will be encouraged, allowing residential development to occur on lots as small as 10,000 square feet for one-family dwellings provided the density standards for the underlying zone are met (Town Code, Chapter 145, Article V, 145).

~~**Transportation Center District**~~

~~The Transportation Center District was created and approved by the Town in 2004. A Comprehensive Plan amendment was simultaneously passed. Since it is a newly-designatedzoning district, the contents of the 2004 amendment are included in this update. Changes tothe 2004 language have been made as appropriate to reflect the present situation, but the purposes and standards of the amendment have not been altered.~~

~~Transportation Center. Under new zoning the Transportation Center is envisioned to be a small-scale, mixed-use commercial area that would complement the new multi-modal WellsTransportation Center facility. Prior to 2003, this area was zoned as Light Industrial with a small portion zoned as both Residential-Commercial and Mobile Home Park Overlay.~~

~~Area Included. The area of a new Transportation Center zoning district focuses on the Wells Transportation Center facility. The boundaries are the Maine Turnpike to the east and the rail line to the south. Directly related development on the other side of the Turnpike is not feasible.Development of uses south of the rail line but related to the Transportation Center would only be possible with some sort of crossing, bridge or tunnel; none of which is envisioned or feasible at this point in time, and certainly not within the ten-year planning period.~~

~~The northern boundary for a new district is Route 9/109 (Sanford Road).~~

~~In order to include all of the Transportation Center access road and the current Turnpike Authority lands in the district, and also to provide for transportation-related development to thewest of the western access road, it is envisioned that the longest line segment of the existing LIboundary in that location would be extended in a straight line to Sanford Road to become the western boundary.~~

~~As the Town continues to address the need to improve traffic circulation throughout theTransportation Center District area of Route 9/109, adjustments to the District may be considered.~~

~~This is a standalone zoning district. With a new, straight-line western zoning district boundaryas described above, the present Rural district zoning would remain unchanged and a small portion of the existing Residential-Commercial~~

district would become Transportation Center district. The existing Mobile Home Park Overlay is envisioned to remain as it is at present andwould simply be an overlay of the new Transportation Center district instead of Residential Commercial.

Desired Uses. The Transportation Center zoning district permits mixed uses aimed toward customers of the multi-modal Wells Transportation Center. Uses include those customarily associated with serving the needs of customers of a multi-modal transportation hub, such as: informational kiosks, sale of convenience items (e.g., toiletries, candy, newspapers, prepared foods, souvenirs), gas stations, restaurants, hotels, motels, conference facilities with associatedfood service, travel agencies, ATM's, bicycle rental, car rental, self storage, and offices & facilities of transportation providers. Certain uses previously allowed under the existing Light Industrial district regulations continue to be compatible with the Transportation Center development and are allowed (some of which may be types of activities noted above): Office Business, Service Business, Motor Vehicle Rental, Municipal Facility, Commercial Parking Lot, Public Utility Facility, Standard Restaurant, Fast Food Restaurant, and Transportation Facility. Implementing regulations include criteria for the review and consideration of restaurant drive through service.

Land Use Guidelines. Development of the transportation center will benefit from more dense and more intensive development, but the regulations should still provide for open areas and landscaping. The plan envisions a density of development and lot coverages similar to (and nogreater than) those in the existing General Business District regulations for properties served by public sewer [that is 20,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size and 65% lot coverage]. The district should promote car parking to the rear of developments and provide for buffering of car parking with vegetative and/or non-vegetative landscaping. Building setback distances from Route 9/109 should be limited so as to provide for construction of parking and ancillary facilities to the rear (away from the traveled way) of new buildings. Forty feet is what was recommended in the April 2002 plan. Setbacks from the internal access road can be less than along Sanford Road due to the size of the district, lower speeds of travel, and so as to generatea more pedestrian scale. Landscaping and sidewalks within the front setback should be required and also within the side or rear setback areas if those areas abut the access road.

Transportation and traffic management will be critical to successful development at the transportation center. How to regulate and design the relationship of commercial developmentto the flow of traffic to/from the Turnpike, along Route 9/109, and to/from the TransportationCenter itself will be issues for thoughtful cooperation between developers, landowners, the Turnpike Authority and the Town. They will also deserve careful consideration by the Planning Board in reviewing site plan and subdivision proposals.

Promoting access to and from commercial developments within the transportation center makes sense in terms of "access management". Obviously, that will be the only practical means of access for development that does not have frontage on

~~Route 9/109. Further, for lots that front on Route 109, utilizing the access road will not only facilitate the type of development sought by the town but also provide a safer and more effective means of controlling traffic via the existing traffic signal. Without long-term rights to access that road, promoting development that must use that road will be necessarily hindered. Coordination withthe Turnpike Authority will be necessary to accomplish it.~~

~~The zoning ordinance provides for buffering and screening to protect the residences in themobile home park presently to the west of this area.~~

~~Water & Sewer. Due to the limited land area, the limited capacity of soils there to function efficiently with large-scale septic systems, and the potential for negative impacts on Credifordbrook, the existing public sewer service which has already been extended past the turnpike forthe train station must be utilized to promote and serve the development within the Transportation Center Zoning District. Public water should also be provided (through the sleeves currently existing within the turnpike overpass) to promote and serve development of the Transportation Center. This is consistent with the Public Utilities goals and policies foundin Chapter 13 of this plan.~~

Transitional Areas

Transitional areas are locations that are presently zoned for rural uses and densities that theFuture Land Use Plan suggests become areas that are redesignated to accommodate future residential, commercial, or industrial uses (as appropriate for each area). Recommendedchanges in these areas concern minimum lot size, lot coverage and other dimensional standards, as well as allowable uses.

There are six suggested Transitional Areas described below.

Transitional Area 1 – Moody

Geographic Description – Includes all areas south of Route 9B and east of the Maine Turnpikethat are currently in the Rural (R) zone, with the exception of the area abutting the Ogunquit River, that is recommended to be part of Critical Rural Area 5C.

Land Use Standards – This area has already seen substantial residential development ~~and needsto be prepared for a potential interchange with the Maine Turnpike, should that come to fruition~~. Improving access in this area is a priority as well, with a particular need to encourageroad connections among new and existing residential developments in order to reduce traffic on Route 1. The following recommendations are made for this area's land use standards:

- ~~Require~~ Encourage ~~road and~~ pedestrian connections among new and existing residential developments
- Require water and sewer line extensions for new developments
- Coordinate with developers to facilitate locations of new roads

- Maintain 20% lot coverage but allow an additional 5% for pedestrian facilities
- Reduce minimum lot size from 100,000 to 40,000 square feet with public water and sewer
- Allow a mix of residential and business uses

~~**Transitional Area 2 – Community College**~~

~~Geographic Description – An area located to the south of Chapel Road and adjacent to the General Business (GB) district, including the York County Community College property andseveral adjacent commercial and undeveloped properties.~~

~~Land Use Standards – The YCCC campus is very important to Wells' economic developmentneeds and may need to expand in the future, possibly to accommodate student housing. This area may be able to accommodate a future roadway that could connect Chapel Road to Mile Road, potentially easing the burden of beach traffic on Route 1. There is already a substantialamount of lodging and transient housing in this area. The following recommendations are made for this area's land use standards:~~

- ~~Increase allowable lot coverage from 20% to 40%~~
- ~~Define student housing as "A room or suite of rooms leased to a post-secondary studentfor a period of ten months or less."~~
- ~~Allow all types of student, transient and seasonal housing~~
- ~~Continue to allow lodging units~~

Transitional Area 3 – Burnt Mill

Geographic Description – Contains the area located just south of the Merriland River and eastof the Maine Turnpike that is currently zoned Rural Residential (R).

Land Use Standards – This corridor has access to the Route 1 corridor and is already located adjacent to developed residential, commercial and industrial areas. As with the Moody area, alternative means of automotive and pedestrian access are needed in this area to support futuregrowth. The following recommendations are made for this area's land use standards:

- ~~Require~~ Encourage ~~road and~~ pedestrian connections among new and existing residentialdevelopments
- Require water and sewer line extensions for new developments
- Coordinate with developers to facilitate locations of new roads
- Maintain 20% lot coverage but allow an additional 5% for pedestrian facilities
- ~~Reduce minimum lot size from 100,000 to 40,000 square feet with water and sewer~~
- Allow a mix of residential and business uses

~~**Transitional Area 4 – Hobbs Farm**~~

~~Geographic Description – An area located along Meetinghouse and Burnt Mill Roads, adjacentto the existing RA zone along the Route 109 corridor.~~

~~Land Use Standards – This area is already experiencing residential growth and is expected tosee additional development in the future. However, it is located west~~

~~of the Turnpike in a~~
~~semi-rural area. Therefore, the type of growth desired for this area is of a large-lot variety. No changes to dimensional or use standards are recommended the transitional area designation is simply a means of recognizing how this area is undergoing change.~~

Transitional Area 5 – Crediford Limited Commercial

Geographic Description – A strip of land located on the west side of Crediford Road (Route 9A), adjacent to the Wells Heath property. This area includes several former gravel pits nowowned by the Town of Wells.

Land Use Standards – This area is proposed for a potential business park and other limited commercial development. Its location adjacent to the Wells Heath makes it less suitable for intensive commercial growth, so development in this area will need to be restricted somewhat. To develop this area to its full potential, extensions of water and sewer lines would be necessary. However, this area is located more than a mile from the end of existing utility lines,and extending lines may prove to be very difficult. The following recommendations are made for this area's land use standards:

- Allow a mix of residential, business and civic uses
- Enact strong access management standards to limit the number of curb cuts on Crediford Road (Route 9A).
- Restrict impacts of lighting in this area on the Wells Heath
- Require that parking facilities are designed in ways that limits their stormwater runoffand that minimizes visual impacts
- *Assuming the use of wells and septic tanks:*
    - Increase maximum lot coverage from 20% to 30%
    - Maintain existing minimum lot size of 100,000 square feet
- *If public water and sewer services are available:*
    - Increase maximum lot coverage from 20%to 40%
    - Reduce minimum lot size to 40,000 square feet

Transitional Area 6 –Limited Industrial

Geographic Description – A narrow area located adjacent to the existing LI zoning district, just to the south of the town landfill and just to the west of the Maine Turnpike.

Land Use Standards – This area is located between the town landfill and a recently-approved residential development. It has environmental constraints, particularly in regard to the availability of drinking water. To ensure that this area balances economic potential with environmental constraints, the following recommendations are made for this area's land use standards:

- Allow limited light industrial uses that produce only minor environmental impacts
- Prohibit all residential uses
- Prohibit the drilling of subsurface wells for drinking water

- Ensure proper buffering from adjacent residential properties

Transitional Area 7 – Downtown District
Geographic Description – A district along Route 109 and Route 1 extending from the Wells Town Offices in the west, to the public library in the south, to the post office in the north, with the eastern boundary being the parcels along the eastern frontage with Route 1.

Land Use Standards – This area is designated as a downtown for the purpose of encouraging density of residential development and services appropriate for a traditional downtown. If rezoned, this district could include such potential changes to development restrictions as reduced road and lot line setbacks, lot coverage requirements, and lot size requirements.

~~RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGING GROWTH~~

~~The Function of the Existing Residential Growth Ordinance~~

~~For the past 25 years, the Town of Wells has had in place a residential growth ordinance that has set a limit for the amount of new housing units that may be built in any one year. Section10 of the Inventory outlined the rationale for the Town of Wells' growth ordinance. The primary purpose of slowing the rate of growth in the Town has historically been to maintain apredictable level of growth. The effect of predictability is that the Town has been able to continue to keep up with the additional public capital and operating costs brought on by new residential development.~~

~~Even with this limit in place, Wells still added 467 housing units from 2000 to 2003, which ismore than all but one other municipality in York County (Saco added 489). As discussed in the Inventory, the actual rate of development from 2000 through 2003 has set a pace for Wellsto probably exceed its 2015 State Planning Office population projection by at least a year or two.~~

~~Without the growth limit in place, the present rate of growth in Wells would undoubtedly be higher. As pressure for residential development has mounted since 2000, the current annual growth limit of 132 units has been reached for the past two years and there is now a waiting listfor both subdivision and single lot development in the Town. In addition, the Town settled a lawsuit in November 2004 by agreeing to exempt 131 lots in a previously approved subdivision from the growth limit. Finally, as of February 2005, projects totaling 277 proposednew subdivision lots are currently under review by the Planning Board and the Town Planner expects to receive applications for as many as 100 more lots by mid 2005.~~

~~Adding up all of these potential new units produces a picture of a Town facing tremendouspressure to grow. In sum:~~

- ~~With a two year waiting list for growth permits, demand exists for 264 units to be builtright now (132 per year);~~

- An additional 131 lots have recently been exempted from the growth cap and may be builtright away;
- Another 277 new lots are in the pipeline (with up to 100 more expected in the immediatefuture);
- Therefore, it can be reasonably estimated that there is an immediate demand to build asmany as 772 housing units in the Town of Wells.

Even at the historic growth rate of between 100 and 132 units per year, the Town already facesa long list of potential capital expenditures. As the Capital Investment Strategy outlines, capital projects totaling about $23 million have already been identified just to serve the Town'sneeds at its current growth rate. If the annual growth rate were to increase by a factor of four or greater, the capital needs of the Town would grow even larger.

The Town of Wells understands clearly that it must move away from a town-wide growth cap.However, given the current demand and the known capacity limitations, the town cannot prudently eliminate the growth cap without having another growth management system in

place. It is that rationale which demands that the Town of Wells continue the current growth cap on a strictly temporary basis. As described in Strategies 7 and 8 at end of this chapter, uponadoption of the plan the Town Selectmen would appoint a Growth Management Committee to develop and recommend for adoption a new system of growth management. The temporary capwould be extended for up to a three-year period for this system to be developed and adopted at town meeting.

A New System is Needed

While the growth ordinance has effectively protected Wells from having to address the potential fiscal consequences of unfettered development, the ordinance has not served to reinforce the Town's Comprehensive Plan or its Zoning Ordinance. As Figure 8 shows, residential development in the Town has occurred in a relatively haphazard fashion, with highconcentrations of new construction in many rural areas of the Town. Several areas current zoned Rural (Perkins Town, Tatnic Hills, the area west of Route 1 near Moody) have seen a great deal of new development since the early 1990s.

The general conclusion of the Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force recognizes that the existing Residential Growth Ordinance may not be the most effective way to manage growth. However, the Task Force feels that zoning alone will not adequately control future residential growth and development. Thus, a new system for growth management is needed inWells.

Recommendation: Appoint a Growth Management Committee to Overseethe Transition to a New System

The Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force has considered a variety of options regarding the management of residential growth in Wells in the context of the ComprehensivePlan Update. It is clear to the members of the Task Force that this issue

~~will require more intensive study than what can be adequately addressed in a Comprehensive Plan. Thus, the Task Force recommends that, as an immediate implementation action, the Board of Selectmenappoint a special Growth Management Committee.~~

~~The responsibility of the Growth Management Committee will be to develop alternative strategies to the existing Residential Growth Management Ordinance (growth cap). The Committee will be asked to examine the potential of growth management strategies such as: adifferential growth cap, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Impact Fees (e.g., stormwater management, transportation, open space) and other innovative planning tools.~~

~~In conducting its work, the Growth Management Committee must understand the goals and policies of the Land Use chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, the strategies developed by the Committee must reinforce the distinctions of growth, transitional, rural and critical rural areas put forth in this plan. The Committee must also pay heed to any changes to state statutes or rules regarding the management of growth to ensure that Wells' ordinances arein compliance.~~

~~The Growth Management Committee will be given a maximum of three years from the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan to complete its work. Within the three-year period, the Committee will develop an alternative system to the present Residential Growth Ordinance andpresent it to Town Meeting for a vote. The present numerical limitation on residential growth will be phased out in conjunction with the implementation of an alternative growth management system.~~

~~In the interim, the existing Residential Growth Management Ordinance will remain in place asa **temporary** means of limiting the pace of growth. As discussed above, Wells already must plan for about $23 million in capital investments at its current pace of growth. The Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force has concluded that removing the growth cap without having an alternative strategy in place would result in a large spike in the growth rate that would place an undue strain on the Town's finances.~~

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. Existing Town Land Use and Subdivision Ordinances and the desired uses and land use guidelines noted above.

Implementation Strategies

1. Amend the Wells Land Use Ordinance consistent with the Land Use Policies, desired uses and land use guidelines.

2. Establish a program to identify, select and prioritize appropriate lands in critical rural areas for open space protection and possible acquisition.

~~2.~~3. Work with the Wells Conservation Commission, State and Federal entities and private landtrust and conservation organizations to assemble a database of parcels suitable for protection based upon guidance policies established by the Conservation Commission. The parcels should focus on Town Natural Resource, Land Use, and Transportation goals, such as establishing protected lands for salt marsh migration due to rising sea levels or parcels that will provide sustainable transportation links such as bike paths or pedestrian commuter paths.

~~3.~~4. Maintain, and enhance where possible, the scenic views and corridors along the easterly side of Route 1 that incorporate coastal waters and marshes.

~~4.~~5. Work with owners of agriculture and forestry lands so they are aware of, and kept up to date with, Maine "current use" programs and encourage the donation or sale of land or conservation easements to the Town or conservation organizations.

6. Manage the development of public infrastructure and facilities in a manner that limits development pressure in rural and critical rural areas.

~~Appoint a Growth Management Committee to develop alternative strategies to the existing Residential Growth Management Ordinance (growth cap) within a three-year period from the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee will examine the potential of growth management strategies such as: a differential growth cap, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Impact Fees and other innovative planning tools.~~

~~5. Temporarily maintain the existing Residential Growth Ordinance for a period of no more than three years while the Growth Management Committee works to implement an alternative system to replace it.~~

~~6.~~

7. Develop an open space plan for the Town of Wells.
8. Encourage the participation and comments from the conservation commission on public and private plans for open space.
9. Continually assess existing and future Town-owned lands based upon conservation, recreation, and facility needs.
10. Update ordinances regarding floodplains following the release of updated FEMA maps in 2022.

~~7.~~11. Direct the Selectboard to consider traffic congestion, water resources, and development rates in planning for future growth.
12. If water and sewer services are extended beyond I-95, no change in residential density should be allowed.

~~Consider downscaling or not extending sewer and water services west of I-95 which would increase development and reduce lot sizes.~~

13. Continue funding ~~to~~ of the Land Bank to acquire open space to sustain public

recreation, resources conservation, watershed protection, and wildlife habitat.

14. Initiate a town wide discussion relating to the use of ~~abandoned~~ depleted gravel pits. Examples of hypothetical use include areas for appropriate businesses, to be set aside for recreational purposes, or replanted/vegetated to enhance the ecological function of this open space.
15. Continue to meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and regulatory and non-regulatory strategies.
16. Continue to provide the code enforcement officer with the tools, training, and support necessary to enforce land use regulations, and ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer is certified in accordance with 30-A M.R.S.A. §4451.
17. Continue to track new development in the community by type and location and report this activity in the annual report.
18. Work to direct new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth areas as identified in the Future Land Use Plan.
19. ~~8.~~ Periodically (at least every five years) evaluate the implementation of this Plan in accordance with Section 2.7, and as identified in Part 3 of this Plan.

Chapter 7 – Town Character and Appearance Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Town Character and Appearance Policies and Strategies describe the goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies ~~for~~ related to what the citizens of Wells want their Town to look like and how to achieve ~~it~~this as an aspect of the Vision for Wells. The policies ~~define~~ address the character and appearance of the Town in terms of its natural, social and built environment for specific geographic areas. They address the protection of scenic areas and vistas, as well as guidelines for new development, buildings, landscaping and other features that affect the Town's function, character and appearance.

The outreach and engagement opportunities during this comprehensive planning project identified an awareness by residents that Wells is changing. This change is a result of the growth and development activity experienced over recent decades. Residents voiced a shared concern that aspects of the Town's rural and small-town appearance have been lost, and the implementation actions identified in this Plan should address this shift. Looking forward, Wells will strive to retain and restore its distinct community character through context sensitive design requirements and infrastructure projects that reinforce the look and feel of the Town. Future zoning discussion will encourage the same in an effort enhance the character and appearance that residents and visitors are seeking.

Goals

State Goal:

1. Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing sprawling development patterns. ~~(Growth Management Act).~~

2. Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well being.

3. Preserve the state's historic and archeological resources.

~~**Regional Goal:**~~
~~(No goal specified)~~

Wells Goals:

1. ~~Maintain~~ Preserve and restore the distinct ~~the small town~~ character of the community, including the rural feeling created by ~~both the physical~~mature trees,

fields, and natural areas; and the social environment~~;~~ west of Interstate 95; and the coastal feeling with its classic architecture to the east of Interstate 95.~~and the coastal feeling west of Interstate 95 with its classic architecture to the east of Interstate 95.~~

2 Retain open space and natural areas throughout the community.

3. Assure that new development is in character with traditional New England architecture, ~~and~~ is of a scale and intensity that is compatible with the existing character of Wells, and reinforces the vision and purpose for the zoning district it is within.

4. Promote those amenities which foster small town neighborliness such as local businesses, places for people to gather and meet, sidewalks, tree-lined roads, ~~-~~and a sense of community and security.

5. Protect the scenic quality and ecological integrity of the Town along the beaches, marshes, rivers, main roads, and in areas with outstanding scenic beauty.

6. Enhance citizens' awareness of the land and its resources as part of the community of Wells.

~~7. Protect and enhance the Town's tourism economic base and quality of life by maintaining and enhancing the Town's village, waterfront and rural character and appearance.~~

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

General

1. Preserve the Town of Wells' historic, traditional New England seacoast and rural community character and appearance. The character and appearance that evolves from the variety of traditional New England Colonial and Victorian architectural styled wood homes, buildings, barns or barn-like buildings that give Wells, Maine its unique character (herein referred to as the "Traditional New England Style" or "Wells Maine Style"), and both the coastal and rural upland forested landscapes.

2. Encourage the use of cluster design in new subdivisions in appropriate areas to preserve open space. ~~I~~Link these neighborhoods ~~and~~ to each other and the central area via pedestrian /bicycle paths~~,~~ that promote off road movement and~~,~~ preserve corridors of open space~~s~~ that ~~and to prevent~~ reduce fragmentation of wildlife habitats.

3. Preserve scenic vistas especially toward the seacoast from Route 1, and along other scenic corridors ~~especially along~~including Routes ~~1,~~ 9, 109, and town roads in rural areas.

4. Pursue ~~locating~~ the burying of existing overhead utilities ~~underground~~ especially in the central area, ~~and~~ along Route One, within important viewsheds, and elsewhere where feasible.

Business Development – Business Areas

1. ~~1.~~ Encourage the development/installation of public and ~~business oriented~~business-oriented buildings, landscaping, signs, lighting, benches, paving materials, and other elements that shape the character and appearance of Wells to reflect the Traditional New England Style.

~~1.~~2. Pursue the adoption of a form-based code to guide future development activity. The focus of this type of zoning ordinance is on the location, size, and appearance of buildings and their relationship with public roadways and the streetscape. It is also a user friendly and visual regulatory tool, and would reinforce the objectives of this Plan.

Business Advertising and Signs

1. Promote a Town-wide business marketing and signage program in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce and local business owners and the Amtrak marketing program to attract more business and improve advertising while reducing signage.

2. Provide for on-site local ~~highway oriented~~highway-oriented signs for business identification. Work with the Chamber of Commerce and local business owners to minimize on-site signs wherever possible; particularly along commercial corridors. Reducing redundant signs on buildings and in on-site ~~free standing~~free-standing locations will make the business and scenic environment better for business, better for public safety and save an unnecessary business expense.

3. Encourage signage that reflects the Traditional New England Style.

4. Encourage ~~highway oriented~~highway-oriented sign messages to be brief, clear, and simple so that driving safety is enhanced.
5. Develop a policy to limit State Department of Transportation off-site signs to only businesses not located on State numbered highways and to only the blue and white businessidentification signs.

Landscape Architecture – Business Areas and Scenic Corridors

1. Landscaping ~~will~~ should be used to reinforce the ~~"rural~~ farm, ~~/~~ upland forest, ~~or~~ and seacoast appearance~~"~~ that exists in Wells, Maine, e.g. the Traditional New England Style. Landscaping plans should use ~~the~~ native ~~white pines, other conifers, deciduous~~ trees (birch, maples, pines etc.); shrubs and ground cover vegetation in informal, rural farm and forest-like designs and patterns. This particularly applies along rural scenic corridors (e.g., Route 109 and 9) west of the Turnpike.

2. Along the commercial corridors east of the Maine Turnpike (Routes 1 and 9/109), maple or other trees that create spectacular fall color for citizens and ~~touriststourists~~' enjoyment will be planted as street trees and on-site in informal patterns.

3. Along rural scenic corridors (Route 9 and 109 west of the Maine Turnpike), existing native trees and other plant material will be preserved or enhanced with similar plant materials. Building ~~set backs~~setbacks and buffers will preserve existing landscaping, and building site clearing should be minimized. Parking shall be located to the rear of buildings or screened from the public way by natural landscaping materials including trees, shrubs, earth berms, and rocks.

4. On other streets, street trees will be planted consistent with a Development Plan for Landscaping and Street Trees.

5. In all Town areas, where possible, rock walls will be preserved and constructed to reflect the Traditional New England Style ~~rural~~ character.

6. From the intersection of Routes 109 and 9 east, and along Route 1, where possible:

    a. Public sidewalks will ~~use "New England Cobble" pavers or other~~be designed to be accessible and aesthetically pleasing and use a material that reflects a native rock or similar paving appearance.
    b. Street curbs will be constructed of granite.

7. Native Maine granite and other rock is encouraged in building construction, walls, planters,etc. too.

8. All onsite utilities will be located underground.

9. Over time, ~~A~~all overhead utility lines along Route 1, 9, and~~/~~109 in the defined Town Center Area and other growth areas will be located underground where feasible.

10. Design public space to maximize its appeal and access for recreation, gathering, picnicking and enjoyment.

Rural Areas and Neighborhoods

1. Protect and enhance the character and appearance of the remaining rural areas. When rural lands are subdivided, they shall use the cluster design concept and the developed portions will be screened from view.

2. New business development including multi-family housing with three or more units shall reflect the Traditional New England Style in architecture, signs, streetlights and other "built" features. These areas will be designed so they are linked to other neighborhoods and to the Town Center by pedestrian and bicycle

pathways, open spaces, and scenic local and collector streets.

3. ~~Rural f~~Farm houses, barns or barn-like buildings existing as of 1915 will be protected via an incentive program.

Beach Areas and Neighborhoods

1. Protect and enhance the character and appearance of beach areas and neighborhoods. As each of these areas strive to become more resilient to rising sea levels and coastal hazards they should ~~– as residential areas with a neighborhood village center, less~~ identify ways to reduce vehicular traffic, provide more public access, and conserve ~~natural~~ ecologically critical areas – open space areas for recreation and natural wildlife habitat.

2. New business development including multi-family housing with three or more units shall reflect the Traditional New England Style in architecture, signs, street lights and other "built" features.

Scenic Rural Corridors

1. Protect and enhance the scenic quality of local streets and highways through natural or naturally appearing landscaped forested and rural areas as scenic rural corridors.
2. Parking shall be located to the rear of buildings or screened from the public way by natural landscape materials including trees, shrubs, earth berms and rocks.

Route One Corridor and Identified Growth Areas Within ~~– Post Road Antiques and Arts Corridor~~

1. ~~Promote~~ Using the architectural standards in place north of Route 109, encourage efforts along Route One ~~as "Post Road Antique and Arts Corridor" and~~ that increase ~~its~~ the character and appearance of commercial business and the scenic appeal by reinforcing the traditional New England Style character and appearance. It will be aimed to increase business and economic development, increase safety, increase appeal and increase value. It will:
   ~~CPUC - Is this still the goal for this corridor?~~

   ~~a. Encourage existing businesses and new businesses focusing on marketing antiques, art and other products and services serving residents and visitors (e.g. motels, restaurants, and other existing uses);~~
   ~~b.~~a. ~~Encourage~~ Require a unified building placement and appearance featuring the Traditional New England Style.
   ~~c.~~b. Promote increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic via new sidewalks and ~~walkways~~ pathways between ~~stores~~destinations.
   ~~d.~~c. Encourage increased landscaping including maple street trees for fall color and pines for ~~year round~~year-round evergreen foliage, and consider sight distances.~~,~~
   ~~e.~~d. ~~Promote~~ Require new benches, ~~and~~ street lights, and other streetscape amenities that reflect~~ing~~ the Traditional New England Style.

~~f.~~e. Encourage signs that are low, use brief simple messages and are consistent with the Traditional New England Style.

~~g.~~f. Promote an improved and expanded Wells trolley service.

~~h.~~g. Encourage less traffic; coordinated access and parking; and traffic turn-a-rounds to keep business in Wells.

~~i.~~h. Promote Town "gateway entrances" at the north and south ends of the Post Road featuringdistinctive landscaping.

~~j.~~i. ~~Promote~~ Require underground utilities where feasible over the long term.

Wells Transportation Center

1. Continue to encourage the development/redevelopment of this area to serve travelers (tourists, residents, and others) at this transportation gateway to the Wells community. Promote traditional New England style architecture and building appearance through flexible design standards incorporating a mix of design and façade methods. This would require a change in the water/sewer requirement currently identified in the zoning ordinance.

Route 109 east of the Turnpike

1. Encourage the protection and enhancement of Route 109 east of the Turnpike to Route 1. Protect and enhance the current scenic, rural/forested landscape and feature Traditional New England-Wells Maine Style mixed-use development along a corridor that links the Wells Turnpike Center to Route One via vehicular, trolley, bicycle and/or pedestrian circulation.

Town Signs and Entrances

1. Encourage the development of a standard design for Town Entrance signs that reflects the Traditional New England Style and branding for Wells~~.~~

2. Support the installation of Town Entrance signs at strategic locations.

Standards

1. To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guidedevelopment:

   a. Existing standards in the Land Use ~~ordinance~~Regulations.

   b. Continue to develop and adopt ~~Set~~ new standards in the land use regulations for ~~business~~ commercial buildings, landscaping, signs, lighting and other elements that shape Town character and appearance to reflect the traditional New England, Maine Wells Style.

Implementation Strategies

1. Adopt Town Character and Appearance design standards for all commercial zoning districts that can be used to evaluate site plan, sign and subdivision applications and Town Development Plans required to implement the

Comprehensive Plan.

2. Initiate a street tree planting and green infrastructure implementation program for Routes 1 and 9/109.

3. Initiate a street curb and sidewalk improvement program for all town owned and maintained roadway corridors.

4. Initiate a study to determine the feasibility of an underground utilities program for Routes 1 (Post Road Antiques and Arts Corridor) and 9/109 east of the Turnpike in conjunction with all of the utilities currently located on the poles ~~Central Maine Power, Verizon, the cable company,~~ and the Maine Department of Transportation.

5. Adopt a Development Plan for the ~~Post Road Antique and Arts (~~Route 1~~)~~ Corridor that includes a form-based code, access managementplan, and streetscape standards to guide future development activity.

6. Adopt a Development Plan for Route 109 east of the Turnpike including a form-based code, access management plan, and streetscape standards to guide future development activity.

~~6.~~7. Continue to implement and expand upon the Development Plan for the Wells Transportation Center.

~~7.~~8. Adopt a standard design for Town Entrance signs that reflect the Traditional New England- Style and branding for Wells.

~~8.~~9. Adopt a standard design for Wells' historical markers.

~~9.~~10. Adopt an ordinance to prohibit the placement of merchandise in building setbacks.

Chapter 8 – Transportation and Circulation Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Transportation and Circulation Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to the transportation system in Wells. Many of the transportation related issues identified in 2005 (congestion, vehicle crashes, needed intersection upgrades, the need for more bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, etc.) persist today and have become even more apparent as growth has continued. However, Wells is well served by transportation options such as the Downeaster, Shoreline Explorer, and the soon to be completed Eastern Trail which are all unique assets. Looking ahead, the transportation system in Wells is in need of a connected pedestrian and bicycle network to achieve its goals for an accessible multi-modal transportation network.

Access management and traffic calming measures along the major roadways in Wells will reduce congestion and will be more achievable through the adoption of a Complete and Green Streets Policy and the related design standards. This will ensure that all future roadway upgrades incorporate all modes of travel and incorporate green infrastructure improvements that address stormwater management, air quality, and other environmental concerns while also improving the travel experience for all modes. Wells must also consider the impact of sea level rise on its transportation infrastructure and address the initial six miles of roadway that are forecast to be impacted most severely.

The land use, housing, and economic objectives identified in this Plan must also be coordinated with the transportation and circulation needs identified here to ensure there is a positive relationship. With these changes in place the transportation system in Wells will compliment the land use objects and future vision articulated in this comprehensive plan.

Goals

State Goal:

Plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate growth and economic development ~~(Growth Management Act)~~.

~~**Regional Goal:**~~

~~Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery through formal andinformal means of inter-local cooperation and communication.~~

Wells Goals:

1. Promote a safe and sustainable transportation system that is consistent with the character of ~~the~~ each neighborhood through which it passes.

2. Encourage and enhance alternative modes of travel including pedestrian and bicycle traffic along all major roadways in Wells, and in off-corridor locations when possible.

~~2.~~3. Improve and enhance the transportation network through the coordination of state, regional and local planning.

~~3.~~4. Plan for and ~~P~~promote the management of the roadway network to better manage and resolve congested areas such as the Route 1 Corridor.

5. Promote the identified growth areas along the Route 1 Corridor ~~in the Wells Corner and Moody areas and the Route 109 Corridor in the Town Hall and High Pine areas~~and elsewhere as "Main Streets" or "Village" development areas within the Town of Wells.

~~4.~~6. Address the access management and traffic calming needs through a comprehensive corridor study.

~~5.~~7. Encourage public/private cooperation in financing necessary improvements to the transportation system.

~~6.~~8. Encourage the selective improvement of Route One to eliminate safety and operational problems while ~~preserving~~ improving its role as the spine of the community as opposed to a major regional traffic artery.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. In cooperation with Maine Department of Transportation (DOT), ensure that planned transportation improvements and enhancements are safe, efficient, and ~~appropriate for the~~reflect or enhance each particular area, result in the creation of "Complete and Green Streets", and complement the effected neighborhoods.

2. ~~When practical,~~ Adopt a Complete Streets and Green Streets Policy to incorporate pedestrian sidewalks, walkways and bicycle lanes and vegetation into transportation project designs when local or state roadway improvements are being implemented. This is especially important on Routes 1, 109. and 9 to improve the transportation system for all modes of travel.

~~2.~~3. Ensure that state, regional and local transportation planning officials are aware of the Town's transportation deficiencies and needs by:

a. Participating in the Region 6 Regional Needs Assessment process.
b. Documenting the need for specific improvements.
c. Establishing priorities for transportation improvements.
d. Identifying the projects in the Town's Capital Improvement Program.
e. ~~Continuing to participate in the~~Initiating a new US Route 1 Corridor Study with MDOT.
f. ~~Continuing to participate~~Implementing the findings in the Route 109 corridor study. ~~with the Town of Sanford~~.

~~3.~~4. While maximizing the efficiency of the state and local roadway network, ~~E~~encourage local businesses, transportation users and civic organizations to financially participate in the cost of transportation enhancement and improvements.

~~4.~~5. Ensure that the Wells Transportation Center is truly an inter-modal passenger transportation center by ensuring the necessary infrastructure is available and then encouraging passenger rail, commuters, tourists, taxis, car shares, limousines, trolley service, walkers, scooters and bicyclists to use the facility.

~~5.~~6. Ensure that the ~~central~~ Central ~~area~~ Area (Route 1/109 intersection and vicinity), the Route 1 Corridor, and the major roadways that connect to the coast provide~~s~~ opportunities for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails and bicycle paths.

~~6.~~7. Recognize the important impact that transportation decisions have on the Town's land use patterns, ensure that future transportation improvements are consistent with the Town's land use policies and give special consideration to maintaining or enhancing the character of established neighborhoods and historic villages.

~~7.~~8. Encourage safe and appropriate access management techniques ~~for~~ are identified and implemented along both US Route 1 and Maine Route 109.

~~8.~~9. New development and redevelopment along Route One and other major roads shall occur in a manner, which minimizes the cumulative impacts on the road network while providing safe access to these parcels.

~~9.~~10. Strive to reduce the seasonal congestion on state and local roadways by:
a. Identifying off-street parking opportunities adjacent to Route 1 and the identified "village" areas~~, and~~.
b. Encouraging residents and tourists to use off street parking coordinated with the trolley system, the park and ride facility and rideshare programs.
c. Creating incentives for the development of local public and private transportation systems that reduce the need to use an automobile locally.

~~10.~~11. Continue to investigate suitable methods for traffic calming, particularly in the summermonths, in the more densely developed areas east of ~~US~~ Route 1.

~~11.~~12. Encourage the planning and implementation of a pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure network ~~bikeway facilities~~ in as much of Wells as is practical.

~~12.~~13. Consider alternatives to ease the traffic congestion on Route 1.

a) Mile Road/College Drive extension
b) Turnpike entrance between Moody and Ogunquit.
c) Connector road between Moody and Exit 19 area

14 Encourage a reduction in traffic speed on Route 1, Route 109, and Chapel Road.

15 Continue to ~~E~~ensure that any road accepted by the Town as a public roadway meets the Town standards and specifications for public roads.

~~Explore the creation of transportation links (e.g., ferry, bridges, etc.) between the Harbor,and Wells Beach.~~

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. See existing land use regulations including the requirements for Town Streets and Sidewalks~~., Land Use and Subdivision Ordinances.~~

~~1. Amend standards to provide sufficient or additional right-of-way for raised sidewalks,bicycle paths and landscaping.~~

Implementation Strategies

Cooperation with the Maine DOT

~~1. Continue to participate in the US Route 1 Corridor Study. US Route 1 is the backbone of the Town's Transportation network and the Town needs to ensure that the study addresses such issues as access management, capacity, mobility, safety, signage and provision for pedestrians and bicyclists.~~

1. Work closely with the MDOT on the implementation of the Route 109 Improvement Program between Exit 19 and the High Pine area through design and construction. The Town ~~recently~~ completed the Route 109/9 Corridor Study that specifically recommended that ~~–~~this portion of the Corridor maintain its existing rural character. It will be necessary to cooperate with MDOT to ensure that the ~~final plans~~implementation is ~~are –~~consistent with the goals and recommendations of this corridor study. Some intersection improvements are needed at: Dodge Road, Route 9B, Willie Hill Road, including the intersection

at Bears Den.

2. Work with MDOT to initiate a corridor study of Route 1 to identify infrastructure improvements, access management opportunities, and to coordinate the changes in local land use regulations needed to reinforce the future of this corridor and the integration of the identified growth areas.

3. Work cooperatively with the state to ensure that there is proper planning and implementation of projects that address key roadway locations, bridges that need attention and high accident locations throughout the community.

4. Maintain, enact or amend local land use ordinances as appropriate to address or avoid conflicts with:

   a. Policy objectives of the Sensible Transportation Policy Act (23 M.R.S.A. §73);

   b. State access management regulations pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704; and

   c. State traffic permitting regulations for large developments pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704-A.

Regional Transportation Planning

1. Participate in the MDOT Regional Needs Assessment process in order to coordinate local transportation planning with the regional and State effort and to become aware of funding and program opportunities.

~~Continue to work with the Maine Turnpike Authority in the negotiation for a major bus company to provide Boston to Portland bus service with a stop at the Transportation Center and for bus service from the Center to link surrounding communities.~~

2. Support and coordinate with York County Community Action (YCCA) on regional transit solutions.

~~2.~~3. Identify locations in Wells and funding opportunities for establishing additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

~~3. Continue to work with the Town of Sanford on the Route 109 corridor study and implement its recommendations when complete.~~

4. Amend local regulations and standards to provide sufficient or additional right-of-way for raised sidewalks, bicycle paths, landscaping, access management, and other priority transportation issues.

Roadway Improvement Program

1. Prepare and fund a roadway improvement program with priorities for inclusion in the Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This process will provide formal notice to all concerned regarding the Town's intention for future roadway improvements.

2. Continue to study alternative routes to ease congestion on Route 1 such as the turnpike exit between Wells and Moody.

3. Build the connection between College Drive and Mile Road.

4. Continue the firm policy ensuring that all roads accepted as public Town roads be built and constructed to the Town's roadway standards, ~~.~~and foster transportation-efficient growth patterns that provide for future street and transit connections.

~~5. Consider establishing an impact fee for all roads accepted as public town roadsappropriate for the impact of the development on Town services.~~

~~6. Do not accept new Town roads in critical rural areas.~~

5. The Route 1 Corridor is in need of signal upgrades to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Alternative and Multi-modal Transportation

1. Adopt a municipal Complete and Green Streets Policy.

~~1.~~2. Continue to participate in the Shoreline ~~Coasta~~l Explorer planning process to evaluate and improvetrolley service to adequately meet the needs of the community and the region.

~~2.~~3. Provide screened off street parking adjacent to Routes 1 and 109, and coordinate these parking facilities as part of the access management solutions for these corridors.

~~3.~~4. Encourage residents and tourists to use the ~~trolley system~~Shoreline Explorer in conjunction with the offstreet parking areas, the park n' ride facility, and rideshare programs.

~~4.~~5. Consider the use of private mass transit.

~~5.~~6. Establish a Trails and Pathways ~~c~~Committee to prepare a Development Plan and design standards for Pedestrian and Bicycle ~~Ways~~ pathways and ~~Trails~~ trails

based on existing regional and local data, and plans ~~and also consider their relationship to sidewalks and other pedestrian ways,~~. Said pedestrian /bicycle paths will be for non- motorized vehicles (~~,~~i.e., no ATV, 4 wheelers, minibikes, etc.)

7. Have the Planning Board or an established Trails and Pathways Committee, at the Selectmen's discretion, review local or state roadway improvements to ensure compliance with the locally adopted Complete and Green Streets Policy, and where possible connect existing trails in Town and eventually connect with the Eastern Trail. As part of this planning, identify appropriate locations for pedestrian sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage to enhance pedestrian safety and traffic calming. This will enable better connection of the western side of town with the Route 1 corridor, and should also parallel the Route 1 corridor. This will provide an alternative, healthy means for residents in western Wells to shop and work while providing coastal residents with a means for reaching the conservation areas in the west.

~~6.~~8. Request the Trails and Pathways Committee monitor and identify other ways Wells can improve connectivity, safety, and zero-carbon transit options.

~~7.~~9. Continue to investigate and implement seasonal traffic calming measures in high density residential and commercial areas, especially adjacent to and east of~~,~~ US Route 1.

~~8. As part of this planning, identify appropriate locations for pedestrian sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage to enhance pedestrian safety and traffic calming.~~

Wells Transportation Center

1. Encourage users of alternate transportation modes to use the Wells Transportation Center by providing them with the necessary infrastructure to access the Center, and amenities such as covered bicycle storage and charging facilities.

2. Plan for the expansion of the rideshare/vanpool facilities as the usage increases.

3. Work to implement ~~a~~ improved pedestrian and bicycle connections along Route 109 ~~to the central area of Wells.~~to the Route 1 Corridor

~~4. Effectively utilize the new internal Transportation Center access road and the existing traffic signal at Route 109.~~

Route 109 Corridor (East of Exit 19)

1. As the central area of Town develops, plan for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails and bicycle paths.

2. Develop a comprehensive sidewalk, bike lane, and streetscape program that is specific

to this corridor and reinforces the municipal Complete and Green Streets Policy.

Chapter 9 – Economic Development Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Economic Development Policies and Strategies section describes the goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to economic development in Wells. The local economy in Wells has been in transition away from agriculture, forestry, and fishing as major industries for some time, and this change continues today. Only a small percentage of Wells residents are now employed within the Town in any sector, and the majority of working residents commute to workplaces in nearby York, Portland, Ogunquit, and Kennebunk. This means that workers from surrounding communities are commuting into Wells to fill these jobs.

The local economy in Wells is directly tied to the transportation system and other required infrastructure. With no current village or downtown area established, businesses primarily locate along Route 1 and other roadways where the necessary infrastructure is available. As a result, the local economy is tied to the land use and infrastructure changes that result from this Comprehensive Plan. Given the broad community concerns related to growth and development in Wells, the identified need for housing options for all residents, and the desire for a more walkable area(s) with a downtown or village feel this presents new opportunities for the community to pursue. Identifying, zoning, and investing in the infrastructure for "village" development areas will accommodate higher density development and redevelopment opportunities and a mix of uses currently lacking in Wells.

Goals

State Goal:

Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and economic well being.~~(Growth Management Act)~~

Regional Goals:

~~Encourage a diversity of commercial development, and expansion of the economic basewherever adequate resources and infrastructure support it.~~

Goals identified in the 2021 Southern Maine Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy are:

1. Celebrate the region as New England's leading place to live, raise a family, work and visit.

2. Strengthen the area's diverse, dynamic and thriving economy.

3. Develop and attract a highly skilled and inventive workforce that embraces cutting edge technologies in the cultivation of traditional industries and

manufacturing companies.

4. Recognize the critical significance of quality of life by preserving our historic downtowns, mills and farms, promoting our culture and the arts, and managing our natural resources including our coastline, inland waters, and forests.

5. Provide and emphasize recreational, art, and cultural opportunities. Southern Maine is home to a diverse network of trails which are a substantial resource to the region and its economy.

Wells Goals:

1. Improve Wells' economic climate by promoting investment, revenue generation, and year-round, good quality job opportunities. This will be accomplished by working to retain existing businesses while encouraging the development of new diverse small businesses and industries that are consistent with and reinforce the community's ~~small town~~distinct character.

~~1.~~2. Identify, regulate, and invest in a village area for higher density pedestrian friendly development activity. This should include a mix of uses including year-round mixed income housing units above and adjacent to commercial uses.

~~2.~~3. Provide suitable areas for low-impact businesses that ~~have~~ provide access to major transportation resources such as the Maine Turnpike.

~~3.~~4. ~~Encourage~~ Continue to allow small-scale, neighborhood commercial enterprises in appropriate areas west of the Route 1 corridor.

~~4.~~5. Foster home occupations and cottage industries that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

~~5.~~6. Enhance and encourage tourist-related activities and small-scale development that are consistent with the character and scale of the community and the image of Wells as a family resort area, especially in the Route 1 Corridor/Beach Business Area. ~~However, restrict the development of commercial tourist "attractions" designed to appeal primarily to the transient tourist or "non-family" travelers, such as nightclubs, bars, amusement parks, andwater slides.~~

7.~~6.~~ Protect natural resource-based business and industry while minimizing both environmental degradation and impact to adjacent property owners.

Policies

To achieve these goals, consistent with the Land Use goals and policies, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Promote Wells and its resources to companies who would be compatible with

the Town's existing community vision and ~~small-town~~ environment.

2. Provide opportunities for land and access to encourage development of new business or expansion of existing businesses in appropriate areas as identified in the Future Land Use Plan.

3. Foster the establishment and expansion of small-scale local businesses that serve the tourist dependent economy in the Route 1 Corridor and Beach Business areas while addressing known transportation conflicts.

4. Provide necessary infrastructure improvements such as access management, off street municipal parking, sidewalks, and public restrooms in the ~~central area,~~identified higher density "village" areas along the Route 1 Corridor, and near Beach areas.

5. Provide specific recommendations through outreach and educational programs, and regulatory incentives, to businesses and property owners along the Route 1 Corridor as to how the corridor can become more visually attractive and functional.

~~6. Promote and market Route 1 as the Post Road Antiques and Arts Corridor and increase its commercial and scenic appeal consistent with the Land Use, Transportation and Town Character and Appearance and other related Plan policies and implementation strategies.~~

~~7.~~6. Continue to support the viability of Wells' working landscapes and the remaining forestry, agriculture and ~~extractive~~ fishing industries through land protection, education, and by discouraging residential and commercial development in areas surrounding these uses.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

~~1. (To be developed in future update.)~~

1. Refine the Wells land use regulations to reflect these identified goals and policies.

~~1.~~2. Ensure future infrastructure upgrades identified in the capital improvement planning process reinforce the desired future land use pattern and address the needs of the local economy.

Implementation Strategies

1. Establish a non-profit economic development corporation whose responsibility would be to market Wells and its resources to companies who would be compatible with the Town's existing ~~small-town~~ character, scale and market. Financial support will need to be provided to this organization for this level of

marketing and coordination.

2. Complete a comprehensive Route One Corridor study in coordination with Maine DOT. As the primary commercial district in Wells, and the largest generator of transportation and congestion related concerns this corridor needs a plan that addresses coordinated infrastructure and regulatory changes.

3. Review and amend local land use regulations to ensure they reflect the desired location, scale, and design of future development. These regulations must also address the connection to the local transportation network, and articulate how to best integrate new development activity in Wells over time. This should include the identification of "village" areas to serve as higher density mixed-use growth areas, and areas for lower density development and open space protection.

~~1.~~4. Identified "village" growth areas will require zoning changes and planned infrastructure improvements over time. Other tools such as Tax Increment Financing districts should be evaluated in conjunction with these changes.

~~2.~~5. Identify areas in Town that would be suitable for future wholesale commercial, research and development or low-impact businesses such as Transitional Area 5 (the Crediford Road area). These areas should have good access to the local and regional highway network and be consistent with the Land Use goals and policies.

~~3.~~6. Identify and attract companies that would be suitable for Wells and would also complement the existing business environment. Such businesses could take advantage of Wells' environmental resources as tourist attractions and could include bicycle/kayak touring, small restaurants, personal service establishments, business service and repair, and arts and crafts-type shops.

~~4. Retain and expand existing businesses by facilitating technical assistance and training through State sponsored economic development programs as well as business planning and management workshops.~~

~~5.~~7. Participate in the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC) ~~Southern Maine Regional Economic Development District (SMEDD)~~ for technical and financial assistance.

~~Foster the development of home occupations and cottage industries that are consistent with Wells' rural, small-town character. Review land use regulations and revise, if necessary, standards for home occupations that provides opportunity for small business yet minimizes impact on adjacent uses or the environment.~~

~~6.~~ Establish a committee to explore ecologically oriented tourist opportunities. ~~Said committee should include representatives from business and natural resource orientedresource-oriented~~ organizations such as the Wells National

~~Estuarine Research Reserve, Laudholm Trust, Nature Conservancy, Great Works Regional Land Trust, and the Rachel~~Rachael ~~Carson National Wildlife Refuge and the Mount Agamenticus Regional Trust.~~

~~7.~~8. Continue to support the farmers' market community and other types of "pop-up" markets and events. ~~This should include regular programing and activity at the Wells Harbor Community Park to draw people to this wonderful area of the community without the need for permanent structures or development.~~

~~8.~~9. ~~Limit residential and commercial development in areas surrounding existing resource- based industries. (see Critical Rural Area standards in Chapter 6).~~

Chapter 10 – Housing Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Housing Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standardsand implementation strategies related to housing in Wells.

The Town of Wells housing stock has developed over the past 150 years. Consequently, there exists a rich variety of housing that includes historic homes, older villages, farmsteads, beach and waterfront cottage and homes and a small number of multifamily units. The Town's greatest density of housing occurs east of the Maine Turnpike and is quite rural west of the Turnpike. In coastal areas some of the homes, and the infrastructure that supports them, are at greater risk from coastal hazards and sea-level rise. ~~Much of Wells' housing growth has been over the past 30 years with over 60% of the over 5000 structures being built after 1970. Another significant trend has been the conversion of seasonal units to year round homes that has required the Town to respond with a commensurate level of municipal services.~~

Housing affordability continues to be a concern in Wells. Median rent has increased 64% in the past 10 years and 74% of renter households are unable to afford median rent for a 2-bedroom housing unit. Median home prices have increased 93% since 2014. As a result, the affordable housing gap has increased significantly. The housing mix in Wells is still predominantly single-family homes, although the percentage of multi-family homes has been slowly increasing. 83% of occupied housing in Wells are owner occupied, while the remaining 17% of units are renter occupied. Between 2004 and 2020, Wells also experienced an increase of 1,700 seasonal units, an increase of 36%, the bulk of which were cottages and campground spaces. Short-term rentals are a growing concern with up to 800 stays recorded per month.

As Wells works to provide opportunities for a variety of housing units to be constructed, including more affordable workforce housing, it is important to understand the impact that lot size and infrastructure have on unit cost. Larger lots increase housing costs and consume open space. The cluster subdivision provision is an important tool for balancing the development of new homes and the protection of open space. Identifying places for higher density housing such as multi-family structures and mixed-use developments is also important. The privatization and cost of infrastructure (roads, fire ponds, etc.) required is also deserving of some evaluation and conversation in the years to come.

Goals

State Goal:

To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens. ~~(Growth Management Act)~~

Regional Goal:
To encourage a diversity of affordable housing throughout the region**.**

Wells Goals:

1. ~~The Town attempts to close its current~~Continue to address the housing supply and affordability gap, and work~~s to ensure that~~toward a goal of at least ~~15~~ 10 percent of ~~its~~ homes constructed in Wells ~~future is~~are affordable for low and moderate-income households, including both families with children and the elderly.

2. Ensure that the quality and location of new residential development provides a good living environment for all residents.

3. Promote the development of a range of housing unit types to meet the needs of all residents.

~~4.~~ Address renewable energy goals through educational campaigns.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Provide opportunities for the construction of a wide range of housing types at a variety of densities to allow for a diversity of people in the Town.

2. Consider a variety of techniques to ensure that there is a range of housing, at a range of densities, that is affordable to low and moderate-income households.

~~1.~~3. Continue to allow housing for the elderly, ~~in growth and transitional areas~~ and explore allowing higher densities than other types of housing through a density bonus program if a percentage of the units are designated as affordable ~~where~~ and the facility can be served by public water and sewer.

~~2.~~4. Continue ~~land use regulations~~ to allow~~ing~~ for the construction of eldercare facilities such as congregate housing and assisted living facilities at appropriate densities provided that the character of these facilities is appropriate to Wells.

~~3. Consider a variety of techniques to ensure that there is a range of housing that is affordable to low and moderate-income households.~~

~~4. Continue to exempt affordable family and senior housing in growth areas from the Town's Residential Growth Ordinance.~~

5. Encourage both non-profit and for-profit developers of affordable and special needs housing to pursue developments in Wells.

6. Encourage and promote efforts to support the creation of adequate workforce housing that will support the community's and region's economic development.

7. Ensure that land use controls encourage the development of quality affordable housing, including rental housing.

~~6.~~8. Encourage and support the efforts of the regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. Amend Land Use Ordinance as needed.

~~2. Amend Residential Growth Ordinance as needed.~~

2. Partnerships with non-profit and for-profit developers of affordable and special needs housing.

Implementation Strategies

1. Adopt and follow the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) definitions of affordability for York County and continue to update affordability targets as new MSHA data are available.

2. Review existing land use regulations to determine if they ~~Continue to~~ allow for adequate opportunities to create housing for the senior population ~~in growth and transitional areas and allow higher densities for this age group than other types of housing through a density bonus program (with the bonus not to exceed clustering standards) where the facility can be served by public sewer and water.~~ and for households needing access to affordable housing units.

~~3. Establish incentives such as those currently allowed for congregate housing to encourage the development of senior housing as long as the development is consistent with the goalsand policies of this Comprehensive Plan.~~

~~4. Revise the mobile home regulations to ensure that they meet the State law for mobile home parks and mobile home park expansion. Such regulations must provide standards to minimize the impact on the Town's services, natural and cultural environment and be respectful of adjoining neighborhoods.~~

~~5.~~ Review the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to ensure that housing density is consistent with the Land Use Plan resulting from this Comprehensive Plan, ~~is directed to~~ addresses the opportunity for multi-family and higher density residential developments in the identified Growth Areas of the community, and is consistent with the capacity of municipal services to ~~ensure~~ these new or redeveloped sites. ~~See also Policies~~

~~and Recommendations for Land Use.~~

3. Review town land use ordinances to determine if these regulations can be revised to ~~encourage~~ incentivize ~~more~~ affordable housing and if the price of the units created can be easily tracked.

~~Consider the development of an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance that would further incentivize the creation of affordable housing units, and could be used in combination with the Cluster provision.~~

~~6.~~4. 5. Collaborate with housing-related organizations in the region, to support efforts to provide diverse housing for all citizens, including affordable and workforce housing.

~~7. Work with other communities to create a regional non-profit housing organization to foster affordable housing programs for low and moderate income families. Such a group could:~~

~~a. Ensure that local land use regulations do not present a barrier to the development of affordable housing.~~

~~b. Work cooperatively with nonprofit organizations and private developers to provide opportunities for affordable housing.~~

~~c. Seek loans and grants from the State of Maine;~~

~~d. Work with area banks through the Community Reinvestment Act.~~

~~e. Consider the use of Town owned land for affordable housing programs.~~

~~8.~~5. Adopt or revise provisions in the land use and building codes to provide greater opportunities for the rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income properties including health, safety, and energy efficiency improvements.

~~9.~~6. Provide opportunities for ~~multiple~~ mixed use~~s of~~ buildings~~,~~ that ~~including~~ include housing, in commercial areas of the community.

~~10. Ensure that any revisions to the Growth Management Ordinance retain or expand theexemptions for affordable family and senior housing.~~

7. Work with York County Community College and the development community to pursue a student housing development in the vicinity of the college.

~~Refine and promote the use of the Cluster Subdivision provision as a regulatory strategy for rural portions of the community, reducing development impact and infrastructure costs through density and open space protections, a minimum of one acre lots, and reducing visual impact through vegetative buffering requirements along municipal roadways.~~

~~11.~~8. Host a work session and evaluation with land use boards, municipal staff,

developers, and Home Ownership Associations to discuss how infrastructure is currently being constructed and managed in Wells.

~~Maintain, enact or amend ordinances to allow the addition of at least one accessory apartment per dwelling unit in designated areas, subject to site suitability, and regulate the use of these as short-term rentals.~~

~~12. Create or continue to support a community affordable/workforce housing committee and/or regional affordable housing coalition.~~

9. Seek to achieve a level of at least 10% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade be affordable.

10. Evaluate the impact and potential benefits of seasonal housing units and short-term rentals, and identify how to best regulate these uses in Wells.

11. Allow mobile homes in areas that are zoned for single-family housing and in parks that are consistent with state laws and requirements.

~~13.~~

Chapter 11 – Public Facilities and Services Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Public Facilities and Services Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to the public facilities and services in Wells including fire, police, schools, parks and open space. Municipal department heads and staff, school district staff, and representatives of the utilities were instrumental to the updating of this section of the comprehensive plan. Since 2005, the Town of Wells has continued to make significant investments in its municipal structures and facilities, and many of the facility needs identified in 2005 have been addressed through renovations and new construction. The Town of Wells and its municipal departments are forward thinking, and plan for future capital improvements and investments while anticipating emerging trends.

In the years ahead, if asset management plans have not been developed for all municipal structures, they should be created to ensure efficient tracking of maintenance needs and major upgrades. The school population has declined slightly since 2005, but the district's projects slow and steady growth in the years to come and recent investments in the school facilities will accommodate this growth.

Goals

State Goal:

Plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth ~~,and~~ economic development, and resource protection as outlined in the Vision. ~~(Growth Management Act)~~

~~**Regional Goal:**~~

~~Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery through formal and informal means of inter-local cooperation and communication.~~

No goal is available at the regional level.

Wells Goals:

1. Promote a pattern of growth and development that allows for a ~~cost effective~~cost-effective delivery of services, that is consistent with the needs and fiscal capacity of the Town.

2. Continue to ensure that police, fire and rescue services are adequate to meet the public health and safety needs of the residents of Wells as the community changes over time and the population fluctuates seasonally.

3. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program

that is based upon the policies and actions of this Comprehensive Plan Update.

~~3.~~4. Continue to ensure municipal facilities incorporate energy efficient construction and renewable energy systems.

~~4.~~5. Strive to provide high quality educational facilities and programs that meet the needs of students in collaboration with the Community School District.

~~5.~~6. Continue to ~~E~~encourage educational programs for all ages that incorporate a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local business. This should include collaborating with the Community School District.

~~6.~~7. Ensure adequate planning to mitigate civil emergencies including the realities of climate change.

8. Continue to ~~A~~assure the Wells Harbor remains a viable ~~resource since the Harbor plays an important role as both an~~ economic and recreational resource for the Town.

9. Develop asset management plans for all municipal facilities to anticipate capital improvement planning.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. ~~Promote~~ Ensure a pattern of growth and development that discourages sprawl, is consistent with the policies on land use and identified growth areas, and ~~allows~~ provides~~for~~ a cost effective and efficient delivery of services consistent with the needs of Wells.

2. ~~Maintain~~ Efficiently maintain and enhance the Town's public facilities and services to provide for the health and safety of the Town's residents,~~.~~ while also ensuring the health and safety of municipal employees and volunteers.

3. Continue to ~~E~~encourage public/private cooperation in planning for, and financing, improvements to theTown's public facilities.

~~3.~~4. Continue to encourage regional solutions, when possible, through cooperative agreements with adjacent communities and regional organizations if reduced cost and improved services can be realized.

~~4.~~5. Continue to ~~E~~ensure that all students have the opportunities to receive the best possible and affordable education so they acquire the necessary skills and

knowledge to make a positive contribution to the community through collaboration with the Community School District.

6. Promote sustainable resource use by all Town departments, in their day to day operations and in the construction and maintenance of municipal facilities.

7. Adopt guidelines for all future municipal facility investments to ensure they incorporate energy efficient construction and renewable energy systems.

~~5.~~8. Continue to ~~E~~encourage ~~the~~ multiple use~~s~~ of community facilities, for greater efficiency, ~~-~~to the greatest extent possible.

~~6.~~9. Continue to ~~S~~support the dredging of the harbor to maintain it as a suitable mooring area.

10. Develop expanded parking, shuttling, and support facilities to ~~allow~~ provide additional transportation options~~use of the area~~ for those engaging in commercial and recreational boating, ~~and~~ other marine uses. A similar effort should be made to address beach access alternatives.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. Fire ponds shall be developed within ~~one quarter~~ half a mile of new development when allowed~~.~~, and an alternative means of fire protection may be provided if not possible. ~~If not possible, require developers to contribute to a fire protection development fund~~.

2. A Five-Year Capital Investment Planning process will continue to be implemented.

3. Land Use Regulations.

~~2.~~4. Asset Management Plan.

Implementation Strategies

General

1. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that is based upon the policies and actions from this Comprehensive Plan, anticipated growth and changing demographics, ~~-~~and an appropriate system of priorities.
2. Locate new public facilities within or adjacent to identified growth areas in Wells.

3. Establish regular communications with Wells Sanitary District and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District to coordinate their efforts with land use and municipal service planning in Wells, and continue to require capacity letters during the review of development applications.

4. Establish regular communications with the School Board.

Municipal Offices

1. Monitor the space needs of Town Hall and consider future expansion and new ways to provide access as the need arises to ensure high quality and efficient level of service.

2. Continue to review the needs of all community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: fire substations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.

3. Utilize asset management plans~~Continue~~ to monitor all Town-owned properties and resources to ensure that there is a rational basis for capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.

~~4.~~1. ~~Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) thatis based upon the policies and actions from this Comprehensive Plan and an appropriate system of priorities.~~

~~5.~~4. Continue to ~~Encourage~~ work with the Community School District on educational programs that use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.

~~6.~~5. Continue to ~~Establish a monthly~~ the inter-department/inter-board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and Town committees and commissions.

~~7.~~6. Continue to ~~C~~conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.

7. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.

8. Conduct a municipal staffing analysis to determine future staff needs by department or changes in how services are provided as the population grows and demographics shift over time

Fire Protection

1. Continue the program of installing dry hydrants.

2. Adopt a specific development plan for fire protection addressing issues such as staffing needs, volunteer fire fighting resources, fire ponds, dry hydrants and response times. ~~Said plan shall become part of the Comprehensive Plan.~~

3. Adopt an ordinance to require either the installation of fire ponds or payment by a developer into a fire protection fund where the development is not on Town water and installation of fire dry hydrant or pond to serve the development in not feasible.

Parks

1. Adopt a specific development plan for parks and recreation facilities addressing issues such as maintenance of current facilities, ~~and~~ the acquisition of new facilities, and programming, and encourage the tracking of programs to meet Town needs. Include the many recreational trails within the open space areas of the community and the organizations managing those recreational resources. ~~Said plan shall become part of the Comprehensive Plan.~~

Public Lands

1. Continue to plan and manage publicly owned lands to meet Town needs consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and where possible maximize their asset and environmental resource value.

2. Employ the Town's land ranking classification system for existing and future Town owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.

Chapter 12 – Open Space Policies and Strategies

Introduction
The Comprehensive Plan's Open Space Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to open spaces for agriculture, forestry, public congregation and recreation, wildlife habitat, and water resource protection.

Goals

State Goal:
1. Safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development that threatens those resources. (Growth Management Act)

2. Promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters. (Growth Management Act)

~~**Regional Goal:**~~
~~(None specified)~~

Wells Goals:
1. Work actively to retain the rural character of Wells as defined, in large measure, by its open land, marshes, fields, farms, and woodlands.

2. Conserve ample open space, to protect, preserve and maintain our natural resources including the ecological integrity of native plant and wildlife species.

3. Promote and expand neighborhood conservation areas and parks throughout the Town such as Fenderson Wildlife Commons to protect public access for traditional outdoor recreation and to protect critical wildlife habitat.

4. Promote environmental education opportunities and produce public information materialsrelated to Wells' natural history and the benefits of protecting open space areas.

5. Minimize conflicts between natural-resource based industries and outdoor recreational uses.

6. Encourage the c~~C~~onnection of large blocks of conserved open space with open space corridors or "greenways" that allow recreators and wildlife to travel from block to block.

7. Identify and ~~P~~provide open space and recreation opportunities to all geographic areas of Wells.

~~5.~~8. Provide open space for upward migration of coastal landforms and habitats, such as sand dunes, beaches, and salt marshes, in response to sea level rise.

Policies

To implement these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Identify key land areas that contribute to Wells' rural character and work with the landowners to preserve the qualities of these areas through support of creative uses and exploring conservation options.
2. Encourage the continued use of lands for forestry and recreation with special attention to financial incentives to property owners to maintain their land's open character including State programs for current use assessment and other cooperative approaches.
3. Provide access to open spaces that meet various public recreational needs such as parks inbuilt-up village areas, ensuring that all geographic areas of Wells are served by open spaces, and support greenways for biking and hiking paths as human and wildlife corridors connecting neighborhoods and large blocks of conserved land.
4. Work with local outdoor clubs and individual landowners to encourage the availability of public access to open land with the consent and cooperation of landowners to preserve traditional outdoor uses such as snowmobiling, hunting, and cross country skiing.
5. Promote the use of clustering techniques that require significant land area to be set aside as open spaces.
6. Protect open space including critical wildlife habitat areas including vernal pools.
7. Maintain information necessary for decision-making related to the protection, development, or use of the open areas whether publicly or privately owned, including open marshlands, swamps and other wetlands such as vernal pools, beaches, uplands, fields, and farmland related to the proper protection, development, or use of the open areas.
8. Coordinate conservation activities with land owners and other preservation groups, such as the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District, Great Works Regional LandTrust, The Nature Conservancy and the State, to leverage existing funding for open spacein areas of mutual concern such as the Great Heath and the Tatnic region.
9. Coordinate Town planning and Conservation Commission activities to protect and promote open space.

10. Continue to ~~P~~promote and strengthen the Wells Land Bank ~~sinking~~ fund, a unique resource that allows Wells to invest in open space as opportunities arise.

11. Ensure that cluster subdivision rules are effective in preserving open space that is useful for a combination of values such as recreation, wildlife habitat, scenic value, etc. while still allowing for practical building and development in appropriate areas.

~~9.~~12. Continue to encourage the connection of new open space lands to adjacent protected open space to create greenway corridors.

Standards

~~(To be developed in future update)~~To guide the implementation of these policies, the Town of Wells has the following standards in place:

1. Wells Town Code, Chapter 145, Land Use Ordinance, § 145-49 Residential cluster development.
2. Wells Town Code, Chapter 202, Subdivision of Land

Implementation Strategies

1. Continue to support the Conservation Commission's use of the Town of Wells' Land Ranking System to identify and prioritize lands with significant wetlands, groundwater sources, scenic view sheds, wildlife habitat, agriculture and forestry uses, outdoor recreation, and other values; and to make recommendations for their protection through the development of an open space plan. The plan will contain input from community recommendations to identify large land tracts throughout the Town within which a conservation area of significant size could be located.
2. Employ the classification system for existing and future Town owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.
3. ~~Expand funding~~Continue to fund ~~of~~ the Town's Land Bank Fund to provide for adequate public openspace in the Town of Wells.

~~4.~~3.

~~5.~~4. Charge the Conservation Commission to work with land owners and other reservation groups such as the KKW Water District, Great Works Regional Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, and the State and Federal Government to leverage existing funding for open space in areas of mutual concern suchas Fenderson Wildlife Commons, the Great Heath, ~~and~~ the Tatnic Region, and upland areas adjacent to sand dunes, beaches, and salt marshes that may serve as migration areas in response to sea level rise.

~~6.~~5. ~~Enable the~~ Continue to have the Conservation Commission ~~to~~ review and comment on public or private plans involving open space areas identified via natural resource data, as high value wildlife habitat, before the Town's reviewing authority makes any decision on the plan.

~~7.~~6. ~~Enable the~~ Continue to have the Conservation Commission ~~to continue to~~ review foreclosed properties and other land proposed for public auction to determine its suitability for retention as conservation land.

~~8.~~7. Work with landowners with high value habitat to protect these areas using tools such as acquisition, education, collaborative management, as well as economic incentives such asTree Growth, Open Space and Critical Habitat Programs.

~~9.~~8. Produce public education and outreach materials that inform the public about theirconservation options and the natural history of Wells.

~~10.~~9. Use Fenderson and other Wildlife Commons for environmental education opportunitiesfor the students of the Wells/Ogunquit School District and the public.

~~11.~~10. Use up-to-date State Inland Fisheries and Wildlife maps of wetlands and Threatened andEndangered species (See Appendix) as well as open space priorities as identified by the Wells Conservation Commission, when evaluating subdivision applications. In the eventthe proposed subdivision is in an area where such resources exist, the Conservation Commission will make recommendations for the building and open space locations.

~~12.~~11. Work with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.

~~13.~~12. ~~Establish a~~Assign to the Implementation Committee the responsibility to review and assess the quality of current wetland management and regulations within Wells including consistency with state and federal laws and regulations, and, if deemed appropriate, establish guidelines for a local wetland regulation.

13. Establish a program to continue to identify, ~~and~~ prioritize, and protect high value freshwater wetlands including vernal pools.

14. ~~Assign to the Implementation Committee the responsibility to review cluster~~ Periodically evaluate the subdivision rules and the results of existing cluster subdivision projects, to determine whether the existing rules are successfully preserving valuable open space.

Chapter 13 - Public Utilities Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Public Utilities Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to the public utilities systems in Wells including water, sewer, telephone/data, cable, electricity and gas. In 2020, the Wells Sanitary District (WSD) completed a Climate Adaptation Plan to inform and guide the plans for infrastructure and operations changes. The Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District (KK&W) is also nearing completion of major upgrades to the metering system, and will soon be able to gather daily meter readings remotely. Continued communication and collaboration with WSD, KKW, other public utilities, and adjacent communities is a priority to ensure informed management and investment in municipal facilities and services.

Goals

State Goal:

Plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public ~~facilities~~ utilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth, ~~and~~ economic development, and resource protection as outlined in the Vision. ~~(Growth Management Act)~~

~~**Regional Goal:**~~

~~Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery through formal and informal means of inter-local cooperation and communication.~~

No goal is available at the regional level.

Wells Goals:

1. Strictly protect the Wells portion of the Branch Brook Aquifer and Watershed.

2. Work cooperatively with the water and sewer districts to provide appropriate levels of service to meet current needs, as well as future needs, in the Town's growth areas.

3. Work cooperatively with the water and sewer districts to restrict and minimize extension of water and sewer service into those areas of Wells that are designated as low growth or rural areas.

4. Continue to communicate and coordinate with the management of both the Wells Sanitary District and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District on planned infrastructure changes, resource protection efforts, and climate impacts to ensure consistency with land use planning and other municipal services.

~~3.~~

5. Work cooperatively with providers of utilities such as telephone/data, cable, gas

and electricity to ensure the type, location, size, scope, quality and accessibility are consistentwith the growth, land use, design, community character and other policies of this Plan to meet the needs of the community.

6. Work with all utilities in coastal portions of the community to ensure that infrastructure improvements address the realities of climate change and sea-level rise, and are coordinated with municipal infrastructure investments and the provision of services.

Policies

To implement these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Promote a pattern of growth and development that discourages sprawl, is consistent with the policies on land use and identified growth areas, and provides a cost effective and efficient delivery of services consistent with the needs of Wells.~~Ensure that, t~~To the greatest extent possible, the water and sewer service area boundaries, both existing and projected, should ~~conform to~~be coordinated with the Town's growth area boundaries as identified in this Plan.

2. Continue to support the use of impact fees by the water and sanitary districts to fund enlargement and expansion of their systems.

3. Retain, and where appropriate, reconfigure the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District as a strategic means for protecting the ~~Water Company~~ Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District's public water supply.

4. Encourage regional solutions, when possible, through cooperative agreements with adjacent communities and regional organizations if reduced cost and improved services can be realized.

~~4.~~5. Continue to ~~cooperate~~ actively collaborate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk on the most appropriate methods for protection of the Branch Brook Watershed and aquifer.

~~5.~~6. Work cooperatively with the water, sewer, gas, electric, telephone, cable and other utility companies in the planning and development of facilities to ensure that residents are properly serviced and that they are aware of the growth area designations as well as other land use policies of this Plan.

~~6.~~7. Maintain a high level of quality of the Town's ground and surface waters, and protection of private property, ~~-~~through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources.

~~7.~~8. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste.

~~8.~~9. Ensure that the location and installation of utilities are consistent with the Town's appearance and character goals and polices.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. Land Use Regulations~~(To be developed in future update.)~~

Implementation Strategies

1. ~~Establish an ongoing dialogue~~Continue to communicate with the Wells Sanitary District and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District ~~water and sewer utility districts~~ to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations and other land use policies of this Plan, and that land use planning in Wells is informed by the realities each organization is facing~~.~~

2. ~~Reconfigure the~~Continue to utilize the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District and other initiatives to protect the Town's water supply.

3. Cooperate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to adopt policies and programs, including the securing of easements, to protect the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.

4. Continue to review the Town's land use regulations to ensure the quality of the ground and surface waters are protected through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources.

~~4. Prepare a specific Development Plan for drainage.~~

~~5. Work with appropriate utility companies to program proactively plan for public utility improvements based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation programs, and an appropriate system of priorities.~~

~~6. Approve new developments that rely on public water only when the applicant can prove adequate water supply for fire protection is available.~~

~~7.~~5. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste including the composting of organic materials.

~~8.~~6. Continue to work with wireless, cable and data utility system providers proactively to ensure state of the art facilities are available for residents and economic development.

~~9. 9. Explore the feasibility of implementing a program to locate overhead utility wires along key roads, (e.g. Route 1, 9/109, 9 and 109) underground over time.~~

Chapter 14 – Fiscal Capacity Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Fiscal Capacity Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to the Town's fiscal capacity to accommodate growth while providing the necessary facilities and services required by the community. Currently, the tax rate in Wells is relatively low compared to surrounding municipalities. General government expenses have increased 55% in the past 5 years, and debt service expenditures have increased 67%. Overall, the Town has a very modest level of debt.

Goals

State Goal:
Plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development. ~~(Growth Management Act)~~

~~**Regional Goal:**~~
~~(No goals specified)~~

Wells Goal:
Finance new and expanded facilities in an orderly manner consistent with the needs and fiscal capacity of the Town.

Policies

To achieve these goals it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Continue to finance existing and future municipal facilities and services in a cost effective manner.

~~1.~~2. Use an annual formal capital improvement planning process that considers the Town's capital requirements as well as coordinates with other districts such as the school, water and sewer districts.

3. Continue ~~S~~seeking alternative means to supplement Town revenues and reduce dependence on the property tax for its annual operating and capital budgets. This may include grants available to assist the funding of capital investments within the community.

~~2.~~4. Ensure that the design and construction of municipal buildings and other infrastructure investments consider energy conservation and community resilience.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

~~1. (To be developed in future update.)~~
1. Capital Improvement Planning Process

Implementation Strategies

~~1. Appoint a committee~~ Request the Budget Review Committee work to identify alternative sources of revenue other than property taxes.~~.~~

~~2. Evaluate the use of impact fees for new development.~~

1. Update and implement the Capital Improvement Plan.

2. Consider the feasibility of evaluating the fiscal capacity of the Town at year end, and projecting the Town's fiscal capacity for at least three years.

Chapter 15 – Flood Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Flood Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation Policies and Strategies describe goals,policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to ~~mitigating~~ managing flood hazards.

Purpose and Background

The Town of Wells, Maine prepared this Flood Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation Plan (hereafter referred to as the~~asthe~~ Plan) because the Town historically has experienced flood-related damage. The Town is also likely to experience increased damage in the future as flood hazards become more severe with climate impacts, including sea level rise, more frequent and intense precipitation events, and storm surge. The following factors contributed to that decision:

- History of coastal flooding and beach erosion in Wells
- Number of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies and claims
- Number of repetitive flood losses in Wells
- Projected climate change impacts

~~Assistance from the Floodplain Mitigation Assistance Program (FMAP) enabled the Town to complete the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan that was included in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and updated for this Comprehensive Plan. This Plan is an integral part of the Town of Wells' Comprehensive Plan.~~

Flooding

As mentioned, this Plan ~~has been~~ was prepared for the Town due to the recurring flooding events throughout the community as well as the number of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) insurance claims. In September of 1936, February of 1978, August of 1991 (Hurricane Bob) and October of 1991 (~~No Name Storm~~ unnamed storm), the Town of Wells experienced serious flooding and sustained damage along Atlantic and Ocean Avenues, Webhannet Drive and along the Webhannet River and the Merriland River and other rivers and streams. The ~~affects~~ effects of ~~the a 100 year flood~~ the October 30 – 31, 1991 ~~No Name~~ storm, which was a 100-year flood event, included flooding on Drake's Island, Moody Beach and Ocean Avenue. The storm flooded both sides of Ocean and Atlantic Avenues, damaging approximately 450 homes. The storm caused inland damage along the Bragdon Road and Branch Road/Mildram Road areas. Businesses, residential units, streets, bridges, other structures and public facilities suffered damage. In more recent years, Wells has experienced significant flooding and damage from a number of coastal storm events. Notable storms, as well as conditions and impacts associated with ~~future~~ sea level rise, are referenced in Appendix A, Chapter 3, Section E. Flood Hazards.

The Town considers this Plan to be a critical tool in minimizing future flood damage and adverse impacts on residents, visitors, infrastructure, and the economy.

Flood Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation

Hazard mitigation means any action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from natural hazards. Hazard mitigation is not a one-time event, but rather an on-going process designed to identify hazards and to propose ways to reduce or eliminate dangers and risks associated with the hazards. Hazard mitigation planning allows towns to address current and future flood risk in near-term decision-making. It is not only essential for protecting people, property, natural resources, and the local economy, it is also a wise investment of limited municipal funds. The National Institute of Building Sciences found that for every one dollar invested in hazard mitigation, communities save six dollars in avoided future disaster costs.

Hazard adaptation means responding to the impacts of a hazard, such as flooding, or decreasing vulnerability of something (*e.g.*, a roadway, private house, or municipal building) to the effects of a hazard. Elevating a home in a flood prone area is an example of adaptation. Adequate planning for flood hazards requires both mitigation and adaptation strategies. Strategies should be designed to be flexible to allow for changes in local conditions as well as shifting flood hazards in order to most effectively protect people, property, and the natural environment and increase community resilience to coastal hazards.

Nationally, the U.S. Government, including the U.S. Congress, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the NFIP are concerned with the extensive amount of damage caused by both coastal and riverine flooding and the consequent amount of federal disaster assistance. As a result, the federal government has encouraged states and municipalities to prepare a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan to identify ways to reduce the risk from flooding and perhaps eliminate flood hazards. In some communities where flooding conditions are significant, disaster assistance in the future may not be available unless a community prepares and follows a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan. Such a plan provides the community with a pathway to receive federal assistance for implementation activities designed around specific mitigation projects.

Flood mitigation and adaptation planning involves a technical analysis of the existing conditions relating to the flooding conditions and a review of alternative strategies that are practical, realistic and achievable for the Town. The strategy provides the Town with direction as to preferred actions the Town can take to reduce and prevent damage to property, life and natural resources and thus enhance the overall quality of life for residents and visitors to Wells.

Flood hazard mitigation and adaptation techniques can vary, but may include:

- More restrictive ~~floodplain~~ development standards designed to reduce the risk from flooding in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) and areas vulnerable to storm surge and sea level rise.
- Land use plans that discourage or prevent public and private investments in floodplains and areas vulnerable to storm surge and sea level rise.
- Priority mitigation projects such as acquisition, relocation, flood retrofitting, drainage improvements and seawall protection.
- Flood retrofitting improvements to residential buildings.
- Public education efforts that stress the benefits of using coastal natural resources to buffer the ~~affects~~effects of coastal storms, ~~and~~ surges, and sea level rise.
- Public education efforts geared to property owners as to the actions they can take to protect themselves and their property from flood damage.

Plan Benefits and Implementation

Several benefits accrue to the Town from participation in a flood hazard mitigation planning program. The primary benefit is to encourage public safety by reducing damage to personal property and harm to residents and visitors. Examples include retrofitting homes so that they are flood resistant and retrofitting bridges so damage is lessened. Mitigation and adaptation activities can reduce storm impacts including the cost of post-disaster clean up and recovery.

Formal adoption and implementation of the Plan enables the Town of Wells to secure additional credit points in the NFIP sponsored Community Rating System (CRS). The Town currently does not participate~~s~~ in the CRS, but did in the past. The CRS recognizes the community's efforts that go beyondthe minimum NFIP requirements of flood plain management by reducing the flood insurance premiums for property owners located in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). The discounts provide an incentive for the Town and the property owners to become involved in new flood mitigation activities and flood plain planning and preparedness activities.

FEMA recently updated the NFIP methodology used to determine flood insurance premiums through the implementation of a new pricing methodology called Risk Rating 2.0. The methodology is aimed at developing insurance rates that are actuarily sound, equitable, easier to understand and better reflect a property's flood risk. For some flood insurance policy holders, that means an increase in their annual premium payment. As of May 2021, Wells had the greatest number of NFIP flood insurance policies in effect as well as the highest insurance premium prices of not only all communities in York County, but in the entire state of Maine. Since 1978, Wells property owners have filed the greatest number of NFIP flood insurance claims of all municipalities in the entire state, and the number of claims is nearly double that of the York County community with the second highest claim number. Additionally, Wells property owners have the 3rd highest payment amount for flood insurance claims in the entire state. As sea levels continue to rise, precipitation events become more intense, and storms occur more frequently, costly damage to homes will not only continue, but intensify, and more properties and people within Wells will be at risk of flooding. ~~Wells' renewal of its participation in the CRS program would help to offset potential flood insurance costs for property owners and help the Town continue its flood mitigation and adaptation efforts.~~

Preparation and implementation of the Plan increases the Town of Wells' opportunities for additional federal assistance including FEMA's pre-disaster Flood Mitigation Assistance Program and its post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The Maine Emergency Management Agency provides a priority in its grant programs to communities who have prepared a comprehensive and ~~well-designed~~well- designed Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan. Pre-planning activities enable the post-disaster and recovery efforts to operate in a smooth and efficient manner. In addition to building support for implementation activities, the Plan advances the community outreach and public education component of the flood mitigation effort.

Plan Scope

The scope of this Plan includes the entire land area contained within the boundaries of the Town of Wells, Maine. The Plan pays special attention to the Little River, Ogunquit River, Webhannet River, Merriland River, Wells Bay and the coastal areas of Wells. The effective Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and the accompanying Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), prepared for the Town of

Wells by the Federal Emergency Management Agency was ~~very helpful in~~used for the preparation of the Plan. Additionally, maps depicting the inundation extent of sea level rise projections and storm surge were considered in the development of the Plan to ensure it addresses both existing and future flood hazards. While this Plan addresses flooding concerns in Wells, Maine, the Town recognizes the benefits of coordinating floodplain management activities with its neighboring communities.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

The Comprehensive Plan's Flood Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation Policies and Implementation Strategies section describes the goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to mitigating and adapting to flood hazards in Wells. Integrating flood risk, climate change considerations, and coastal flood resilience strategies into municipal planning, policies, expenditures, and infrastructure decisions will help to protect people, physical infrastructure, and public investments. Future development should be guided away from flood-prone areas and redevelopment should incorporate flood risk reduction measures to protect people and property.

Goals

State Goal:

Each municipality shall prevent inappropriate development in natural hazard areas, including ~~flood plains~~floodplains and areas of high erosion. (Maine Growth Management Act)

Growth Management Program Goals:

1. To protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas and unique natural areas.

2. To plan for the effects of the rise in sea level on buildings, transportation infrastructure, sewage treatment facilities and other relevant state, regional, municipal or privately held infrastructure, property or resources.

Wells Goals:

1. Identify and protect existing populations, buildings and facilities, which are at risk due to potential flooding conditions associated with existing and future flood hazards, including sea level rise and storm surge.

2. Reduce the potential damage to both private and public property due to flooding conditions associated with existing and future flood hazards, including sea level rise and storm surge.

3. Identify specific land use policies, projects and programs that will mitigate and reduce future flood related damages and adapt to future flood conditions, including sea level rise and storm surge. **Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.**

4. Recommend specific actions the Town should take to mitigate and reduce damages caused by coastal and riverine flooding, storm surge, and sea level rise.

5. Continue to Qualify the Town of Wells for federal flood mitigation grant assistance, which can assistin the Plan's implementation.

6. Involve local officials, affected property owners and the general public in the Plan's preparation so that broad acceptance is achieved.

7. Conduct a public education and outreach program to inform the public about the risks associated with development in the floodplain and areas vulnerable to storm surge and sea level rise.

~~7.~~8. Conduct an education and outreach program to inform the public about climate change-related flood hazards and associated impacts to Wells through work with partners such as the Wells Reserve. **Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.**

~~8.~~9. Protect and preserve the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains and coastal areas subject to existing and future flood hazards.

Policies

To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Ensure that an accurate inventory of the properties located in the Special Flood Hazard Area is completed and maintained.

~~1.~~2. Conduct an inventory of properties and infrastructure located in areas subject to sea level rise and storm surge impacts based on the scenarios recommended for planning purposes by the Maine Four-Year Plan for Climate Action.

~~2.~~3. Review the Town's local land use regulations on a regular basis to ensure they are consistent with the latest National Flood Insurance Program and any other requirements and reduce hazardous floodplain ~~flood plain~~ risks.

4. Review the Town's land use regulations to identify opportunities for incorporating measures and standards that increase the resilience of development to flooding and provide enhanced flood risk reduction for areas vulnerable to future flood hazards, including sea level rise and storm surge. **Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.**

~~3.~~5. Provide incentives for property owners in the ~~flood plain~~ floodplain area and areas vulnerable to existing and future flooding, including sea level rise and storm surge, to properly floodproof their properties and to make their properties more flood damage resistant.

4.6. Ensure that improvements to existing public investments are built to minimize potential damage from existing flooding and future flood hazards, including sea level rise and storm surge, ~~situations~~ through proper stormwater management and floodplain management practices.

5.7. Identify flood hazard mitigation and adaptation projects in consultation with local, state and federal officials, property owners and the community at large.

6.8. Identify and seek assistance from federal, state and local sources for flood hazard mitigation and adaptation projects.

7.9. Educate property owners in the ~~flood plain~~ floodplain and areas vulnerable to future flood hazards, including sea level rise and storm surge, and the community at large about the risks of building in those ~~the flood plain~~ areas and techniques to reduce the risks.

8.10. Examine the potential for financial incentives to landowners in the ~~flood plain~~floodplain area and areas subject to future flooding, including sea level rise and storm surge, through state or federal programs for maintaining their property in open space.

11. Discourage new public and private investment in the floodplain ~~area~~ and areas vulnerable to future flooding, including sea level rise and storm surge, that would encourage growth in those areas.

9.12. Partner with neighboring municipalities to assess and address flood hazards and undertake flood adaptation and resilience planning initiatives and projects.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. See existing Wells Floodplain Management ordinance.

Implementation Strategies

Note: Wells' reports from recent coastal flooding projects, including the New England Climate Adaptation Project, Tides, Taxes, and New Tactics project, and Flood Resilience Checklist process, should be reviewed for policies, strategies, and actions.

Planning

Continue the ~~Establish a~~ Flood Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation ~~Committee~~ review to ensure the ~~Plan~~ standards remain~~s~~ current. ~~Review this Plan once a year and update it every three years.~~

Prevention

Prevention activities include planning and zoning, open space preservation, floodplain development regulations, stormwater management, drainage improvements and pre-disaster mitigation activities.

Land Use Planning Activities

1. Identify local and state policies, programs and practices that directly or indirectly promote growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and areas subject to future flood hazards and increase the potential for coastal damage due to flooding conditions. Once these policies and programs have been updated, recommend policy and regulatory changes that will discourage growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and areas vulnerable to future flood hazards, including sea level rise and storm surge.

2. Work with local, state, and federal conservation organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify ~~and~~, acquire, and conserve parcels in the Special Flood Hazard Area and those in areas vulnerable to future flood hazards that have the potential to reduce the risk from flooding.

3. Consider the inclusion of ~~a~~ floodplain management and sea level rise criteria as the Town formulates its open space strategy for management and acquisition of open space lands to promote conservation of areas vulnerable to flooding. **Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.**

4. Continue to ~~A~~amend the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance (Chapter 115) to be consistent with State requirements after the Town has adopted ~~accepted~~ the new Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). ~~Incorporate enhanced flood resilience measures and standards for development in the Floodplain Management Ordinance that exceed the minimum State requirements.~~

5. Review the findings and conclusions of the Wells Bay Planning Committee to determine what recommendations should be included in the Town's floodplain management program and public education activities.

Note: The following suggestions are based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.

~~5.~~6. ~~Amend~~ Continue to encourage the Town's land use ordinances to include flood resilience measures and standards and direct development away from areas that are vulnerable to existing and future flood hazards.

~~6.~~7. Continue to encourage~~Amend~~ the Town's land use ordinances to promote land conservation and protection of open space, especially for subdivisions and large developments.

~~7. Increase setbacks for all waterbodies to accommodate climate change impacts, including storms of increasing intensity and frequency and sea level rise.~~

8. ~~Consider~~ Continue to supportthe Conservation Commission in the implemention~~ing~~ ~~a~~of the land bank program to support land conservation, especially in areas vulnerable to existing and future flood hazards and areas that can support landward migration of critical natural resources, such as saltmarshes, to address the impacts of climate change.

Stormwater management and drainage improvements

1. ~~Conduct an~~Periodically update the inventory of all ~~culverts, and bridges~~culverts, bridges, and stormwater infrastructure components to determine their adequacy to handle the 100-year flood event i.e., determine their capability to provide for the efficient runoff of peak stormwater discharge and to prevent localized flooding conditions.

2. Seek the assistance and cooperation of landowners to gain access to drainage ways so debris can be removed to improve drainage. Because the existing drainage ways have become plugged over time and there is a 1 to 1 ½ feet change in elevation, some coastal areas experience minor and, on occasion, moderate flood conditions. This should restore tosome degree the drainage system function.

3. Initiate a regular program to clean out and maintain existing catch basins on public lands orrights-of-way so that they can retain an adequate amount of water during periods of peak discharge.

4. Continue to ~~E~~ensure that all proposed developments have an acceptable stormwater retention plan and drainage plan as part of the subdivision and site plan review process.

5. Adopt regulations for stormwater management and ensure they account for climate change and expected increases in precipitation frequency and intensity.

6. ~~Conduct an~~Collaborate with others to utilize the reports from recent coastal flooding projects, including the New England Climate Adaptation Project, and the Tides, Taxes, and New Tactics project to assess~~ment of~~ the impacts of sea level rise, storm surge, and more frequent and intense precipitation events on stormwater infrastructure.

7. Continue to ~~R~~require ~~new and redevelopment~~future developments to employ low impact development measures for stormwater management. **Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.**

8. Continue to ~~U~~use Stream Smart principles when designing culvert upgrades and replacements for municipal projects.

9. Investigate establishing a municipal fund to support infrastructure improvements that enhance the community's resilience to coastal and flood hazards.

Property Protection

1. Property protection activities include relocation, acquisition, demolition, building elevation, ~~floodretrofitting~~flood retrofitting, retrofitting and insurance. The Town should consider focusing its initial efforts on ~~the seven~~ repetitive loss properties.

2. Conduct a flood hazard audit and analysis of ~~the seven~~ repetitive loss properties located on Atlantic and Ocean Avenues, ~~and~~ Webhannet Drive, and other flood-prone areas of town to determine how the risks can be reduced.

~~3. Ensure that all critical public facilities such as the Wells Sanitary Sewer District facilities and the KKW's water system plant are properly floodproofed to prevent the infiltration of floodwaters. These facilities should be adequately insured against the risk of flood damage.~~

~~4.~~3. Identify residential and commercial properties in the Special Flood Hazard Area and areas vulnerable to storm surge and sea level rise that would be appropriate candidates for structural improvements such as elevation and retrofitting to reduce the risk of flood damage.

4. Work with property owners within the floodplain to identify loan programs for floodproofing or other appropriate mitigation activities for structures located within the Special Flood Hazard Area.

5. Work with FEMA, conservation groups, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Program, other appropriate partners and property owners to identify and pursue

opportunities to purchase properties repeatedly damaged by flood hazards and conserve them as open space. **Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update**

6. Initiate a pilot mitigation program to provide additional incentives for residential and commercial buildings located in the flood hazard area and areas vulnerable to sea level rise. For example, if a sufficient number of projects were generated in a localized area, a local contractor may be able to offer a discount to property owners who wish to elevate or retrofit their structures.

Natural Resource Protection

(Natural resource protection includes dune stabilization, beach nourishment, wetlandprotection, and erosion and sediment control measures and best management practices.)

1. ~~1.~~ Continue to ~~S~~seek engineering assistance to review the Town's practice of relocating sand to the eroded beach area at the beginning of Laudholm Beach at the northeastern part of Drake's Island.

2. Continue to ~~W~~work with state and federal partners to evaluate the feasibility of beach nourishment though the beneficial reuse of dredged material where appropriate.

3. Continue to ~~Conduct an assessment of~~ assess how Wells' beaches and other coastal resources will be impacted by sea level rise and increasing erosion.

4. Continue to ~~W~~work with regional, state, and federal partners to investigate opportunities to protect natural resources and areas that provide natural flood mitigation benefits.

5. Continue to ~~P~~preserve and protect natural wetland and coastal waterbody buffers through zoning, ~~increased~~ regulatory setbacks for development and land conservation. **Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.**

Emergency Services

(Emergency services include flood warning, flood response, critical facilities and public health and safety maintenance.)

1. Continue to ~~R~~review and update the Town's local Emergency Response Plan. Since the Plan was first prepared, changes in land use have occurred with new

commercial and industrial development, and in the emergency planning context, such as the flood warning notification system, the Code Red Program, the updated evacuation plans and the Emergency Alert System (EAS). An updated Emergency Response Plan should reflect these changes.

2. Conduct a tabletop flood response drill once a year to test the notification and communication procedures, the responders' knowledge of their procedures and the extentof local resources such as sandbags, barricades, generators and shelters.

3. Complete evacuation route signage.

~~4. Provide additional support to the Town's Emergency Management Director in the form of a computer and part time administrative assistance.~~

Structural Projects
(Structural projects include seawalls, floodwalls and beach nourishment.)

1. Continue to repair and improve the seawalls along town owned property.~~footing along Webhannet Drive by placing sheet pile facade in from the existing seawall. This project provides protection from storm and flood damage to properties along Webhannet Drive. The project should continue for approximately 1,500 feet at an estimated cost of $1,600,000. This project should be completed over a 5 to 7 year period.~~

   Is this still a strategy the updated Comprehensive Plan should reference?

~~2.~~ Continue to ~~M~~monitor the results of the recently completed beach nourishment ~~program so that minor alterations can be made, as needed.~~

~~3.~~2.

Public Information and Engagement
~~(As one of the initial members in the Community Rating System (CRS) program, Wells has been was previously active in various public information and education programs associated with an effective floodplain management program.)~~ The Town should continue education and engagement efforts regarding flood hazards facing Wells and flood mitigation and adaptation. Public engagement includes information campaigns, education and outreach programs, community discussions, and technical assistance.

1. Initiate public information and engagement activities including providing:

   a. FIRM map information
   b. Sea level rise and storm surge hazards, impacts, and community vulnerability information
   ~~b.~~c. Technical assistance on the floodplain regulations and flood mitigation activities
   ~~c.~~d. Information at the library
   ~~d.~~e. Outreach projects
   ~~e.~~f. Real estate disclosure

g. Environmental education

~~f.~~h. Flood mitigation actions that property owners can implement to protect their homes and businesses.

i. Coordination with adjacent communities.

~~g.~~j. Opportunities for residents and property owners to share their flood hazard knowledge, concerns, and experiences, as well as ideas for flood adaptation and mitigation activities, with town officials.

Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.

2. Prepare a public information brochure that describes in detail the comprehensive nature of the Town's floodplain management program, flood resilience, and sea level rise adaptation activities. **Note: This suggestion is based on public comments from outreach and engagement efforts for the Comprehensive Plan update.**

3. ~~Establish a committee of concerned flood hazard property owners who are advocates of the Town's floodplain management~~ and flood adaptation and resilience ~~efforts. Use the committee as a sounding board for new ideas and initiatives regarding an effective floodplain management~~ and climate change resilience ~~program.~~

4. Continue to ~~U~~use the community cable access program to publicize the Town's floodplain management programs and sea level rise adaptation and resilience efforts.

~~Chapter 16 – Planning and Management Policies and Strategies~~

CHAPTER 16 – PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES WAS ELIMINATED BY CPUC ON 4/28/22 DUE TO REDUNANCIES WITH OTHER CHAPTERS.

~~**Introduction**~~

~~The Comprehensive Plan's Planning and Management Policies and Strategies describe goals,policies, standards and implementation strategies related to Town planning and management.~~

~~Goals~~

~~**State Goal:**~~

~~Plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development. (Growth Management Act)~~

~~**Regional Goal:**~~

~~Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery through formal and informal means of inter-local cooperation and communication.~~

~~**Wells Goals:**~~

1. ~~Promote a pattern of growth and development that allows for cost effective delivery of services that is consistent with the needs and fiscal capacity of the Town.~~

2. ~~Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program based upon the policies and actions of the Comprehensive Plan and its updates.~~

   ~~Ensure adequate planning to mitigate civil emergencies.~~

3. ~~Continue to upgrade the professional and voluntary planning and management capability of the Town to plan for the future and regulate the quality of new development.~~

4. ~~Maintain inter-community communications among the Town departments, Town committees and commissions and other levels of government.~~

~~Policies~~

~~To achieve these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:~~

1. Promote a pattern of growth and development that discourages sprawl and is consistent with the policies on land use, that allows for cost effective delivery of services consistent with the needs of Wells.

2. Maintain and enhance the Town facilities and services to provide for the health and safetyof the Town's residents.

3. Encourage public/private cooperation in planning for, and financing, improvements to the Town's public facilities.

4. Ensure all students have the opportunities to receive the best possible and affordable education so they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to make a positive contribution to the community.

5. Promote sustainable resource use by all Town departments.

6 Maintain inter-community communications among the Town departments, town committees and commissions and other levels of government.

7. Provide adequate, high quality staff support to the Town's various boards and commissions.

8. Support the enforcement of the Town's land use regulations in a fair and equitable manner.

9. Develop a program for working with the School District on planning for future school needs.

10. Encourage educational programs about Town planning and management for volunteers of all ages involved that incorporate a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local business.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

1. (To be developed in future update.)

Implementation Strategies

1. Maintain a coordinated, accurate system for data management that allows for efficient transfer of uniform data and information from one department to

another including geographic information.

2. Monitor the space needs of Town Hall and consider a future plan for efficient use or expansion or reconfiguration of Town facilities as the need arises to ensure high quality and efficient level of service.

3. Continue to review the needs of all other community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: fire substations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.

4. Continue to monitor all town-owned properties and resources to ensure that there is a program for ongoing capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.

5. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) thatis based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation strategies and an appropriate system of priorities.

6. Develop and implement Town planning and management educational programs for volunteers of all ages involved in the business of the community which use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.

7. Establish a monthly inter-department/inter- board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and town committees and commissions.

8. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.

9. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.

10. Establish a continuing program for re-monitoring and evaluating the policies and implementing the programs established by the this Comprehensive Plan.

CHAPTER 16 – PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES WAS ELIMINATED BY CPUC ON 4/28/22 DUE TO REDUNANCIES WITH OTHER CHAPTERS.

Chapter ~~16~~ 17– Regional Coordination Policies and Strategies

The Comprehensive Plan's Regional Coordination Policies and Strategies describe goals,policies, standards and implementation strategies related to regional coordination. These regional coordination efforts are intended to manage the shared resources and infrastructure in Wells and the surrounding communities. This includes but is not limited to surface waters, aquifers, coastal resources, housing opportunities, and transportation facilities. Given the demand on transportation infrastructure, the need for a range of housing solutions, and the impact of development and sea-level rise on resources regionally Wells will benefit greatly from this regional collaboration.

Goals

State Goal:

Cooperate with local, regional and federal agencies and organizations to continually improve planning and resource management.

~~**Regional Goal:**~~

~~Cooperate with local, State, regional, Federal and other agencies to continually improve planning and management.~~

Wells Goals:

Coordinate with Federal, State regional and local agencies and organizations to continually improve the planning and management of Wells and the many resources within while meeting civic needs.

Policies

To implement these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Work with appropriate Federal, State, regional and local agencies and organizations to implement the goals, policies, and implementation strategies related to the land use, transportation, housing, natural resources, economic development, marineresources and other issues addressed in this Comprehensive Plan.

Implementation Strategies

1. Continue the cooperative relationship with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to expand the water quality monitoring program.

2. Work with adjacent communities to maintain or improve water quality standards for surface waters that occur in more than one community. Specifically, work with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to undertake policies and programs for the protection of the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.

3. Ensure that the water quality of Ell Pond is not degraded by working with the Town of Sanford to implement a consistent set of standards for water quality protection.

4. Work cooperatively with ~~the~~ US Fish and Wildlife, the Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Department, and other local, State and Federal agencies to manage and protect high value habitat and areas for significant habitat and rare and endangered species while addressing the realities of climate change and its impact on these resources and other infrastructure in Wells.

5. Continue to work with the Department of Marine Resources, the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to ensure the viability of the recreational shellfish harvesting program and prohibit any commercial harvesting.

6. Actively participate with the Maine Department of Transportation on ~~any~~ all active projects in Town ~~including the~~ while advocating for a comprehensive US Route 1 Corridor Study ~~and on the Route 109 Improvement Program between Exit 19 and the High Pine area~~.

7. Work cooperatively with the MDOT to ensure that there is proper planning and implementation of ~~any~~ all projects in ~~Town~~ Wells, and that a "complete and green streets" approach is incorporated.

8. Participate in the MDOT Regional Needs Assessment process in order to coordinate local transportation planning with the regional and State efforts, and to become aware of funding and program opportunities.

~~9. Work cooperatively with the Maine Turnpike Authority for a major bus company to provide Boston to Portland bus service with stops in Wells.~~

9. ~~10.~~ Establish an ongoing dialogue with all utility providers to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations, ~~as well~~ sea-level rise projections, complete street policies, and ~~as~~ the other policies ~~of~~ established in this Plan.

10. ~~11.~~ Work cooperatively with other Towns to help implement the regional Eastern Trail system.

~~12. Work cooperatively with the Maine Department of Transportation for a new Turnpike interchange between Wells and Ogunquit to ease traffic congestion on~~

~~Route 1.~~

~~13. Continue to work with the Town of Sanford on the Route 109 corridor study and implement its recommendations when complete.~~

11. Participate in regional approaches within York County that address housing choice and the creation of workforce housing options that fit with the Visions of the communities involved.

Part 3 – Implementation Program

The Comprehensive Plan's Implementation Program describes how the goals, policies and standards will be implemented; when they will be implemented and who is responsible. The Implementation Program consolidates the implementation strategies for each ~~policy~~ topic area found in Part 2. The intent of this section is to ensure coordination across the many topics and needs addressed in this planning document. Wells is committed to the holistic implementation of this Plan, and that will require the ongoing coordination of municipal boards, committees, and professional staff throughout the implementation phase of this planning process. Our goal is to periodically (at least every five years) evaluate the following:

A. The degree to which future land use plan strategies have been implemented;

B. Percent of municipal growth-related capital investments in growth areas;

C. Location and amount of new development in relation to community's designated growth areas, rural areas, and transition areas (if applicable);

D. Amount of critical natural resource, critical rural, and critical waterfront areas protected through acquisition, easements, or other measures.

The Implementation Program is organized into the following categories:

~~**Regulatory Implementation Programs**~~

a. Land Use ~~and Development Implementation (Zoning and Subdivision)~~
~~Residential Growth Management~~

~~**Non-Regulatory Implementation Programs**~~

b. Capital Improvement
c. Open Space/Land Acquisition and Protection
~~a. Planning and Management~~
~~b.~~a. Regional/Intergovernmental Cooperation
~~c.~~b. Historic Preservation
~~d.~~c. Town Character and Appearance
~~e.~~d. Transportation and Circulation
~~f.~~e. Economic Development
~~g.~~f. Housing
~~h.~~g. Public Facilities and Services
~~i.~~h. Public Utilities
~~j.~~i. Flood Hazard Mitigation

In addition, a responsible party is assigned to each action and a priority is given to each action—*Ongoing* indicates these efforts are underway; *Immediate* is to occur within the next 1-2 years; *short term* is to occur in the next 2 to 4 years and *long term* is to occur within the next 4-10 years.

~~REGULATORY PROGRAMS~~

Land Use~~, Development and Resource Protection~~ Implementation Program

Action	Responsibility	Priority
~~1. Appoint a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) to initiate and monitor Plan implementation.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~2. Revise the zoning districts and requirements for those districts identified and described in the Land Use Section.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board~~	~~Immediate Short~~
~~3. Revise the official zoning map to incorporate critical rural and transitional zones put forth in the Future Land Use Plan.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board~~	~~Immediate~~
~~4. Revise the cluster ordinance in the Land Use Ordinance based on the Comprehensive Plan's Policies.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board~~	~~Immediate~~
~~5. Establish a program to ensure there is proper inspection of all septic system installations and a program to monitor septic system performance in/or adjacent to the Branch Brook Critical Rural areas.~~	~~CPIC~~	~~Short~~
~~6. Maintain the current buffer around surface water bodies and wetlands in the Land Use Ordinance to prohibit septic systems and other uses with the potential to contaminate both the groundwater and the groundwater/ surface water interface.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board~~	~~Short~~
~~7. Continually integrate the State of Maine Guidelines for Municipal Shoreland Protection, as may from time to time be revised, into the local land use regulations.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board~~	~~On-going~~
~~8. Revise local subdivision and site plan review regulations to require stormwater management, erosion and sediment control and landscaping plans including a reference to a suitable guidance document that requires currently accepted Best Management Practices.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board~~	~~Immediate~~
~~9. Require all applications for subdivision and site plan review investigate and map the presence of any significant wildlife habitat and habitat for state rare or endangered species that may not have been previously mapped.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board~~	~~Short~~
~~10. Amend the land use code and subdivision regulation to require a timber cutting permit prior to construction of any large scale activity.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board~~	~~Immediate~~
~~11. Retain the currently designated buffers along rivers and streams in the Town's Land Use Ordinance to maintain the quality of these areas for wildlife and fishery habitat.~~	~~Citizens~~	~~On-going~~
~~12. Implement the Flood Mitigation Policies and Implementation Strategies.~~	~~CPIC~~	~~Short~~

~~13. Adopt Town Character and Appearance standards to implement adopted Policies.~~	~~CPIC~~	~~Short~~
~~14. Adopt an ordinance to prohibit the placement of merchandise in building setbacks.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
1. Amend the Wells Land Use Ordinance consistent with the Land Use Policies, desired uses and land use guidelines.	Comprehensive Plan Implementation ~~Update~~ Committee (CPIC) / Planning Board	Ongoing
2. Establish a program to identify, select and prioritize appropriate lands in critical rural areas for open space protection and possible acquisition.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
3. Work with the Wells Conservation Commission, State and Federal entities and private land trust and conservation organizations to assemble a database of parcels suitable for protection based upon guidance policies established by the Conservation Commission. The parcels should focus on Town Natural Resource, Land Use, and Transportation goals, such as establishing protected lands for salt marsh migration due to rising sea levels or parcels that will provide sustainable transportation links such as bike paths or pedestrian commuter paths	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
4. Maintain, and enhance where possible, the scenic views and corridors along the easterly side of Route 1 that incorporate coastal waters and marshes.	Planning Board	Ongoing
5. Work with owners of agriculture and forestry lands so they are aware of, and kept up to date with, Maine "current use" programs and encourage the donation or sale of land or conservation easements to the Town or conservation organizations.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
6. Manage the development of public infrastructure and facilities in a manner that limits development pressure in rural and critical rural areas.	Selectboard	Ongoing
7. Develop an open space plan for the Town of Wells.	Conservation Commission / Planning Board	Ongoing
8. Encourage the participation and comments from the conservation commission on public and private plans for open space.	Selectboard	Ongoing
9. Continually assess existing and future Town-owned lands based upon conservation, recreation, and facility needs.	Selectboard / Conservation Commission	Ongoing
10. Update ordinances regarding floodplains following the release of updated FEMA maps in 2022.	Comprehensive Plan Implementation~~Update~~ Committee (CPIC) / Planning Board	Short
11. Direct the Selectboard to consider traffic congestion, water resources, and development rates in planning for future growth.	Comprehensive Plan Implementation ~~Update~~ Committee (CPIC) / Planning Board	Ongoing
12. Aside from health and safety considerations do not extend sewer and water services west of I-95 which would increase development and reduce lot sizes.	Comprehensive Plan Implementation~~Update~~ Committee (CPIC) / Planning Board / Selectboard	Ongoing

13. Continue funding of the Land Bank to acquire open space to sustain public recreation, resources conservation, watershed protection, and wildlife habitat.	Selectboard / Conservation Commission	Ongoing

~~Residential Growth Management Implementation Program~~

~~1. Appoint a Growth Management Committee to develop alternative strategies to the existing Residential Growth Management Ordinance (growth cap) within a three year period from the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee willexamine the potential of growth management strategies such as: a differential growth cap, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Impact Fees and other innovative planning tools.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~2. Temporarily maintain the existing Residential Growth Ordinance for a period of no more than three years while the Growth Management Committee works to implement an alternative system to replace it.~~	~~Growth Management Committee~~	~~Short~~

~~NON-REGULATORY PROGRAMS~~

Capital Improvement Implementation Program

1. Program public facility improvements through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies, implementation programs and an appropriate system of priorities.	Capital Improvement Program Committee	Immediate-Ongoing

Open Space/Land Acquisition and Protection Implementation Program

~~1. Work with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate-Ongoing~~
~~2. Establish a Committee to review and assess the quality of current wetland management within Wells and, if deemed appropriate, establish guidelines for a local wetland regulation.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~3. Establish a program to identify, prioritize and protect high value freshwater wetlands including those containing vernal pools.~~	~~Conservation Commission~~	~~Short~~
~~4. Within areas of Wells designated as Rural Use, seek to maintain large parcels of land and to ensure that wildlife habitats are connected by travel corridors through both regulatory and non-regulatory means.~~	~~CPIC with Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Conservation Commission.~~	~~Immediate~~
~~5. Charge the Conservation Commission or establish an open lands protection committee to identify and~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~

~~prioritize high value open lands for protection and management including wetlands, wildlife habitat, forestry and agriculture.~~		
~~6. Establish a program to work with landowners with high value habitats to protect these areas.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~
~~7. Appoint a Committee to recommend specific implementation programs to assure public access to beaches, manage beach use, protect the physical quality and create transportation links.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~8. Establish a graphic inventory of all sand dunes on the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) and update as new data becomes available. Ensure that any landowner with property on a sand dune obtain any necessary state permits prior to obtaining any local permits.~~	~~Office of Planning and Development~~	~~Short~~
~~9.Continue to support the Conservation Commission's use of the Town of Wells' Land Ranking System to identify and prioritize lands with significant wetlands, groundwater sources, scenic view sheds, wildlife habitat, agriculture and forestry uses, outdoor recreation, and other values; and to make recommendations for their protection through the development of an open space plan. The plan will contain input from community recommendations to identify large land tracts throughout the Town within which a conservation area of significant size could be located.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~
~~10. Employ the classification system for existing and future Town owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.~~	~~Planning Board and Conservation Commission~~	~~Immediate~~
~~11. Expand funding of the Town's Land Bank Fund to provide for adequate public open space in the Town of Wells.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~12. Charge the Conservation Commission to work with land owners and other reservation groups, such as the KKW Water District, Great Works Regional Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Rachael Carson National Wildlife Refuge, and the State and Federal Government to leverage existing for open space in areas of mutual concern such as Branch Brook Area, Fenderson Wildlife Commons, the Tatnic Region and the Great Heath.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~13. Encourage prospective developers to preserve key open space parcels~~	~~Planning Board, Conservation Commission~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~
1. Continue to support the Conservation Commission's use of the Town of Wells' Land Ranking System to identify and prioritize lands with significant wetlands, groundwater sources, scenic view sheds, wildlife habitat, agriculture and forestry uses, outdoor recreation,	Selectboard	Ongoing

and other values; and to make recommendations for their protection through the development of an open space plan. The plan will contain input from community recommendations to identify large land tracts throughout the Town within which a conservation area of significant size could be located.		
2. Employ the classification system for existing and future Town owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
3. Continue to fund the Town's Land Bank Fund to provide for adequate public open space in the Town of Wells.	Selectboard	Ongoing
4. Continue to support the Conservation Commission to work with land owners and other reservation groups such as the KKW Water District, Great Works Regional Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, and the State and Federal Government to leverage existing funding for open space in areas of mutual concern such as Fenderson Wildlife Commons, the Great Heath, the Tatnic Region, and upland areas adjacent to sand dunes, beaches, and salt marshes that may serve as migration areas in response to sea level rise.	Selectboard	Ongoing
5. Continue to have the Conservation Commission review and comment on public or private plans involving open space areas identified via natural resource data, as high value wildlife habitat, before the Town's reviewing authority makes any decision on the plan.	Selectboard / Planning Board	Ongoing
6. Continue to have the Conservation Commission review tax foreclosed properties and other land proposed for public auction to determine its suitability for retention as conservation land.	Selectboard	Ongoing
7. Work with landowners with high value habitat to protect these areas using tools such as acquisition, education, collaborative management, as well as economic incentives such as Tree Growth, Open Space and Critical Habitat Programs.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
8. Produce public education and outreach materials that inform the public about their conservation options and the natural history of Wells.	Selectboard / Conservation Commission	Ongoing
9. Use Fenderson and other Wildlife Commons for environmental education opportunities for the students of the Wells/Ogunquit School District and the public.	Recreation Department	Ongoing
10. Use up-to-date State Inland Fisheries and Wildlife maps of wetlands and Threatened and Endangered species (See Appendix) as well as open space priorities as identified by the Wells Conservation Commission, when evaluating subdivision	Planning Board	Ongoing

applications. In the event the proposed subdivision is in an area where such resources exist, the Conservation Commission will make recommendations for the building and open space locations.		
11. Work with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.	Conservation Commission / Selectboard	Ongoing
12. Assign to the Implementation Committee the responsibility to review and assess the quality of current wetland management and regulations within Wells including consistency with state and federal laws and regulations, and, if deemed appropriate, establish guidelines for a local wetland regulation.	Selectboard	Immediate
13. Establish a program to continue to identify, prioritize, and protect high value freshwater wetlands including vernal pools.	Planning Board	Ongoing
14. Periodically evaluate the subdivision rules and the results of existing cluster subdivision projects, to determine whether the existing rules are successfully preserving valuable open space.	Planning Board	Ongoing

Planning and Management Implementation Program

Plans and Policies Preparation		
1. Prepare a local Development Plan for Harbor Management that addresses harbor use issues, marine resource protection, adjacent land use and public access.	Harbor Committee	Short
2. Review and implement the Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan.	Board of Selectmen	Short
3. Initiate a study to determine the feasibility of an underground utilities program for Routes 1 (Post Antiques and Arts Corridor) and 9/109 and coordinate with future major construction.	Board of Selectmen	Short
4. Encourage educational programs to use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.	CPIC	Immediate
5. Continue to review the Town's Land Use Ordinance to ensure that the quality of the ground and surface waters are protected.	CPIC	Immediate Ongoing
6. Prepare and adopt Development Plans for the Wells Post Road Antiques and Arts Corridor (Route 1); Route 9/109; and the Wells Transportation Center.	CPIC with Planning Board	Short Long
7. Establish a graphic inventory of all sand dunes on the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) and update as new data becomes available. Ensure that any landowner with property on a sand dune obtain any necessary State permits prior to obtaining any local permits.	CPIC with Planning Staff	Long
8. Update the local harbor management plan that addresses harbor location and use issues, jetty issues, marine resource protection, adjacent land use and public access. The updated plan should be submitted to the Maine State Planning Office for approval and become a part of the Comprehensive Plan.	CPIC with Harbor Committee	Intermediate
9. Enable the Conservation Commission to review and comment on public or private plans involving open space areas identified via natural resource data, as high value wildlife habitat, before the Town's reviewing authority makes any decision on the plan.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
10. Enable the Conservation Commission to continue to review foreclosed properties and other land proposed for public auction to determine its suitability for retention as conservation land.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
11. Work with landowners with high value habitat to protect these areas using tools such as acquisition, education, collaborative management, as well as economic incentives such as Tree Growth, Open Space and Critical Habitat Programs.	Conservation Commission	On-going

12. Produce public education and outreach materials that inform the public about their conservation options and the natural history of Wells.	Conservation Commission	Immediate-Ongoing
13. Use Fenderson Wildlife Commons and other locations for environmental education opportunities for the students of the Wells/Ogunquit Community School District and the public.	Conservation Commission with School District	On-going
14. Use up-to-date State Inland Fisheries and Wildlife maps of wetlands and Threatened and Endangered species (See Appendix) as well as open space priorities as identified by the Wells Conservation Commission, when evaluating subdivision applica tions. In the event the proposed subdivision is in an area where such resources exist, the Conservation Commission will make recommendations for the building and open space locations.	Planning Board with Conservation Commission	On-going
15. Work with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
16. Establish a Committee to review and assess the quality of current wetland management within Wells and, if deemed appropriate, establish guidelines for a local wetland regulation.	Board of Selectmen	Short
17. Establish a program to identify and prioritize and protect high value freshwater wetlands including vernal pools.	CPIC	Short
18. Evaluate the use of impact fees for new development.	Growth Management Committee	Short
General Planning and Management		
1. Maintain a coordinated, accurate system for data management that allows for efficient transfer of uniform data and information from one department to another including geographic information.	Board of Selectmen with Town Manager	On-going
2. Continue to review the needs of all other community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: firesubstations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.	Board of Selectmen with Town Manager	Immediate-Ongoing
3. Continue to monitor all town-owned properties and resources to ensure that there is a program for ongoing capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board, Capital Improvement Program Committeeand Conservation Commission.	Immediate-Ongoing
4. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that is based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation strategies and an appropriate system of priorities.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board and CIP Committee.	Immediate-Ongoing

5. Develop and implement Town planning and management educational programs for volunteers of all ages involved in the business of the community which use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.	Planning Board with Office of Planning and Development	Short
6. Establish a monthly inter-department/inter-board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and town committees and commissions.	Town Manager	Short
7. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.	Board of Selectmen with Town Manager	Immediate
8. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.	Town Manager	Immediate
9. Establish a continuing program for re-evaluating the policies and implementing the programs established by the Comprehensive Plan.	CPIC with Board of Selectmen	Short Ongoing

Regional/Intergovernmental Cooperation Implementation Program

1. Continue the cooperative relationship with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to expand the water quality monitoring program with annual monitoring results and analysis made available to the Town.	Shellfish Commission	Immediate
2. Work with adjacent communities to maintain water quality standards for surface waters that occur in more than one community. Specifically, work with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to undertake policies and programs for the protection of the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer and Merriland River.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
3. Ensure that the water quality of Ell Pond is not degraded by working with the Town of Sanford to implement a consistent set of standards for water quality protection.	Board of Selectmen	Short
4 Continue to work with appropriate state agencies and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to manage point and non-point source pollution into the harbor and estuary to ensure appropriate water quality levels for shell fish harvesting and other marine recreation activities	Board of Selectmen	On-going
5. Work cooperatively with the Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage and protect high value habitat and areas for significant habitat and rare and endangered species.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate

~~6. Continue to work with the Department of Marine Resources and the DEP to ensure the viability of the recreational shellfish harvesting program and prohibit any commercial harvesting.~~	~~Shellfish Commission~~	~~Immediate~~
~~7. Actively participate with the MDOT in the US Route 1 Corridor Study and on the Route 109 Improvement Program between Exit 19 and the High Pine area.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~8. Work cooperatively with the MDOT to ensure that there is proper planning and implementation of projects in Town.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate Short~~
~~9. Participate in the MDOT Regional Needs Assessment process in order to coordinate local transportation planning with the regional and State effort and to become aware of funding and program opportunities.~~	~~Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~10. Continue to work with the Maine Turnpike Authority in the negotiation for a major bus company to provide Boston to Portland bus service with a stop at the Transportation Center and for bus service from the Center to link surrounding communities.~~ ~~Transportation Center and for bus service from the Center to link surrounding communities.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~
~~11. Establish an ongoing dialogue with the water and sewer utility districts to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations as well as other land use policies of this Plan.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~12. Work cooperatively with the Maine Department of Transportation for a new Turnpike interchange between Wells and Ogunquit to ease traffic congestion on Route 1.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~13. Continue to work with the Town of Sanford on the Route 109 corridor study and implement its recommendations when complete.~~	~~Town Manager and Planning staff~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~
~~14. Continue to participate in the Coastal Explorer planning process to evaluate and improve trolley service to adequately meet the needs of the community and the region.~~	~~Town Manager and Planning staff~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~
1. Continue the cooperative relationship with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to expand the water quality monitoring program.	Town Manager / Planning Staff	Ongoing
2. Work with adjacent communities to maintain or improve water quality standards for surface waters that occur in more than one community. Specifically, work with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to undertake policies and programs for the protection of the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.	Selectboard	Ongoing

3. Ensure that the water quality of Ell Pond is not degraded by working with the Town of Sanford to implement a consistent set of standards for water quality protection.	Selectboard	Long
4. Work cooperatively with US Fish and Wildlife, the Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Department, and other local, State and Federal agencies to manage and protect high value habitat and areas for significant habitat and rare and endangered species while addressing the realities of climate change and its impact on these resources and other infrastructure in Wells.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
5. Continue to work with the Department of Marine Resources, the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to ensure the viability of the recreational shellfish harvesting program and prohibit any commercial harvesting.	Shellfish Commission	Ongoing
6. Actively participate with the Maine Department of Transportation on all active projects in Town while advocating for a comprehensive US Route 1 Corridor Study.	Selectboard	Ongoing
7. Work cooperatively with the MDOT to ensure that there is proper planning and implementation of all projects in Wells, and that a "complete and green streets" approach is incorporated.	Selectboard	Ongoing
8. Participate in the MDOT Regional Needs Assessment process in order to coordinate local transportation planning with the regional and State efforts, and to become aware of funding and program opportunities.	Selectboard	Ongoing
9. Establish an ongoing dialogue with all utility providers to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations, sea-level rise projections, complete street policies, and the other policies established in this Plan.	Selectboard	Ongoing
10. Work cooperatively with other Towns to help implement the regional Eastern Trail system.	Selectboard	Ongoing
11. Participate in regional approaches within York County that address housing choice and the creation of workforce housing options that fit with the Visions of the communities involved. Continue to advocate for change to toll policy to alleviate the impact on local and regional roadways (i.e. Post Road, Route 1).	Selectboard	Ongoing

Historic Preservation Implementation Program

~~1. Seek Local Government Certification with the State Historic Preservation Office to be eligible for matching grants to assist the work of the Wells Historic Preservation Commission.~~	~~Historic Preservation Commission with Historical Society~~	~~Immediate~~
~~2. Continue to support the identification and documentation of historic and archaeological resources for purposes of building a written and photographic record that can be used to maintain and protect these valuable community resources.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~

~~3. Identify scenic historic landscapes resources areas including agricultural lands and fields, rock walls, etc~~	~~Historic Preservation Commission~~	~~Immediate Short~~
~~4. Manage the "Gateways" or major roadway entrances into the Town of Wells to protect their historic community character and ensure that any new development be consistent with this character.~~	~~Historic Preservation Commission~~	~~Short~~
~~5. Continue and enhance the education and outreach program for both the residents and visitors to Wells about the Town's historic and archaeological resources.~~	~~Historic Preservation Commission~~	~~Ongoing~~
~~6. Work with public and private groups to establish a permanent heritage trail that would include a map and permanent markers for specific historic properties~~	~~Historic Preservation Commission~~	~~Short~~
~~7. Encourage more property owners to place their properties on the National Register of Historic Places.~~	~~Historic Preservation Commission~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~
~~8. Strengthen requirements in the Land Use Ordinance regarding proximity to and impacts on historic and archaeological resources.~~	~~CPIC with Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Board~~	~~Short~~
1. Seek Local Government Certification with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in order to be eligible for matching grants related to preservation planning and cultural resource protection.	Selectboard / Historic Preservation Committee	Ongoing
2. Re-establish and maintain the Wells Historic Preservation Commission to assist with implementation of these actions and collaborate with the Historical Society.	Selectboard	Immediate
3. Continue to identify and document historic and archaeological resources for purposes of building a written and photographic record that can be used to maintain and protect these valuable community resources. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has noted that a comprehensive survey of Wells' historic above-ground resources needs to be conducted in order to identify other properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.	Selectboard	Ongoing

4. Identify scenic historic landscape resource areas including agricultural lands and fields, rock walls, and other features that should be preserved as important cultural viewsheds.	Selectboard / Historic Preservation Committee	Ongoing
5. Manage the "Gateways" or major roadway entrances into the Town of Wells to protect their historic community character and ensure that any new development is consistent with this character.	Selectboard	Ongoing
6. Continue and enhance the education and outreach program for both the residents and visitors to Wells about the Town's historic and archaeological resources. Annual historic walks, walking and driving tours and education resources are examples.	Historic Preservation Committee	Ongoing
7. Work with public and private groups to establish a permanent heritage trail that would include map and permanent markers for specific historic properties.	Historic Preservation Committee	Long
8. Encourage more property owners to place their properties on the National Register of Historic Places.	Historic Preservation Committee	Long
9. Strengthen requirements in the Land Use Ordinance regarding proximity to and impacts on historic and archaeological resources. For known historic and archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, use the local land use ordinances to require developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.	Planning Board	Long
10. Adopt or amend the land use ordinances to require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.	Planning Board	Long
11. Continue to utilize design standards for all commercial zoning districts that are modelled after the existing design standards for the northern portion of the Route 1 Corridor and informed by the vision and purpose of each zoning district.	Planning Board	Long

Town Character and Appearance Implementation Program

~~1. Initiate a street tree planting programs for Routes 1 and 9/109.~~	~~Board of Selectmen with Beautification Committee and Chamber of Commerce, Garden Club~~	~~Short~~
~~2. Establish a program to preserve scenic views along the Route 1 Corridor and other specific locations as identified by the Scenic Resources Committee.~~	~~CPIC~~	~~Immediate~~

~~3. Identify scenic landscape resource areas including agricultural lands and fields, rock walls, etc~~	~~CPIC with Scenic Resources Committee~~	~~Immediate-Ongoing~~
~~4. Install Town Entrance signs that reflect the traditional New England Traditional New England Wells Maine Style. See also the recommendation in the Historic Preservation Program.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~5. Initiate a street curb and sidewalk improvement program.~~	~~CPIC with Capital Improvement Program and Sidewalk Committees~~	~~Immediate-Ongoing~~
1. Work on Town Character and Appearance design standards for all commercial zoning districts that can be used to evaluate site plan, sign and subdivision applications and Town Development Plans required to implement the Comprehensive Plan.	Planning Board / CPIC	Short
2. Continue a street tree planting and initiate a green infrastructure implementation program for Routes 1 and 9/109.	Selectboard / Planning Board	Ongoing
3. Initiate a street curb, sidewalk, and paved shoulder improvement program for all town owned and maintained roadway corridors.	Selectboard	Ongoing
4. Adopt a Development Plan for the Route 1 Corridor that includes access management plan, and streetscape standards to guide future development activity.	Planning Board / CPIC / Selectboard	Short
5. Adopt a Development Plan for Route 109 east of the Turnpike including access management plan, and streetscape standards to guide future development activity.	Planning Board / CPIC / Selectboard	Short
6. Continue to implement and expand upon the Development Plan for the Wells Transportation Center.	Planning Board / Selectboard	Short
7. Adopt an ordinance to regulate the placement of merchandise in building setbacks.	Planning Board / Planning Staff	Short

Transportation and Circulation Implementation Program

~~1. Study alternative transportation options to ease congestion on Route 1~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~2. Reduce the seasonal congestion by providing off street parking adjacent to Route 1 and encouraging residents/ tourists to use the trolley system, the park and ride facility and rideshare programs.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~

3. Continue to investigate and implement seasonal traffic calming measures in high densityresidential and commercial areas, especially adjacent to and east of Route 1.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
4. Encourage users of alternative transportation modes to use the Wells Transportation Center.	Board of Selectmen	Short
5. Implement the recommendations of the *Route 109/9 Corridor Plan.*	CPIC	Immediate-Short
6. Prepare Development Plans for Streets, Sidewalks and Bikeways.	CPIC	Immediate-Short
7. Prepare and fund a roadway improvement program with priorities for inclusion in the Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This process will provide formal notice to all concerned regarding the Town's intention for future roadway improvements.	CPIC with Board of Selectmen	Short
8. Continue to study alternative routes to ease congestion on Route 1 such as the turnpike exit between Wells and Moody.	CPIC	Short-Ongoing
9. Build the connection between College Drive and Mile Road.	Board of Selectmen	Short
10. Continue the firm policy ensuring that all roads accepted as public Town roads be built and constructed to the Town's roadway standards.	Road Commissioner	On-going
11. Consider establishing an impact fee for all roads accepted as public town roads appropriate for the impact of the development on Town services.	Board of Selectmen, Growth Management Committee	Short
12. Establish a committee to evaluate and improve the trolley service to adequately meet the needs of the community.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
13. Provide screened off street parking adjacent to Routes 1 and 109.	Board of Selectmen	Short
14. Encourage residents and tourists to use the trolley system in conjunction with the off street parking areas, the park and ride facility and rideshare programs.	Board of Selectmen	Short
15. Consider the use of private mass transit	Board of Selectmen	Long
16. Establish a committee to prepare a DevelopmentPlan for Bicycle Ways and Trails based on existing regional and local data and plans and also consider their relationship to sidewalks and other pedestrian ways. Said pedestrian /bicycle paths will be for non-motorized vehicles, i.e., no ATV, 4 wheelers, minibikes, etc.)	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
17. Have the Bicycle Ways and Trails Committee review local or state roadway improvements and where possible connect existing trails in Town and eventually connect with the Eastern Trail.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
18. Continue to investigate and implement seasonal traffic calming measures in high density residential and commercial areas, especially adjacent to and east	Board of Selectmen	Short

~~of, US Route. Also, identify appropriate locations for pedestrian sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage to enhance pedestrian safety and traffic calming.~~		
~~19. Plan for the expansion of the rideshare/vanpool facilities as the usage increases.~~	~~CPIC~~	~~Long~~
~~20. As the central area of Town develops, plan for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails and bicycle paths.~~	~~CPIC~~	~~Long~~
~~21. Develop a comprehensive sidewalk and streetscape program for Route 109 east of the Turnpike.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~23. Effectively utilize the new internal Transportation Center access road and the existing traffic signal at Route 109.~~	~~Planning Board~~	~~Immediate Ongoing~~
1. The Town completed the Route 109/9 Corridor Study that specifically recommended that this portion of the Corridor maintain its existing rural character. It will be necessary to cooperate with MDOT to ensure that the implementation is consistent with the goals and recommendations of this corridor study. Some intersection improvements are needed at: Dodge Road, Route 9B, Willie Hill Road, including the intersection at Bears Den.	Selectboard	Ongoing
2. Work with MDOT to initiate a corridor study of Route 1 to identify infrastructure improvements, access management opportunities, and to coordinate the changes in local land use regulations needed to reinforce the future of this corridor and the integration of the identified growth areas.	Selectboard	Ongoing
3. Work cooperatively with the state to ensure that there is proper planning and implementation of projects that address key roadway locations, bridges that need attention and high accident locations throughout the community.	Selectboard	Ongoing
4. Maintain, enact or amend local land use ordinances as appropriate to address or avoid conflicts with: a. Policy objectives of the Sensible Transportation Policy Act (23 M.R.S.A. §73); b. State access management regulations pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704; and c. State traffic permitting regulations for large developments pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704-A.	Planning Board	Ongoing
5. Participate in the MDOT Regional Needs Assessment process in order to coordinate local transportation planning with the regional and State effort and to become aware of funding and program opportunities.	Selectboard	Ongoing
6. Support and coordinate with York County Community Action (YCCA) on regional transit solutions.	Selectboard	Ongoing
7. Identify locations in Wells and funding opportunities for establishing additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure.	Selectboard	Ongoing

8. Amend local regulations and standards to provide sufficient or additional right-of-way for raised sidewalks, bicycle paths, landscaping, access management, and other priority transportation issues.	Selectboard / Planning Board	Ongoing
9. Prepare and fund a roadway improvement program with priorities for inclusion in the Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This process will provide formal notice to all concerned regarding the Town's intention for future roadway improvements.	Selectboard	Ongoing
10. Continue to seek alternative routes to ease congestion on Route 1 such as the turnpike exit between Wells and Moody.	Selectboard	Ongoing
11. Continue the firm policy ensuring that all roads accepted as public Town roads be built and constructed to the Town's roadway standards, and foster transportation-efficient growth patterns that provide for future street and transit connections.	Selectboard / Planning Board	Ongoing
12. The Route 1 Corridor is in need of signal upgrades to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.	Selectboard / Planning Board	Ongoing
13. Adopt a municipal Complete and Green Streets Policy.	Selectboard	Short
14. Continue to participate in the Shoreline Explorer planning process to evaluate and improve trolley service to adequately meet the needs of the community and the region.	Selectboard	Ongoing
15. Continue to encourage residents and tourists to use the Shoreline Explorer in conjunction with the off-street parking areas, the park n' ride facility, and rideshare programs.	Town Manager	Ongoing
16. Consider the use of private mass transit.	Town Manager	Ongoing
17. Prepare a Development Plan and design standards for Pedestrian and Bicycle pathways and trails based on existing regional and local data, and plans. Said pedestrian /bicycle paths will be for non- motorized vehicles (i.e., no ATV, 4 wheelers, minibikes, etc.)	Selectboard / Planning Board	Ongoing
18. At the Selectmen's discretion, review local or state roadway improvements to ensure compliance with the locally adopted Complete and Green Streets Policy, and where possible connect existing trails in Town and eventually connect with the Eastern Trail. As part of this planning, identify appropriate locations for pedestrian sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage to enhance pedestrian safety and traffic calming. This will enable better connection of the western side of town with the Route 1 corridor, and should also parallel the Route 1 corridor. This will provide an alternative, healthy means for residents in western Wells to shop and work while providing	Selectboard	Short

coastal residents with a means for reaching the conservation areas in the west.		
19. Continue to investigate and implement seasonal traffic calming measures in high density residential and commercial areas, especially adjacent to and east of US Route 1.	Selectboard	Ongoing
20. Encourage users of alternate transportation modes to use the Wells Transportation Center by providing them with the necessary infrastructure to access the Center, and amenities such as covered bicycle storage and charging facilities.	Town Manager	Ongoing
21. Plan for the expansion of the rideshare/vanpool facilities as the usage increases.	Town Manager	Long
22. Work to implement improved pedestrian and bicycle connections along Route 109 to the Route 1 Corridor	Selectboard	Ongoing
23. As the central area of Town develops, plan for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails and bicycle paths.	Selectboard / Planning Board	Ongoing
24. Develop a comprehensive sidewalk, bike lane, and streetscape program that is specific to this corridor and reinforces the municipal Complete and Green Streets Policy.	Selectboard / Planning Board	Long
25. Continue to request updates on the timing of repairs or replacement of all critical transportation infrastructure maintained by the Maine DOT, Maine Turnpike Authority, Boston and Maine Railroad, and others.	Town Manager	Ongoing

Economic Development Implementation Program

~~1 Establish a non profit economic development corporation (EDC) whose responsibility would be to market Wells and its resources to companies who would be compatible with the Town's existing small town character, scale and market~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~2. Identify areas in Town that would be suitable for future wholesale commercial, research and development or low impact businesses such as the Crediford Road Area. These areas should have good access to the local and regional highway network and be consistent with the Land Use goals and policies.~~	~~CPIC with Planning Board and EDC~~	~~Short~~
~~3. Identify and attract companies that would be suitable for Wells.~~	~~EDC~~	~~Short~~

~~4. Identify and attract companies that would be suitable for Wells and would also complement the existing business environment. Such businesses could take advantage of Wells' environmental resources as tourist attractions and could include bicycle/kayak touring, small restaurants, personal service establishments, business service and repair, and arts and crafts type shops.~~	~~EDC~~	~~Short~~
~~5. Establish a revolving loan fund coordinated with the local Chamber of Commerce and fund through local financial institutions to encourage small business development.~~	~~EDC~~	~~Long~~
~~6. Retain and expand existing businesses by facilitating technical assistance and training through State sponsored economic development programs as well as business planning and management workshop.~~	~~EDC~~	~~Short~~
~~7. Participate in the Southern Maine Regional Economic Development Program for technical assistance.~~	~~EDC~~	~~Immediate~~
~~8. Foster the development of home occupations and cottage industries that are consistent with Wells' rural, small-town character. Review land use regulations and revise, if necessary, standards for home occupations that provides opportunity for small business yet minimizes impact on adjacent uses or the environment.~~	~~EDC~~	~~Short~~
~~9. Establish a committee to explore ecologicallyoriented tourist opportunities. Said committeeshould include representatives from business and natural resource oriented organizations such as the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, Laudholm Trust, Nature Conservancy, Great Works Regional Land Trust, and the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge and the Mount Agamenticus Regional Trust.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~10. Continue to maintain Wells Harbor as an active harbor that provides access, service and mooring facilities for both commercial, marine related vessels and recreational boats.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Ongoing~~
~~11. Continue to support the farmers' market community.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Ongoing~~
1. Establish a non-profit economic development corporation whose responsibility would be to market Wells and its resources to companies who would be compatible with the Town's existing character, scale and market. Financial support will need to be provided to this organization for this level of marketing and coordination.	Selectboard	Long
2. Complete a comprehensive Route One Corridor study in coordination with Maine DOT. As the primary	Selectboard	Short

commercial district in Wells, and the largest generator of transportation and congestion related concerns this corridor needs a plan that addresses coordinated infrastructure and regulatory changes.		
3. Review and amend local land use regulations to ensure they reflect the desired location, scale, and design of future development. These regulations must also address the connection to the local transportation network, and articulate how to best integrate new development activity in Wells over time. This should include the identification of "village" areas to serve as higher density mixed-use growth areas, and areas for lower density development and open space protection.	CPIC / Planning Board	Long
4. Identified "village" growth areas will require zoning changes and planned infrastructure improvements over time. Other tools such as Tax Increment Financing districts should be evaluated in conjunction with these changes.	Selectboard	Long
5. Identify areas in Town that would be suitable for future wholesale commercial, research and development or low-impact businesses such as Transitional Area 5 (the Crediford Road area). These areas should have good access to the local and regional highway network and be consistent with the Land Use goals and policies.	CPIC	Long
6. Identify and attract companies that would be suitable for Wells and would also complement the existing business environment. Such businesses could take advantage of Wells' environmental resources as tourist attractions and could include bicycle/kayak touring, small restaurants, personal service establishments, business service and repair, and arts and crafts-type shops.	Town Manager / Economic Development Committee	Ongoing
7. Participate in the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC) for technical and financial assistance.	Selectboard	Ongoing
8. Continue to support the exploration of ecologically oriented tourist opportunities.	Selectboard	Ongoing
9. Continue to support the farmers' market community and other types of "pop-up" markets and events. This should include regular programing and activity at the Wells Harbor Community Park to draw people to this wonderful area of the community without the need for permanent structures or development.	Selectboard	Ongoing

Housing Implementation Program

~~1. Adopt the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) definitions of affordability for York County and update affordability targets as new MSHA data are available~~	~~CPIC~~	~~Immediate, ongoing~~

2. Continue to allow housing for the senior population in growth and transitional areas and allow higher densities for this age group than other types of housing through a density bonus program where the facility can be served by public sewer and water.	CPIC	Immediate
3. Establish incentives such as those currently allowed for congregate housing to encourage the development of senior housing as long as the development is consistent with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan	Planning Board	Short
4. Revise the mobile home regulations to ensure that they meet the State law for mobile home parks and mobile home park expansion. Such regulations must provide standards to minimize the impact on the Town's services, natural and cultural environment and be respectful of adjoining neighborhoods.	Planning Board	Immediate
5. Review the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to ensure that housing density is consistent with the Land Use Plan, is directed to Growth Areas of the community and is consistent with the capacity of municipal services to ensure new or redeveloped sites. See also Policies and Recommendations for Land Use.	Planning Board	Immediate
6. Review town land use ordinances to determine if these regulations can be revised to encourage more affordable housing.	CPIC	Immediate
7. Work with other communities to create a regional non-profit housing organization to foster affordable housing programs for low and moderate income families. Such a group could: a. Ensure that local land use regulations do not present a barrier to the development of affordable housing. b. Work cooperatively with nonprofit organizations and private developers to provide opportunities for affordable housing. c. Seek loans and grants from the State of Maine; d. Work with area banks through the Community Reinvestment Act. e. Consider the use of Town-owned land for affordable housing programs.	Board of Selectmen	Short
8. Adopt or revise provisions in the land use and building codes to provide greater opportunities for the rehabilitation of low and moderate income properties.	Planning Board	Short
9. Provide opportunities for multiple uses of buildings, including housing, in commercial areas of the community.	Planning Board	Short

~~10. Ensure that any revisions to the Growth Management Ordinance retain or expand the exemptions for affordable family and senior housing.~~	~~Growth Management Committee~~	~~Short~~
~~11. Work with York County Community College and the development community to pursue a student housing development in the vicinity of the college.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
1. Adopt and follow the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) definitions of affordability for York County and continue to update affordability targets as new MSHA data are available.	CPIC	Short
2. Review existing land use regulations to determine if they allow for adequate opportunities to create housing for the senior population and for households needing access to affordable housing units.	CPIC	Ongoing
3. Review the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to ensure that housing density is consistent with the Land Use Plan resulting from this Comprehensive Plan, addresses the opportunity for multi-family and higher density residential developments in the identified Growth Areas of the community, and is consistent with the capacity of municipal services and state statute to these new or redeveloped sites.	CPIC	Short
4. Collaborate with housing-related organizations in the region, to support efforts to provide diverse housing for all citizens, including affordable and workforce housing.	Selectboard	Ongoing
5. Adopt or revise provisions in the land use to provide greater opportunities for the rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income properties.	CPIC	Ongoing
6. Provide opportunities for mixed use buildings that include housing, in commercial areas of the community.	CPIC / Selectboard	Ongoing
7. Work with York County Community College and the development community to pursue a student housing development in the vicinity of the college.	CPIC	Ongoing
8. Host a work session and evaluation with land use boards, municipal staff, developers, and Home Ownership Associations to discuss how infrastructure is currently being constructed and managed in Wells.	Selectboard	Ongoing

9. Seek to achieve a level of at least 10% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade be affordable.	Planning Board / CPIC	Ongoing
10. Evaluate the impact and potential benefits of seasonal housing units and short-term rentals, and identify how to best regulate these uses in Wells.	Selectboard	Short
11. Allow mobile homes in areas that are zoned for single-family housing and in parks that are consistent with state laws and requirements.	Planning Board / CPIC	Short

Public Facilities and Services Implementation Program

~~General~~		
~~1. Monitor the space needs of Town Hall and consider future expansion as he need arises to ensure high quality and efficient level of service.~~	~~Selectmen~~	~~Immediate-Ongoing~~
~~2. Continue to review the needs of all community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: fire substations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.~~	~~Selectmen~~	~~Immediate-Ongoing~~
~~3. Continue to monitor all Town-owned properties and resources to ensure there is a rational basis for capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.~~	~~Selectmen, Town Manager~~	~~Immediate-Ongoing~~
~~4. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) based upon the policies and actions from this Comprehensive Plan and an appropriate system of priorities.~~	~~Selectmen with Capital Improvement Program Committee~~	~~Immediate-Ongoing~~
~~5. Encourage educational programs that use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.~~	~~CPIC with School District~~	~~Long~~
~~6. Establish a monthly inter-department/inter-board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and Town committees and commissions.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~7. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~On-going~~

~~8. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~9. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.~~	~~Town Manager~~	~~On-going~~
~~**Fire Protection**~~ ~~1. Continue the program of installing dry hydrants.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~On-going~~
~~2. Adopt a specific development plan for fire pro-tection addressing issues such as volunteer fire fighting resources, fire ponds, dry hydrants and response times. Said plan shall become part of the Comprehensive Plan.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~3. Adopt an ordinance to require either the installation of fire ponds or payment by a developer into a fire protection fund where the development is not on Town water and installation of fire dry hydrant or pond to serve the development in not feasible.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Immediate~~
~~**Parks**~~ ~~1. Adopt a specific development plan for parks and recreation facilities addressing issues such as maintenance of current facilities and acquisition of new facilities to meet Town needs. Said plan shall become part of the Comprehensive Plan.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~**Public Lands**~~ ~~1. Continue to plan and manage publicly owned lands to meet Town needs consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and where possible maximize their asset and environmental resource value.~~	~~Board of Selectmen with Planning Board and Conservation Commission~~	~~On-going~~
~~2. Employ the Town's land ranking classification system for existing and future Town-owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.~~	~~Planning Board and Conservation Commission~~	~~On-going~~
1. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that is based upon the policies and actions from this Comprehensive Plan, anticipated growth and changing demographics, and an appropriate system of priorities.	Selectboard	Ongoing
2. Locate new public facilities within or adjacent to identified growth areas in Wells when feasible.	Selectboard	Ongoing
3. Establish regular communications with Wells Sanitary District and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District to coordinate their efforts with land use and municipal service planning in Wells, and continue to require capacity letters during the review of development	Selectboard	Ongoing

applications.		
4. Establish regular communications with the School Board.	Selectboard	Ongoing
5. Monitor the space needs of Town Hall and consider future expansion and new ways to provide access as the need arises to ensure high quality and efficient level of service.	Selectboard	Ongoing
6. Continue to review the needs of all community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: fire substations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.	Selectboard	Ongoing
7. Utilize asset management plans to monitor all Town-owned properties and resources to ensure that there is a rational basis for capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.	Selectboard	Immediate
8. Continue to work with the Community School District on educational programs that use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.	Selectboard	Ongoing
9. Continue to the inter-department/inter-board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and Town committees and commissions.	Town Manager	Ongoing
10. Continue to conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.	Town Manager / Selectboard	Ongoing
11. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.	Town Manager	Ongoing
12. Conduct a municipal staffing analysis to determine future staff needs by department or changes in how services are provided as the population grows and demographics shift over time	Town Manager	Ongoing
13. Continue the program of installing dry hydrants.	Fire Chief / Planning Board	Ongoing
14. Adopt a specific development plan for fire protection addressing issues such as staffing needs, volunteer fire fighting resources, fire ponds, dry hydrants and response times.	Selectboard / Fire Chief	Ongoing

15. Adopt a specific development plan for parks and recreation facilities addressing issues such as maintenance of current facilities, the acquisition of new facilities, and programming, and encourage the tracking of programs to meet Town needs. Include the many recreational trails within the open space areas of the community and the organizations managing those recreational resources.	Recreation Committee	Short
16. Continue to plan and manage publicly owned lands to meet Town needs consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and where possible maximize their asset and environmental resource value.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing

Public Utilities Implementation Program

1. Continue the program of installing dry hydrants.	Planning Board	Immediate
2. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.	Selectmen, Town Manager	Short
3. Program public utility improvements that are based upon the policies and actions from this Comprehensive Plan and an appropriate system of priorities	Planning Board, Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
4. Approve new developments that rely on publicwater only when the applicant can prove that adequate water supply for fire protection is available.	Planning Board	Immediate-Ongoing
5. Establish an ongoing dialogue with the water and sewer utility districts to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations and other land use policies of this Plan.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board	On-going
6. Reconfigure the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District to protect the Town's water supply.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board	Short
7. Cooperate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to adopt policies and programs to protect the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
8. Continue to review the Town's land use regulations to ensure the quality of the ground and surface waters are protected through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board	On-going
9. Prepare a specific Development Plan for drainage.	Board of Selectmen	Short
10. Work with appropriate utility companies toprogram public utility improvements based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation programs and an appropriate system of priorities.	Board of Selectmen with CPIC	On-going
11. Approve new developments that rely on public water only when the applicant can prove adequate water supply for fire protection is available.	Planning Board	On-going
12. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
13. Continue to work with wireless, cable and data utility system providers to ensure state of the art facilities are available for residents and economic development.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
14. Explore the feasibility of implementing a program to locate overhead utility wires along key roads, (e.g. Route 1, 9/109, 9 and 109) underground over time.	CPIC	Short

1. Continue to communicate with the Wells Sanitary District and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations and other land use policies of this Plan, and that land use planning in Wells is informed by the realities each organization is facing	Selectboard / Town Manager	Ongoing
2. Continue to utilize the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District and other initiatives to protect the Town's water supply.	Selectboard	Ongoing
3. Cooperate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to adopt policies and programs, including the securing of easements, to protect the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.	Selectboard	Ongoing
4. Continue to review the Town's land use regulations to ensure the quality of the ground and surface waters are protected through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources.	Selectboard	Ongoing
5. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste including the composting of organic materials.	Solid Waste Committee	Ongoing
6. Continue to work with wireless, cable and data utility system providers proactively to ensure state of the art facilities are available for residents and economic development.	Selectboard	Ongoing

Flood Hazard Mitigation Implementation Program

Planning 1. Establish a Flood Hazard Mitigation Committee to ensure the Plan remains current. Review this Plan once a year and update it every three years.	Board of Selectmen	
Prevention (Prevention activities include planning and zoning, open space preservation, floodplain development regulations, stormwater management, drainage improvements and pre-disaster mitigation activities.)		
Land Use Planning Activities 1. Identify local and state policies, programs and practices that directly or indirectly promote growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and increase the potential for coastal damage due to flooding conditions. Once these policies and programs have been updated, recommend policy and regulatory changes that will discourage growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area.	FHMC	Short
2. Work with local, state and federal conservation organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify and acquire parcels in the Special Flood Hazard Area that have the potential to reduce the risk from flooding.	FHMC	Short
3. Consider the inclusion of a floodplain management criteria as the Town formulates its open space strategy for management and acquisition of open space lands.	Conservation Commission	Short
4. Amend the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance (Chapter 115) to be consistent with State requirements after the Town has accepted the Food Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM).	Board of Selectmen	Short
5. Review the findings and conclusions of the Wells Bay Planning Committee to determine what recommendations should be included in the Town's flood plain management program and public education activities.	CPIC	Short
Stormwater management and drainage improvements 1. Conduct an inventory of all culverts and bridges to determine their adequacy to handle the 100 year flood event i.e., determine their capability to provide for the efficient runoff of peak stormwater discharge and to prevent localized flooding conditions.	Town Manager	Short
2. Seek the assistance and cooperation of landowners to gain access to drainage ways so debris can be removed to improve drainage. Because the existing drainage ways have become plugged over time and	Board of Selectmen	Short

there is a 1 to 1 ½ feet change in elevation, some coastal areas experience minor and, on occasion, moderate flood conditions. This should restore to some degree the drainage system function.		
3. Initiate a regular program to clean out and maintain existing catch basins on public lands or rights-of-way so that they can retain an adequate amount of water during periods of peak discharge.	Town Manager	Short
4. Ensure that all proposed developments have an acceptable stormwater retention plan and drainage plan as part of the subdivision and site plan review process.	Planning Board	On-going
5. Adopt regulations for stormwater management.	Board of Selectmen	Short
Property Protection (Property protection activities include relocation, acquisition, demolition, building elevation, flood retrofitting, retrofitting and insurance. The Town should consider focusing its initial efforts on the seven repetitive loss properties.)		
1. Conduct a flood hazard audit and analysis of the seven repetitive loss properties located on Atlantic and Ocean Avenues and Webhannet Drive to determine how the risks can be reduced.	FHMC	Immediate
2. Ensure that all critical public facilities such as the Wells Sanitary Sewer District facilities and the KKW's water system plant are properly floodproofed to prevent the infiltration of floodwaters. These facilities should be adequately insured against the risk of flood damage.	Board of Selectmen	Short
3. Identify residential and commercial properties in the Special Flood Hazard Area that would be appropriate candidates for structural improvements such as elevation and retrofitting to reduce the risk of flood damage.	FHMC	Short
4. Work with property owners within the floodplain to identify loan programs for floodproofing or other appropriate mitigation activities for structures located within the Special Flood Hazard Area.	FHMC	Short
5 Initiate a pilot mitigation program to provide additional incentives for residential and commercial buildings located in the flood hazard area. For example, if a sufficient number of projects were generated in a localized area, a local contractor may be able to offer a discount to property owners who wish to elevate or retrofittheir structures.	FHMC	Short

Natural Resource Protection (Natural resource protection includes dune stabilization, beach nourishment, wetland protection,and erosion and sediment control measures and best management practices.) 1. Seek engineering assistance to review the Town's practice of relocating sand to the eroded beach area at the beginning of Laudholm Beach at the northeastern part of Drake's Island.	Board of Selectmen	Short
Emergency Services (Emergency services include flood warning, flood response, critical facilities and public health and safety maintenance.) 1. Review and update the Town's local Emergency Response Plan. Since the Plan was first prepared, changes in land use have occurred with new commercial and industrial development, and in the emergency planning context, such as the flood warning notification system, the updated evacuation plans and the Emergency Alert System (EAS). An updated Emergency Response Plan should reflect these changes.	FHMC	Immediate
2. Conduct a tabletop flood response drill once a year to test the notification and communicationprocedures, the responders' knowledge of their procedures and the extent of local resources such as sandbags, barricades, generators and shelters.	FHMC	Short
3. Provide additional support to the Town's Emergency Management Director in the form of a computer and part time administrative assistance.	Board of Selectmen	Short
Structural Projects (Structural projects include seawalls, floodwalls and beach nourishment.) 1. Continue to repair and improve the seawall footing along Webhannet Drive by placing sheet pile facade in from the existing seawall. This project provides protection from storm and flood damage to properties along Webhannet Drive. The project should continue for approximately 1,500 feet at an estimated cost of $1,600,000. This project should be completed over a 5 to 7 year period	Board of Selectmen	Short
2. Monitor the results of the recently completed beach nourishment program so that minor alterations can be made, as needed.	Conservation Commission	Short
Public Information (As one of the initial members in the Community Rating System (CRS) program, Wells has been active in various public information and education programs	FHMC	Short

~~associated with an effective floodplain management program.)~~ ~~1. Initiate public information activities including providing:~~ ~~a. FIRM map information;~~ ~~b. Technical assistance on the floodplain regulations and flood mitigation activities;~~ ~~c. Information at the library;~~ ~~d. Outreach projects;~~ ~~e. Real estate disclosure~~ ~~f. Environmental education and~~ ~~g. Coordination with adjacent communities.~~		
~~2. Prepare a public information brochure that describes in detail the comprehensive nature of the Town's floodplain management program.~~	~~FHMC~~	~~Short~~
~~3. Establish a committee of concerned flood hazard property owners who are advocates of the Town's floodplain management efforts. Use the committee as a sounding board for new ideas and initiatives regarding an effective floodplain management program.~~	~~Board of Selectmen~~	~~Short~~
~~4. Use the community cable access program to publicize the Town's floodplain management programs.~~	~~FHMC~~	~~Immediate~~
1. Identify local and state policies, programs and practices that directly or indirectly promote growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and areas subject to future flood hazards and increase the potential for coastal damage due to flooding conditions. Once these policies and programs have been updated, recommend policy and regulatory changes that will discourage growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and areas vulnerable to future flood hazards, including sea level rise and storm surge.	Planning Staff / Code Enforcement Staff	Ongoing
2. Work with local, state, and federal conservation organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify, acquire, and conserve parcels in the Special Flood Hazard Area and those in areas vulnerable to future flood hazards that have the potential to reduce the risk from flooding.	Planning Staff	Ongoing
3. Consider the inclusion of floodplain management and sea level rise criteria as the Town formulates its open space strategy for management and acquisition of open space lands to promote conservation of areas vulnerable to flooding.	Planning Staff	Ongoing
4. Continue to amend the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance (Chapter 115) to be consistent with State requirements after the Town has adopted the new Flood Insurance Study (FIS)	Planning Staff	Ongoing

and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM).		
5. Continue to encourage the Town's land use ordinances to include flood resilience measures and standards and direct development away from areas that are vulnerable to existing and future flood hazards.	Selectboard / Planning Staff	Ongoing
6. Continue to encourage the Town's land use ordinances to promote land conservation and protection of open space, especially for subdivisions and large developments.	Planning Board	Ongoing
7. Continue to support the Conservation Commission in the implementation of the land bank program to support land conservation, especially in areas vulnerable to existing and future flood hazards and areas that can support landward migration of critical natural resources, such as saltmarshes, to address the impacts of climate change.	Selectboard	Ongoing
8. Periodically update the inventory of all culverts, bridges, and stormwater infrastructure components to determine their adequacy to handle the 100-year flood event i.e., determine their capability to provide for the efficient runoff of peak stormwater discharge and to prevent localized flooding conditions.	Public Works	Ongoing
9. Seek the assistance and cooperation of landowners to gain access to drainage ways so debris can be removed to improve drainage. Because the existing drainage ways have become plugged over time and there is a 1 to 1 ½ feet change in elevation, some coastal areas experience minor and, on occasion, moderate flood conditions. This should restore to some degree the drainage system function.	Public Works	Ongoing
10. Initiate a regular program to clean out and maintain existing catch basins on public lands or rights-of-way so that they can retain an adequate amount of water during periods of peak discharge.	Public Works	Ongoing
11. Continue to ensure that all proposed developments have an acceptable stormwater retention plan and drainage plan as part of the subdivision and site plan review process.	Public Works	Ongoing
12. Adopt regulations for stormwater management and ensure they account for climate change and expected increases in precipitation frequency and intensity.	Selectboard	Short
13. Collaborate with others to utilize the reports from recent coastal flooding projects, including the New England Climate Adaptation Project, and the Tides, Taxes, and New Tactics project to assess the	Planning Staff	Ongoing

impacts of sea level rise, storm surge, and more frequent and intense precipitation events on stormwater infrastructure.		
14. Continue to require future developments to employ low impact development measures for stormwater management.	Planning Staff	Ongoing
15. Continue to use Stream Smart principles when designing culvert upgrades and replacements for municipal projects.	Public Works	Ongoing
16. Investigate establishing a municipal fund to support infrastructure improvements that enhance the community's resilience to coastal and flood hazards.	Public Works / Selectboard	Short
17. Property protection activities include relocation, acquisition, demolition, building elevation, flood retrofitting, retrofitting and insurance. The Town should consider focusing its initial efforts on repetitive loss properties.	Planning Staff / Code Enforcement Staff	Ongoing
18. Conduct a flood hazard audit and analysis of repetitive loss properties located on Atlantic and Ocean Avenues, Webhannet Drive, and other flood-prone areas of town to determine how the risks can be reduced.	Planning Staff / Code Enforcement Staff / Public Works	Ongoing
19. Identify residential and commercial properties in the Special Flood Hazard Area and areas vulnerable to storm surge and sea level rise that would be appropriate candidates for structural improvements such as elevation and retrofitting to reduce the risk of flood damage.	Planning Staff / Code Enforcement Staff	Ongoing
20. Work with property owners within the floodplain to identify loan programs for floodproofing or other appropriate mitigation activities for structures located within the Special Flood Hazard Area.	Code Enforcement Staff	Ongoing
21. Work with FEMA, conservation groups, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Program, other appropriate partners and property owners to identify and pursue opportunities to purchase properties repeatedly damaged by flood hazards and conserve them as open space.	Selectboard	Ongoing
22. Continue to seek engineering assistance to review the Town's practice of relocating sand to the eroded beach area at the beginning of Laudholm Beach at the northeastern part of Drake's Island.	Selectboard	Ongoing
23. Continue to work with state and federal partners to evaluate the feasibility of beach nourishment though the beneficial reuse of dredged material where appropriate.	Selectboard	Ongoing
24. Continue to assess how Wells' beaches and other coastal resources will be impacted by sea level rise and increasing erosion.	Selectboard	Ongoing

25. Continue to work with regional, state, and federal partners to investigate opportunities to protect natural resources and areas that provide natural flood mitigation benefits.	Selectboard	Ongoing
26. Continue to preserve and protect natural wetland and coastal waterbody buffers through zoning, regulatory setbacks for development and land conservation.	CPIC	Ongoing
27. Continue to review and update the Town's local Emergency Response Plan. Since the Plan was first prepared, changes in land use have occurred with new commercial and industrial development, and in the emergency planning context, such as the flood warning notification system, the Code Red Program, the updated evacuation plans and the Emergency Alert System (EAS). An updated Emergency Response Plan should reflect these changes.	Fire Chief	Ongoing
28. Conduct a tabletop flood response drill once a year to test the notification and communication procedures, the responders' knowledge of their procedures and the extent of local resources such as sandbags, barricades, generators and shelters.	Fire Chief	Ongoing
29. Complete evacuation route signage.	Fire Chief	Ongoing
30. Continue to repair and improve the seawalls along town owned property.	Selectboard	Ongoing
31. Continue to monitor the results of the recently completed beach nourishment.	Selectboard	Ongoing
32. Initiate public information and engagement activities including providing: a. FIRM map information b. Sea level rise and storm surge hazards, impacts, and community vulnerability information c. Technical assistance on the floodplain regulations and flood mitigation activities d. Information at the library e. Outreach projects f. Real estate disclosure g. Environmental education h. Flood mitigation actions that property owners can implement to protect their homes and businesses. i. Coordination with adjacent communities. j. Opportunities for residents and property owners to share their flood hazard knowledge, concerns, and experiences, as well as ideas for flood adaptation and mitigation activities, with town officials.	Code Enforcement Staff	Ongoing

33. Prepare a public information brochure that describes in detail the comprehensive nature of the Town's floodplain management program, flood resilience, and sea level rise adaptation activities.	Code Enforcement Staff	Ongoing
34. Continue to use the community cable access program to publicize the Town's floodplain management programs and sea level rise adaptation and resilience efforts.	Selectboard	Ongoing

Part 4 – Capital Investment Strategy

Introduction

A "Capital Investment Strategy" highlights the capital investments needed to manage growth in Wells. It is not a formal capital improvements program (CIP), but it will serve as a guide to future capital expenditures that relate to the Town's growth. It is to be updated annually and contains in its appendix a ~~Five Year~~Five-Year CIP.

In addition to the major investments identified in this section, the Town also faces other smaller, ongoing capital expenditures. For example, it must continually replace and maintain vehicles and equipment or address other existing deficiencies that are unrelated to growth. This chapter does not address those "as needed" items and instead only deals only with items needed to accommodate growth or to meet the policies of this Comprehensive Plan.

Two major capital items -- public water and public sewer – are the responsibilities of separate, independent districts. The Town's capital investments therefore are free of these items except to the extent that the Town itself wishes to initiate the extension of one of the systems for its own purpose (such as to support economic development). However, as stated elsewhere in this Plan, coordination between the Town and the utilities is important to the success of the Plan. The Town is fortunate to have a good working relationship with both the Wells Sanitary District and the KK&W Water District.

The Wells / Ogunquit Community School District (CSD) was formed in 1980 through the vote of both communities as a part of the State Legislature action to allow Ogunquit to separate from the Town of Wells. The ownership of the school facilities was turned over to the CSD at that time. New facilities are bonded through a vote of the two towns and debt retirement is the responsibility of the Towns of Wells and Ogunquit through the CSD statutory funding formula. ~~In recent referendum in 2001, the voters agreed to bond up to $19.5 million for the construction of a new elementary school and renovations to the Junior High School. In that same referendum, the voters of Wells donated public lands purchased in the 1990's for future siting of municipal facilities next to Town Hall to the CSD for the purpose of constructing the new Elementary School.~~

It also should be noted that a capital investment item, as opposed to capital expenditure that typically would be found in an operating budget, usually involves a large expenditure paid for over time or with the help of outside funds. Financing over time does not necessarily mean borrowing. It may involve a reserve fund or a tool such as tax increment financing. But, frequently, the best way to finance a capital investment is through borrowing. ~~Section 10 of the Inventory reviewed the Town's fiscal capacity and outstanding capital debt. It documented that Wells' debt level as of 2003 was $26.88 million, including its share of school debts. Of this amount, $1.24 million is the Town's own debt and $25.64 million is from the CSD.~~ Wells has a very modest level of long-term debt relative to its borrowing capacity. Debt obligations in Fiscal Year 2020 amounted to about 1.05% of the total municipal valuation. As of June 30, 2020, the total amount of long-term debt carried by the Town of Wells was $16,213,148. In

addition to the Town's debt, Wells owes a much higher level of debt to the Wells-Ogunquit Consolidated School District. As of June 2020, the CSD's total outstanding debt level was $22,948,385 ($22.25 million in principal, $723,385 million in interest). Of the total amount, Wells' current share is set at 78.77 %. This is pegged to present levels of enrollment and property valuation and changes each year as the two variables change. At the current level, though, Wells' obligation is estimated to be $18.04 million. Adding together Town and School debts, the total debt level of the Town of Wells as of June 2020 is $34,289,590, or 1.05% of the Town's total property valuation. ~~This level is well within the limits of measures of credit worthiness for a town of its size, and the payout schedule is rapid.~~

Each of the capital investments derived from the Comprehensive Plan is rated by priority. The rating system is:

- **In Progress:** First priority. This indicates that the project is already underway to some degree.
- **Urgent:** ~~First~~ Second priority. The improvement is required to address an immediate public health or safety problem, to comply with a governmental regulation or mandate, or to complete animportant, unfinished project. Failure to address the problem or mandate would hinder the Town's ability to accommodate expected growth.
- **Necessary**: ~~Second~~ Third priority. The project is not needed to solve an immediate public healthor safety problem but should be undertaken in the near future.
- **Growth Dependent**: ~~Third~~ Fourth priority. The project gives the Town the ability to accommodate expected growth and would enhance the community's quality of life, but the improvement can wait until other more pressing projects are finished and additional funds are available.
- **Desirable, further study required**: ~~Fourth~~ Fifth priority. The project would allow for ideal operations given the projected growth, but can be deferred without detriment to delivering the basic services.
- ~~—~~

Capital Investments

This section outlines the capital investment needs by department for the Town of Wells. All cost figures expressed here only account for cost of buildings and facilities and do not include any potential land costs.

~~1. General Administration~~

~~As documented in Section 9 (Public Facilities and Utilities) of the Inventory, Wells Town Hall is overcrowded and no longer meets the needs of the Town's growing population. After several unsuccessful attempts to expand Town Hall over the past ten years, the 2004 Town Meeting finally approved funds to expand the building to accommodate more office space for the Town's Code Enforcement and Planning staff and to improve the building's accessibility.~~

These improvements will help to meet current deficiencies, but they will not be sufficient to serve the Town's needs for office and meeting space for the next 10 years. Additional Town Hall space will be needed, either at the location of the existing facility or at a satellite location. The estimated cost of expanding Town Hall is $4 million.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

2. Public Safety

Police Department: The Police Department has been in the same location since 1986 and its space and equipment needs have now been maximized at its present location. Space needs of the Police Department will need to be considered in the near future.

A particular concern is the location of the current facility in the Route 1 corridor. Considering that much of Wells' growth is occurring further from the coast, there may need to be a greater police presence in the Town's inland area. To meet the Town's needs, a new Police Station needs to be built and an additional substation may be needed as well. The estimated cost of a new main station would be $2.5 million, and the cost of a substation would be $500,000.

Priority Rating: Growth Dependent

Fire Department: The Wells Fire Department operates three two stations at this time, the main station at Wells Corner and two substations at Wells Branch and Highpine one located by the Public Works buildings on North Berwick Road. The two substations are both outdated and were identified in the Inventory as not being the ideal locations to serve the Town's growing population, particularly in its southern and western sections. It is recommended that these two facilities be replaced with two new substations: a northern one in the Sanford/Meetinghouse Road area and a southern one in the Littlefield/Bear's Den Road area. Each of these stations is estimated to cost $1 million, for a total investment need of $2 million. Based on NFPA standards additional stations should be considered within the town to meet the four minute response times to 90% of the community. These stations will need to house several firefighters/EMTs, along with a fire engine and an ambulance based on the most recent MRI study on "Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

In addition to these new stations, an addition to the main station at Wells Corner is needed as well. This addition would allow the main station to raise its level of service in the coastal areas of the Town. Its estimated cost is $750,000.

Priority Ratings:

New substations: Growth Dependent Necessary

Addition to Wells Corner station: Necessary

3.1. Public Works

Garage: The existing public works garage on Route 9 (North Berwick Road) is 50 years old, outdated, and lacks some of the basic equipment for efficiency and safety, such as adequate ventilation and proper

~~overhead doors. A lean-to facility houses much of the equipment along with a donated round metal garage building. The fueling depot is not in compliance with DEP Underground Tank regulations and an above ground storage facility is being investigated. The estimated cost for a new garage is $3.5 million.~~

The existing public works garage on Route 9 (North Berwick Road) ~~is 10 years old~~was built in 2011. Not all the equipment fits in the new building, and the building is not easily expandable. The current facility does not have a room large enough to allow for an area sufficiently large enough to get the entire staff together for health and safety training. Although, there are other facilities in the Town to accommodate a meeting such as this.~~If any additional equipment is added, it will have to be housed outdoors because there is no more available space.~~

~~The old garage lacks some of the basic equipment for efficiency and safety, such as adequate ventilation and proper overhead doors. A donated round metal garage building houses the rest of the equipment but is unheated and not well suited to this use. The fueling depot is not supported by an uninterruptable power supply. A generator has to be manual started to power the garage, and the pumps must be manually reset after a power outage.~~

~~If more lane miles are added to the town's roadway system, additional equipment and personnel will be needed to provide the current level of service. It is anticipated that MS-4 environmental requirements will be expanded to include Wells in the area covered by these rules. This will mean expanded maintenance and reporting requirements.~~

Priority Rating: ~~Urgent~~Desireable, further study required

Sand and salt shed: ~~Sand and salt shed: To meet a State mandate, the Town must build a sand and salt storage shed facility. The MDOT Salt Shed Priority program rates Wells a "2" with 1 the highest need. A salt shed reserve fund has been established with the Town appropriating funds to engineer and design it. The new shed will be able to store 5,000 cubic yards of sand/salt mix. Its location is on the Highway Department site. The estimated cost of this facility is $1.4 million~~

The town has an updated salt storage facility. Routine maintenance is performed on the metal roof, but it will need replacement in 5 years.

~~**Solid waste disposal:** Disposal of domestic solid waste is managed through MERC from the Wells Transfer Facility off the Willy Hill Road. The facility was constructed on the parcel containing the Town's Landfill that was officially closed in 1986 and DEP Closure in 1996. The Transfer Station has been added onto in 2000 to include a recycling building. The Landfill requires water quality monitoring annually. The Transfer Station operation has become dependant on a Solid Waste and Material Broker for all materials other than solid waste. The Town contracts for hauling services of its waste trailers to MERC. These very expensive trailers wear out fairly quickly and are thus considered capital equipment. Replacing them all would cost $100,000.~~

~~*Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required*~~

~~4.~~2. Flood Hazard Mitigation

The Public Works Department has identified flood problem areas in Wells:

- Mile Road
- Eldridge Road
- Furbish Road at Stevens Brook
- ~~Post Road at the Merriland River~~
- Tatnic Road
- Ocean Avenue
- Branch Road at the Merriland River~~.~~
- Bourne Avenue
- Coles Hill at the Merriland River
- Webhannet Drive
- Atlantic Avenue
- Drakes Island Road
- Island Beach Road

Problems include flooding, the undermining of roadways,~~ and~~ erosion and inadequate drainage capacity~~.~~ Specific improvements have not been identified, ~~but~~ however ~~generally they involve working with federal and state agencies to determine proper solutions~~.the Town has 3 On Call Engineering firms to develop engineered solutions an~~f~~d obtain the proper Federal and State permits for construction. ~~The Town's adopted Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan contains additional details.~~ According to the current Public Works Director the Webhannet south seawall will be reconstructed as a FEMA disaster project. The project will be designed with sea level rise and storm surge consideration. The engineering consultant will also provide an assessment of the rest of the walls, north and south to determine expected life. The side slopes of Mile Road were damaged in the Halloween storm last year, and the town is working with FEMA to create a project, including mitigation, to replace the stone armor along both sides of the road. This project will also consider storm surge and sea level rise.

To address these problems, the Town needs to make a number of capital investments. These are described below.

Stormwater management and drainage improvements: ~~The flood problem areas identified above are in need of stormwater/drainage improvements to reduce their flood risks. In order to make these improvements, the Town needs to first inventory all culverts and bridges in these areas to determine their adequacy to handle the 100-year flood event and then improve these culverts and bridges. The estimated cost of these improvements is $500,000~~.
The town needs a complete inventory and condition assessment of the drainage systems, with particular consideration of how the ocean outfalls will function with climate change. Individual watersheds need a hydraulic study to evaluate capacity for the current storm data. There are many private systems tied into the town's drainage that reduce the capacity of the public drainage.

Priority Rating: ~~Urgent~~Necessary

Property Protection: The Town adopted a Flood Hazard Mitigation plan in 2001. One of the Plan's key recommendations was to take action to protect properties in Wells that are known to

suffer repetitive losses from flooding, so as to avoid future losses. These protection activities may include relocation, acquisition, demolition, building elevation, floodproofing, retrofitting and insurance. There are seven such properties that have been identified in the Town, located on Atlantic Avenue, Ocean Avenue and Webhannet Drive. ~~A flood hazard audit and analysis of these properties needs to be undertaken to determine how the risks can be reduced. Following this analysis, investments in property protection will be needed. As with the stormwater/drainage category, the costs of these improvements are not yet known.~~

Priority Rating: *Necessary*

Structural Projects: ~~The Webhannet Drive seawall has been found to be in need of major repairs. The particular improvements needed involve the seawall footings, which need to be protected by placing sheet pile facades in from the existing seawall. This project will provide protection from storm and flood damage to properties along Webhannet Drive. The project should continue for approximately 1,500 feet at an estimated cost of $1.6 million.~~

The town has recently completed a ~~high-level~~high-level engineering assessment of major infrastructure elements. None of the infrastructure elements are in danger of ~~immenent~~imminent failure, but several are in need of immediate attention. The proposed budget included a bond to finance construction/reconstruction. The engineering is already underway, including permitting.

Priority Rating: *Urgent*

~~5.~~3. Transportation

Road reconstruction and paving. The town has a pavement management system and at an annual investment of approximately $900,000 a year the pavements in town will stay as good as they currently are. Traditionally, the Town has invested abo~~ut~~ve this threshold, so the pavements are improving, Any improvement to the drainage, horizontal or vertical alignments are done before, or with the paving. and the pavement techniques result in the most effective, longest lasting improvements.~~:~~ ~~Many arterial and collector roads in Wells need to be reconstructed. Funding for this work is appropriated annually. Cost of this type of work for each road ranges from $50,000 to $125,000. Roads that should be undertaken for reconstruction are:~~

- ~~Route 9B (Littlefield Road)~~

~~Bragdon Road~~

- ~~Tatnic Road~~

~~Quarry Road~~

~~Drakes Island Road~~

- ~~Coles Hill Road~~
- ~~Burnt Mill Road~~

~~Assuming an average cost of $75,000 for each of these projects, the total anticipated cost to the Town of these eight projects would be $600,000.~~

Priority Rating: *Necessary*

Route 1 improvements: ~~A number of improvements related to access management and mobility in the Route 1 corridor are needed to serve Wells and the surrounding region.Specific projects identified include:~~

- ~~Re-pavement from the Intersection of Route 109 to Route 9 (Port Road).~~
- ~~Route 109 and 1 Intersection Improvements~~
- ~~Moody area cumulative growth impact on traffic study~~
- ~~Regional coastal explorer bus service~~
- ~~Greater investment in Chamber Trolley System~~
- ~~Improvement to the intersections of Chapel and Route 109 and Chapel and Route 1.~~
- ~~Upgrade to the traffic signal system to meet current traffic pattern demands~~

The Town has included ~~discussed~~ funding in FY2023 for a study of the Route 1 corridor with Maine DOT, including a land use component. Implementation of strategies identified in the study will be critical to ensuring successful travel along Route 1. There is funding available for implementation in the Island Golf reserve account.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

Sidewalk Master Plan: ~~Various sidewalk improvements have been recommended in the Sidewalk Master Plan in the Wells Corner area. The immediate project that requires Town investment is for a new raised sidewalk from Harbor Road to the Wells CongregationalChurch. The estimated cost to the Town of this improvement is $450,000.~~The most recent sidewalk master plan only includes the sidewalks along Route 1 and Route 109 ~~from the Public Library to the Town Hall~~. Creating a town-wide sidewalk plan should be a goal in the next ten years. This should be done in conjunction with an active transit master plan that includes bicycle passage as well. Future sidewalk construction based on this Plan should be timed with roadway upgrades or reconstruction projects.

Priority Rating: Necessary

~~6.~~4. Harbor and Marine Resources

~~**Wells Harbor Pier:** Following recent improvements to buildings at the harbor, it was discovered that the pier holding the Harbormaster facility is sagging and cannot hold the weight of the building. The building structurally is settling and developing noticeable sags. The Town has begun to explore moving the facility off the pier and building a new office and storage complex off the shellfish hatchery building and locating a portable bait locker (refrigerated trailer) on the opposite side of the parking lot. The pier would then be repaired and it would open it up for further tourist use. The estimated cost of this improvement is $50,000.~~

~~*Priority Rating: Urgent*~~

Harbor Dredging: The Town, with the Army Corps of Engineers have submitted to the State of Maine an application to allow it to undertake maintenance dredges to the outer harbor area over a period of 10 years. The Town will be eligible for a full dredge of the harbor in ~~2007~~2023 if the monitoring reports indicate that the prior full dredge did not cause environmental harm to the marsh area surrounding the harbor. Support for this is crucial for a viable and stable harbor. ~~The estimated cost of the Town's matching share of the full dredge would be $650,000.~~

Priority Rating: ~~Desirable, further study required~~ Necessary

~~7.~~5. Recreation and Historic Preservation

~~**Public Restroom:** The Town has developed a reserve fund to establish a public restroom facility in the Routes 1 and 109 area. Talks are ongoing with the owner of the Wells Shopping Center to establish a facility in that location. The estimated cost of providing this facility is $65,000.~~

~~*Priority Rating: Necessary*~~

~~**Marsh Walk:** Public interest is strong for some type of coastal walkway along the Webhannet River. However, abutting property owners have resisted the development of such a facility, and community issues would need to be resolved before pursuing the Marsh Walk. The estimated cost of this project is $750,000.~~

~~*Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required*~~

~~**Field House:** In response to demand for additional programs and services, the Recreation Department developed a master plan for its facilities on Route 9A. The key finding of this plan was that a field house facility, including a gymnasium, multipurpose rooms and locker/restroom facilities, was needed. This has been and continues to be a major need of the Recreation Department. The estimated cost of this facility is $2 million.~~

~~*Priority Rating: Growth Dependent*~~

Eastern Trail Development: A significant portion of the Eastern Trail, a planned regional trail, is designated for Wells. An abandoned rail bed that is currently used for a gas pipeline is slated for Wells' portion of this off-road trail stretching from Kittery to South Portland. The estimated cost to develop the Wells segment of the Eastern Trail is ~~not known at this time~~ estimated at $4 – 6 Million. To date the Town of Wells has contributed funding for this project annually. Since 2004 this totals more than $85,000.

Priority Rating: Desirable

~~**Route 1/Elementary School Path:** A need has been identified for a walking path connecting Route 1 to the new Wells Elementary School on Route 109 to help pedestrian access for children. This trail could~~

~~be built on property owned by the Wells-Ogunquit CSD. Its estimated cost is $40,000.~~

~~*Priority Rating: Desirable*~~

~~**Colonial Road Walking Trails:** Many abandoned Colonial roads that are still in existence as public rights-of-way in Wells may be suitable for the development of walking trails. Doing so would require additional study and costs are unknown at this time.~~

~~*Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required*~~

Land Bank: ~~The Town of Wells already has some funding for a Open Space Reserve Fund as part of a land bank. Further funding for acquisition and recreational development may be needed in the future, though there is no exact amount set at this time.~~

~~*Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required*~~ The Town of Wells, led by the Conservation Commission's efforts, has established a robust and active land acquisition program that is funded annually through taxation.
Priority Rating: Necessary

~~8.~~6. Library

~~The Wells Public Library has been in existence for approximately 23 years with a building starting out at 5,000 square feet with an addition in 1991 of an additional 6,000 square feet. Today the library is the largest municipal building with 11,000 square feet of heavily used space. Strategic Planning is underway to consider another addition and to landscape the front, side and rear of the library. The beautification programs will assist the town in making this facility a destination location for cultural and educational services. The estimated cost for the addition and the landscaping is $1.5 million.~~

The Wells Public Library opened in 1978 with a 5,000 square foot space. In 1993, the first addition was completed giving the library greatly expanded children, young adult and circulation areas. A second addition was completed in 2018, adding a community room, a quiet study area and staff workspace for a total of 15,000 square feet. Space is currently adequate to meet the needs of the town residents, but an enlarged teen area and several small 2-3 person study/meeting rooms, as well as space for collection expansion should be considered in future growth plans.

~~*Priority Rating: Growth Dependent*~~ *Priority Rating: Growth Dependent*

Summary of Capital Investment Strategy

The following matrix expresses all of the identified capital investment needs of the Town of Wells and displays their priority levels to the Town. These items and their estimated costs are based on preliminary input from various heads of Town departments, and represent current anticipated construction costs .

No.	Item	Est. Cost	Priority Level
~~**General Administration**~~			
~~1.~~	~~Town Hall Expansion~~	~~$4.0M~~	~~Desirable, further study required~~
~~**Public Safety**~~			
~~2.~~	~~New Police Station~~	~~$2.5M~~	~~Growth Dependent~~
~~3.~~	~~Police Substation~~	~~$500K~~	~~Growth Dependent~~
~~4.~~	~~Northern Fire Substation~~	~~$13.50M~~	~~Growth Dependent~~
~~5.~~	~~Southern Fire Substation~~	~~$13.50M~~	~~Growth Dependent~~
~~6.~~	~~Wells Corner Fire Station Addition~~	~~$750K~~	~~Necessary~~
Public Works			
~~7~~1.	~~New~~ Public Works facility needs study~~Garage~~	30k~~$3.5M~~	Necessary~~Urgent~~
~~8~~2.	~~*~~ New Sand and Salt Shed roof	~~$1.4M~~$50k	~~Necessary~~
~~9.Solid Waste Disposal Trailers~~		~~$100K~~	~~Desirable, further study required~~
Flood Hazard Mitigation			
~~10.~~ ~~Stormwater/Drainage Improvements~~		~~$200K~~$500K~~~~	~~Necessary, but phased~~Urgent~~~~
~~11~~3.	Hardening of infrastructure for sea level rise and storm surge ~~Repetitive Flooding Property Protection~~	Unknown	Necessary
~~12~~.	~~Webhannet Drive Seawall Repairs~~	~~$1.6M~~	~~Urgent~~
Transportation			
~~13~~4.	Various Road Reconstruction/Pavings~~~~	$~~600K~~900K	Necessary
~~14~~5.	Route 1 ~~Improvements~~Corridor Study	Unknown	Desirable, further study required
~~15~~6.	~~* Raised~~ Sidewalk Master Plan ~~(Harbor Road to First Congregational Church)~~	Unknown~~$450K~~	Necessary
~~16.~~	~~Wells Harbor Pier Repairs~~	~~$50K~~	~~Urgent~~
~~17.~~	~~Wells Harbor Dredging (Local Match)~~	~~$650K~~	~~Desirable, further study required~~
Recreation and Historic Preservation			
~~18.~~	~~* Public Restroom in Route 1/109 area~~	~~$65K~~	~~Necessary~~
~~19.~~	~~Webhannet Marsh Walk~~	~~$750K~~	~~Desirable, further study required~~
~~20.~~	~~Route 9A Field House~~	~~$2.0M~~	~~Growth Dependent~~
~~21~~7.	Eastern Trail Development/Maintenance	Unknown	~~Growth Dependent~~In Progress
~~22.~~	~~Route 1/Elementary School Path~~	~~$40K~~	~~Growth Dependent~~
~~23.~~	~~Colonial Road Walking Paths~~	~~Unknown~~	~~Desirable, further study required~~
~~24~~8.	Land Bank	Unknown	Necessary ~~Desirable, further study required~~
~~**Library**~~			
~~25.~~	~~Library Addition & Landscaping~~	~~$1.5M~~	~~Growth Dependent~~

~~* Project partially or completely funded as of October 2004.~~

Note: This table presents a compilation off potential capital investments that may be needed by the Town of Wells.No projects on this list will be funded without Town Meeting approval.

Part 5 - Appendices

Section 1 – Economics and Demographics

A.POPULATION

Year-Round Population Trends

~~In 1900 the population of Wells was approximately 2,000. By 1950 it had reached 2,321. In the next20 years, Wells had almost doubled its population to 4,448. By 1990~~In 2000, the Census reported the population at 9,400 year-round residents living in Wells.~~,7,778 and~~ Tthe 2010 Census ~~201000~~ tabulated it at ~~9,4009~~,589, representing ~~about~~ a 2.01~~50~~% increase from ~~1980-20002~~000-2010. **See Table 1**~~. Although the population increased by 51% from 1970 to 1980, it slowed to 16%in the 10 year period from 1980 to 1990~~. By 2020, the population of Wells reached 11,850. During that time period ~~the 1990s~~ the rate of growth increased to 23.58~~1~~%. The rate of growth during this time period was higher than in any of the other neighboring municipalities, including York County as a whole. ~~Though this rate of growth was not as high as York, Kennebunk or Ogunquit, it was faster than all of the other neighboring municipalities and York County as a whole.~~

Table 1

Year Round Population

Wells and Adjacent Communities

	1970	1980	% Change 1970-80	1990	% Change 1980-90	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Wells	4,448	6,719	+51	7,778	+16	9,400	+21
Kennebunk	5.646	6.621	+17	8.004	+21	10.476	+31
Sanford	15.812	18.020	+14	20.463	+14	20.806	+2
North Berwick	2.224	2.878	+29	3.793	+32	4.293	+13
South Berwick	3.488	4.406	+16	5.877	+33	6.671	+14
York	5.690	8.465	+49	9.818	+16	12.854	+31
Ogunquit	NA	1.492	NA	974	-35	1.226	+26
York County	111.596	139.666	+25	164.587	+18	186.742	+13

Source: US Census, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission

TABLE 1: YEAR-ROUND POPULATION

Wells and Adjacent Communities

	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010	2020	% Change 2010-2020
Wells	**9,400**	**9,589**	**2.01%**	**11,850**	**23.58%**
Kennebunk	10,476	10,789	2.99%	12,008	11.30%
Sanford	20,806	20,798	-0.04%	21,470	3.23%
North Berwick	4,281	4,576	6.89%	5,077	10.95%
South Berwick	6,671	7,220	8.23%	7,390	2.35%
York	12,854	12,529	-2.53%	13,744	9.70%
Ogunquit	1,226	892	-27.24%	951	6.61%
York County	186,742	197,131	5.56%	215,410	9.27%

Source: Southern Maine Planning and Economic Development Commission (SMPDC), US Census

~~Since 1990, Wells has experienced a significant amount of residential development.~~ Changes in population are driven by two factors, natural change and net migration. Natural change is the difference between the number of births to Wells residents and the number of deaths of Wells residents. Well's desirability as a community is a likely contributor to the increase in net migration.

Table 2
Components of Recent Population Change

	'opulation :hange
1990 Household Population	7,778
Building Permits-1990-2000	419
Natural Change (Births-Deaths) -1990-2000	+167
Net Migration 1990-2000	+1.455
Population Growth 1990-2000	1.622
2000 Population	**9,400**

Source: Maine Dept. of Human Services

TABLE 2: COMPONENTS OF RECENT POPULATION CHANGES

	Population Change
2011 Household Population	**9,643**
Building Permits 2011-2020	1,299
Natural Change (Births-Deaths) 2011-2020	-266
Net Migration 2011-2020	+2017
Population Growth 2011-2020	2207
2020 Population	**11,314**

Source: Maine Division of Public Health Systems, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, US Census

Table 2 shows the natural change and net migration in Wells between ~~1990~~2011 and ~~2000~~2019. Wells experienced a ~~steady~~ natural ~~increase~~ decrease during this period of 2% but a 23% increase in population from net migration. ~~, but that the most significant increase comes from net migration – over 80% of the population increase.~~

Age of Population

Wells' 201900 population, ~~like the rest of~~ similar to~~ly,~~ York County's,~~'~~ is a predominantly middle-aged population with 31.94% of its population between the ages of 4535 and 654. **See Table 3.** ~~However, c~~Compared to the rest of the county, the Town has a somewhat older population, with 24.79% of the population aged 655 or over compared to 21.13% for York County. ~~Almost one in six Wells residents in 2000 was over 65 years of age. Alternatively,~~ Wells has a relatively smaller population in the younger age groups than the rest of the county.

Wells' median age ~~increased from 36.6 in 1990 to 43.3 in 2000 and~~ is overalmost six ~~five~~ years higher than that in York County overall, another indicator of its older population. The median age has increased significantly since 2000, when the median age was 43.3, reaching 48 by 2010. In 2017, it reached its highest point in the past two decades at 53.4 and has fallen slightly to its current level in 2019, 51.7. ~~Both Ogunquit and Kennebunk show a similar trend of an aging population. In 2000 Ogunquit's median age was 55.2 while Kennebunk's was 41.3. These communities have fewer younger people, fewer younger households and larger elderly populations.~~ Given this aging trend, Wells will need to consider how to best service this population. Additionally, 12.6% of Wells Population is considered by the American Community Survey to have some type of disability. Approximately 60% of those with a disability are 65 years or over.

Table 3
Age Distribution Wells & York County Residents—2000

	Wells		York County	
Age	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
< 18 Years	1.972	21.0	46.273	24.8
18 to 24 Years	527	5.6	12.807	6.9
25 to 44 Years	2.479	26.4	56.013	30.0
45 to 64 Years	2.837	30.2	46.220	24.8
65 Years & Older	1.585	16.9	25.429	13.6
Median Age	43.3		38.5	

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

TABLE 3: AGE DISTRIBUTION

Wells & York County Residents – 2019

	Wells		York Co	
Age	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
< 18 Years	1771	17.1%	38046	18.3%

18 to 24 Years	522	5.0%	14929	7.2%
25 to 44 Years	1998	19.3%	49921	24.0%
45 to 64 Years	3307	31.9%	60900	29.3%
65 Years & Older	2558	24.7%	43845	21.1%
Median Age	51.7		45.5	

Source: US Census

Year-Round Population Forecasts

Real estate development and thus population growth are driven by a variety of factors such as national and regional economic and income growth, numbers of jobs, interest rates, the community's attractiveness as a residential community, the availability and cost of housing, and the natural increase of the population.

~~Over the past 20 years Wells has experienced steady growth in its year round household population, as it reached~~ In 2000, the Wells population was 9,400 ~~by the year 2000. In the same year, t~~The Maine State Planning~~State Economist Office projected~~s Wells' population to reach ~~10,300~~11,600 ~~by 2015.05 and 11,600 by 2015.~~ In 2018, the population had reached 10,235, an increase of 835 people since 2000, or a growth rate of 8%. The State Economist released projections based on data from the 2016 census, projecting the population would reach 11,365 by 2023, 12,171 by 2028, and 13,582 by 2038, representing an overall increase of 3,038 between 2018 and 2038. The overall population growth rate for this time period would therefore be 28%. As of 2020, the Town population stood at 11,850, already exceeding the 2023 projection. ~~These represent increases of 900 between 2000 and 2005 and 1,300 from 2005 to 2015. The overall population growth rate from 2000 to 2015 would therefore be 23%.~~ **See Table 4.**

Table 4

Projected Population Growth, 2000-2015

	1990 Census	2000 Census	2005	2010	2015
Wells	7,778	9,400	10,298	11,045	11,613
York Co.	164,587	186,742	197,946	206,430	214,609

Source: US Census, Maine State Planning Office

TABLE 4: PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH, 2018 - 2038

	2018	2023	2028	2033	2038
Wells	10,544	11,365	12,171	12,917	13,582

York Co.	206290	215424	223396	229809	234432

Source: Maine Dept. of Administrative and Financial Services, Maine Office of the State Economist

~~The Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission produced estimates of population for 2004 for Wells, based on actual building permit activity and expected natural change in population from births and deaths. From 2000 to 2003, there were a total of 467 building permits in Wells, an average of 117 per year. SMRPC estimates that, at this level of development, the 2004 population of Wells is 10,290. The SPO projection for 2005 put Wells' population for that year at 10,298. So real population growth has been about one year ahead of projected growth. SPO Projections for 2015 should therefore be reasonably accurate, though they may be reached a year or two early. Given the uncertainty of future trends, though, it is difficult to make any absolute statements regarding population projections.~~

Seasonal Population Forecasts

Because of its coastal location and stock of seasonal housing units, the population of Wells during the summer increases significantly. ~~According to the 1980 Census,~~The Town of Wells maintains its own database of lodging units. ~~As of 2004~~In 2004, there were 1,300 motel rooms in the Town, 229 hotel rooms and 67 bed & breakfast rooms, for a total of 1,596 motel/hotel rooms. In addition, there are 450 cottage units and 2,822 licensed RV park and campground spaces. Assuming average peak occupancies of 2.0 persons per motel/hotel room, 3.5 persons per cottage and 4.5 persons per campground space, this would mean a peak seasonal population of 3,192 in hotel/motel rooms, 1,575 in cottages and 12,699 in campground spaces. The total peak population in lodging accommodations is therefore estimated to be 17,466~~. the Town had approximately 1,750 seasonal homes; 1,526 licensed lodging rooms in motels and hotels; and 1,977 licensed campground sites. By 1990, there were over 1,840 seasonal housing units. The 2000 Census reported 3,461 seasonal housing units, but this number likely includes units that are technically reported by the Town of Wells as being lodging units~~.

Since the 2000 Census reports that only 49% of the vacant units in Wells are single-family units, it appears that the overall number of seasonal dwelling units has not changed much since 1990, when the number of seasonal units stood at 1,840. ~~-~~At an estimated peak occupancy of 3.5 persons per seasonal unit this would mean about 6,440 additional occupants in these units at the height of the summer season. Adding those numbers to the 9,400 year-round residents, the peak season population in Wells in 2004 was estimated to be 33,306.

Estimates for the Town's seasonal population in 2021 were calculated using data provided by the Town of Wells and the Maine State Housing authority. The seasonal population estimates assume a total of approximately 3,816 seasonal homes, 1,912 hotel/motel units, 1,032 cottage units, 29 bed & breakfast units, and 3,644 campground spaces. ~~The Town of Wells maintains its own database of lodging units. As of 2004, there were 1,300 motel rooms in the Town, 229 hotel rooms and 67 bed & breakfast rooms, for a total of 1,596 motel/hotel rooms. In addition, there are 450 cottage units and 2,822 licensed RV park and campground spaces.~~ Assuming average

peak occupancies of 2.250 persons per motel/hotel/B&B/Inn room, 3.5 persons per cottage, and and 4.5 persons per campground space, this would mean an estimated peak seasonal population of 3,463192of 4,367 in hotel/motel rooms/B&B/Inn, 3,612 2,3451,575 in cottages and 9,612126,398,699 in campground spaces. The total peak population in lodging accommodations is therefore estimated to be 15,420174,377,466. With the addition of seasonal housing units, assuming average peak occupancy of 3.5 persons per unit for a total of 13,056041 additional persons, the estimated additional seasonal population is 28,46137,733. Adding that number to the 2019 population of 10,366 9,40010,366 47,784 year-round residents and the 6,440 occupants of seasonal units, the peak seasonal population of Wells is estimated to be 48,099 be 383,827306. This represents an increase of about 16.619a 44% increase from the percent % over the 1994 2004 estimate of 28,00033,306.

Given the continued development of seasonal accommodations, particularly of cottages and "condo-tel" units, the number of short-term visitors to the Town will continue to grow. If the peak seasonal population grows at the same rate from 2017 to 2026 as it did from 2004 to 2017, Wells' peak population in 2026 would reach over 45,000. If the peak seasonal population grows at the same rate from 202117 to 2026 as it did from 2004 to 2021 \17, Wells' peak population in 2026 would reach over 45,00054,000.

A. LOCAL ECONOMY

The Wells Labor Force

Between 2000 and 2010, the Town experienced an overall decrease of 2.9% in its civilian labor force, Between 1980 and 1990, the Town experienced a dramatic increase of 52% in its civilian labor force, which is the number of residents of Wells who are employed or are actively seeking employment. The labor force decreasedincreased from 3,3615,529 persons to 5,1065,367 persons for a nettotal decrease of 162 1,745 persons during that ten- year period. **See Table 5**. However, from 20001990 to 19952005, the Town experienced a declinen increase in its civilian labor force from 5,1065,529 persons to 5,9514,567 persons, a net gainloss of 539 422 or 10.67%, whereas Since the mid-1990, Ffrom 2005 to 2010, the Town experiencedexperiences a net loss of 584 persons or 9%. Since 2010, the size of the labor force in Wells has yet to recover to its sizezie in its 2005 size but has rebounded somewhat and stood at 5,708 more than 5,400 in 20202003. Overall, the Town's labor force has expanded by about 1,900179 people (62%) since 20001980. The growth rate from 19902000 to 2003-20was far more modest: 6.6%. a modest 3.2%.

For reporting purposes, the Maine Department of Labor includes the Town of Wells in the Wells Biddeford Labor Market Area (LMA). The Wells Biddeford LMA includes the Towns of ArundelNorth Berwick, BiddefordOgunquit, Dayton, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Lyman, Saco, Ogunquit and Wells. In 1990 2000, Wells accounted for 17.5% 63.2% of the labor force in the Biddeford Wells LMA; in 2003 the percentage of Wells' contribution was just 12.4%only slightly less at 62.5%, and by 2020 it has reached 65.2%. In 19902005, the Biddeford Wells LMA's civilian labor force was 29,2009,526 and grewfell to about 43,600 8,453in 201003, an

~~increase~~decrease of ~~14,400~~ 1,073 or 11~~49~~%. By 2020, the civilian labor force has increased to 8,745, an increase of 3% since 2010.

TABLE 5

Civilian Labor Force
Town of Wells, Maine
1980 – 2003

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate	% Biddeford LMA
1980	3.361	3.145	216	6.4%	
1985	4.842	4739	103	2.1%	19.3%
1990	5.106	4.939	167	3.3%	17.5%
1995	4.567	4.341	226	4.9%	12.5%
2000	5.159	4.999	160	3.1%	12.4%
2003	5.448	5.172	276	5.0%	12.4%
% Change 1980-03	62%	64%			
%Change 1980-90	52%	53%			
1990-03	6.6%	4.7%			

Source: Civilian Labor Force Estimates from Maine Department of Labor

TABLE 5*: *CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE

Town of Wells, Maine: 2000 - 2020

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate	% Wells LMA
2000	5529	5363	166	3.0%	63.2%
2005	5951	5685	266	4.5%	62.5%
2010	5367	5894	473	8.8%	63.5%
2015	5572	5305	267	4.8%	64.3%
2020	5708	5370	338	5.9%	65.2%
% Change					
2000-20	3.2%	0.1%			
% Change					
2000-10	-2.9%	9.9%			
2010-20	6.0%	-9.8%			

Source: Civilian Labor Force Estimates from Maine Department of Labor

The reasons for the decline in the Town's civilian labor force during the ~~199~~2000s were most likely related to: the economic recession of ~~the early 1990s~~ 2008-2009 and its aftermath and the aging of the population. ~~· The closure in 1989 of the Pease US Air Force Base in Portsmouth, NH and· The downsizing of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine.~~ These external factors were beyond the Town's ability to influence employment decisions in any meaningful manner. By the same token, growth in Wells' labor force since the mid-1990s has been driven largely by regional employment growth in centers like Portsmouth (including the growing private sector employment base at Pease International Tradeport), Biddeford/Saco and Portland.

Employment By Industry Group

Between ~~1990~~2010 and 201~~900~~, Wells experienced ~~positive~~negative changes in its pattern of employment, ~~adding~~losing 97~~8~~ persons to its base of employed residents (1~~26~~% ~~gain~~loss). While there are ~~two~~ two ~~number of~~ industries in York County that saw a rather significant decline in employment (~~,~~the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing industry (-33%) and the Wholesale Trade industry (-15.6%)), industry employment remained relatively stable across the board for the Town. ~~The big changes being~~ Notably, these changes include a 4.8% decline in employment in the Construction industry, a 5.1% increase in the Professional and ~~Adminstrative~~Administrative Services industry, and a 9.5% increase in employment in the Educational, Health, and Social Services industry. Wells is experiencing growth in some professional sectors as resident incomes and housing values increase. Some of the sectors that are seeing decreases are due to shifts in employment as those industries have less of a presence in Wells, and others reflect a reality of needing to live elsewhere in the region where housing options match income levels. ~~While the numbers of residents employed in the manufacturing sector declined significantly in many other York County communities during that period, the number of Wells residents working in this sector actually increased by 118 (15%).~~

~~The largest areas of employment growth among Wells residents were Services (93% increase), Wholesale Trade (64% increase) and Public Administration (43% increase). Services grew particularly rapidly, as the share of working residents employed in this sector grew from 28% in 1990 to 43% in 2000. There were declines in resident employment of 13% in both the Transportation and Retail sectors.~~

TABLE 6
Resident Employment By Industry Group
Town of Wells, Maine

Industry Group	1990 #	%	2000 #	%	Change, 1990-2000 #	Change, 1990-2000 %
Ag. Forestry. Farm	128	3.3%	30	0.6%	-98	-76.6%
Construction	338	8.8%	335	7.0%	-3	-0.9%
Manufacturing	806	21.0%	924	19.2%	118	14.6%
Transportation	247	6.4%	214	4.4%	-33	-13.3%
Wholesale Trade	85	2.2%	140	2.9%	55	64.7%
Retail	800	20.8%	699	14.5%	-101	-12.6%
FIRE*	259	6.8%	259	5.4%	0	0.0%
Services	1,080	28.1%	2,079	43.1%	999	92.5%
Public Administration	96	2.5%	137	2.8%	41	42.7%
TOTAL	**3,839**	**100%**	**4,817**	**100%**	**978**	**25.5%**

* FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

TABLE 6: RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY GROUP

Town of Wells, Maine

					Change, 2010 - 2019	
Industry Group	**2010 #**	**%**	**2019 #**	**%**	**#**	**%**
Ag, forestry, fishing	110	2.1%	0	0.0%	-110	-2.1%
Construction	518	10.1%	264	5.2%	-254	-4.8%
Manufacturing	685	13.3%	585	11.6%	-100	-1.7%
Wholesale trade	77	1.5%	78	1.5%	1	0.0%
Retail trade	674	13.1%	573	11.3%	-101	-1.7%
Transportation/Util	172	3.3%	162	3.2%	-10	-0.1%
Information	90	1.7%	45	0.9%	-45	-0.9%
FIRE	201	3.9%	323	6.4%	122	2.5%
Prof/Admin Serv	362	7.0%	614	12.1%	252	5.1%
Educ/Health/Soc Serv	841	16.3%	1305	25.8%	464	9.5%
Arts/Rec. Serv.	83	1.6%	87	1.7%	4	0.1%

Accommodation and food services	710	13.8%	544	10.8%	-166	-3.0%
Other serv.	359	7.0%	231	4.6%	-128	-2.4%
Public administration	271	5.3%	245	4.8%	-26	-0.4%
Total	**5153**	**100.0 %**	**5056**	**100.0 %**	**-97**	**0.0%**

Source: US Census: American Community Survey

*FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate

Note: Figures included in this table may reflect a small sample size, and are not updated annually through the American Community Survey

Table 7 compares the resident employment by industry group of Wells to York County. The percentage of Wells residents employed in the different sectors of the economy corresponds fairly closely to residents in ~~the Southern Maine region and~~ York County ~~as a whole.~~. The actual number of jobs in each sector is less important to informing this Comprehensive Plan then the trends that are evident from this data. The industries and the composition of the workforce in southern Maine are changing.

TABLE 7
Resident Employment By Industry Group, 2000
Wells and York County

Industry Group	Wells		York Co	
	#	%	#	%
Ag. Forestry, Fishing	30	0.6%	993	1.0%
Construction	335	7.0%	7,097	7.5%
Manufacturing	924	19.2%	17,670	18.6%
Wholesale Trade	140	2.9%	3,796	4.0%
Retail Trade	699	14.5%	12,085	12.7%
Transpo/Util	214	4.4%	3,982	4.2%
Information	88	1.8%	1,980	2.1%
FIRE*	259	5.4%	6,327	6.7%
Prof/Admin Serv	332	6.9%	6,491	6.8%
Educ/Health/Soc Serv	974	20.2%	19,598	20.6%
Arts/Rec Serv	480	10.0%	7,515	7.9%
Other Serv.	205	4.3%	4,252	4.5%
Public Administration	137	2.5%	3,230	3.4%
TOTAL	**4,817**	**100%**	**95,016**	**100%**

* FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

Source: 2000 US Census

TABLE 7: RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY GROUP, 2019

Wells and York County

Industry Group	Wells-2019		Wells-2010		York Co 2019		York Co-2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ag, forestry, fishing, hunting	0	0.0%	25	0.8%	1,021	0.9%	780	1.1%
Construction	264	5.2%	361	11.7%	8,080	7.5%	5,685	8.5%
Manufacturing	585	11.6%	638	20.7%	13,284	12.3%	11,616	17.4%
Wholesale trade	78	1.5%	61	1.9%	2,184	2.0%	2,016	3.0%
Retail trade	573	11.3%	376	12.2%	14,244	13.2%	7,411	11.1%
Transportation/Util	162	3.2%	151	4.9%	3,945	3.7%	2,747	4.1%
Information	45	0.9%	63	2%	1,993	1.8%	1,248	1.8%
FIRE	323	6.4%	91	2.9%	7,645	7.1%	5,620	8.4%
Prof/Admin Serv	614	12.1%	197	6.4%	9,611	8.9%	5,807	8.7%
Educ/Health/Soc Serv	1,305	25.8%	423	13.7%	27,008	25.0%	14,336	21.5%
Arts/Rec.	87	1.7%	15	0.4%	1,986	1.8%	680	1%
Accommodation and food services	544	10.8%	236	7.6%	8,248	7.6%	2,961	4.4%
Other serv.	231	4.6%	218	7%	4,469	4.1%	2,424	3.6%
Public administration	245	4.8%	223	7.2%	4,150	3.8%	3,078	4.6%
Total	**5,056**	**100.0%**	**3,078**	**110.0%**	**107,868**	**100.0%**	**66,499**	**100%**

Source: US Census: American Community Survey

**FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate*

Note: Figures included in this table may reflect a small sample size, and are not updated annually through the American Community Survey

For further comparisons, Table 8 examines the resident employment by occupation breakdown in Wells to that of York County.

TABLE 8
Resident Employment By Occupation, 2000
Wells, Southern Maine and York County

Occupation	Wells		York County	
	#	%	#	%
Mgmt/Professional	1.740	36	29.435	31
Service	576	12	13.664	14
Sales/Office	1.319	27	24.906	26
Farm, Forestry, Fish	28	1	639	1
Constr/Maint	461	10	10.486	11
Product/Transpo	693	14	15.886	17
TOTAL	**4,817**	**100**	**95,016**	**100**

Source: 2000 Census

TABLE 8: RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION, 2019

Wells and York County

Occupation	Wells		York County	
	#	%	#	%
Mgmt/Professional	2,155	42.6%	40,416	37.5%
Service	874	17.3%	19,132	17.7%
Sales/Office	1,122	22.2%	23,072	21.4%
Construction/ Manufacturing	374	7.4%	10,967	10.2%
Product/Transpo	531	10.5%	14,281	13.2%
Total	**5,056**	**100%**	**107,868**	**100%**

Source: US Census: American Community Survey

Compared to York County, Wells has a higher percentage of residents (42.636%) engaged in Management and Professional occupations than the 37.51% for York County. Wells has less of an orientation (14) towards residents working in Manufacturing and Transportation occupations (10.5%) than does York County (13.217%). Additionally, Wells' residents are less orientated toward the Construction and Manufacturing sector (7.4%) than York County as a whole (10.2%)

Income

Median household income refers to the income level earned by a given household and provides some indication of a geographic area's economic status. Median household income is strongly tied to cost of living, employment levels, and poverty rates. In 2019, the American Community Survey reported that Wells' median household income is $66,578, which is higher than Maine's at $58,924 and somewhat similar to York County's at $67,830. The median household income by age of household for 15–24-year-olds is $58,526, while that figure for 25–44-year-olds is $93,900. The median household income for 45–64-year-olds is $83,910 and for 65 years and over its $46,207.

***TABLE 9:* Median Household Income**

Wells, York County, and Maine

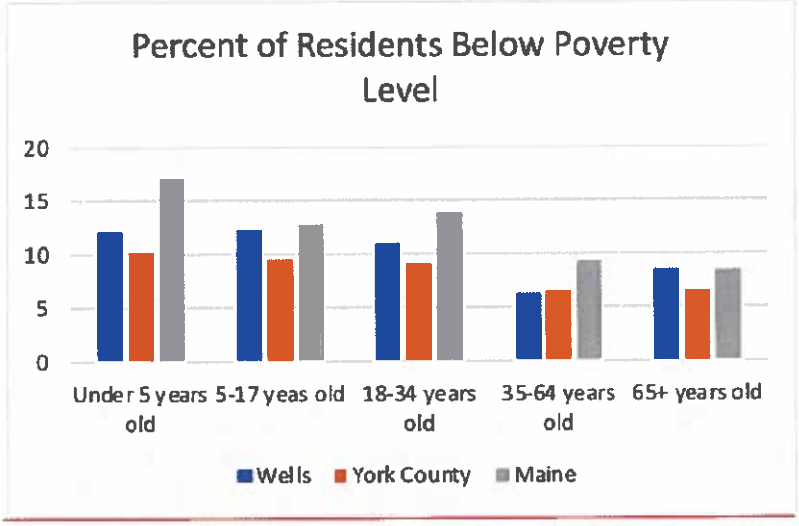
Year	Wells	York County	Maine
2014	$60,455	$56,701	$48,804
2015	$57,250	$57,919	$49,331
2016	$62,524	$59,132	$50,826
2017	$65,230	$62,618	$53,024
2018	$67,269	$65,538	$55,425
2019	$66,578	$67,830	$57,918

Source: American Community Survey

Poverty

Understanding what parts of a community's population are below the federal poverty line is important for understanding the overall economic health of residents in Wells. In Wells, 8.6%, or approximately 888 residents, are living below the poverty line.

In York County, 7.6% of individuals living below the poverty line and in Maine, 10.9% of the population fall within this category. According to the 2019 American Community Survey, 8.3% of households in Wells receive food stamps/supplemental nutritional assistance program funds.



Educational Attainment

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education that an individual has completed. The US Census' American Community Survey collects annual data on educational attainment levels for local communities. In Wells, 95.5% of residents over the age of 25 years have a high school degree or higher. 50.% have a Bachelor's Degree or higher. The table below shows percentages of Wells residents based on their highest level of education completed.

TABLE 10: LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Town of Wells, Maine

Level of Education Completed	# of Residents 25+ years old	% of Residents 25+ years old
Less than 9th grade	224	2.8%
9th-12th grade, No Diploma	308	3.8%
High School Graduate (or equivalency)	2,125	26.3%
Some college, no degree	1,638	20.3%

Associates Degree	733	9.1%
Bachelor's Degree	2,000	24.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1,045	12.9%
Source: 2019 American Community Survey		

Commuting Patterns

In ~~1990~~2000, the US Census reported that 26.0% of the employed Wells residents worked in the Town of Wells while in 1990 the percentage was 37.4%. ~~This represented a decrease of 213 residents living and working in Town.~~ By 2010, only 19.6% of employed Wells residents worked within the town. While the actual number of residents working within the Town increased by 13 persons between 2010 and 2018, the overall percentage of employed residents working within the Town decreased to 17.5%. **See Table 11~~9~~**. It is discouraging for a number of reasons (increased automobile use, loss of sense of community, jobs-housing spatial mismatch) to observe that fewer residents are working in Town despite strong labor force growth. As of 201~~8~~00, ~~the majority of~~ only 28.9% Wells' workforce ~~(53%)~~works within the Wells LMA. ~~commutes outside the Biddeford LMA to go to work. Six of the 10~~The leading commuting destinations for Wells residents, other than Wells itself, ~~are outside the labor market area~~ is York (7.2%), followed by Portland (6.5%), then Ogunquit (6.2%) and Kennebunk (6.2%). ~~-~~More than 1,01~~5~~0 Wells residents commute to these four locations. ~~each of these six locations, which are: Kittery, Sanford, York, Portland, Portsmouth and North Berwick.~~

TABLE 9

Commuting Patterns
Employed Wells Residents
1990-2000

Place of Work	1990 #	%	2000 #	%
Wells	1,435	37.4%	1,222	26.0%
Balance of Biddeford LMA	348	10.6%	974	20.8%
Other	1,751	45.6%	2,490	53.1%
TOTAL	3,839	100%	4,686	100%

Source: 2000 Census

TABLE 11: COMMUTING PATTERNS OF EMPLOYED WELLS RESIDENTS 2010 - 2018				
Place of Work	2010 #	%	2018 #	%
Wells	763	19.60%	780	17.50%
York	280	7.20%	336	7.50%
Portland	251	6.50%	311	7%
Ogunquit	241	6.20%	276	6.20%
Kennebunk	243	6.20%	273	6.10%
Sanford	213	5.50%	237	5.30%
Biddeford	171	4.40%	146	3.30%
North Berwick	122	3.10%	145	3.30%
Portsmouth, NH	162	4.20%	137	3.10%
South Portland	122	3.10%	106	2.40%

The Economic Base of Wells

As mentioned in the Introduction, in the early days of the Town's history, natural resource-based industries played a large role in the Town's economic base. However, the summer recreation tourism business has played a very strong and significant role for the last 100 years. For a relatively small Maine coastal community, the Town does possess an impressive list of businesses. The largest business is York Community College ~~Spencer Press~~ which employs ~~550~~ 362persons. Table 10 lists the other local significant businesses.

TABLE 10 Major Employers in Wells, Maine – 2003		
COMPANY	Industry	# of Employees
Spencer Press, Inc.	Color web lithography	550
Shaw's Distribution Center	Food sales	400
Hannaford	Food store	210
York County Comm Coll	Community college	137
Lord's Harborside	Restaurant	100
United Parcel Service	Distribution Center	88
Ogunquit River Plantation	Resort Hotel	85
Pike Industries, Inc.	Quarry stone	56
Source: Town of Wells Assessor		

Table 10 Major Employers in Wells, Maine - ?		
Company	**Type of Business**	**# of Employees**
York Community College	Maine Community College	362
Shaws Distribution Center	Grocery Chain Warehouse	342
WOCSD #18	Local Schools	250
Hannaford	Grocery Store Chain	135
Lafayette Properties	Hotels	125
Town of Wells	Local Government	104
Mike's Clamshack	Restaurant	107
Varano's	Restaurant	105
UPS	Parcel Delivery service	97
Wasco Products	Commercial Products Manufacturer	88
Source: Town of Wells		

In addition to the businesses listed in Table 10, Wells has a number of smaller, unique specialty businesses. ~~such as Borealis Breads (10 employees), My Hang Up and Clothworks of Maine.~~ These types of businesses are often attracted to a smaller tourist type community and demonstrate how the tourism economy can assist the general business economy. They can be a magnet for other specialty businesses that also might want to locate in a coastal tourist community. Wells also has a high concentration of antique stores, mostly along Route 1, making it a regional destination for antiquers. Because of access to the State's major road network, residents of Wells can easily commute to the greater Portland area, all sections of southern Maine, New Hampshire and even Massachusetts. As such, many residents of Wells travel substantial distances to go to work each day.

Retail Sales

Retail sales are tracked in Maine at the Economic Summary Area (ESA) level. Wells is part of the Kittery ESA, along with Kittery, Cape Neddick, Eliot, Ogunquit, York, Eliot and South Berwick. During the four~~five~~-year period from ~~1988~~2015 to ~~1999~~2019, the total taxable sales in the Kittery ESA increased by $15~~24~~ million or about 15%. **See Table 11.**

The dominant category is restaurants and lodging facilities, which accounted for 54~~0~~% of all taxable sales in the ESA as of 20~~03~~19 and likely even more in Wells. The next most prominent retail sales category is ~~General Merchandise~~Other Retail, accounting for 13.9% of total taxable

sales in 2019, followed closely by General Merchandising with accounted for 13.3% in the same year. This category has suffered a 13% loss in the four-year period between 2015 to 2019. ~~substantial losses in recent years as the Kittery Outlets area has lost several key retailers and substantial big-box expansion have occurred in Portsmouth, Portland and Biddeford, drawing spending away from the Kittery area.~~

TABLE 11

Taxable Retail Sales in Kittery ESA 1999-2003

Year	Total Taxable Sales	Total Consumer Sales	General Merch	Other Retail	Restaurant & Lodging	Rest/Lodge as % of Total
1999	$512.301	$525.386	$151.944	$88.629	$191.390	37%
2000	525.942	538.012	143.148	94.804	197.321	37%
2001	521.256	532.541	130.944	94.757	201.766	39%
2002	538.896	549.565	125.799	96.085	216.453	40%
2003	536.685	550.013	121.049	95.794	214.313	40%
Change						
#	$24.384	$24.627	-$30.895	$7.165	$22.923	
%	4.8%	4.7%	-20.3%	8.1%	11.9%	

Source: Maine State Planning Office, Maine Revenue Services

TABLE 11

Taxable Retail Sales in Kittery ESA, 2015 – 2020

Year	Total Taxable Sales	Total Consumer Sales	General Merch	Other Retail	Restaurant and Lodging	Rest/Lodge as % of Total
2015	$773,318.6	$748,264.5	$135,046.7	$112,073.2	$365,901.0	47.3%
2016	$822,320.2	$798,116.0	$137,182.3	$116,160.0	$390,971.0	47.5%
2017	$853,322.6	$829,757.2	$131,284.0	$116,436.5	$420,567.9	49.3%
2018	$879,925.0	$750,932.2	$123,085.9	$103,166.4	$442,083.5	50.2%

2019	$888,904.5	$864,728.2	$117,826.1	$123,178.7	$444,662.7	50.0%
2020	$693,416.0	$671,288.5	$75,719.1	$118,833.1	$291,595.5	42.1%
Change						
#	$115,585.9	$116,463.7	-$17,220.6	$11,105.5	$78,761.7	
%	15%	16%	-13%	10%	22%	
Source: Maine Revenue Services						

In 19902000, the Town of Wells accounted for 1820.7% of the total consumer sales in the Kittery ESA District. In 2010, tThat percentage declined had increased by almost 21 percentage points. Dduring the 19902010 to 2020 timeframe, it increased by almost another 3 percentage points, to comprise 22.6% of the total consumer sales in the Kittery ESA.. **See Table 12**. For comparison purposes, the Town of Kittery accounts for approximately 4629% of the sales in the ESA.

TABLE 12

TAXABLE TOTAL CONSUMER SALES: 1990, 1995 AND 2000

(in 000s of dollars)

Year	Wells	Kittery ESA	Wells % of ESA Sales
1990	$66.194	$319.127	20.7%
1995	$79.827	$411.596	19.4%
2000	$100.695	$538.012	18.7%

Source: Maine State Planning Office, Maine Revenue Services, Report # F2R2171

TABLE 12

Taxable Consumer Sales: 2010, 2015, 2019, 2020

Year	Wells	Kittery ESA	Wells % of ESA Sales
2010	$126,491,704	$643,597,360.0	19.7%
2015	$165,102,864	$773,318,551.0	21.3%
2019	$187,308,640	$888,904,500.0	21.1%
2020	$156,570,624	$693,416,000.0	22.6%
Source: Maine Revenue Services			

Analysis

The inventory of Wells' demographics and local economy characteristics suggests the following implications for the long-range planning of the community.

Economics and Demographics

1. The household population of Wells increased steadily over the past ten years, while the surrounding region has generally been growing at a faster rate. As a result of the continuing increase in demand for residential development, the Town needs to develop strategies to properly accommodate the recent and projected levels of housing demand.

2. Wells' population has aged significantly since 1990 and is expected to continue to get older. The Town needs to continue to assess the most appropriate ways to assist and support residents choosing to age in place. ~~policies for providing services to residents of all ages.~~

~~2.~~3. Although Wells' population in households is increasing, its average household size is decreasing. There will continue to be demand for new housing units at a pace that exceeds the rate of population growth.

4. Wells seasonal population has grown substantially in the recent past and development of new seasonal and lodging units will likely continue. The Town will need to establish policies and strategies to accommodate future demand in a manner consistent with its ~~small town~~ vision.

~~3.~~5. There is interest in looking at a variety of growth management strategies that may be available to the Town during implementation of this Plan, and in understanding how other Maine communities are managing growth currently.

Local Economy

~~1. The Town can play an effective role in economic development by identifying and establishing, either through public or private ownership, additional land for industrial and manufacturing purposes. The Town should identify both large (over 50 employees) and small companies that would complement the existing business community.~~

~~2.~~1. ~~To that end, t~~The Town should consider the reactivation of an Economic Development Corporation (or Committee) whose responsibility would be to market Wells and its resources (overall community character, work force, location) to companies that would be compatible with the existing Wells environment. In general, the targeted companies should promote the concept of economic sustainability; that is a company should not adversely impact the Town's resource base by consuming too many local resources (water supply, sewerage capacity, labor supply) too quickly so as to be a detriment. The local group would "pre-qualify" companies it considers appropriate for Wells.

~~3.~~2. The Town should maintain its image and position as a family type recreation and tourist community that caters to families. In order to continue to promote the concept of a high- quality recreational community, the Town should restrict development of commercial "tourist attractions" which appeal to the transient tourist or "non-family" travelers. Wells' outstanding natural environment and proximity to cultural and recreational resources also position it well to attract more cultural and heritage tourism activity as well.

~~4.~~3. While the Town engages in the first three items, it should also help existing businesses to maintain and/or expand their operations in Wells since they provide the Town with the greatest opportunity for continued employment and tax growth. These local companies can refer others to Wells and provide "testimonials" for prospects considering the Town.

~~5.~~4. The Town should be actively involved in the programs of the Southern Maine Economic Development District (SMEDD) as they are a source of valuable information, funding and technical assistance regarding economic development activities.

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Section 2 – Fresh Water Resources

Watersheds

Wells is divided into four major watersheds, the Little River, The Webhannet, the Ogunquit and the Works. The Little River Watershed is made up of two sub-basins, the Branch Brook Watershed and the Merriland River Watershed. Similarly, the Ogunquit Watershed contains two sub-basins, the Ogunquit River Watershed and the Stevens Brook Watershed.

Watersheds and the watercourses within them represent the natural drainage pattern that carries precipitation from the land to the Atlantic Ocean. This natural drainage system can be affected adversely by the following:

- reduction in the ability to accommodate stormwater through filling, channelization or siltation; or
- creating higher than natural stormwater flows as the result of increased impervious surfaces.

The 1990 Comprehensive Plan fully describes the characteristics of each watershed. Below is an updated summary.

Little River Watershed

This watershed includes both the Branch Brook Basin and the Merriland River Basin, which drain the northern portion of Wells. ~~The~~ Branch Brook serves as the main water supply for the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District. Over the past ~~10-15~~25-30 years there has been residential development in this area. ~~There has also been a golf course approved in the Branch Brook Basin.~~ The Merriland Basin remains in low-density development, although there is continued pressure for additional residential development.

Great Works River Watershed

This watershed drains the west central portion of the Town and includes Perkins Brook and West Brook, both of which are ~~is a~~ tributaries~~y~~ of the Great Works River in North Berwick. The Heath is the headwater of this watershed. Much of the Town's gravel extraction takes place within this watershed and there continues to be new residential development.

Webhannet River Watershed

This coastal watershed drains the east central portion of Wells through Depot Brook, Blacksmith Brook and other smaller tributary watercourses. This watershed includes most of the Town's coastal marshes and is also the most intensively developed including the Route 1, Route 109 and Route 9 Corridors. The Webhannet River originates near Bear's Den Road and continues about three miles to its estuary. On its way to the estuary, the Webhannet River now flows to the south of a new residential development (built along Clubhouse Rd) and through the Old Marsh Country Club and golf course. The portion of river through the golf course contains a vegetated

buffer. ~~There is an approved but unbuilt golf course with frontage on both sides of the river.~~ Also, ~~T~~the DEP has mandated significant protection in the area near the Wells Transportation Center and where the Turnpike crosses the Crediford Brook. Over 8% of the Webhannet watershed is covered with impervious surfaces, the greatest percentage of all watersheds within Wells.

Ogunquit River Watershed

This watershed incorporates two sub-basins, the Ogunquit River and Stevens Brook, and includes Green Book and Bragdon Brook. It drains the southern portion of Wells. Much of the northerly divide is contiguous with Route 9/9B. The eastern part of the watershed is intensively developed along the Route ~~One~~ 1 Corridor, while the western portion is relatively undeveloped with a scattering of residential uses.

Surface Waters

The streams and rivers identified in the watershed section comprise the major freshwater surface waters in Wells. Hobbs Pond, an impoundment in the Merriland River, is the only sizeable pond solely within the Town. The Hobbs Pond dam is privately owned and the owner would legally be able to remove the dam, though there are no plans to do so. A second pond, Ell Pond, is smaller and straddles the Wells-Sanford town line.

As described in the previous Comprehensive Plan, the State of Maine has established a system of classifying the waters of the state into water quality classes from Class AA (the highest water quality) to Class C (the lowest water quality). Marine waters are classified into three categories from SA (the highest) to SC. Based upon this classification system, each designated water body should meet the standards for each category. ~~The Maine Department of Environmental Protection monitors water quality throughout the state. In its *State of Maine 1994 Water Quality Assessment*, (the most recent available), no streams or ponds in Wells were listed as not attaining the standards of their water quality classification.~~

In Wells there are no Class AA water bodies. The freshwater sections of the Branch Brook and Merriland River are classified as Class A, meaning they are suitable for drinking water with proper treatment. The remaining streams and rivers are classified as Class B including the Webhannet River, Depot and Blacksmith Brooks, Stevens and Bragdon Brooks, the Ogunquit River and its tributaries including Green Brook and Perkins and West Brooks and their tributaries.

All of Wells marine and estuarine waters are Class SB including the tidal portions of the Webhannet and Ogunquit Rivers and the Blacksmith, Depot, Stevens and Bragdon Brooks.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) monitors water quality throughout the state although individual towns may opt to create their own long-term water quality monitoring programs to expand upon monitoring by the DEP. Streams that are classified as threatened by the ME DEP indicate the stream unimpaired, but is subject to potential impacts of

non-point source pollution. Streams classified as impaired indicate the stream does not support its designated use due to the quality of its water.

In its *State of Maine 2016 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report*, Stevens Brook (ME0106000303_624R01, Class B) has been listed as impaired by pollutants other than those listed in 5-B through 5-D therefore requiring a TMDL (although listed as a low priority). Other impaired streams which contain unimpaired headwaters in Wells such as West Brook (North Berwick), the Ogunquit River (Ogunquit) to Webhannet River (Wells), Little River (Wells) to Cape Arundel (Kennebunkport), are listed as impaired for various reasons.

To achieve the goals of the Clean Water Act, the EPA and each state have implemented a variety of programs to establish surface water quality standards, assess the condition of water, control nonpoint source pollution, ~~regulate point source discharges~~, and protect source waters, estuaries, oceans, and wetlands. The State of Maine DEP is responsible for administering the Nonpoint Source (NPS) Priority Watersheds Program that was enacted into law in 1997 (5 MSRA 3331(7)) to develop a comprehensive watershed protection program. As part of this program in 1998 DEP conducted a Unified Watershed Assessment with the NRCS as part of the federal Clean Water Act. This assessment grouped Maine's major watersheds into four categories: Category 1—In Need of Restoration; Category II—Currently Meeting Water Quality Goals; Category III—Pristine/Sensitive Aquatic System Conditions administered by federal, state or tribal governments; or Category IV—Having Insufficient Data to Make and Assessment. The Piscataqua River Watershed, which includes the subwatersheds of Wells, has been ranked as a Category 1 Watershed in part because rivers and coastal estuaries are not attaining standards. Depot Stream, Pope Creek, and the Unnamed Stream at I-95 Exit 19 tributary to Webhannet River are all listed as threatened due to highway access-related development) (ME DEP, 2020). Highway access-related development indicates the stream is at high risk of future development within the watershed due to their proximal location to a highway exit (SMSWG, 2018).~~Specifically for Wells, although water quality standards are in attainment, the Ogunquit and Webhannet Estuaries are threatened. Based upon this designation watershed communities are eligible for funding to develop and implement watershed management programs.~~

Under the NPS Priority Watersheds program the Ogunquit and Webhannet River estuaries are priority water bodies due to elevated levels of bacteria, low dissolved oxygen, and areas closed to shellfish under certain conditions. In addition, Branch Brook is a priority stream because it is public drinking water supply that is threatened. Finally, the Great Works River below the Works River is in nonattainment and has low dissolved oxygen.

Based on US EPA funding, the Maine Healthy Beaches Program (MHB) was established to ensure that Maine's salt-water beaches remain safe and clean. Refer to the Marine Resources Appendix for information on the MHB program in Wells. ~~The program brings together communities to preform standardized monitoring of beach water quality, notifying the public if health risks are detected and educating both residents and visitors on what can be done to help keep Maine's beaches healthy. Maine has adopted the US EPA safety limit of 104 Enterococci per 100 millimeters of sample water. Enterococci is a type of bacteria which indicates fecal contamination and the possible presence of disease causing microorganisms. When bacteria levels exceed this limit, there is an increased probability of contracting illness from the water.~~

~~Wells' beaches have their water quality posted regularly on the Maine Healthy Beaches website. Beyond routine beach monitoring, MHB has supported analysis of samples collected intermittently to assess bacteria levels in sand, seaweed, and stormwater impacting Wells beaches. Each year, a report is compiled and issued to the US EPA on the state of Maine's beaches. In 2012, Wells Casino Square Beach had two advisory days, Crescent Beach had three, and Laudholm and Wells beaches each had one. Although these beaches contained swimming advisories, the water quality results did not trigger the beaches to close (ME DEP, 2018).~~

The percentage of impervious cover within a watershed may also be an indicator of expected water quality. Stormwater easily traverses impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, roadways, and parking lots and is quicky carried to adjacent surface waters rather than infiltrating into the ground. Studies have shown water quality degradation once impervious surfaces in a watershed exceed a 5-10% range (May et al., 1997; Center for Watershed Protection, 2003). Stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces can increase surface water temperature, increase sedimentation, and carry pollutants from the landscape such as bacteria, nutrients (from fertilizers and agricultural activities), and man-made substances (such as oils, greases, and soaps). Currently, all watersheds within Wells contain less than 10% impervious cover. It is noted that each stream and watershed are unique and other factors influence water quality besides sole impervious surfaces. Regardless, future development should follow low impact designs and contain stormwater management controls.

Groundwater Aquifers

Groundwater is water existing within the pore spaces of the subsurface geologic material. ~~These areas~~Areas of deep sand and gravel are geologically referred to as stratified drift deposits that are capable of yielding significant quantities of water. The highest yielding aquifers identified in Wells can produce ~~10 to 50~~over 50 gallons per minute, which are rated as good to excellent potential by the Maine Geological Survey. There approximately ~~4,977~~ 5,346 acres of ~~this category~~significant sand and gravel aquifers or ~~almost~~ just over ~~14~~11% of the Town.

The most critical aquifer area in Wells is that associated with Branch Brook, the water source for the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District. This area extends from the Sanford town line almost to the Atlantic with an apparent break slightly west of~~in~~ the Meetinghouse Road/Route 9A area. This area has regulatory protection through the Aquifer Protection Overlay District in the Town Zoning Ordinance. It is likely that this feature is hydrologically connected to the brook and maintains its year-round flow. Additional aquifer areas in Wells are along ~~Route 9~~the Wells-Sanford town line near~~, in the area along~~ Roger Bragdon Road and ~~near~~ the Sanford line in the Quarry Road/Perry Oliver Road area.
Groundwater water level is recharged through precipitation and percolation. Climate change projections for Maine indicate precipitation is increasing in both frequency and intensity (Fernandez et al., 2020). Therefore, if infiltration of stormwater can be maintained (infiltration does not occur through impervious surfaces), it is expected that groundwater levels in Maine will either be maintained or increase with all other factors set aside (i.e. withdrawal rates, evaporation of surface waters, etc.).

Private Wells

~~As of the end of 2003,~~ In June of 2021, there were a total of 3,296~~2,071~~ year-round residential accounts and 1,493 seasonal residential accounts with the KKW Water District in the Town of Wells. With about 4,789 housing units served by municipal water, ~~4,400 year-round households in Wells as of 2004 (see Section 6 for estimate),~~ this assumes there are roughly 4,197 ~~2,300~~ permanently occupied homes in the Town that are on private well systems. As of April 2020, the Bedrock Well Database, housed by the Maine Department of Agriculture Conservation & Forestry, has record of 786 domestic wells reported to the Maine Geological Survey in the Town of Wells. This dataset is built on an original survey of well drillers in the 1970s, a voluntary well driller reporting program through the mid-1980s, and the existing mandatory reporting program where well drillers submit new well information. Of the 786 reported wells, 766 are bedrock wells, 14 are gravel wells, 1 is an overburden well, and 5 are unidentified. As such, it likely undercounts the extent of private wells in the Town. Since the overwhelming majority of these private wells do not draw their water from sand and gravel aquifers, there is no Town protection of the primary water source for more than half of its households.

Public Water Systems (PWS) in Wells can source water from either surface water or groundwater resources. There are currently 20 sources of PWS in Wells that are classified as one of three types: Community, Non Community, and Non-Transient, Non Community. There are 5 community PWS, 12 Non Community PWS, and 3 Non-Transient, Non-Community PWS. The risk of each groundwater source for containing acute contaminants can be determined by following the matrix table provided in the Maine Source Water Assessment Program Final Source Assessment Report (ME CDCP, n.d.)

Groundwater in wells is maintained when the rate of recharge is equal to the rate of withdrawal. During times of drought, when recharge is low, or times of overuse, when withdrawal rates are high, groundwater levels in wells decrease. These decreases must be monitored to avoid overuse of the aquifer, especially when close to the interface of fresh and salt water. Saltwater intrusion occurs when too much freshwater is withdrawn from the aquifer, saltwater within the ground is pulled landward to fill the deficit and then supplies saltwater to the well. Wells should keep this in mind for the safety of private well owners as the possibility of saltwater intrusion may increase as sea levels continue to rise from climate change.

Analysis

Wells has many surface water and groundwater resources that need to be managed to ensure the health and safety of Wells' residents. The following observations need to be considered for recommendations and strategies to achieve the Town's goals for water resources.

1. There are several mapped sand and gravel aquifers in Wells. The most important of these are the two aquifer areas associated with Branch Brook, the Town's municipal water supply. The

Town should seriously consider if these aquifers need additional protection to preserve the quality and quantity of the groundwater. In addition, consideration should be given to proper management of the remaining aquifers.

2. Through the state's NPS program there are several threatened watersheds and associated rivers. The Town will need to consider strategies to enhance the quality of these surface water resources and to maintain the quality of the remaining surface waters. It will be necessary to minimize non-point pollution to the Town's surface waters. Wells should review the effectiveness of performance standards that control stormwater runoff and erosion in order to protect the Town's freshwater and saltwater resources.

3. Many existing homes and businesses in Wells, including a large share of recent and expected future development, are on private wells that draw water from groundwater sources that are not part of sand and gravel aquifers. The Town needs to look at ways to protect water quality and quantity on these individual systems.

4. The Ogunquit and Webhannet River estuaries have been identified by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection as priority water bodies, due to indicators that show water quality degradation. The Town needs to protect these two threatened estuaries.

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Section 3 – Critical Natural Resources

A. TOPOGRAPHY, SLOPE AND SOILS

Topography

Wells is part of the coastal plain of the New England physiographic region, which is characterized by low relief, poorly developed drainage systems and a mantle of glacial materials in the form of till and large quantities of sand and gravel. The Town rises gently and gradually from east to west. Elevations rise from sea level to approximately 360~~140~~ feet. The marsh systems along the coast within the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve are at or near mean sea level. The Tatnic Hills near the South Berwick border are the highest elevation at approximately 360 feet.

SLOPE

Slope affects the capability of land for development. The slope or steepness of the land is defined by the change of elevation over horizontal distance. For example, a ~~10 foot~~10-foot rise within 100 feet is a 10% slope. Slopes in the 3% to 8% range are generally considered to offer the fewest restrictions to development. Typically, construction costs of development increase with slope. Slopes of 0-3% may present drainage problems.

Slope is important for planning purposes for several reasons. The increase in slope corresponds to the potential increase for surface runoff and erosion. The soil depth is also thinner as slopes increase, thereby decreasing the capacity of the land to filter septic system effluent in areas that lack public sewer services. The Maine State Plumbing Code does not allow installation of septic systems on slopes greater than 20%. Private septic systems are most common within the Town of Wells, as many homes are not served by public sewer. The sewer system services coastal areas located east of the Turnpike.

In Wells, like the other coastal communities in Southern Maine, the slope is generally between 0% and 8%. The few areas with slopes steeper than 15% primarily occur along river and stream corridors, such as along Branch Brook in the northern edge of the Town, in areas around the Tatnic Hills in the northwestern area of the Town near South Berwick, or coastal waterfronts. There are approximately 1,163 acres ~~1,046 acres~~ of ~~steep~~ slopes greater than 15%, or about 3% of Wells' land area. Although these steep slope areas may present limitations, lack of adequate slope to promote proper drainage is of more concern.

SOILS

The soils in Wells have developed over time from the interaction of climate, vegetation, topography and surficial materials. Since much of the surface materials of Wells are underlain by marine clays and glacial till, many of the soils tend to be moist and/or stony with areas of ~~high water~~

high-water table, shallow ledge or ledge outcroppings. Where there is sand and gravel or stratified drift, the soils tend to be more sandy and gravelly and better drained. Hydric soils (also referred to as wetland soils) tend to be found in low spots associated with surface water features or in areas underlain by silt and clay deposits throughout the Town. Soil types are from the Soil Survey Geographic Database from the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service (spatial version 5, Sep 16, 2019). This database identifies 36 soil series in Wells. ~~derived from the *York County Soil Survey* produced by the USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in 1982. The SCS has identified over 36 soil series in Wells. In the last several years, the SCS has become the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).~~

SOIL ASSOCIATIONS

There are six general soil associations in Wells. A soil association is a group of soils or miscellaneous areas geographically associated in a characteristic repeating pattern, inventoried in the U.S. General Soil Map (last updated in 2016). ~~The general characteristics of each association are described below.~~ It should be noted that the soil associations for Wells describe very broad geographic regions that have similar soil-landscape relationships and should only be used to gain a general idea of the nature of soils and landscapes within the Town. The smallest delineation is typically several hundred acres in size and has only minimal value for making land use decisions at the T~~t~~own wide level.

1. The Ipswich-Groveton-Beaches Association, located along the coast area of Wells.
2. The Naumburg-Croghan-Adams Association, located throughout central Wells.
3. The Scantic-Lamoine-Buxton Association, located in north central Wells.
4. The Sebago-Croghan-Colton-Adams Association, located in central Wells and along the town northern border.
5. The Skerry-Lyman-Hermon Association, located on the southern border of Wells (minimally present within the Town).
6. The Tunbridge-Lyman-Abram Association, located in south central Wells.

~~1. The Adams-Colton Association consists of deep, nearly level to steep, excessively drained soils. Located primarily south of Route 109, especially along sections of Route 9 and the western corner of Town near the Sanford/North Berwick borders.~~

~~2. The soils of the Naumberg-Croghan Association have a high water table in the spring and fall, and both have rapid or very rapid permeability. The high water table and rapid permeability make groundwater contamination a major concern. These soils are interspersed throughout Wells with concentrations along Route One , the railroad and the western section of Route 109.~~

~~3. The Hermon-Lyman Association consist of shallow and deep, gently sloping to very steep, well, drained to somewhat excessively drained soils formed in glacial till. These are scattered in areas west of the Turnpike just north and south of Route 109.~~

~~4. The Scantic-Raynham-Buxton Association consists of deep, nearly level to moderately steep and hilly, poorly drained to moderately well drained soils formed in marine and lacustrine (ancient lake) sediments. These areas are west of the Turnpike and associated with areas adjacent to the Merriland River.~~

5. ~~Lyman Rock Outcrop Scantic Association. Lyman soils consists of glacial till that are shallow, gently sloping to very steep, and somewhat excessively drained. Rock outcrop consists of areas of bedrock exposures. The Scantic soils are deep, nearly level and poorly drained. The shallow depth, steep slopes, bedrock exposures, and the poor drainage of of this association limit its suitability for development with on site water supply and sewage disposal. This association tends to be located near the border with South Berwick in the Tatnic Hills area.~~
6. ~~The Sulfihemists Udipsamments Association consists of deep, level, very poorly drained soils formed in organic deposits and deep, undulating to rolling, excessively drained to moderately well drained soils that are associated with tidal marshes.~~

PRIME FARMLAND SOILS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines prime farmland as the land that is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce a sustained high yield of crops while using acceptable farming methods. Farmland of statewide importance is land for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops that does not meet criteria for prime farmland. Although potentially important for agriculture, farmland of statewide importance tends to have more limitations, such as slope or the need to be irrigated or drained in order to be suitable.

Prime farmland produces high crop yields with the least amount of external input. Prime farmland is a valuable, limited commodity not only in Wells, but in many southern Maine communities. The characteristics that make these soils suitable for agriculture also make them suitable for development.

The Town of Wells has approximately 412 acres of s~~S~~oils series rated as prime farmland soils by the Natural Resource Conservation Service of York County in Wells, includinge~~:~~ Allagash very fine sandy loam, ~~Becket fine sandy loam, Buxton silt loam, Colton bgravelly loamy coarse sand, Elmwood fine sandy loam,~~ Madawaska fine sandy loam, ~~Marlow fine sandy loam, Ondawa fine sandy loam, Peru fine sandy loam, Podunk and Winooski soils,~~ and Skerry fine sandy loam. The Town of Wells has approximately 10,520 acres of soil series rated as farmland of statewide importance, including Adams loamy sand, Allagash very fine sand loam, Buxton silt loam, Colton gravelly sand loam, Croghan loamy fine sand, Elmwood fine sandy loam, Hermon sand loam, Lyman loam, Podunk and Winooksi soils, and Scio silt loam (soils classified as both prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance are differentiated based on slope).

~~The NRCS of York County also rates farmlands of statewide and local importance that are identified in the 1991 Master Plan. Although potentially important for agriculture, they tend to have more limitations, such as slope or the need to be irrigated or drained in order to be suitable.~~

Prime farmland soils are found in small concentrations west of Route 9A in Wells Branch~~, and~~ along West Brook near Roger Bragdon ~~Road and~~Road and extending to the town line with North Berwick and Sanford. Farmland of statewide importance is also present in these areas, as well as along the costal marsh area along Route 1, and along Branch Brook in northern area of the town. ~~This same area has small concentrations of soils of statewide importance. A larger area of the~~

~~Town has~~ Naumberg ~~soils~~ sand is also present in large areas of the town, which~~that~~ can be productive, but requires draining and irrigating. This soil series is ~~ese are~~ located in the following areas—between Route 1 and the Turnpike, the Burn Mill area west of the Turnpike, along Branch Brook and near the Sanford town line.

~~Prime Forestry~~ *FORESTLAND PRODUCTIVITY BY SOILS*

The ~~Soil~~ Natural Resource Conservation Service defines prime forest land as having soils which are capable of growing wood at the economic productive growth rate for a given tree species. Forestland p~~P~~roductivity is based on the total yield of wood per hectare of mature trees and indicates the potential productivity of the soils for wood crops. The volume of wood fiber is the yield likely to be produced by the most important tree species. This volume is expressed for the most important tree species in each soil series as cubic feet per acre per year, and indicates the amount of fiber produced in a fully stocked, even-aged, unmanaged stand. In the Town of Wells, 20 soil series have forestland productivity ratings, indicating these soils have the potential productivity for wood crops. ~~Soils with a productivity rating of medium, high, or very high are considered prime forestry soils.~~ Management problems such as erosion hazard, equipment limitations, or seedling mortality are not factored in when calculating the productivity of a soil. ~~Productivity is based on the total yield of wood per hectare of mature trees.~~

~~All of the soils identified as prime farmland in Wells are also rated as prime forestry soils. The Scio soil group has the highest tree growth productivity rating of all York County soils. Much of the land in Wells consists of prime forestry soils. The exceptions include the peat soils (Biddeford mucky peat, Choeura peat, Scao mucky silt loam, Vassalboro peat and Waskish peat), beaches and very shallow soils.~~

SOIL SUITABILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT

The characteristics of an individual soil are important in determining its suitability for various types of uses. The soils in Wells have been rated by the ~~SCS~~ Natural Resource Conservation Service for suitability for development and installation of septic systems. One class of soils is highly unsuitable for either activity—hydric soils. All of the information in this section was compiled by a countywide survey and presents an incomplete picture of soil suitability. This information should therefore not be used for site planning purposes. However, it does provide the best available overview of soil suitability in Wells.

Hydric Soils

Hydric soils are soils that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part (as defined by the National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils). Hydric soils are one of the three essential characteristics of wetlands (along with hydrophytic vegetation and wetland hydrology). ~~have very similar characteristics to those wetlands as defined by the Army Corps of~~

~~Engineers. These~~ Hydric soils include all poorly and very poorly drained soils often associated with marine silts and clays including muck, peat, swamps and marshes. Within Wells, soil series classified as hydric ~~They~~ include ~~such soil types as the~~ Biddeford mucky peat, Brayton and Westbury fine sandy loams, Chocorua peat, Naumburg sand, Raynham silt loam, Rumney fine sandy loam, Saco mucky silt loam, Sebago peat, Pemaquid, Todds point, and Damariscotta soils, and ~~eantic silt loam and~~ Vassalboro peat. The water table is at or near the surface 5 to 9 months of the year. ~~Wetland soils are associated with low lying areas in Wells, such as~~Hydric soils in wells are located in the following general areas:

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- the tidal marshes east of Route One;
- large portions of the freshwater wetland area west of 9B running northerly to the railroad;
- a large portion of the area bounded by Route 9, Route 109 and Bragdon Road, including the Heath;
- the area west of the CMP right-of-way south of Route 109 and running to the Sanford town line; and
- along watercourses such as the Ogunquit River, Merriland River, Hobbs Brook, and the Little and Webhannet Rivers.

Hydric soils in Wells comprise a large portion of the Town—15,~~696~~ 997 acres or 43% of Wells. The large area of hydric soils is a major limiting factor for growth and development in Wells.

Building Site Development Suitability ~~*for Low Density Residential Development*~~

The ~~SCS~~ National Resource Conservation Service has developed a rating system for (1) dwellings and small commercial buildings, and for (2) roads and streets, shallow excavations, and lawns and landscaping ~~low density residential development suitability~~ based upon the capability of each soil type for septic systems, home construction and road/utility construction. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect building site development, such as slope, flooding, depth to saturated zone, and shrink-swell. Ratings range from "not limited" to "very limited". ~~The capability ratings are based upon the potential for environmental degradation and the costs for corrective measures and long term maintenance. Suitability is ranked from very high to very low.~~

In Wells, soil series ranked as "very limited" for dwellings and small commercial buildings include soils that are greater than 15% slope, hydric soils such as Biddeford mucky peat or Chocorua peat due to ponding, rocky soils that have short depths to bedrock such as Lyman loam, and silt-loam soils that experience shrink-swell, such as Scantic silt loam or Buxton silt loam. Soils series ranked as "very limited" for lawns and landscaping, local roads and streets, and shallow excavations include sloped land greater than 8% for shallow excavations due to unstable excavation walls, drought-likely soils for lawns and landscaping such as Adams loamy sand, soils that experience frost action for roads (many soils series experience frost action), and soils with low

depths to saturated zones. ~~there are no soils in the very high suitability class. There are some small areas in the high category, particularly between Route 109 and the Wire Road in the northwestern part of Wells and south of Branch Brook on either side of the Maine Turnpike. Most of Wells is rated as having medium suitability or very low suitability for low density residential development. The areas with medium rating tend to be non-hydric soils in the northern and central parts of the community. Low ratings occur in the areas between Routes 9 and 9A and the Ogunquit River due primarily to soils with shallow bedrock and areas with steep slopes.~~

B. WETLANDS

Wetlands are found throughout Wells. Wetlands have the ability to control erosion, store flood waters, recycle nutrients, filter pollutants, and recharge ground water. They provide open space and wildlife habitat. They are some of Maine's most productive areas, providing food and habitat for a wide variety of fish, animal and bird species.

Wetlands are defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Army Corps of Engineers (COE), and the State of Maine as:

> *Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands usually include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. (EPA, 40CFR 230.3 and COE, 33 DFR 328.3)*

Most wetlands can be identified by three characteristics—the presence of: 1) ~~hydrophitic~~hydrophytic plants, 2) hydric soils, and 3) ~~a very high water table for at least part of the year~~wetland hydrology (hydrologic characteristics of areas that are inundated or have soils saturated to the surface at some time during the growing season (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2012). Hydric soils are defined by the ~~NRCS~~ National Technical Committee for Hydric Soils as soils that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part.~~poorly and very poorly drained soils~~. Wetlands also have water present at or near the surface for one week or more during the growing season. Wetlands perform valuable natural functions and should be considered a severe constraint to development.

TYPES OF WETLANDS

Note: The wetland types have been updated to reflect those identified in the Wells GIS map.

There are a number of types of wetlands in Wells. Although there are several wetland classification systems, the State of Maine has identified and mapped wetlands through the National Wetland Inventory, which includes the Town of Wells. Under this system the most common types of wetlands in Wells are:

Wetland Type	Area (acres)
Estuarine and Marine Deepwater	9,884*
Estuarine and Marine Wetland	1,837
Freshwater Emergent Wetland	357
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	6,849
Total**	**18,927**
**Estuarine and marine deepwater wetland acreage includes ocean deepwater classified as wetland, which includes coastal ocean waters within the Wells town boundary that extends approximately three miles from the inland boundary.*	
**This table does not include freshwater pond, riverine, or lake wetland types, which are included in the National Wetland Inventory but are discussed in the Surface Waters section of this appendix.*	

~~*Palustrine*~~ *Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland*

Freshwater Forested and Shrub Wetlands include palustrine forested and palustrine shrub wetlands, and can be characterized generally as woody wetlands, forested swamps, and shrub bogs. Comprising approximately 6,849 acres within Wells, t~~T~~his category is ~~by far~~ the largest in Wells, and is found throughout the town, and in large areas between the turnpike and south of Route 109 and north of Route 9B. More specifically, palustrine forested wetlands ~~These~~ are wooded swamps that generally occur along sluggish streams, on flat uplands, and in shallow lake basins or potholes. Tree species common in Maine's wooded swamps include tamarack, arborvitae, black spruce, balsam fir, red maple, and black ash. The floor of coniferous swamps usually have a thick carpeting of mosses. Deciduous swamps often support duckweeds, smartweeds, and other herbaceous vegetation. ~~These areas tend to be located south of Route 109 between the Maine Turnpike and the Sanford town line.~~ The palustrine shrub wetland type is usually characterized by dense growth of alders, winterberry, highbush blueberry and species of viburnum. Shrub swamps occur primarily along sluggish streams, or as inclusions within forested wetlands. Alder and dogwood predominate in the drier areas; willow, buttonbush, and sweet gale characterize wetter sites.

~~*Palustrine*~~ *Freshwater Emergent Wetland*

Freshwater emergent wetlands are herbaceous marsh, fen, swale, or wet meadow wetlands, and include p~~P~~alustrine wetlands. There are approximately 357 acres of freshwater emergent wetlands in the Town of Wells. More specifically, palustrine emergent wetlands are non-tidal marshes characterized as non-woody plants that may be at least temporarily flooded at the base. Bulrushes and sedges are examples of this type of vegetation. ~~Much smaller in area they~~Palustrine emergent marshes tend to be adjacent to the palustrine forested wetlands.

~~*Palustrine Scrub Shrub*~~

~~This wetland type is usually characterized by dense growth of alders, winterberry, highbush blueberry and species of viburnum. Shrub swamps occur primarily along sluggish streams, or as inclusions within forested wetlands. Alder and dogwood predominate in the drier areas; willow, buttonbush, and sweet gale characterize wetter sites. There is a large area in the He~~

Estuarine and Marine Wetland

Estuarine and Marine Wetland includes vegetated and non-vegetated brackish and saltwater marsh, shrubs, beach, bar, shoal, and flat wetland type. There are approximately 1,837 acres of estuarine and marine wetland within Wells, located east of Route One. This wetland type is dominated by salt marsh and is an extremely productive ecosystem. These marshes are generally flat with often intricate drainage channels and creeks, lined by small cliffs or ridges and dotted with pools and salt pannes. The marshes provide a high quality habitat for many species of birds including migratory raptors, shorebirds, wading birds, gulls, terns and ducks.

Estuarine and Marine Deepwater Wetlands

Estuarine and Marine Deepwater wetlands are open water estuary, bay, sound, or open ocean wetlands. Within the Town of Wells, there are approximately 9,884 acres of this wetland type. This includes ocean deepwater classified as wetland, which includes coastal ocean waters within the Wells town boundary that extends approximately three miles from the inland boundary. Eelgrass meadows form in marine and estuarine coastal aquatic areas and provide and important habitat for juvenile fish, invertebrates, and settlement of some shellfish larvae. Eelgrass is not currently mapped in Wells.

~~This wetland type is dominated by salt marsh and is an extremely productive ecosystem. These marshes are generally flat with often intricate drainage channels and creeks, lined by small cliffs or ridges and dotted with pools and salt pannes. The marshes provide a high quality habitat for many species of birds including migratory raptors, shorebirds, wading birds, gulls, terns and ducks. In Wells these wetlands are located east of Route 1.~~

WETLANDS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Wetlands of special significance include: any coastal wetland or wetland within 250 of a coastal wetland, a wetland within 250 feet of a great pond, a wetland with at least 20,000 square feet of aquatic marsh vegetation or open water, a wetland located within 100-year flood zone, or a wetland that contains significant wildlife habitat, any wetland part of peatlands not previously mined, and any wetland within 25 feet of a river, brook, or stream.

Within the Town of Wells, mapped wetlands with characteristics of Wetlands of Special Significance include:

- The town's extensive coastal wetlands, including the approximately 1,343 acres of estuarine and marine wetlands located within between the coast and Route 1.
- Approximately 3,193 acres of wetland within the 100-year flood zone, located primarily within the coastal wetlands east of Route 1 and within the large wetland complex between Route 9 and Bragdon Road, between Bald Hill Road and the Sandford town border, and in the wetland complex in the upper reaches of the Webhannet River.
- Wetland areas within Wells that co-occur with mapped significant wildlife habitat including candidate deer wintering areas, inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat, shorebird

areas, tidal waterfowl and wading bird habitats, significant vernal pools, and other valuable wetland habitat for wildlife.

In Maine, wetlands and other natural resources are regulated under the Natural Resources Protection Act [38 MRSA, Sec. 480-A-S] and the State's Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act). Thise Natural Resources Protection Actact, which is administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP), also regulates activities in or adjacent to surface water bodies, coastal sand dunes, significant wildlife habitat and fragile mountain areas. The level of regulation is based upon the amount of the resource area that may be impacted by any given activity—the more the impact, the higher level of regulatory review and scrutiny. At present, the Town has identified certain large wetland areas as part of its Resource Protection District and defined them in the Land Use Ordinance for purpose of regulation. A more thorough documentation of wetland location, type and value would provide the basis for a more systematic approach to wetland management and protection.

THREATS TO WETLANDS

In addition to their value for flood storage, wildlife habitat and groundwater recharge, wetlands also filter pollutants and sediment from the environment. However, their filtering capacities can be exceeded. Pollution and sediments that discharge into productive wetlands or estuaries can have an adverse impact on habitat and shellfish beds. Since wetlands are often part of a larger ecosystem, if their functional values are impacted, the effect may be felt in other parts of the ecosystem. In Wells, coastal flooding, sea level rise, failing septic systems, storm water from impervious surfaces and non-point pollution from roads, parking lots, lawns, and fields pose the greatest threat to wetlands.

Coastal Flooding and Sea Level Rise

Coastal flooding heavily impacts tidal wetland systems and freshwater wetlands. Estuarine wetlands, marine wetlands, and adjacent freshwater wetlands will be increasingly impacted by coastal flooding as there is increased daily tidal flooding of tidal marsh systems. Increased flooding may reduce Well's extensive coastal marsh system's flood storage capacity during storm events, which may be partially offset by inundation of freshwater wetlands.

Changes in daily tidal condition and seasonal high tides from sea level rise will also affect the stability of marsh systems and their ability to sustain surface elevations that keep pace with rising water levels. Marsh systems can either disappear under rising sea levels or migrate inland, or both. In developed areas where there is no space for natural habitat to retreat or migrate inland,

marshes may disappear. With the exception of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge Upper Wells Division, the coastal marsh system in Wells is in close proximity to development and built landscapes such as roads, buildings, and utilities that will prevent the marsh system from migrating inwards.

High water levels from sea level rise will drown salt marshes, convert salt marshes into mudflats, and convert mudflats into subtidal zones. Sedimentation from storms may affect habitat that lies behind beaches and smother shellfish beds. Saltwater intrusion may change freshwater wetlands to brackish wetlands, which may impact the surrounding habitat as well as the Webhannet River, Pope Creek, Depot Brook, and Blacksmith Brook that outlet into the estuary. Changes in salinity will affect coastal plants and animals. Furthermore, changing water levels may impact where fish and waterfowl breed. Along with sea level rise, groundwater levels will rise and cause freshwater inundation at topographic low points that are currently dry.

Furthermore, wetlands provide a wealth of habitat that may be compromised by coastal flooding. Habitat and species loss in wetlands and marsh systems due to coastal flooding will likely be greater in developed areas where there is no space for natural habitat to retreat or migrate inland. Hardened structures built to defend buildings will alter natural systems and prevent habitat and species from migrating inward, affecting near shore ecosystems. For example, dunes will disappear when they do not have a natural path to retreat, and rare species such as Piping Plover may be affected by habitat loss. Sea level rise will also alter the function of coastal habitats such as salt marshes and estuaries, habitat availability, and timing of nesting and migration for seabirds.

C. SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES HABITAT

The availability of ~~high quality~~high-quality habitat for fish and wildlife is essential to maintaining an abundant and diverse population for both ecological and sporting purposes. Wells has a number of areas that offer quality habitat for a variety of species. ~~The previous Master Plan identified four types of habitat area including riparian habitat, wetlands and waterfowl wintering habitat, deer wintering areas and nongame habitat. The plan also identified locations for each of these habitat types that are located in **Appendix B**.~~

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) is responsible for assessing the value of, and monitoring, wildlife habitats in Wells. IF&W has identified areas of special concern because of their importance as wildlife and fish habitat and as recreational resources. The Maine DEP is responsible for regulating activity in or adjacent to areas that contain significant wildlife habitat..~~1~~

Beginning with Habitat (BwH), a collaborative program of federal, state, and local agencies and non-governmental organizations, is a habitat-based approach to conserving wildlife and plant habitat on a landscape scale. The goal of the program is to maintain sufficient habitat to support all native plant and animal species currently breeding in Maine.

SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE HABITAT~~S~~

The State of Maine has two programs for the direct protection of wildlife habitat—the Natural Resources Protection Act (38 MRSA, Sec. 480-A-S) and Maine Endangered Species Act (MESA, 12 MSRA, Sec. 7751-7758). ~~Wells does not have any upland areas characterized as "Essential" Wildlife Habitat under MESA. Such habitats are considered critical for the survival of Endangered and/or Threatened species.~~ Wells has Essential Wildlife Habitat that are currently or historically providing habitat essential to the conservation of endangered or threatened species as directed by MESA. Mapped Essential Wildlife Habitat within Wells includes approximately 181 acres of Piping Plover habitat, located in the coastal areas of the town at the mouth of the Little River and Laudholm Beach, as well as at Ogunquit Beach and the mouth of the Ogunquit River.

~~However,~~ The Town of Wells also has~~does have~~ Significant Wildlife Habitats, as defined by the Natural Resource Protection Act, including:

- habitats for State or Federally listed Endangered and/or Threatened species;
- high and moderate value deer wintering areas and travel corridors;
- high and moderate value waterfowl and wading bird habitats, including nesting and feeding areas;
- shorebird nesting, feeding, and staging areas;
- significant vernal pools; and
- shellfish areas

These are further described below.

1. *Habitat for State or Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened Species*
This includes~~ese are~~ habitats for Endangered or Threatened Species, other than bald eagle, ~~nesting sites and~~ roseate tern, piping plover, and least tern nesting areas that are ~~singled out for separate protection~~identified as "Essential" Wildlife Habitat", discussed above. Habitat for Endangered and Threatened Species within Wells ~~Such areas~~ include the coastal marsh system east of Route 1, areas where Stevens Brook, and Bragdon Brook enter the coastal marsh system in the southeast area of Wells, the area between Green Brook and the South Berwick town border in the southwest of Wells, Ogunquit River, Ogunquit Beach ~~(Piping Plover and Least Tern)~~, Laudholm Beach and the Little River Area in the northeast of Wells, ~~(Piping Plover and Least Tern)~~ and the Wells Beach/Drakes Island Beach ~~Plover Nesting~~ a~~A~~rea.

2. *Deer Wintering Areas*
During the winter months deer herds tend to migrate to wintering yards that are typically composed of softwood forests. Deer Wintering Areas in Wells are located in the four following areas of Wells:
    - northwest of Bald Hill at the Sanford town line;
    - along the Webhannet River between the railroad and Route 9B west of the Turnpike;
    - The Heath bounded by Bragdon Road, Swamp John Road, Route 9, and Route 109; and
    - in the Coles Hill Road area parallel to the Turnpike.

- ~~Their locations and approximate sizes are shown in the attached map. IF&W has not rated the habitat value of these yards.~~

3. *Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat*

Waterfowl habitat includes areas used for breeding, migration, and wintering. Nesting habitat includes dense, emergent, herbaceous or shrubby cover for seclusion, concealment, and protections from predation. The Natural Resources Protection Act identifies both inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat and tidal waterfowl and wading bird habitat as Significant Wildlife Habitat. Inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat includes freshwater breeding, migration, feeding, and wintering waterfowl or wading bird habitat and documented habitat locations are mapped by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Mapped areas are present in Wells in the wetland area of West Brook between Quarry Road and Bragdon Road, off of Bragdon Road adjacent to Sherridge Lane, and in a wetland complex between Hiltons Lane and Green Road. There are approximately 360 acres of inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat within the Town of Wells.

Tidal waterfowl and wading bird habitat includes breeding, migrating/staging, or wintering areas for coastal waterfowl or breeding, feeding, loafing, migrating, or roosting areas for coastal wading birds, and documented habitat locations are mapped by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Tidal waterfowl and wading bird habitats include aquatic beds, eelgrass, emergent wetlands, mudflats, seaweed communities, and reefs. Within Wells, there are approximately 3,951 mapped acres of tidal waterfowl and wading bird habitat, located in the coastal marshes east of Route 1 and along the coastline. ~~Wells has two wetland areas classified as "Significant" Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat both of which are located in the waters area of West Brook between the CMP right-of-way and Quarry Road. They are located primarily in palustrine scrub shrub and palustrine emergent wetlands as classified in the National Wetlands Inventory. IF&W has not rated the value of these habitats as moderate.~~

4. *Shorebird Nesting, Feeding and Staging Areas*

Shorebirds are a closely related group of species including sandpipers, plovers and dowitchers. Shorebird habitat includes coastal staging areas that provide feeding habitat like tidal mud flats or roosting habitat like gravel bars or sand spits for migrating shorebirds. Documented habitat locations are mapped by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. In Wells, mapped Shorebird areas are located along the coastline, including at along Moody and Ogunquit Beach, Wells Beach, Wells Beach South near Fisherman's Cove, Laudholm Beach, and the Webhannet River salt marsh pannes adjacent to Harbor Road. There are approximately 316 acres of identified shorebird areas within the Town of Wells.

5. *Significant Vernal Pools*

Vernal pools are characterized by a pool or depression used for breeding by amphibians and other indicator species and 250 feet of critical terrestrial terrain beyond the spring or fall high water mark. These vernal pools lack predatory fish and a permanently flowing inlet or outlet and are of natural origin. There are 21 mapped significant vernal pools within the Town of Wells, all of which are located inland of Route 1. The majority of the

mapped pools are located in the northern area of the town, in the general vicinity of Branch Brook, Hobbs Brook, and the upper Merriland River.

6. *Shellfish Areas*
Shellfish areas include softshell and hard clam resources and are presently mapped in Wells estuary where the Webhannet River, Pope Creek, Depot Brook, and Blacksmith Brook outlet into estuarine waters. Shellfish areas are also mapped on the coastline off of Moody Beach and Drakes Island Beach. Section 4, Marine Resources, provides additional information on shellfishing areas.

~~COASTAL WILDLIFE CONCENTRATION AREAS~~NATURAL RESOURCE CO-OCCURRENCE

The co-occurrence of natural resources represents the concentration of selected environmental asset data layers overlaid on the Town of Wells. The purpose is to highlight relative conservation values which can aid in planning efforts. Natural resource layers accounted for include rare and exemplary natural communities, rare plants, endangered species, significant wildlife habitat, riparian zone and water resources, and undeveloped habitat blocks. Areas within Wells that are valued highest in co-occurrence of natural resources, generally indicating high natural resource value, include (but ~~is~~are not limited to):

- The coastal marsh system east of Route 1
- The outlet and associated marsh system of the Little River along the Wells town boundary with Kennebunk
- The Heath, located between Route 9, Route 109, and Bragdon Road,
- The Wells Barrens, located in the north of Wells adjacent to the Kennebunk Plains.

~~IF&W conducts periodic resource inventories for marine wildlife along Maine's shoreline. These areas offer an abundance of food and protection from weather and predator, often supporting a large number of marine birds and seals. While these areas are not "Significant Wildlife Habitats" per se, they may contain within their boundaries designated or candidate Essential Habitats and/or Significant Wildlife Habitats.~~

~~The abundance and diversity of species using these concentration areas is an indicator of an area's value to wildlife. Areas of significance are ranked into three classes: Class A (very high species abundance or diversity or importance to federal or state listed Endangered or Threatened species); Class B (high species abundance or diversity, species of regional significance); and Class C (moderate species abundance or diversity).~~

~~In Wells there are four Class A areas including Little River/Crescent Surf Beach, the Webhannet River, Ogunquit/Moody Beaches and the Ogunquit River. There are three Class B areas — Drake's Island Beach, Fisherman's Cove and Wells Beach. Bibb Rock is the only Class C area.~~

~~Other~~ *HABITAT BLOCKS AND EXEMPLARY NATURAL COMMUNITIES*~~s~~

Habitat Blocks

Within Wells, there are approximately 20,637 acres of undeveloped habitat spread over 60 blocks of land. Undeveloped habitat blocks are considered land outside of a 250-500 foot buffer around roads and developed areas. Undeveloped natural areas are likely to provide core habitat blocks that provide relatively undisturbed habitat conditions required by many of Maine's species.

~~The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has mapped "Important Fish and Wildlife Habitats in Southern Maine." Forty-three endangered species were included in the study. All are migrating birds or fish. The species included in the mapping have seriously reduced populations on a national, Gulf of Maine watershed, or State of Maine basis. Habitats mapped include areas that historically have been used by a species, as well as areas identified through a comprehensive screening process that have high habitat values for a given species.~~

~~Areas of Wells identified on a composite map of high value habitat for the 43 species include significant contiguous acreage and the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. The high value habitat areas are closely associated with wetlands in these areas.~~

~~Unique Natural Areas~~*Rare Plants and Exemplary Natural Communities*

The Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP), a program of the Maine Department of Conservation, maintains information on the status and location of rare plants and exemplary natural communities in Maine. Because of the rarity and sensitive nature of many of the plants and natural communities the MNAP keeps records on, information on the location of the resources is general in nature. MNAP encourages landowners considering development in areas identified as containing rare plants to check with MNAP for more specific site locations, or to conduct a field survey. In many instances, the plant or community will not be present where the development is contemplated, or the proposed development will not impact habitat and no change of plans will be necessary.

MNAP ranks the rarity of a plant or natural community on a scale of 1 to 5 (based on the frequency of sightings or occurrences), on both a state and global basis with 1 being the ~~most rare~~ rarest and consisted critically imperiled in Maine. ~~Plants or communities that have obtained status as an endangered or threatened species at either the state or federal level are also noted.~~ Within t~~T~~he Town of Wells, rare plants ranked as 1 include the Beach Plum, Chestnut Oak, Dwarf Glasswort, Flowering Dogwood, Hair Boneset, Indian Grass, Northern Blazing Star, Pitch Pine, Sandplain Grassland, White-topped aster, and Wild Coffee. Plants or communities that have obtained status as an endangered or threatened species at either the state or federal level are also noted. Within Wells, this includes American Sea-bite, Beach plum, Blunt-loved grapefern, Chestnut Oak, Creeping Spike-moss, Flowering Dogwood, Hairy Boneset, Indian Grass, ~~has a~~

~~number of plants in these categories including the Pale Green Orchis, Sweet Peeper Bush, Small Red Grass, Slender Blue Flag,~~ Northern Blazing ~~Star,~~ Star, Slender Blue Flag, Spotted Winter-green, Spreading Sedge, Summer Grape, Upright Bindweed, White-topped Aster, and Wildlife Coffee. ~~Spicebush, Hollow Joe Pyeweed, Saltmarsh False Foxglove, and Dwarf Glasswort. See attached Inland Fisheries and Wildlife map.~~

Rare plants and exemplary natural communities are located throughout Wells, especially in the coastal marsh system east of Route 1, the Heath, and the Wells Barrens. ~~All of the plants and natural communities identified above that have varying degrees of rarity in Maine are considered "demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure globally."~~

~~*Perkins Cove/Mousam River Heritage Coastal Area*~~
~~The Maine Coastal Program has identified locations along the coast of Maine that represent significant areas of coastal heritage. In Wells Perkins Cove/Mousam River area extends from Ogunquit River to the Little River. The 1991 Comprehensive Plan documents the scenic, historical and natural phenomena that constitute this heritage area that incorporates large areas of the Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.~~

Focus Areas of Statewide Ecological Significance
Focus areas of statewide ecological significance have been designated based on exceptionally rich concentrations of rare species and natural communities and high quality common natural communities, significant wildlife habitats, and their intersection with large blocks of undeveloped habitat. These non-regulatory areas were identified by MNAP and the IF&W biologists and are intended to draw attention to these special places and for use as a planning tool for landowners, conservation entities, and towns. Focus areas, unlike some other habitat values, are tied to specific environmental settings and are not geographically transferable. They warrant place-specific conservation attention through a variety of methods ranging from conservation land acquisition to focused implementation of best management practices. There are three Focus Areas in Wells:

- The Wells and Ogunquit Marsh system is the second largest salt marsh complex in Maine, and includes large areas of undisturbed habitat that supports rare and exemplary natural communities. In addition, it is home to several rare, threatened, and endangered species.
- The Kennebunk Plains and Wells Barrens in northwestern Wells is a unique barrens complex that was formed by the melting glaciers about 14,000 years ago. This area supports high-quality examples of natural communities including sandplain grassland, pitch pine-scrub oak barrens, pitch pine-heath barrens, and red maple alluvial swamp forests.
- Mount Agamenticus in southern Wells is one of the largest remaining expanses of undeveloped forests in coastal New England. The uplands and wetlands around Mt. Agamenticus are home to 12 animal species and 21 plant species considered rare in Maine.

D. SCENIC AND COASTAL AREAS

Scenic and Coastal Areas are described in two other places in the Inventory:
- Section 4, Marine Resources
- Section 8, Land Use

E. FLOOD HAZARDS

Please see Section E: Flood Hazards to view information on flood hazards facing Wells.

Analysis

Wells is blessed with an abundance of natural resources of high value. To maintain the ecological integrity of such resources and to ensure the health and safety of Wells residents, these resources need to be managed in a manner that maintains or enhances their natural value.. The following observations need to be considered for recommendations and strategies to achieve the Town's goals for natural resources.

1. Much of the coastal area and low-lying uplands are susceptible to flooding. Although most of these areas are in the Resource Protection Zone, the Town should continually reexamine its need to take urgent climate resiliency measures, such as the use of living shorelines to protect beaches, marshes, and coastal development from erosion and flooding, land conservation adjacent to marshes, residential development buyback programs, and strengthening of the town's Floodplain Ordinance to strengthen the resiliency of vulnerable areas and buildings.

~~1.~~2. Wells is a growing coastal community with poorly drained topography. As a result of this conflicting situation, there has been substantial development in the Town's wetlands, some of which has occurred on large wetlands. The town should continually revisit their Resource Protection Zone and Shoreland Overlay Zones to ensure the appropriate protection of the town's wetland resources. Wetland restoration efforts should be prioritized and undertaken where the opportunity arises. ~~Although the Town has a Natural Resource Protection Zone additional regulation should be considered in order to provide appropriate protection of these resourcesMuch of the coastal area and low-lying uplands are susceptible to flooding. Although these areas are in the Resource Protection Zone, the Town needs to reexamine the recommendations of the Flood Hazard Plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update.~~

3. Wells has an abundance of wildlife and fishery resources in the tidal marshes, beaches/dunes and harbor area. Much of this area is protected through state and federal ownership and management. In addition, there are several significant wildlife habitats in the upland area of the community associated with large wetland areas, ~~or~~ valuable forest stands, ~~—~~waterfowl habitat and deer wintering yards. The Wells Ogunquit Marsh system,

Kennebunk Plains and Wells Barrens, and Mount Agamenticus area extending into southern Wells have been identified as Focus Areas of Statewide ecological Significance through by MNAP and IF&W. These focus areas should continue to be protected. In addition, h~~H~~aving contiguous parcels of undeveloped land is critical for maintaining Wells' biological diversity. Some of these areas are zoned resource protection and covered by Shoreland Zoning, but beyond these protections, undeveloped habitat block protection should be a priority for land conservation efforts.~~.~~

~~2.~~4. The Town should protect the ~~long term~~long-term viability of other resources that are not currently protected from indirect and direct impacts of climate change human impacts.

~~3.~~5. The Town contains a number of rare plant and exemplary natural communities~~. These are in a number of locations~~ throughout the community. The Town should protect these resources.

~~4.~~6. Data from the ~~York County~~Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey show that Wells has many areas that are not necessarily suitable for development. There are several large, contiguous areas with limiting factors and there are no high suitability locations within the town. However, the county's data may miss some smaller suitable areas for development and are not detailed enough to be used for site planning purposes.

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22. Maine Floodplain Management Program

Section 4 – Marine Resources

Major Marine Resource Areas

The coastal region can be viewed as eight distinct areas with differing characteristics.

1. Laudholm Beach

This area runs from the Little River south towards Drakes Island. The area consists of an undeveloped sand beach which is state property that is incorporated into the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve. Between the Laudholm Beach and the marsh area behind the Little River are coastal sand dunes. Much of the frontal dune and back dune were identified as erosion hazards area by the 2011 Maine geological Survey dune mapping, indicating the dunes may become part of the coastal wetland system in the next 100 years due to long or short term erosion, flooding, or after a two-foot rise in sea level (Maine Geological Survey).

2. Drakes Island

This area runs southerly from Laudholm Beach to the Webhannet River. The area is a barrier sand dune that has been extensively developed with single-family homes. All of the frontal dune and part of the back dune identified behind Drakes Island Beach are identified as erosion hazard areas by the 2011 Maine Geological Survey.

3. Wells Beach

This area runs from the Webhannet River to Moody Point. This area is also a barrier sand dune between Wells Beach and the Webhannet River estuary. It has been extensively developed with residential homes. All of the frontal dune and the majority of the back dune are identified as erosion hazard areas by the 2011 Maine Geological Survey. In the Casino Square area, there is substantial commercial use, including motels, restaurants, and retail stores.

4. Moody Point

A rocky headland, this point separates Wells Beach and Moody Beach. It is the only area of shorefront not characterized by sand beaches. Moody Point is extensively developed with residential structures.

5. Moody Beach

Extending from Moody Point to the Ogunquit town line, this area is a barrier beach and dune that

has been extensively developed with residential structures. All of the frontal dune and part of the back dune are identified as erosion hazard areas by the 2011 Maine Geological Survey.

6. Webhannet Estuary

This area is an extensive salt marsh, which lies behind Drakes Island and Wells Beach. The Webhannet River watershed drains into the Webhannet estuary (refer to Appendix Section 2 – Fresh Water Resources for additional information). The salt marsh area itself is undeveloped, and much of it is owned by the federal government as part of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge ~~that is now~~which is further incorporated into the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve. The Webhannet Estuary salt marsh is bordered by development on east, south, and western edges. The northern edge is adjacent to the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge Upper Wells Division.

7. Wells Harbor

This area is an upland area on the west side of the Webhannet River with an adjacent mooring basin and dredged channel in the Webhannet to the outlet between Drakes Island and Wells Beach. The upland area consists of a marina, restaurant, boat launch, parking areas, and related service and storage areas.

8. Ogunquit River Estuary

This area is an extensive salt marsh located in southern Wells bordering the Town of Ogunquit. The salt marsh lies~~ying~~ behind a barrier beach and dune system that includes Moody Point and Moody Beach. The salt marsh area is undeveloped, but is bordered by development along Moody Beach and inland by residential properties extending off of Route 1. ~~and m~~Much of ~~it~~ the Ogunquit River Estuary is owned by the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge and is incorporated into the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan

Question: ~~Is the committee knowledgeable of any recent updates to the Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan?~~The Wells Bay Management Plan has not been updated since 2001, so w~~W~~e recommend slimming this section down. ~~as there does not appear to be a more recent Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan. The 2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan identifies and discusses many of the goals discussed below. If an update to the Wells Bay Regional Management Plan takes place in the future, we~~ recommend Wells participates.

Relevant highlights from this plan have been included in the "Harbor Facilities" and "Beaches" sections. The 2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan identifies and discusses many of the goals discussed below and is more up to date.

In 2002, the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission completed a planning study to assess the beach and dune resources of Wells Bay and to determine what measures may be appropriate to manage and protect these resources. This study was part of the State of Maine initiative to improve beach resources statewide. The study produced a regional beach management plan for Wells and Kennebunk that proposed both regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms for beach and dune management, including maintaining existing beaches in Wells Bay, studying the effects of the Wells Harbor jetties, pursuing beach nourishment activities, clarifying conflicts between state sand dune rules and local shoreland zoning standards, clarifying rules regarding movement of sand from accreting areas to eroding areas, and ensuring the existing sand dune areas are protected during construction activities. ~~. The Towns of Ogunquit and Kennebunkport, which also abut Wells Bay, declined to participate in the study.~~

Some of the ~~above~~ actions identified in the 2002 planning effort have been ~~are being~~ taken at the state level, including ~~:~~ the Maine Geological Survey ~~continues to map~~mapping erosion rates for Maine's beaches. In addition, the ~~,~~ Wells Bay beaches have been nourished with dredge material from the harbor, and sand dune rules changes enacted in 2003 have taken place to address outstanding issues, in accordance with the Maine Natural Resources Protection Act. ~~The sand dune rules changes enacted in 2003 did, in fact, follow the recommendations made in the Wells~~

~~Bay plan.~~
~~The plan put forth five key recommendations:~~
~~• Maintain existing beaches in Wells Bay~~

- Study effects of Wells Harbor jetties and pursue beach nourishment activities as appropriate
- Clarify conflicts between state sand dune rules and local shoreland zoning standards
- Clarify rules regarding movement of sand from accreting areas to eroding areas
- Ensure that existing dune areas are protected during construction activities

Based on these recommendations, the plan called for 12 specific actions by the towns under three major categories (Natural/Geological Resources, Sand Dune Regulation and Economic Impact). These actions are as follows:

Natural/Geological Resources

1. Create GIS database of coastal resources in Wells Bay
2. Develop cooperative management agreement for bird habitat in Kennebunk
3. Increase shellfish habitat
4. Study impact of modifications to Wells Bay jetties
5. Nourish Wells Bay beaches

Sand Dune Regulation

1. Create Wells Bay Advisory Committee
2. Develop consistent standards for shoreland zoning
3. Amend Sand Dune rules to protect resources during construction activity
4. Develop GIS-based program for assessing sand dune permits

Economic Impact

1. Conduct economic impact study of Wells Bay beaches
2. Develop economic indicators for Wells Bay region
3. Develop and administer regional beach management fund

Some of the above actions are being taken at the state level: the Maine Geological Survey continues to map erosion rates for Maine's beaches, Wells Bay beaches have been nourished with dredge material from the harbor, and sand dune rules changes have taken place to address outstanding issues, in accordance with the Maine Natural Resources Protection Act. The sand dune rules changes enacted in 2003 did, in fact, follow the recommendations made in the Wells Bay plan.

However, little progress has been made locally to date. The recommendations of this plan should be considered for inclusion by reference in this Comprehensive Plan.

Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve

The Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (WNERR) is located on the southern Maine coast and comprises 2,250 acres of upland fields and forests, riparian areas, salt marshes, dunes, beaches, and submerged lands within the Little River Watershed, the Webhannet River watershed, and the Ogunquit River watershed. Conserved land within the WNERR is owned by the Town of Wells, the
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry,

and the Wells Reserve Management Authority. The protected lands lie on the eastern edge of Wells and extend into Kennebunk on the North and Ogunquit on the south. The Wells Reserve allows public access to its grounds and facilities for environmental education, outdoor recreation, and scientific research. More than 30,000 visitors use the Reserve annually.

The Wells Reserve works to address pressing local and regional management issues in line with the priorities of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (WNERR Management Plan 2019- 2024). Current issues include:

- Climate change and its impact on coastal ecosystems and communities
- Development pressures,
- Land use change impacts on coastal habitats, and
- Water quality degradation.

~~Water Dependent Uses~~

~~The major water dependent use at this time is the marina, associated facilities, and mooring area located at Wells Harbor. This is the only marine service facility in Wells, the only boat launch capable of handling commercial vessels, which attracts roughly 3,000 boaters a year, and the only mooring area in Wells for both commercial and pleasure boats.~~

~~Ideally, the harbor has the capacity for about 150 moorings.~~ ~~There are currently 150 moorings in Wells Harbor and all are in use. There is, as of July 2019,s presently a waiting list for moorings with 2380 people on it, an indication of the strong demand for recreational boating in Wells.~~

~~Commercial fishing is also of importance at Wells Harbor, especially with the growing charter boat industry which continues to draw in visitors. As of the *2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan*, there are 15 commercial charter boats operating out of Wells Harbor for fishing and sightseeing activities. Also of commercial significance is the lobster industry, for which boats are operating full time in Wells. This number is up substantially from a few years ago, due in large part to dredging of the harbor (see below) and to a newly rebuilt boat ramp.~~

~~Of the 150 moorings, 17 are used by commercial vessels and 133 by pleasure boats. In 1990 there were over 35 commercial boats and about 100 pleasure boats, and a third of the commercial boats were used by tuna fishermen. Today, all of the commercial boats are used for lobstering, thus showing how marine industries in Wells are challenged.~~

~~There are no significant marine related businesses in Wells except at the marina. There are a number of lobster pounds, including Inness on Route One, Forbes on the Mile Road, LordHobbs Harborside's at the Harbor, and Lord's at Wells Beach.~~

~~There are no other significant water dependent uses in Wells due to the nature of the area. It is unlikely that there will be water dependent use in Wells Harbor, although the Town and the~~

~~Department of Marine Resources are working to restore clam beds for recreational shellfish harvesting.~~

Harbor Facilities

Wells Harbor is the only harbor facility in Wells and is the most suitable location for a harbor due to the protection provided by the barrier dunes on the eastern edge of Wells. ~~and is the only area suitable for this use.~~ The Town of Wells operates the harbor area, which contains a private marina leased from the Town, restaurants, and the Wells Harbor Community Park.

In 1961, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers carried out a harbor improvement program, which consisted of constructing two jetties at the mouth of the Webhannet River and the dredging of the navigation channel and mooring basin. With these improvements came the development of the current marina facilities and expanded mooring capabilities.

Since the original dredging, the mooring basin and channel experienced shoaling. The controlling depth of the channel deteriorated to only 4 feet to day beacon "5" and 1 foot beyond it. At low tide, much of the mooring basin was exposed. In addition, shoaling was occurring near the entrance to the harbor, and swells were reported to break in this area even in moderate seas. However, after many years of negotiations, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Town have completed routine maintenance dredging to reestablish the channel and mooring basin. The immediate effect of the dredging ~~is~~ was that more than 40 moorings have been replaced and the harbor is again operating at its full capacity. Dredging of the harbor occurred again in 1991, 1996, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2005, and 2012, 2014, and 2020. The dredged sand from the channel has led to beach nourishment on Drakes Island beaches and Wells Beach and the increased ability for the public to access the beaches. For instance, in 2018, the Town and the Wells Reserve were able to construct an ~~1/2 mile~~ accessibility trail roughly a half-mile in length ~~in 2018~~ behind the jetties, located on ~~as a result of~~ the upland area built up by ~~from~~ the dredge spoils (WNERR Management Plan, 2019-2024). The 2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan states that research on the ecological impacts of dredging and the effects of "denaturalizing" on beach erosion should be continued in partnership with WNERR, the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, and others.

Wells Harbor can moor 150 vessels with lengths up to 42 feet, and offers gas, diesel fuel, ice, ~~and~~ water~~,~~; and ~~there are~~ dumpster facilities. Typically, approximately 75% of the moorings and slips are allocated to recreational users. The marina's marine railway can handle boats up to forty feet. Some engine repairs and service are available. There are no transient moorings, but short-term tie-up is available at the Town floats.

The 2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan was written to expand and build off the 1991 Wells Harbor Plan and establish priorities and outline strategies to address key elements including marketing, land use surrounding the harbor, harbor facilities and infrastructure, harbor economy and sustainability, commercial fishing, shellfish and aquaculture, recreational boating, natural areas, beach erosion, and dredging. The plan was developed with assistance from the Wells Harbor Committee, Town Staff, and community outreach. The following overarching goals have been identified for ~~the Town of~~ Wells Harbor:

- Balance additional development of the Harbor with its inherent constraints, both natural (marshes, habitat, sensitive plants and wildlife) and built (access roads, limited

upland area), in order to minimize negative environmental impacts.

- Generate revenue from commercial and recreational use of the Harbor to offset the need for investments in support of the goals of the Harbor Plan. Seek federal, ~~and~~ state, ~~as well as~~ private, and nonprofit/foundation funds to support implementation of the Plan.
- Treat Harbor planning as a continuous process.

The Wells Harbor Advisory Committee meets monthly to discuss Harbor issues such as moorings, dredging activities, clamming, oversite of the Harbor Management Plan, and maintenance of the waterfront area. ~~developed plans to upgrade the harbor areas and this led to a new public boat ramp (built by the state) and a plan to rebuild the fish locker that was approved at the 2004 Town Meeting.~~ Development has expanded parking and low-intensity recreation uses at the harbor. These facilities are adequate to meet projected demand for access. The Town does not presently charge for parking at Wells Harbor.

~~**Question: Has any further progress been made on pursuing a Wells Harbor Pedestrian Bridge? If so, we should include it here. If not, would the committee like to keep this information?**~~

~~In 2013, a Wells Harbor Pedestrian Bridge Feasibilty study was conducted to assess the feasibility of providing a connection between the Wells Harbor and Eastern Shore beach to provide a connection between these two sides for pedestrians. Currently, to reach the eastern shore from the western shore, a five mile trip is required that can take up to 40 minutes during the height of tourist season. The study identified bridge design criteria, cost considerations, regulatory considerations, and economic considerations.~~

Beaches

~~The Town of~~ Wells has many beaches, including Laudholm Beach, Drakes Island Beach, Wells Beach, Crescent Beach, and Moody Beach. Though the beaches have been historically well supplied with sand, there have been several notable ~~impacts~~activities that have had impacts to beach sand supplies,~~es~~ including dredging, installation of jetties, and private sea walls. As noted in the 2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan, Wells Beach and Drakes Island Beach have been supplied with sand from harbor dredging. The installation of jetties at the harbor entrance in the early 1960s has impacted the Drakes Island Beach and Wells Beach by eroding sand at the points of the beaches that ~~is~~are fa~~u~~rthers from the jetty and accumulating sand on both sides of the jetties. Private seawalls influence beach erosion by enhancing the scouring effect on the sand, causing the beach to narrow and the beach profile become steeper.

Wells Beach Management Agreement

The Town of Wells, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and Maine Audubon developed a Beach Management Agreement for the Town of Wells for 2018-2021. The Beach Management Agreement is intended to help the Town of Wells protect piping plover nesting and foraging areas in state designated esssential habitat for piping plovers on Wells and Drakes Island Beaches.

Recreation and Public Access

The major use of the coastal area has been for recreation since the late 1800s. This situation ~~was~~has been complicated by the ~~recent~~ 1989 Supreme Court decision with respect to Moody Beach (Bell v.

Town of Wells, 1989). The decision determined that the beach and intertidal areas in this section of the shorefront are private property with limited rights of public access. In 2021, a class action lawsuit was filed that challenges the 1989 decision regarding the public's access to Maine ~~B~~beaches. The lawsuit aims to overturn the 1989 decision and reclaim some private beach areas for public access.

As a result, p~~P~~ublic access to Moody Beach ~~is restricted as a result of the recent court decisions.~~ Access for the public is restricted to a number of Town -owned rights-of-way. There is a public parking lot along Ocean Ave near the Wells-Ogunquit town line which serves both communities. The Town is currently pursuing a number of possibilities to secure limited public access to Moody Beach. A community center is located at Moody Beach and is operated by the beach association.

Access to Laudholm Beach is available through the Wells Estuarine Research Reserve and State land. The Wells Reserve has identified the goal of improving access to trails for people with disabilities. In addition, the Wells Reserve has identified the public access challenge of controlling dogs on Laudholm ~~b~~Beach during shorebird nesting season. ~~At present the Reserve and the state have no plans to further develop the area for improved beach access.~~

Access to Drakes Island Beach is unrestricted. There are a number of public rights-of-way to the beach and two parking lots.

Access to Wells Beach is also unrestricted. There is public access to the beach at Casino Square and at a number of public rights-of-way. Public parking is available in Casino Square, at two parking lots ~~off of~~on ~~in a parking lot on~~ Mile Road, and at a large lot at the northern end of Atlantic Avenue. ~~A new private parking facility is being developed on Gold Ribbon Drive to expand available parking.~~

Public access to Crescent ~~b~~Beach is available on Gold Ribbon Drive. Access to Harbor Beach is available from the Riverside Habor Park.
~~Public access to Moody Beach is restricted as a result of the recent court decisions. Access for the public is restricted to a number of Town owned rights-of-way. There is a public parking lot near the Wells-Ogunquit town line which serves both communities. The Town is currently pursuing a number of possibilities to secure limited public access to Moody Beach. A community center is located at Moody Beach and is operated by the beach association.~~

Public access is also provided at Wells Harbor. This area provides the only ~~salt water~~saltwater boating access in ~~the Town~~Wells. The Town owns this facility, which provides low intensity and passive recreation for both residents and tourists. The 2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan identified several goals relevant to the continuation of public access to the Wells Harbor facilities and infrastructure, including to continue to maintain and support the Wells Boat Launch for both motorized and non-motorized public boat access to the water, support and plan for capital improvement and maintenance of the pier, floating dock, and other boat facilities, and investigate how sea level rise may impact the Wells Harbor facilities and infrastructure. ~~The Town and Wells National Estuarine Research Center are considering the construction of a clam research center and educational facility at this location.~~

Along with the boating access at Wells Harbor, Harbor Park is also a place for recreational use.

Managed under the Harbor Management Plan, this area provides recreational activities such as

swimming, picnic areas, a playground, vendors, community events, and concerts (2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan).

Water Quality and Wells' Beaches

Funded by the US EPA, the Maine Healthy Beaches Program (MHB) was established to ensure that Maine's salt-water beaches remain safe and clean. The program brings together communities to perform standardized monitoring of beach water quality, notifying the public if health risks are detected, and educating both residents and visitors on what can be done to help keep Maine's beaches healthy. Maine's US EPA-approved single sample maximum safety threshold (or Beach Action Value-BAV) is 104 Enterococci bacteria per 100 milliliters of sample water. Enterococci is a type of bacteria which indicates fecal contamination and the possible presence of disease-causing microorganisms. When Enterococci bacteria levels exceed the saftey threshold, there is an increased probability of contracting illness from the water.

Wells' beaches are monitored at least ~~1x~~once per week from Memorial Day to Labor Day. When wate r quality results are available, they are posted on the Maine Healthy Beaches website (www.mainehealthybeaches.org). Each year, a report is compiled and issued to the US EPA detailing water quality conditions for Maine's participating beaches (ME DEP, 2020). There are currently six beaches in Wells monitored through the Maine Healthy Beaches program ~~and those include~~: Casino Square, Crescent Beach, Drakes Island Beach, Laudholm Beach, Wells Beach, and Wells Harbor Laudholm Beach is monitored and managed by the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (WNERR), and the remaining Wells beaches are monitored and managed by the Town of Wells.
Between 2013 and 2020. 62 samples (including all six participating beaches)exceeded Maine's single sample safety threshold of 104 Enterococci bacteria per 100 milliliters.During this time frame, there were four exceedances at Casino Square, one exceedance at Crescent Beach, 12 exceedances at Drakes Island Beach, 14 exceedances at Laudholm Beach, 13 exceedances at Wells Beach, and 18 exceedances at Wells Harbor (Table 1) (Maine Healthy Beaches, 2021).

Table 1. Summary of Enterococci bacteria exceedances for the six participating beaches in Wells from 2013-2020. An exceedance is defined as any sample with results greater than or equal to 104 Enterococci bacteira per 100 millileters of sample water.

Beach	Number of Bacteria Exceedances, by year								
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Sum
Casino Square	4								4
Crescent Beach			1						1
Drakes Island Beach	7	1	2		1		1		12
Laudholm Beach	5			2		2	3	2	14
Wells Beach	5	4	4						13
Wells Harbor	10	4		1		1	2		18

Advisories and closures are based on bacteria exceedances, as well as, other factors including environmental conditions, risk of pollution, historical water quality, and other known safety hazards (Maine Healthy Beaches Factsheet, 2021). Each participating town/park designates a Beach Manager who consults with the MHB program to make informed decisions when issuing public notifications (advisories or closures) at a beach.The decision to post notifications ultimately rests with the designated beach manager and not with Maine Healthy Beaches or Maine DEP. ~~Since~~Because advisories are voluntary and dependent on multiple factors, they are not an accurate measure of water quality. Contamination advisories are issued based on bacteria monitoring results and preempetive.

Section 5 -- Transportation and Circulation

Introduction

In the Transportation and Circulation Chapter of the ~~1990~~ 2005 Comprehensive Plan, there was a discussion of the following issues. These issues remain relevant in ~~2004~~2021.

1. The role of US Route 1 both as an arterial and as the principal local business street in the Town and what level of improvements would be acceptable.

2. Relief from the congestion on US Route 1 and provision of improved north – south movement.

3. Maintenance of the carrying capacity of state and local roadways.

4. Improvement of problem intersections on US Route 1.

5. Additional access to the Maine Turnpike in order to serve vehicles destined for the southern section of Wells and Ogunquit. This would reduce traffic on US Route 1.

6. Opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle travel in all areas of Town.

7. Improved public transportation alternatives to serve ~~the eastern and coastal areas~~areas all of Wells.

8. Upgrade of the collector road network in order to address safety and capacity issues.

Since the 1990 and 2005 Comprehensive Plans ~~was~~ were developed, a number of opportunities for alternative transportation modes have expanded or become available. Specifically, the Wells Transportation Center was constructed at the Maine Turnpike Interchange, Amtrak reinstated passenger rail service between Portland and Boston with a stop in Wells at the Transportation Center, park-and-ride capacity was expanded, the ~~Wells~~ Shoreline Explorer Trolley has continued to serve summer travelers, construction of the Eastern Trail (which traverses Wells) began, a Sidewalk Committee was appointed, and a Sidewalk Development Plan produced. Still, the Town recognizes that the state and local road system provide the framework for the bulk of the transportation in, through, and out of Wells. Major Maine Department of Transportation road improvement projects that have occurred since 2005 occurred at the following locations:

- Route 1/109 intersection
- Chapel Rd./Route 109 intersection
- Route 109 widening
- Chapel Rd./Route 1 intersection
- Route 109/9A intersection

- Other light improvements on Route 9B, Wells Plaza and Mile Rd, and the Exit 19 lane change.

The Town's roadway system ranges from rural country-type roads to the six-lane Maine Turnpike,which serves as Maine's gateway from the Boston metropolitan area and the eastern United States.The Maine Turnpike is a heavily traveled highway, especially during the ten- week summer touristseason from late June through Labor Day. The local road system experiences similar seasonal demands while the year-round population and travel activity in southern Maine continues to rise.

There are a variety of demands placed on the Town's roadway system, such as regional growth and economic factors that are beyond the control of the Town of Wells and local economic activity and population growth. Historically, the Town's economy was based on natural resource-based industries such as recreation and tourism, fishing, agriculture, silviculture and wood products.

Although the economy has shifted and the recreation and tourism sector has become a major component of the localeconomy, there is still significant transportation demand for the Town roadway system. Wells is now home to several larger companies and institutions such as ~~Spencer Press,~~ Shaw's Distribution Center, United Parcel Service, York County Community College, and many small specialty and tourist related businesses. Wells can also expect additional traffic demand from relatively small professional and technical businesses. The ~~2000~~ 2019 Census data identified Management/Professional/Related and Sales/Office occupations as continuing to ~~comprising~~ comprise over ~~6064~~% of the workforce in Wells, higher than the York County average.

A larger share of traffic in Wells is due to residents of Wells and other towns that use the Town's roadways to commute to jobs outside of Wells. In ~~2000~~2019, only ~~26~~17.5% of the ~~4,686~~ Wells commuters worked within the Town's boundaries, ~~meaning that about 3,500 people commute out of Wells each day~~ this represents a continued reduction since 1990 when 37.5% of Wells residents worked in the community. Additionally, residents of many nearby communities such as Sanford, North Berwick and SouthBerwick, must pass through Wells in order to reach the Maine Turnpike.

The Town's attractive and lengthy sandy beaches along with the scenic and recreational value of Wells Bay make the community very inviting for summer tourists with middle level income. The rural nature of the community with its access to major highways makes Wells attractive to year- round residents. As the year-round and seasonal population continues to increase, Wells will need torespond to the changing demands by providing a well-managed and balanced transportation system.

Regional Transportation Planning

A community's transportation and circulation system needs to be considered in a multi-community orregional context since no individual mode could function in a single community. Wells has traditionally participated in the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT's) Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) process. The role of the RTAC is to solicit and provide MDOT with public input into the statewide planning process. Individual towns are not specifically represented in the RTAC membership, although there is a general municipal representation on the committee. The RTAC does not make project-specific recommendations. In order for the Town of Wells to ensure that state and regional transportation planning officials are aware of the Town's transportation deficiencies and

needs, it responds to MaineDOT's biennial

project solicitation letter. Every two years, MDOT updates its Six Year Plan. At that time, community requests for state and federally funded transportation projects are made. The RTAC hosts public hearings on the Draft Six- Year Plan and participates in updates to MaineDOT policy objectives. Current initiatives include the dual train station platform project, and the Eastern Trail extension.

The dual train station platform project, also known as the Wells Area Improvement Project, includes the construction of a new platform for northbound and southbound passenger trains, a pedestrian bridge, and a six-mile extension to existing passing siding at Wells Station. This project will improve reliability and schedule flexibility of both the Downeaster and Pan Am Railways trains. These capacity improvements will expand service to a 6th daily Downeaster round-trip between Wells and Brunswick, Maine. The project funding for these improvements totals nearly
$23 million dollars.

The Eastern Trail extension will add an additional 19 miles resulting in a total of 25 miles of off- road trail connecting 7 communities in the most densely populated region in the state (Cumberland and York Counties). Wells has been a strong supporter of expanding the trail. The Town and other nearby communities have provided the matching funds required for the Private Public Partnership program, and received funding from Maine DOT to cover much of the route's existing conditions survey.

This extension will promote trail-associated economic development in York and Cumberland Counties by providing a safe and scenic transportation and recreation corridor between towns that promotes regional cooperation in economic and tourism development plans. Based on the 2018 ETA Economic Impact Study data, over 251,000 annual visitors visited 22 miles of the off-road Eastern Trail, contributing $3M to the local economy.

~~One example of an effective method to incorporate regional issues in local transportation planning is to participate in a Corridor Committee. In November 2003, the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC) convened a Route 109 Corridor Committee with~~ representatives ~~from the towns of Wells and Sanford and the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT). Early in the process, the need to determine whether or not the road would be able to meet the mobility needs of the anticipated future economic and residential activity in the region was identified. If not, it was recognized that other transportation options will need to be identified since there are a number of significant limits to increasing the capacity of Route 109 by widening, including historical properties,funding constraints, conservation land, and the desire to retain rural~~ character in the residential zones.Also, impacts to existing and future residents of the corridor can ~~be considered in the Corridor Planning process as the two communities promote and plan for commercial and industrial development at the ends of the study area. Another item under discussion at the Corridor Committee level includes the likely increase of heavy vehicle traffic along Route 109 and potentially other routesas a result of the expansion of industrial uses currently encouraged in both Sanford and Wells.~~

~~The Corridor Committee is regularly updated on the design of the reconstruction of just over 4 miles of Route 109 between the Maine Turnpike and the High Pine area. Construction is~~ expected ~~to begin in 2005or 2006. In general, the design will include widening to two 12 foot lanes and 8 foot shoulders, minor adjustments to the horizontal and vertical alignments to improve driving~~ sight distance and meet AASHTO safety standards, and extensive

reconstruction of the road base. Two left-turn lanes are also included. The first is a northbound left-turn lane onto Roger Bragdon Road. The design incorporates a bypass lane northbound at Roger Bragdon Road. The second is a

southbound left-turn lane onto Lindsey Road. The design incorporates a 10-foot wide passing shoulder at the Lindsey Road intersection.

This roadway continues to have increased traffic volumes. Just east of the Maine Turnpike interchange (Exit 19 - formerly Exit 2), the 2002 Average Annualized Daily Traffic (AADT) was 18,610, an increaseof 6,000 vehicles since 1991. Also, there are three high crash locations along Route 109 in Wells: the Route 9/109 intersection; the Route 9A/109 intersection, and the section of Route 109 between Bragdon Road and Meetinghouse Road. The town is very concerned that Route 109 retain its rural character and that any designs be consistent with the *Route 109/9 Corridor Study* completed and adopted as an element to this Comprehensive Plan in January, 2000. That study designates the High Pine area for residential andlimited business use and Route 109 north of High Pine to the Sanford Town Line as rural. Between Route1 and the Turnpike, a Town Center is envisioned.

Access Management

The Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) adopted a set of access management rules in2002 in response to the enactment of An Act to Ensure Cost Effective and Safe Highways in the State by the Legislature in 2000, which addressed arterial capacity, poor drainage, and the high number of driveway-related crashes. The rules regulate sight distance, corner clearance, spacing, width, setbacks, parking, drainage, and mitigation requirements. In order to obtain a permit from MaineDOT, any new or changed driveway or entrance on state and state-aid highways located ***outside urban compact areas*** must meet specifications described in the rules.

The rules can be viewed in detail at http://www.state.me.us/mdot/planning/bureauweb/accesslinks.htm.

The rules are organized into a four-tier system with regulation of driveways and entrances increasingfor roads with higher mobility importance and poorer safety records. The following are the designations for the highway network in Wells:

1. Basic Safety Standards apply to all state and state-aid roads. (non-urban compact portionsof Route 9, Route 9A, Route 9B, Route 109, and US Route 1)2. Major Collector and Arterial Standards provide more detailed design standards for entrances onto major collector and arterial roads. Entrances are accesses that serve 50 or trips per day. (non-urban compact portions of Route 9, Route 109, and US Route 1)
3. Mobility corridors connect service centers and/or urban compact areas and carry at least5000 vehicles per day along at least 50% of the corridor's length. (non-urban compact portions of Route 9 west of Route 109, Route 109 north of Route 9, and US Route 1)
4. Retrograde arterials are mobility corridors where the number of crashes related to a driveway or entrance exceeds the statewide average for arterials with the same posted speed. (non-urban compact portion of Route 9 between Boyd Road and Route 109; non-urban compact portion of Route 109 between Route 9 and El Velvel Circle; and approximately ½ mile of US Route 1 just

   south of the Kennebunk Town Line)

The rules *do limit access* to assure safety and preserve mobility on state highways. Since this

~~Comprehensive Plan and the Central Area Development Plan focus growth largely within the urban compact area (where the access management rules do not apply), it does not appear that this conflict between the rules and local growth planning is currently an issue in Wells.~~

However, access management is needed within and outside the Urban Compact. In 2010 the Central York County Connections Study was started to identify a series of recommendations designed to preserve or enhance transportation connections between central York County and US Route 1 and the Maine Turnpike. Access management is an important aspect of this Study and the 2016 Technical Memo specifically addresses the "Role of Land Use and Access Management in Managing the Transportation System" and can be found at: https://www.maine.gov/mdot/planning/docs/cycc/chpt4.pdf

~~However, the need to strengthen access management along Route 109 has been discussed in detail bythe Route 109 Corridor Committee. At the time of this writing, the Committee was discussing the potential for a consistent curb cut permitting process between Route 4 in Sanford and Chapel Road inWells. Additionally, the Committee was discussing the potential need to preserve right-of- way (ROW) to allow for additional capacity, possibly in the form of service roads in areas where commercial development is anticipated. Also, the committee discussed the opportunity to consistently regulate sign and building design. Developing a Route 109 Mobility Plan and/or adopting a consistent set of access management rules is anticipated.~~

~~Central Area Development Plan~~

~~The Central Area Development Plan, prepared by Wilbur Smith Associates for the Town in (what year?), conceptualized a Town Center for Wells. As part of that plan, new streets were recommended to create an interconnected street network to serve the new Center. However, the need to create a no Master Plan for the envisioned grid system was noted by MaineDOT in order to identify the impactto the existing highway networkwas ever created, and some of the parcels identified at that time have changed hands and been developed~~

State and Local Functional Classification

The functional classification system identifies roadways according to the service they provide in the highway network. The system allows the user to understand how individual roads and streets relate tothe highway network as a whole. The classification system provides a procedure for the long-term management and development of the state~~'s~~ and local roadway network. For the purpose of highway planning and maintenance, the Maine Department of Transportation has classified highways and roads in Wells for state and federal aid requirements. The Town of Wells has modified the classification to fit its own roadway planning and maintenance programs. In general, the two systemsare consistent with each other. Of the approximately ~~136.2~~ 152 miles of public roads in the Town of Wells, approximately ~~90~~ 109 miles are local roads.

Arterials

Arterial highways, as designated by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT), are intendedto provide a high degree of mobility by being able to handle large volumes of traffic

and to serve individuals and commercial operations for longer trips. Arterials connect major

economic activity centers such as southern York County with the greater Portland area. Arterials are capable of handling between 10,000 and 30,000 vehicles per day.

MDOT has further subdivided arterials into:

- Principal arterial - interstate highways
- Other freeways and expressways
- Other principal arterial
- Minor arterial

Collectors

Collector roads link the arterial highways with local roads and roadways serving residential neighborhoods. Collector roadways are so located as to conveniently manage local roads traffic andtypically have two travel lanes and ~~six to eight foot~~six-to-eight-foot shoulders with the capacity to handle 8,000 to 10,000 vehicles per day.

Local Roads

Local roads are designed to provide direct access to abutting properties, usually residential or low- impact commercial. They are relatively short and discontinuous in order to limit the traffic volume. Local roads have two travel lanes and may have a parking lane. Traffic volumes are low, normally under a 1,000 vehicles per day.

MAINE DOT FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

The functional classification system extends only to those roadways that have state and/or federal designation as a collector level or higher. Wells' current roadway network consists of the following MDOT functional classification designations:

Arterials

- Principal Arterials – I – 95 (Maine Turnpike)
- Other Freeways and Expressways – none
- Other Principal Arterials – Maine Route 109
- Minor Arterials – US Route 1; Maine Routes 4 and 9; Maine Route 109/9 (between I – 95and US Route 1)

Collectors

- Major Collectors – Maine Route 9A (from Maine Route 109 to the Kennebunk Town Line;Maine Route 9B (from Maine Route 9 to Route 1)
- Minor Collectors – Bragdon Road

PRIVATE ROADS

48 miles of roadway in Wells are considered private roads. The State of Maine defines a private road as a "privately owned road over which neither the municipality nor the general public has the right to pass by vehicle or on foot." The Town cannot use public funds to maintain or repair private roadways.

WELLS FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Using traffic volumes and local knowledge of roadway function, the Wells Public Works Department has developed a five-tier approach for the classification of roadways for which it is responsible. See Table 13. While some of these roadways are state highways, when they fall in the urban compact area and ~~consequently,~~ the Town is responsible for their maintenance.

Table 13
Town of Wells
Road Classification System

Level	Type of usage	Example
1	State arterials	US Route 1; Portions of Routes 9. 109. 9B
2	Town arterials	Mile Road
3	Collectors	Bourne Ave., Atlantic Ave.
4	Local	Furbush Road
5	Private	

Source: Town of Wells Streets & Sidewalks Ordinance (Chapter 201 of Town Code)

~~The Town's street ordinance has defined a specific type of roads serving developments: boulevards. The adopted definition of boulevard is: "A local street consisting of at least two approximately parallel travel lanes (at least one in each direction) and lanes connecting the travel lanes, separated bya landscaped median strip at least ten feet wide, providing access to lots in a residential subdivision."As of 2004, there has only been one such boulevard constructed in Wells, and the Town has considered amending or doing away with this road category.~~

Roadway Maintenance ~~Policy~~

The Town's Public Works Department has completed an ~~Road Surface Management Program using amodel prepared by the Maine Department of Transportation in cooperation with the University of Maine. This document provides guidance to local officials and is a useful tool in establishing priorities for road reconstruction, rehabilitation and resurfacing. Funds have not always been available to implement the Road Surface Management Program.~~ automated pavement condition assessment with assistance from Street Scan in 2018. The pavement condition index ranges from 0 to 100 with higher ratings considered better. The target range is a rating of 70-80 and the town-wide average for Wells is a Pavement Condition Index of 77. This data helps the Town create a maintenance plan, and it has been documented that preserving good pavement costs less over time than waiting for major repair or reconstruction efforts.

Complete Streets and Green Streets

The MaineDOT is working to accommodate the needs of all modes of travel in the planning, programming, design, rehabilitation, maintenance, and construction of the state's transportation system. The MaineDOT Complete Streets Policy; developed in 2013 and 2014, formally approved in June 2014, and revised in July 2019 outlines how MaineDOT and its project partners will consider the needs of all users when planning and developing projects. The Town

of Wells can work toward a

similar goal through the adoption of a Complete Streets Policy. Complete Streets policies have a foundation in federal law, guidance, and best practices, and have been signed into law or policy in states and communities throughout the nation. The intent of this policy is to help ensure that all users of Maine's transportation system including bicyclists, pedestrians, people of all ages and abilities, transit users, and motor vehicle users, have safe and efficient access to the transportation system.
This is accomplished through Complete Street Designs that incorporate infrastructure such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, separated facilities, transit stops, and ADA-accessible routes as critical elements of the transportation system.

If a Complete Streets Policy is adopted in Wells the community should consider adding a Green Streets provision. A Green Street is a policy and design approach that incorporates vegetation (perennials, shrubs, trees), soil, and engineered systems (e.g., permeable pavements) to slow, filter, and cleanse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., streets, sidewalks). Green streets are designed to capture rainwater at its source, where rain falls. Whereas, a traditional street is designed to direct stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces into storm sewer systems (gutters, drains, pipes) that discharge directly into surface waters, rivers, and streams. Many additional benefits are realized by Green Streets including reduced heat island effect, replenished groundwater supplies, carbon absorption, improved air quality and neighborhood aesthetics, and green connections between parks and open spaces. These improvements also improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, and calm traffic.

Traffic Volumes

The ~~Maine Department of Transportation (~~MaineDO~~T~~) conducts traffic counts on a periodic basis.Historically, traffic patterns and the resulting volumes have peaks (i.e. morning / afternoon commutes and weekends) and valleys (mid-day and late evening / early morning). Maine DOT hasconverted the traffic data into Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, which provide a uniform basis for the evaluation of traffic volumes and averages out the seasonal highs and lows that occur in Wells.

Because of its strategic location as a desirable summer beach resort, state highways and local roadways in Wells carry a significant amount of traffic. However, this traffic volume does vary seasonally. According to ~~T~~the Maine Turnpike, ~~also referred to as~~who manage I – 95, there is a noticeable difference in total monthly vehicle counts at Exit 19 in January versus July. In January of 2018, 2019, and 2020 the monthly traffic volume at Exit 19 ranged from 218,000 vehicles to 241,000 vehicles. In July of 2018 Exit 19 recorded 419,000 vehicles, and in July of 2019 425,000 vehicles. This seasonal spike decreased to 323,000 vehicles in July of 2020 due to the realities of the Covid-19 Pandemic. ~~is the heaviest traveled road in Town with a 1997 AADT of 32,000 vehicles. In 1997, the AADT along US Route 1 ranged between 10,000 and 18,000 vehicles. The maximum recorded AADT of 18,000 vehicles was south of Mile Road; these travelers were destined for Atlantic Avenue and WellsBeach. Traffic along US Route 1 is concentrated between Furbush Road and the intersection of Maine Route 9 / 109.~~ Because of the averaging of the traffic data, the state and local roadway network carries significantly more traffic in summer and less in the late fall, winter and early spring. ~~The following is a sampling of traffic volumes from 10 traffic recording locations.~~

Table 14
Town of Wells - Traffic Volumes
Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)

Wells Station	Location	1992	1995	2000
010	US Route 1 South of Mile Road	14,680	18,080	17,880
016	US Route 1 North of Furbush Rd		13,680	15,760
007	US Route 1 South ofRoute 9/109	14,310		14,630
001	US Route 1 Southwest of Route 9	10,720		12,540
608	Route 9/109 Southeast of Route 9	12,660	13,280	15,200
608	Route 9 Southwest of Route 9/109	4,940	5,320	6,320
014	Route 9B West of US Route 1	3,810	3,220	4,040
612	Route 109 Southeast of Wire Rd	5,820	6,860	7,850
010	Mile Road East of US Route 1		8,770	6,770
611	Meeting House Road West of Route 9A		500	670

Source: 1997 & 2001 Maine Transportation Count Books, MaineDOT

It is interesting to note that these ten traffic count locations in Wells have experienced a leveling off or decrease in daily traffic volumes. While other sections of Routes 9, 109, and local roads have experienced a levelling off or increase in traffic volumes. This could represent a re-distribution of traffic in Wells as development continues and as drivers make an effort to avoid congested roadways at key times.

LOCATION	Year					
	2000	2005	2010	2013	2016	2019
US 1 S/O MILE RD	24493	24794	22745	24385	-	21918
US 1 N/O FURBISH RD	25842	-	-	-	-	20724
US 1 (POST RD) S/O SR 9/109 (SANFORD RD)	19000	21711	-	19383	-	18020
US 1/SR 9 (POST RD) SW/O SR 9 (PORT RD)	15109	15701	14594	14147	-	15219
SR 9/109(SANFORD) SE/O SR 9(N BERWICK)	17268	-	18352	-	20049	-
SR 9(N BERWICK) SW/O SR 9/109(SANFORD)	7187	8276	7931	7761	9132	9537
SR 9B (LITTLEFIELD RD) W/O US 1(POST RD)	4810	5118	-	5820	3866	-
SR 109 (SANFORD RD) SE/O WIRE RD	9230	10096	8618	8291	8137	-
MEETING HOUSE RD W/O SR 9A (BRANCH RD)	756	817	788	-	935	-
MILE RD E/O US 1	10578	11429	7984	10156	-	10891

**blank years indicate that no count was taken that year.*

~~Of the ten locations sampled above, seven stations experienced a 15% increase or greater:~~

- ~~US Route 1 South of Mile Road - 22% increase from 1992 to 2000;~~
- ~~US Route 1 North of Furbush Road - 15% increase from 1995 to 2000;~~
- ~~US Route 1 Southwest of Route 9 - 17% increase from 1992 to 2000;~~
- ~~Route 9/109 Southeast of Route 9 - 20% increase from 1992 to 2000;~~
- ~~Route 9 Southwest of Route 9/109 - 28% increase from 1992 to 2000;~~
- ~~Route 109 Southeast of Wire Road - 35% increase from 1992 to 1997; and~~
- ~~Meetinghouse Road West of Route 9A - 34% increase from 1995 to 2000.~~

Vehicle Crashes

Maine Department of Transportation vehicle crash data and provided the 2011-2021 data in the table below. The number of crashes reported per year in Wells appears to be trending upward with the exception of 2020 when traffic volumes were lower overall, and in 2021 this only accounts for the first half of the year.

Total Number of Vehicle Crashes by Year in Wells

Year	Number of Crashes
2011	289
2012	268
2013	284
2014	316
2015	310
2016	319
2017	309
2018	313
2019	343
2020	245
2021	156
Total	**3152**

The Maine Department of Transportation's *High Crash Location Listing* for the years ~~2000-2002~~2010-2020 identified ~~nine~~ six high crash locations in the Town of Wells. To be designated a high crash location, the intersection or road segment must experience at least eight accidents within a ~~three year~~three-year period and have a critical rating factor (CRF) of greater than 1.00. The CRF is the actual crash rate divided by the expected crash rate. A CRF greater than 1.00 indicates that the road segment or intersection has more vehicle crashes than would be expected. Table ~~15~~ _____ provides the crash data for these ~~nine~~ six locations in Wells, and indicates in which years they were identified as having high numbers of vehicle crashes.

High Crash Locations by Intersection

Years	Intersection Location	Total Crashes	Percent Injury	Fatalaties	Injuries
2010-2012	Int of CHAPEL RD and POST RD	39	25.6	0	11
2010-2012	Int of BRANCH RD, CREDIFORD RD, and SANFORD RD	17	35.3	0	7
2012-2014	Int of CHAPEL RD and POST RD	37	24.3	0	13
2012-2014	Int of GARDEN ST, N BERWICK RD, and SANFORD RD	11	18.2	0	2

2012-2014	Int of BRANCH RD, CREDIFORD RD, and SANFORD RD	13	30.8	0	5
2014-2016	Int of WELLS PLAZA ENTRANCE and POST RD	25	20	0	6

2014-2016	Int of CHAPEL RD and POST RD	40	20	0	9
2014-2016	Int of GARDEN ST, N BERWICK RD, SANFORD RD	12	25	0	4
2014-2016	Int of BRANCH RD, CREDIFORD RD, SANFORD RD	21	38.1	0	11
2016-2018	Int of ELDRIDGE RD and POST RD	9	22.2	0	3
2016-2018	Int of CHAPEL RD and POST RD	21	23.8	0	6
2016-2018	Int of BRANCH RD, CREDIFORD RD, and SANFORD RD	14	7.1	0	1
2016-2018	Int of HARBOR RD and POST RD	10	40	0	7
2018-2020	Int of GARDEN ST, N BERWICK RD, and SANFORD RD	16	18.8	0	3
2018-2020	Int of BRANCH RD, CREDIFORD RD, and SANFORD RD	19	21.1	0	6
2018-2020	Int of HARBOR RD and POST RD	9	33.3	0	5

Table 15
Town of Wells
High Crash Locations 2000-2002

Location	Total Crashes	Critical Rate Factor	Percentage w/ injuries
US Route 1/Chapel Road	22	2.70	23%
Route 9/Chapel Road	13	1.87	15%
Route 9/ Route 109/Garden St	11	2.00	36%
Route 9A/Route 109	8	2.00	12 %
I-95 North/Ramp D (Off)	9	2.12	11%
US 1, North of Buzzell Rd	13	1.09	15%
US 1, near Route 9/109	15	1.00	27%
Route 109 (Bragdon -Meetinghouse)	8	2.29	25%
I-95 North On-Ramp	15	1.45	40%

Source. Maine DOT, High Crash Location Listing 2000-2002.

~~These nine locations recorded a total of 114 accidents during the three-year period of 2000-2002. By comparison, the 1990 Comprehensive Plan documented 11 sites as high crash locations, only two of which were the same as cited in Table 2—the intersection of Route 109 and Route 9 and US Route 1 north of Buzzell Road. Of those 11 high accident locations, five were on Route One.~~ Fifty crashes, or ~~44% of the total number of crashes occurred on US Route 1.~~

~~In addition, the Town's Public Works Department has identified the following problem intersections:~~

- ~~Maine Route 109 and US Route 1 *~~
- ~~Maine Route 9B and US Route 1~~
- ~~Maine Route 9 (The Kennebunk Road) and US Route 1~~
- ~~Maine Route 109 and Route 9A – very poor condition *~~
- ~~Maine Route 109 and Route 9 *~~
- ~~Bear's Den Road and Maine Route 9B~~

~~These problems are due to heavy traffic volumes and outdated designs. The two problem intersections identified with a * are also listed as a high crash locations as identified in Table 15.~~ The 2005 Comprehensive Plan identified several problem intersections in the Town of Wells and since that time most of those intersections were addressed through reconstruction and critical improvements. The previously identified intersections include:

- The reconstruction of the Route 109 and Route 1 intersection,
- Signal upgrades for the Route 9B and Route one intersection coordination with other nearby traffic signals
- Upgrades to the Route 9 and Route 1 intersection
- In 2021, the reconstruction of the Route 109 and Route 9A intersection was initiated. This will resolve many issues at a location that is considered the worst intersection in the community currently.

The intersection of Route 109 and Route 9 was also identified as a problem intersection in 2005 and may need to be addressed in the future, but this location is currently identified as a low priority by the State. The intersection of Bear's Den Road and Route 9B was also identified in 2005, but conversations with Town staff have revealed this this intersection has sight distance and grade challenges that may be difficult to resolve.

Sidewalks

In 2000, the Town established a sidewalk committee with the responsibility of identifying locations for the extensions of new sidewalks. The Sidewalk Committee identified Route 1 between Drakes Island Road and Stewart Street (Area A) and Route 109 between Route 1 and the Wells Transportation Center (Area B) as the highest priority for the construction of sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities. The Town of Wells Sidewalk Development Plan and related ordinance amendments were approved at Town Meeting in April 2003. The Plan includes goals, policies, standards, implementation strategies, and a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to develop pedestrian walkways in the identified priority areas. While the sidewalk Committee is no longer in place this Plan and the related ordinance requirements are still informing the development process and infrastructure upgrades in Wells.

Bridges

According to the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) Bridge Management Program, there are ~~twenty-seven (27)~~Forty-four (44) publicly owned bridges including frame culverts that carry motor vehicles in town. Responsibility for these facilities is determined by the MaineDOT Local Bridge Program, which became law in July of 2001. Bridges of at least 20 feet in length on town or state-aid roadways are the responsibility of MaineDOT. Minorspans, which are bridges that are at least 10 feet but less than 20 feet in length, that are on town roadways are the responsibility of the municipality. If a minor span is located on a state or state-aid roadway, maintenance responsibility falls with MaineDOT. As such, the Town of Wells is responsible for the maintenance of ten (10) bridges.

MaineDOT inspects all Bridges and Minor Spans on public ways every two years in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and MDOT's Bridge Management Coding Guides.

~~The inspections result in a Federal Sufficiency Rating (FSR) for each bridge, which is calculated by analyzing the condition of each of the bridge's components, such as the deck, the~~ substructure, the ~~superstructure, etc. Table 16 describes the FSR scale.~~ A review of the Maine DOT data for these forty-four bridges revealed four bridges of concern. One of the bridges is Tibbets (Kings Highway at the Ogunquit River) which has failed and is out of service. Another is a municipal bridge on Drakes Island Road over the Wells River which has a Poor Substructure Condition with evidence of advanced deterioration. The third is a state-maintained bridge on US Route 1 over the Webhannet River which is in poor condition and showing ~~advanced deterioration of both the deck and~~ superstructure. ~~The last bridge is maintained by the~~ Boston and Maine Railroad and intersects with Old Route 1. This bridge is rated as poor ~~condition because of advanced deterioration of the~~ substructure. ~~It would appear that three of~~ these facilities were of concern in 2005 as well. As these bridges are addressed and improved it is important to add bicycle and pedestrian facilities so that all modes of travel can safely cross.

Table 16
Federal Sufficiency Ratings (FSR)

FSR Range	Condition Description	FSR Range	Condition Description
90-100	Excellent	40-49	Poor
80-89	Very Good	30-39	Serious
70-79	Good	20-29	Critical
60-69	Satisfactory	1-19	Imminent Failure
50-59	Fair	0	Failed

Source: MDOT Bridge Management Division

~~If the FSR on a state bridge located on a state or state aid highway is less than 50, the bridge requires attention and may qualify for federal funding, depending upon the individual condition ratings of the bridge's various components. In Wells, nine (9) bridges with a sufficiency rating of 50.0 or lower.~~

~~These are noted in Table 17. The Town should work closely with MDOT in order ensure that~~ these ~~bridges are maintained at a satisfactory level.~~

Table 17
Bridge Conditions of Concern - Town of Wells

Bridge Number/Name	Custodian	AADT	Sufficiency Rating
0821/Buffam (Old)	Town	Pedestrian	0.0
1253/Stover Mill	Town	123	49.5
3091/Branch Brook	MaineDOT	1980	47.7
3199/High Pine Crossing	MaineDOT	7820	45.7
3577/Drakes Island	Town	1456	47.5
3765/Bourne Avenue	MaineDOT	2498	49.3
3771/Skinner	MaineDOT	435	48.9
3916/Lewis West	Town	969	49.1
5337/B&M RR Underpass	Railroad	railroad	0.0

Source: Maine Department of Transportation, Bridge Management, 2003

Parking

Wells Beach, Moody Beach, Wells Harbor Park, Drake's Island Beach, the Wells Reserve/ Laudholm Beach, and the roads leading to the beaches experience parking problems during the tourist season. There is limited on-street parking on Ocean Avenue and Atlantic Avenue specifically. The amount of available parking limits the number of automobiles and consequently the number of persons who can use the beach area. There is need for additional off-street parking adjacent to Route 1 that can be serviced by the trolley to shuttle beach goers.

At certain times during the day and year, some motorists park in the break down lane and passing lane of US Route 1. Commercial activities that are close to the road along with yard sales create this type of condition. In general, parking does not tend to be a problem in other parts of Town.

Efforts should be made to increase bicycle parking infrastructure at the beaches and other popular destinations. Researching how other communities have accomplished this will inform these efforts and provide new ideas on how to best promote public and alternative transit to tourists and residents to reduce automobile parking at beaches and other popular locations.

Transportation Infrastructure and Sea Level Rise

Given the proximity of transportation infrastructure to coastal ecosystems, and the need for these roadways to facilitate evacuations during flood and storm events, it is important for Wells to understand the potential impact on transportation infrastructure from sea level rise. According to an assessment conducted in 2020 as part of the Maine Climate Council process, there is a 67% probability that sea level will rise between 1.1 and 1.8 feet by 2050 and 3.0 and 4.6 feet by the year 2100 under intermediate global greenhouse gas emissions scenarios, with higher sea level rise amounts possible. Based on those projections, the 4-year state climate action plan "Maine Won't Wait" recommends that the state commit to manage for 1.5 feet of relative sea level rise by 2050, and 3.9 feet of sea level rise by the year 2100, but prepare to manage for 3.0 feet by 2050, and 8.8 feet by 2100, all in relation to 2000 local sea level.

Using data from the Maine Geological Survey it appears that a total of 73 roads in Wells will be impacted by the initial 1.6 feet of sea level rise projected, and this totals approximately six

miles of roadway impact.

Summary Statistics: Miles of Roadway in Wells Affected by Sea Level Rise		
Scenario	Miles of Roads Affected (approximate)	Number of Roads Affected
HAT+1.6 ft	6.16	73
HAT+3.9ft	6.18	73

Given the fact that both scenarios appear to impact the same length of roadway, it was important to identify the top ten affected roads. They are listed in the Table below and should inform future infrastructure improvements planned for these roadways.

Road	Miles of Road Affected (approximate)	Feet of Road Affected (approximate)
Webhannet Dr	0.53	2,807
Ocean Ave	0.41	2,145
Furbish Rd	0.36	1,901
Drakes Island Rd	0.36	1,887
Mile Rd	0.34	1,804
S Tibbetts Ave	0.28	1,498
Eldridge Rd	0.27	1,422
Bourne Ave	0.24	1,293
Ox Cart Ln	0.24	1,273
N Tibbetts Ave	0.20	1,074

Other Modes of Transportation

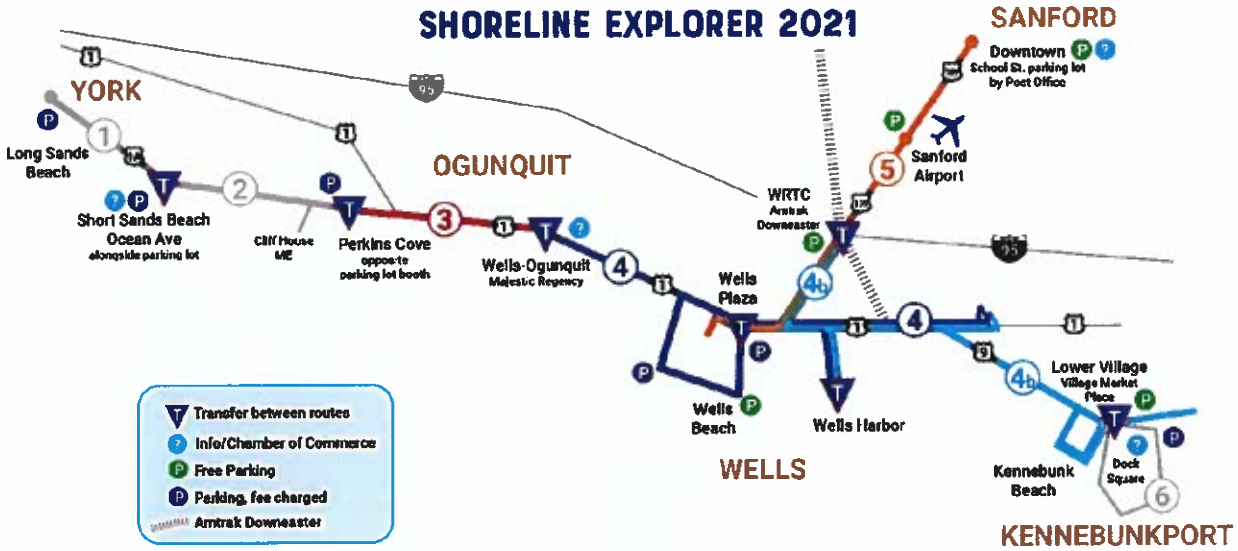
Wells' transportation system is in large part a reflection of the historical growth of the Town. At the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, a light electric rail service was available in Wells and other nearby coastal southern Maine communities. The rail service connected the coastal Southern Maine communities with Sanford and Springvale. Long distance railroads with two stations in Wells served the Town. Similar to the pattern that evolved throughout the United States during the early to middle part of the 20th century, the private automobile became the primary means of transportation in Wells.

While motorized vehicles including automobiles, heavy and light trucks, will continue to be the primary form of transportation in Wells for the next several decades, the Town has been effective in encouraging and planning for other suitable forms of transportation. The most significant example of this planning is for the Wells Transportation Center, which opened for business in December 2002. The Wells Transportation Center is located directly off of Exit 19 (formerly Exit 2) of the Maine Turnpike on Route 109/9. It is an intermodal transportation center serving southern Maine, and served by passenger rail service and commuter parking for

220 vehicles.

Wells Trolley

The Wells Chamber of Commerce, with assistance and cooperation from the Town of Wells, established and continues to operate the Wells Trolley system. The trolley system currently serves ~~the Town center area and the beaches~~the region between late June and Labor Day. Wells is fortunate to be at the core of the Shoreline Explorer's route with service provided to the Harbor, Beaches, destinations along Route 1, the Transportation Center, and nearby towns. Efforts should be made by the Town of Wells and the business community to actively promote and advertise the trolley service as a public transportation option.



~~The Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC), at the time of writing, was coordinating a study to determine the feasibility and potential route and costs of additional transit service along the southernMaine Coast. Part of this work was focused on the Wells Trolley. A May 2004 Draft of Service Design Alternatives, prepared by Tom Crikelair Associates, noted the following issues with the existing Wells Trolley service:~~

- ~~A route that is too long, with too many diversions;~~
- ~~Infrequent service, resulting in part from the length of the route;~~
- ~~Unpredictable service, with long gaps and no published timetable;~~
- ~~Slow and indirect access to hotels from the Wells Transportation Center;~~
- ~~Inadequate transfer facilities for connections with the Ogunquit trolley;~~
- ~~No southbound access to Beach Acres campground; and~~
- ~~Limited northbound access to the Wells Plaza.~~

~~At the time of writing, two suggested improvements were being pursued: (1) to eliminate service to the Wells Transportation Center [The study recommends replacing the service to the Wells Intermodal Center with hotel shuttles for increased traveler convenience. Other stops that would loseservice could be served by the recommended fixed-route service out of Sanford]; and (2) to~~ move thetransfer with the Ogunquit Trolley to the Wells Chamber of Commerce.

Rail Service

Amtrak's Downeaster passenger rail service was initiated in December 2001 and currently includes ~~four~~ five roundtrips from Portland, Maine to Boston, Massachusetts with stops in Wells.

With the improvements currently underway the facility will increase to six roundtrip trains per day. Since its inception in December 2001, the Downeaster service has been increasingly popular. The Downeaster now carries more than half a million passengers annually, including commuters, business travelers, college students traveling to and from school, youths on educational trips, patients receiving medical treatments, families attending sports and theatre events, shoppers, visitors to Maine and more. ~~In a 1993 transportation impact study for a restored passenger rail service, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) predicted that 121 passengers would use the Wells station each day in the first year of service (1994 for that study). By 2010, it was expected that Wells would see 255 passengers per day~~. Annual Station Ridership at the Wells station in FY 2020 was 24,680 and was likely impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic.
~~During the summer months of 2003, a weekday average of 97 passengers boarded or disembarked at the Wells Station, less than that projected for the first year of service. For the summer 2003 weekends, the average number of passengers was 92.~~[1]

Taxi Service and Ride Shares

~~Three~~ Private taxi companies from outside Wells serve the Town primarily during the summer tourist season. ~~One operates from Ogunquit, a second from Kennebunk, and a third from Sanford.~~, and now ride share companies are increasingly serving residents and visitors as well. This includes services such as Uber and Lyft.

Social Service Agency Transportation

The York County Community Action Corporation (YCCAC) provides a public demand responsive transit service for its resident clients in Wells and other York County communities. YCCAC also provides a range of other transportation options, available to the general public and equipped for people with disabilities. These services include both public transportation and contracted/special service transport that provide the means for residents to get to work, attend doctor appointments, do errands, and more. ~~.~~ For most of these services ~~C~~clients call in advance and schedule their transportation need with the agency. The service targets the elderly, disabled, and low-income populations although the general population can use the service on a space available basis. ~~Another group that provides a similar service in the Kennebunk-Wells area is FISH~~

~~[1] April 13, 2004 Memorandum to Tom Crikelair regarding Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission Coastal Explorer Study~~

~~(Friends in Service Helping).~~ The York Hospital also provides a bus service for patients who require transportation to and from the hospital.

~~YCCAC also operates the Wheels to Access Vocation and Education (WAVE) service between Wells and Sanford. The WAVE connects people with jobs and job training with 24-hour advance registration. The WAVE currently provides between 2,300 and 3,000 one-way rides to approximately 100 people per month. Roughly a third of these riders travel to work or training in Wells, including Spencer Press, McDonald's, and York County Community College.~~

Air Service

Wells is approximately ½ hour from Portland International Jetport, and both Pease International Tradeportin Portsmouth, NH. Manchester, NH ~~or~~ and Logan Airport in Boston are about 1¼ hour away. Shuttle service is available to Boston and Portland from private

carriers.

Bicycle

Any segment of roadway having a paved shoulder of at least 4 feet in width is generally considered appropriate for bicycle travel. As mentioned previously, as state highways such as Routes 9 and 109and US Route 1 have been improved, the Town and MaineDOT have worked to provide for bicycle lanes by creating adequate paved shoulders and proper striping. A portion of Route 109/9 has a bicycle lane. As highways are improved and upgraded, the Town will encourage adequate shoulder widths in order to accommodate bicycle travel. According to the Maine Department of Transportation's (MDOT's) policy for paving shoulders, any highway improvement, reconstruction,or pavement preservation project on state and state-aid roads where the Summer Average Daily Traffic exceeds 4000 vehicles shall include paved shoulders. The construction of shoulders on otherroadways would be the responsibility of the town.

~~Several interest groups (Saco Trails, Old Orchard Beach Trails, Scarborough Conservation Land Trust) are working to establish a~~A four-season corridor is under development for cyclists, hikers, walkers, inline skaters, cross-country skiers ~~called~~ along the Eastern Trail from South Portland, Maine to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The Eastern Trail follows the old Boston and Maine Eastern Line, which travels through the western section of Wells. Wells has joined eleven other municipalities and the private Eastern Trail Alliance to form the Eastern Trail Management District. The District will be the entity managing the trail once it is built. As was stated earlier, the Eastern Trail extension will add an additional 19 miles resulting in a total of 25 miles of off-road trail connecting 7 communities, including Wells, in the most densely populated region of the state. ~~MaineDOT has been supportive of the trail development, including funds for it in its Biennial Transportation Improvements Plans for the past two biennia. The District is currently designing trail improvements in Scarborough, where it will connect with existing sections of the trail in South Portland.~~

Analysis

The inventory of transportation identified a number of issues, which need to be addressed in the Action Plan of this chapter of the plan update. They include:

1. The need to provide a safe, efficient and balanced transportation system that meets the needs of the citizens of Wells as well as visitors to the Town while recognizing that the road systemprovides the framework for the bulk of the transportation in, through, and out of Wells.
2. The need to play an active role in ongoing planning for improvements to the US Route 1Corridor in coordination with the Maine Department of Transportation to ensure that the following issuesare addressed:
   - The definition of US Route 1's role as a state arterial and principal local business street, i.e."Main Street";
   - Exploring options for alternative north-south connector routes;
   - Improvement of problem intersections;
   - Need for off-street parking areas and sidewalk, walking trails and biking lanes;
   - Desire to reduce congestion.

3. Working with the Maine Turnpike Authority and other towns in the area to better understand andaddress the impact of the Turnpike's toll policy and accessibility on the movement of traffic in Wells and the surrounding region. This may include investigating the need for a new

Turnpike interchange in the Moody/Ogunquit area.

4. The need to play an active role in the implementation of the Route 109 ~~Corridor Committee being coordinated by theSouthern Maine Regional Planning Commission to ensure that Corridor Committee recommendations that effect the Town of Wells are consistent with the findings of the Route 109/9~~ Corridor Study ~~and~~ along with the objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.

5. The need to encourage appropriate techniques for access management to ensure safe traffic movements on the Town's major arterials and collectors, especially in urban compact areas whereMaineDOT's access management rules do not apply.

6. The need to create a Master Plan for the envisioned Central Area that ensures that the Town Center provides opportunities for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails andbicycle paths.

7. The opportunity to establish a more formalized system of classifying local roadways that will enable the Town to effectively program roadway projects that will produce the most benefit. Thiseffort could assist the Town in determining how best to handle safety and capacity problems on collector roads such as Routes 9 and 109. Also, a formal local functional classification system could allow for differing design standards in rural and growth areas that could help encourage development in growth areas while maintaining rural character elsewhere.

8. The need to continue to dedicate funds to continue the Road Surface Management Program to establishpriorities for road reconstruction, rehabilitation, and resurfacing.

~~9. The need for the Town to coordinate with MaineDOT to design and schedule improvements tothe12 locations identified in the inventory as having safety issues.~~

~~10.~~ 9. The need to support the implementation of the Sidewalk Development Plan. There is also a needto recognize that while sidewalks are appropriate for some sections of Town (built up areas, Town Center, along major highways), natural gravel trails may be desirable for the beach areas and more rural parts of Wells. The overall pedestrian facility system should be coordinated withthe Transportation Center and the Eastern Trail.

~~11.~~ 10. The need for the Town to continue to ~~participate in the planning and development~~support ~~of~~the ~~*Coastal*~~*Shoreline Explorer*, a ~~potential~~ transit service that ~~would~~ connects York County communities with existing intercity transit services such as the *Downeaster* passenger rail service, to ensure that proposed plans provide for intermodal transportation opportunities such as regional busservice, ride sharing, trolley service and bicycling.

~~12.~~ 11. The need to address the condition of the bridges identified as "Bridges of Concern" in theinventory.

~~13.~~ 12. The need to address the parking limitations for the beaches and other areas of the community over time.

~~14.~~ 13. The opportunity to improve options for bicycle travel. The Maine DOT is

supportive of adding adequate shoulder width to a state highway when an improvement is being constructed in order to provide a bicycle lane. Local plans and policies will provide directionto local and state officials to ensure that bicycle lanes are constructed in a coordinated manner.

14. The need to develop clear policies regarding the acceptance of new roads and theabandonment or discontinuance of old public roads, including colonial roads.

15. The need to plan for the impact that sea level rise will have on the roadways in Wells over the decades ahead, and to ensure that this transportation infrastructure can withstand potential flooding impacts.

Data Sources and References

Maine Department of Transportation:

- Maine Turnpike:
  https://www.maineturnpike.com/About-MTA/Traffic-Statistics/
- Traffic Data:
  https://www.maine.gov/mdot/traffic
  https://mainedottrafficdata.drakewell.com
- Traffic Volume Counts and Vehicle Class:
  https://www.maine.gov/mdot/traffic/counts/
- MaineDOT Work plan 2021 - 2023:
  http://www.maine.gov/mdot/projects/workplan/
- MaineDOT Map Viewer:
  https://www.maine.gov/mdot/mapviewer/
- Maine Public Crash Query Tool:
  https://mdotapps.maine.gov/MaineCrashPublic/
- MaineDOT Complete Streets Policy:
  https://www.maine.gov/mdot/completestreets/

Shoreline Explorer:

- http://www.shorelineexplorer.com/

Highway Corridor Priorities and Customer Service Levels:

- http://www.maine.gov/mdot/about/assets/hwy/

Wells Area Improvement Project:

- https://www.nnepra.com/project/wells-area-improvement-project-2/

Maine Geological Survey (MGS) Sea level Rise Scenarios

rainfall advisories are issued as a result of heavy rainfall. Between 2013 and 2020, there were 42 advisories and no closures issued for participating Wells beaches (Table 2).

Table 2. Summary of advisories (Contamination and Preemptive Rainfall) issued at the six participating Wells beaches between 2013 and 2020. Advisories are voluntary and based on multiple factors; as such, they are not an accurate measure of water quality.

Beach	Number of Issued Advisories, by Year								
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Sum
Casino Square	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contamination Advisory	1								1
Preemptive Rain Advisory		1	1	1				1	4
Crescent Beach	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Preemptive Rain Advisory		2	1	1				1	5
Drakes Island Beach	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contamination Advisory					1		1		2
Preemptive Rain Advisory		1	1	1				1	4
Laudholm Beach	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contamination Advisory	1			1		1		1	4
Preemptive Rain Advisory			1	1		1			3
Wells Beach	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contamination Advisory		1	1						2
Preemptive Rain Advisory		2	1	1				1	5
Wells Harbor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contamination Advisory	2	1		1		1	2		7
Preemptive Rain Advisory		2	1	1				1	5

Public Access to Increase Pedestrian Use and Accessibility

In 2018, the Webhannet Marsh Walk was completed, which crosses a 25-acre parcel owned by the Town and looks out over the Webhannet Marsh. The trail is American Disability Act compliant and is incorporated into the Wells Reserve.

The 2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan has outlined the goal of making improvements to the Wells Harbor to promote pedestrian, bycicle, and public transit access. In 2020, the Town of Wells began a project to construct a sidewalk along Habor Road to Harbor Park and a marsh viewing platform. In addition, In 2013, a Wells Harbor Pedestrian Bridge Feasibilty study was conducted to connect to assess the feasibility of providing a connection between the Wells Harbor and Eastern Shore beach to provide a connection between these two sides for pedestrians.

Shellfishing

The Town of Wells has had an abundance of shellfishing resources, predominately with clams,

throughout the Webhannet and Little River Estuaries. The resource was plentiful and opened for harvesting for most of the Town's history until the 1969 when the Webhannet Estuary was closed to all shellfish harvesting due to pollution from cesspools, septic tanks, drainage fields in marsh areas that were washed by high tides, and extensive development along Route 1. ~~with the exception of the late 1970s through the mid 1990s. During that period in the Webhannet River Estuary,~~ In the 1970s, the Town went through major sanitary infrastructure installation to address water quality within the Webhannet River estuary. During the decade or so that followed, pollution and conditions prohibited the State from opening the shellfish resource in the Webhannet Estuary and only a small number of commercial harvesters were licensed and all ~~clam landings were subject to~~ depuration to remove pollution prior to consumption ~~. disrupting the shellfish industry in Wells. In the process of installing sanitary lines, the clam beds were harvested through commercial means leaving the resource destroyed.~~ The Little River estuary has not been legally claimmed since the ~~mid 1970s~~mid-1970s.

~~During the decade or so that followed, pollution and conditions prohibited the State from opening the shellfish resource in the Webhannet Estuary.~~ During the late 1980s, the Town partnered with the Wells Reserve and the State Department of Marine Resources (DMR) to study, re-seed and re-open sections of the Webhannet Estuary to shellfishing. Town funds were allocated annually to the Town's Shellfish Commission to:

1. Re-seed productive harvesting sections of the estuary;
2. Funds were granted to the Wells Reserve for clam population studies, water quality testing and analysis, and research projects determining pollution sources; and
3. Funds were annually spent on controlling the Green Crab population, a predator of the shellfish.

Teams of volunteers assisted in the water quality testing that resulted in the re-opening of the estuary by the DMR in March 1996 for a controlled seasonal harvesting. At the Town's request to DMR, the Town's Shellfish Ordinance prohibited commercial harvesting. Recreational harvesting was allowed during only certain winter months during the year. Licenses were limited to 250 Wells residents and 50 non-residents. During initial years of the harvesting in the late 1990s, the maximum licenses were sold. In 2004, only 169 licenses were sold during the harvesting period.

~~As~~ As of 2021, ~~The Town of Wells~~ commercial harvesting is still prohibited by the Town of Wells through the Shellfish Conservation Program License provisions in the Town Code, and as such, the Shellfish Conservation Program Ordinance does not provide commercial licenses (Town Code; Chapter 190 Shellfish Conservation Program). The maximum number of licenses varies depending upon the annual conditions and is allocated by the Maine Department of Marine Resources. In 2021, recreational licenses were granted to 88 residents and 17 nonresidents, and all shellfish activity is monitored by the ~~5~~five members of the Shellfish Conservation Committee along with the Maine DMR (Maine Department of Marine Resources 2021 Allocation Approval). ~~The 2013 Harbor Management Plan identified two harvest areas within the Town of Wells, one being within the Harbor and the second extending to Drakes Island.~~

The Town's Shellfish Conservation Committee ~~Commission~~ meets three times a year and continues to partner with DMR and the Wells Reserve on keeping the Shellfish areas open in the Webhannet Estuary. The Shellfish Conservation Committee operates a facility at the Harbor to

raise clams for "seeding" the flats, producing 65,000 small clams annually. As of 2021, the Shellfish Committee raises clams for seeding the flats, producing approximately 80,000 small clams each year and expects to raise tat number to 500,000 in 2022. The seeded areas are selected based on observation. ~~In 2000, the Shellfish Commission constructed a clam hatchery to raise clam seedlings for planting. Annually,~~

~~bulk purchases of seedlings are purchased and placed in the hatchery to allow for growth for planting purposes. Planting techniques and locations are determined by the Commission and its partners.~~

Shellfish ~~Harvesting in Wells, since the shellfish beds have been re-opened in 1996, has been~~ harvesting is contained to the Webhannet Estuary from Drakes Island Road to the Mile Road. The area seaward of the estuary from Atlantic Ave eastward is classified as prohibited by Maine DMR. ~~S~~The area south of Mile rRoad is classified as restricted. Shellfish beds located north of Jetty Lane in the tidal portion of Blacksmith Brook are classified as conditionally approved. All other areas are closed to harvesting. The State continues to monitor the water quality at roughly ten locations around the clam flats.

Water Dependent Uses

The major water dependent use at this time is the marina, associated facilities, and mooring area located at Wells Harbor. This is the only marine service facility in Wells, the only boat launch capable of handling commercial vessels, which attracts roughly 3,000 boaters a year, and the only mooring area in Wells for both commercial and pleasure boats.

~~Ideally, t~~The harbor has the capacity for about 150 moorings under ideal conditions when ~~the harbor~~ ~~is~~ newly dredged. There is, as of July 2019, a waiting list for a mooring with 23 people on it, and a waiting list for a slip with 55 people on it, an indication of the strong demand for recreational boating in Wells.

Commercial fishing is also of importance at Wells Harbor, especially with the growing charter boat industry which continues to draw in visitors. As of the 2013 Wells Harbor Management Plan, there are 15 commercial charter boats operating out of Wells Harbor for fishing and sightseeing activities. ~~Also of commercial significance is the lobster industry, for which~~, in addition to nine lobster boats ~~are~~ operating full-time in Wells.

Recreation, as discussed above in the public access section, and shellfishing are also important water dependent uses in Wells.

There are no significant marine- related businesses in Wells except at the marina. There are ~~a number~~numerous lobster pounds, including the Wells Beach Lobster Pound, Forbes on the Mile Road, Hobbs Harborside at the Harbor, and Lord's at Wells Beach.

Effects of Sea Level Rise and Storm Surges on Marine Resources

Refer to Appendix Section 3 – Critical Natural Resources, Section E: Flood Hazards for information on future sea level rise and storms.

Wells Harbor

Wells Harbor facilities that will be affected by intermittent or permanent inundation from future sea level rise and storms surges include the harbor facilities and infrastructure such as the marina, boat

launch, and Wells Harbor Community Park., The 2013 Harbor Management Plan identified the goal that the Town should "consider the effects of projected sea level rise on both Harbor infrastructure and ecological aspects of the Harbor/estuary and make investment and maintenance decisions that mitigate anticipated impacts of projected sea level rise."

Beach and Dune Systems

Beach and dune systems in Maine are continually reshaped by wind, waves, tides, and currents. Sea level rise and storms surges amplify these continuing processes and cause the beach/dune systems to migrate to higher elevations, if space is available. Within ~~the Town of~~ Wells, Wells Beach, Moody Beach, Drakes Island, and Wells Harbor, are projected to experience the greatest damages from future tidal and surge flooding due to sea level rise. The future submersion of beaches and marshes will also eliminate the natural barrier that serves as a defense if the dune/beach systems are not allowed to migrate landward.

Shellfishing

The recreational shellfishing areas located within the Town of Wells within the Webhannet River Estuary may be affected by sedimentation from storms that may smother shellfishing beds. In addition, future storm surges and coastal flooding may increase pollution from stormwater runoff and inundation, ultimately leading to further pollution closures to shellfishing areas.,

Effects of Ocean Acidification on Marine Resources

Ocean acidification affect's the Town of Well's shellfish resources. Ocean acidification occurs in marine waters where added carbon dioxide in the atmosphere dissolves and decreases the pH of the water, ~~and~~ thus increasinges acidity. Acidification impacts marine resources most notably by impacting organisms that make hard shells using calcium and carbonate from seawater such as shellfish. When ocean acidification increases, the available carbonate ions bond with the excess hydrogen, which reduces the amount of carbonate ions that are available for these organisms to build and maintain the shells. Ongoing studies are examining how ocean acidification can impact fish, seaweed, and seagrasses as well (NOAA, 2020).

Effects of Invasive Species on Marine Resources

Green Crabs

Green crabs are non-native to Maine and were first observed in approximately 1905 in Maine. In ~~2021~~recent years, members of the shellfish industry began noting the devastating impacts that green crabs had on the shellfish industry as heavy loss of soft-shelled clam seeds. Through further study, the Maine Department of Marine Resources also found that green crab infestations were causing declines in eelgrass beds and marsh bank erosion. In addition to shellfish seed, green crabs also negatively affect adult bivalves, marine worms, urchins, scallops, and lobsters (Report by the Governor's Task Force on the Invasive European Green Crab, 2014). In 2018, Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve researchers studied green crabs in the Webhannet River estuary, finding that males moved up in the estuary into generally warmer, shallower water and females tended to move into deeper colder water.

Green crabs are present in Wells and pose a threat to the town's marine resources by preying on softshell clam seeds, destabilizing estuary marsh banks, and damaging eelgrass beds.

(WNERR, Green Crab 2019 Update, 2019). Other nonnative invasive marine species in Maine that have a

disruptive, negative impact on the habitat include Asian shore crab, Didemnum (a tunicate), and Codium (a green spongy algae that can smother shellfish beds). The Department of Marine Resource works with several partners throughout the state to identify and track the spread of marine invasive species (DMR 2021).

Analysis

The inventory of marine resources identifies a number of issues that should be addressed in the policies and implementation section of the Plan:

1. Tthe need to maintain Wells Harbor as a viable marine facility providing moorings, marine services and ocean access for commercial and recreational boaters through the continual updating and revision ~~as needed~~ of the Harbor Management Plan, as needed.

2. Tthe need to continue to improve and maintain the water quality of the estuaries to ensure that marine resources can thrive and provide continued opportunity for recreational harvesting. Improving and maintaining estuarine water quality is a function of controlling nonpoint source pollution of land activities upstream on the numerous rivers and tributaries that flow into the estuaries. A local plan to identify and eliminate pollution sources could serve as a roadmap towards maintaining and improving water quality.

3. Tthe need to maintain and, where appropriate, improve public access to beaches and waterfront resources in Wells in a manner that balances the rights of residents and non- beachfront property owners with the residents of the beach areas.

4. ~~the~~ The desirability of providing a "high quality" beach experience for residents and visitors alike, including adequate facilities and parking, while avoiding overuse of this resource and balancing recreation with environmental concerns.

4.5. The vulnerability of Wells Harbor and the ~~B~~beaches, and associated marine resources, to climate change and rising sea levels. Harbor facilities and infrastructure, as well as beach geology, habitat, and access will likely be affected.

5. ~~the need to continue to implement the Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan, with a particular focus on beach nourishment, protection of coastal properties and improving the coastal tourism economy through maintaining a healthy beach system.~~

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Section 6 – Housing

Household Change

The rate of growth of Wells' households closely matched that of the Town's population. In

2000~~1980~~ there were ~~2,591~~ 4,004 households in Wells. By ~~1990~~ 2010 there were ~~over~~ ~~3,056~~4,019 households, an increase of ~~465~~ 15 households during this 10-year period. From ~~1990~~ 2010 to 202~~000~~, household growth was ~~even~~ much more rapid as Wells added ~~948~~ 574 households for a ~~2000 total of 4,004~~total of 4,593 households in 2020. **See Table 17**.

TABLE 17 **Household Change, 2000 – 2019**	
	Number of Households
2000 Census	4,004
2010 Census	4,019
Change 00-10	0.4%
2019 Census	4,593
Change 10-19	14.3%
Source: US Census Bureau	

Table 17 **Household Change**	
	Number of Households
1980 Census	2,591
1990 Census	3,056
Change 80-90	+465 (17.9%)
2000 Census	4,004
Change 90-00	+948 (31.0%)

Using the population projections from ~~the~~ Section 1, the number of households in Wells may reach 5,409~~4,300~~ by 202~~805~~, 5~~4~~,74~~100~~ by 203~~310~~ and 6,036~~4,900~~ by 203~~815~~. These figures assume a steady average household size of 2.2~~3~~5 persons. A continued decrease in the Town's average household size would result in even greater household growth.

As mentioned in Section 1, the actual number of residential building permits issued between 2011~~00~~ and 202~~003~~ in Wells was 1,299~~133467~~. However, the number of new households added would not have been so great for two reasons: some new units are seasonal, and some old units have been torn down since 2011~~00~~. ~~Adjusting for these two considerations, SMRPC estimated that the change in occupied housing units from 2000-2003 was 393, meaning that there are an estimated 4,397 year-round households in Wells as of 2004. Averi noted that she is still waiting on data on building permits from Jodine. I'm assuming she meant from 2020.~~

~~Though~~ In the past, the population projections for Wells have ~~been reasonably on target~~ somewhat overestimated the Town's growth. (see Section 1). ~~,~~ In 2010, the estimated number of households in 2010~~0004~~ was 4,120, meaning there were 580 ~~less~~fewer households than the state's projected 4,700. In the same year, the projected population was 11,045, ~~over~~ exceeding the actual population by 1,450 persons ~~over the actual population of 9,589~~.

In 2018, the number of households based on the state's projections was estimated to be 4,686 households. The actual number of households in 2018 was 4,582, which was below projections by 100 households. This is likely due to the fact that the state estimated the 2018 population to be around 300 persons more than what the actual population was. ~~exceeds the state's projection for 2005 by 100 households, indicating a continued trend of decreasing household size in Wells. The number of households in Wells could therefore easily exceed 5,000 by the year 2015, if not sooner.~~

Understanding how the number of households is changing is important for planning purposes since in terms of land use and municipal services, this figure is often the key unit for determining demand on public services. Table 18 shows how the number of year round households changed between ~~1980~~ 2000 and 201~~900~~.

After growing more slowly than other towns in southern York County during the 2000~~1980~~s, Wells' household growth rate picked up considerably from 2010~~1990~~ to 201~~900~~. The Town's growth rate significantly exceeded these other towns during this time-period. ~~Kennebunk and York both still grew at faster clips than did Wells, however, during the 1990s.~~ **See Table 18.**

Table 18
Comparative Household Change
Wells and Adjacent Communities

	1980	1990	% Change 1980-90	2000	% Change 1990-00
Wells	2,591	3,056	+17.9	4,004	+31.0
Kennebunk	2,506	3,161	+26.1	4,229	+33.8
South Berwick	1,380	2,104	+52.5	2,403	+14.2
York	3,152	3,788	+20.2	5,235	+38.2
York County	49,648	61,848	+24.6	74,563	+20.6

Source: US Census, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission

TABLE 18
Comparative Household Change
Wells and Adjacent Communities

	2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010	2019	% Change 2010-2019
Wells	4,004	4,019	0.4%	4,593	14.3%
Kennebunk	4229	4589	8.5%	4983	8.6%
South Berwick	2403	2655	10.5%	2785	4.9%
York	5235	5326	1.7%	5746	7.9%
York County	74563	80299	7.7%	86227	7.4%

Source: US Census

During the 2000~~1980~~s and 201~~1990~~s, Wells continued to witness changes in the composition of households. Household size dropped ~~at a rapid rate~~ during the 2000~~1990~~s: according to the 2000 census it was just 2.35 persons per household compared to 2.55 in 1990, 2.59 in 1980 and 2.83 in 1970. The Town has seen a continuation of this trend into 2020. In 2010, the average household size had dropped to 2.30 persons per household, and as of 2019 that number has dropped to 2.25 persons.

York County as a whole has followed a similar trend, as it also saw household size drop from 2.75 persons per household in 1980 to 2.63 in 1990 to 2.54 in 2000. In 2010, that number had fallen to 2.40 persons and stood at 2.07 in 2019. This decrease in household size is the result of lower birth rates, higher divorce rates, increased longevity among seniors and a greater number of younger and elderly individuals living independently in single households. Based upon regional and national trends, this figure is likely to continue to drop.

This phenomenon of an increasing population with a decrease in the size of households has a significant effect on growth and residential development. In effect, it requires a greater number of households to house the same number of people. This affects the number of housing units as well as the amount of land needed for residential uses.

Housing Stock Characteristics

In addition to total housing supply and growth, it is also important to examine the composition of a municipality's housing growth. The availability of different types of housing units (i.e., single family, multi-family, manufactured (mobile) and renter occupied versus owner occupied) is significant if the housing needs of all segments of the community are to be served adequately. Analysis of the assessing records indicates that there are 5,016 single family housing units in Wells. Currently, and these units occupy a total of 11,207 acres which is nearly a third of the town's land area. There are also 442 multi-family residential units (including attached residential condominiums) occupying 1,619 acres. The Wells Housing map shows the distribution of housing units across town.

As indicated above, Wells' housing stock is predominantly single family, owner-occupied housing units. As of 2012~~1980~~ Wells had ~~2,879~~4,045 occupied year- round housing units, 406 vacant units either for rent or sale, and another ~~1,750~~3,398 seasonal units for a total of ~~4,629~~8,011. ~~66~~74% Sixty-six percent (~~2,140~~5,320 units) of the Town's ~~total year round housing~~ units were single family. Of these 52~~89~~% were owner occupied. Conversely, 16~~14~~% of Wells housing was multi-family, while 17~~2~~% ~~was manufactured~~were considered mobile homes. By ~~1990~~ 2017 Wells had ~~5,217~~8,930 housing units, consisting of 4,551 occupied units and 3,692 seasonal units, of which ~~3,849~~67% (5,949) were single family, and 20% (1,748) were multi- family homes. ~~, also 74% of the housing stock.~~ By comparison York County had over ~~79,000~~ 108,609 total housing units and of that single family was ~~only~~ 69.7~~8~~%.

According to ~~2000 Census data~~data from the Maine State Housing Authority, Wells had a total of 5,238~~4,333~~ year-round housing units. Among these units, 4,551~~4,004~~ were occupied and 453~~329~~ were vacant—a vacancy rate of about 9~~8~~.9~~2~~%. Most of the vacant units were considered rental units but it is possible that some of these were not ~~really~~ vacant housing units but were

actually lodging units (see next paragraph). Among occupied units, 3,7823,282 (832%) were owner occupied and 722 (178%) were renter occupied.

The 2000 Census Maine State Housing Authority, based on 2013-2017 American Community Survey tables, also reported a total of 3,692461 seasonal housing units in Wells. If accurate, this figure would represent an increase of more than 1 more than 230,000 seasonal units from 2001990. However, it appears that the Census figures include many new units built in recent years that are, in fact, lodging units and not dwelling units. In the past, it may have been possible that many seasonal units were being illegally used as off-season dwelling units. However, the Town now has a full-time employee in the Code Enforcement Office whose job it is to monitor lodging units for code compliance. This position has greatly reduced the threat of the illegal use of lodging units.

Table 19 compares lodging and seasonal units in Wells from 2004 1994 to 202004. Overall, the Town added more than 1,001,7000 seasonal units, an increase of 36%, the bulk of which were campground/RV park spacescottages and campground spaces. . There was a significant increase in the number of seasonal cottages in the Town as well, as that inventory grew from 184 in 1994 to 450 in 2004.

TABLE 19
Lodging and Seasonal Units in Wells

	No. of Units/Specs		Change	
Lodging Type	**2004**	**2020**	**Number**	**Percent**
Hotel/Motel	1,529	1,912	383	25%
Cottages	450	1,032	582	129%
Bed & Breakfast	67	29	-38	-56%
Campground Spaces	2,822	3,644	822	29%
Total	**4,868**	**6,617**	**1,749**	**36%**

Source: Town of Wells Code Enforcement Office, US Census Bureau, Various Campground Websites

Table 19
Lodging and Seasonal Units in Wells

	No. of Units/Spaces		Change	
Lodging Type	**1994**	**2004**	**No.**	**Percent**
Hotel Motel Rooms	1,672	1,529	-143	-9.3%
Bed & Breakfast Rooms	21	67	46	219.0%
Cottages	184	450	266	144.6%
Campground Spaces	1,977	2,822	845	42.7%
Total	**3,854**	**4,868**	**1,014**	**26.3%**

Source: Maine Dept. of Human Services & Town of Wells Code Enforcement Office

Table 20 compares the number of seasonal homes in Wells and York County from 2010 to 2019. Overall, the Town experienced a 19.5% increase in its number of seasonal homes, a total number of 624 homes, while the County experienced a 9.2% increase. In 2019, 42.5% of housing units in Wells were for seasonal use. In the same year, 18.2% of housing units in York County were for seasonal use.

TABLE 20 Number of Seasonal Homes Wells and York County				
	No. of Seasonal Homes		Change	
	2010	2019	Number	Percentage
Wells	3,192	3,816	624	19.5%
York County	18,666	20,388	1,722	9.2%
Source: US Census Bureau				

Housing Conditions

The gGeneral guidelines ~~which are~~ often used to classify housing units as substandard are those which have more than 1.01 persons per room, lack complete plumbing and lack central heat (excluding wood and flue heaters). ~~Based upon the 2000 Census~~According to the Census, in 2019, 132 ~~just 38~~ units were overcrowded and ~~only~~ there were zero units that ~~14~~ lacked complete plumbing. These figures have changed ~~little~~ some since the 200~~1990~~ Census, where there were 38 units that were overcrowded and 14 units that lacked complete plumbing. .

Another statistic that may be an indicator of the quality of Wells housing is the age of the housing stock. Generally, a community with a housing stock comprised of newer units is less likely to have problems or to have been built without proper plumbing and heating since building codes have become more stringent over time.

A ~~large percentage~~majority of the Town's housing units (about ~~75~~42%) were built after 198~~6~~0. A ~~substantial~~ number of housing units have~~amount has~~ been built since ~~1980~~ 2000 (28~~44~~%).
Consequently, Wells is quite likely to have only a few substandard housing units. However, Wells has only been enforcing building codes since the late 1980s, so some units built prior to that time may have not been built to code.

Housing Affordability

The Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) tracks the status of Maine's housing by town and housing market. MSHA includes Wells in the ~~Biddeford~~ York LMA housing market, ~~although it borders both the Sanford and Kittery/York markets as well~~which includes York, Wells, Ogunquit, and North Berwick. MSHA's chief indicator of housing affordability is its Affordability Index, which compares the affordable housing price for a household earning the median income level in a given area with the actual median home sale price in that area for the past year. For example, if a town's median affordable price was $120,000 and the actual median sale price in the past year was $160,000, that town's Affordability Index would be 0.75.

In 2020~~2003~~, MSHA reported Wells' Affordability Index as being 0.70~~64~~, making it one of the less ~~ast~~ affordable towns in York County (the countywide average in 2020~~2003~~ was 0.~~78~~.86). Looking into these numbers more closely, the median household income for Wells as reported by MSHA was $~~50,922~~76,109, and a household earning this much would be able to afford a home priced at about $~~158,000~~301,887. The actual median sale price for homes sold in Wells in

202003 was $429245,5000—$12787,613000 above the median affordable price. From 2010 to 2014, the median home price in Wells decreased by 8.25 while the median income increased by 17%. Since 2014, the median home price has increased by 93% and the median income has only increased by 13%. In 2014, the affordability index for the Town was 1.13.

Affordability in York County is relatively similar to what it was a decade ago at 0.83, although the index has fluctuated from anywhere between 0.80 and 1.07 during that timehas been on the decline for several years. As recently as 201400, the county's overall Affordability Index stood at 1.070.97, but has fallen every year since then to its current level in 2019 of 0.80, increasing back to 0.86 in 202078. During that span, the county's median home sale price ballooned from $204,100124,500 to $330,000184,000—an increase of 6148% in just sixthree years. MSHA estimates that 64.3% of households are unable to afford the median home cost in the Town.

Looking at surrounding housing markets, the Kittery/York LMA and Portsmouth, NH-ME, which includes Kittery and Elliot,Biddeford markets are increasingly unaffordable, as MSHA's Affordability Index levels for those two markets in 202003 were 0.7165 and 0.7768, respectively. The Sanford market's Index was 0.9586, making it more affordable than the other two and the county as a whole. Wells' affordability index does compare evenly with its coastal neighbors York (0.7064) and Kennebunk (0.694). However, Wells is less affordable than inland neighbors like South Berwick (10.080), North Berwick (0.9978) and Sanford (1.690.77).
Ogunquit has a very low index of 0.470, but it is very small size and concentration of off-season rental housing skews its affordability figures. Please see table 21, below.

TABLE 21
Affordability Index
Wells and Adjacent Communities

	2000	2010	2015	2020
Wells	0.90	0.75	1.02	0.70
Kennebunk	0.87	0.78	0.93	0.69
Kennebunkport	0.55	0.75	0.54	0.52
North Berwick	1.04	0.93	1.31	0.99
South Berwick	0.96	0.9	1.16	1.00
Ogunquit	0.57	0.51	0.63	0.47
York	0.73	0.70	0.70	0.70
York County	0.97	0.83	0.98	0.86

Source: Maine State Housing Authority

MSHA also reports on rental housing. According to the 202003 report, there are 7912 renter households in the Town and 586 (74%) of those households are unable to afford the median rent for a two-bedroom household. nd that Tthe medianaverage rent for a two-bedroom unit in 2020 was $1,800063, a 64% increase from what it was in 2010 when it stood at $1,084.. This is only slightly quite a bit higher than both the countywide average median rent of $1,704978 and the same as the York LMABiddeford market's average median rent of $1,800862. However, Wells' median rent is considerably lower than Kittery's ($1,999) but significantly higher that those of York ($1,1847) , Kittery ($1,228) and South Berwick ($1,077113). At Wells' average median

rent level, a household would need to earn about $742,0500 per year to afford a unit, $31,323 high than 2020 median renter household income of $40,677.. MSHA estimates that 74.159% of renter households cannot afford the medianaverage rent level in the Town.

Another issue related to affordability is that Wells hads put an emphasies on exempting affordable units from its residential growth ordinance. Accessory units that are attached to existing units were are exempt from the growth ordinance, as were are certain types of general and elderly affordable units. These exemptions are playinglikely played a strong role in increasing the Town's inventory of affordable units, however, as of 2008 the growth ordinance lapsed and has not been replaced.. The growth ordinance issue is discussed further in Sections 8 and 10.

HOUSEHOLDS IN NEED OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Maine Growth Management Law defines the affordability of homes and apartments as follows:

> A home (apartment) is affordable to a household if that household can pay its mortgage, utilities and property taxes for a cost that does not exceed 28-33% of its gross income. An apartment is affordable to a household if that household can pay rent and utilities for a cost that does not exceed 30% of its gross income.

The law further requires that new housing stock be provided in the community that can be afforded by households that have incomes categorized as very low, low and moderate. Very low income is defined as income less than 50% of the county median. Low income is 50 to 80% of the county median and moderate income is 80 to 120% of the median. As of 202003, the county median income level was estimated by the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) to be $66,209 48,522. To more easily define Very Low, Low, and Moderate levels for the area, this figure has been rounded downup slightly to $50,00065,000.

Therefore, the income levels are:

- Very Low: Under $3225,500
- Low: $3225,5000 to $5240,000
- Moderate: $5240,000 to $7860,000

Not all households within the very low, lower, and moderate-income ranges have an unfulfilled need for housing. Some are renters who are in an acceptable unit at a price that is affordable to them. Some are renters who because of their stage in life would not choose to buy a home even if they had the opportunity. Others, including many senior households or people who inherit family property, may have a relatively low income but already own a home and are content where they are.

Based on the income to housing cost thresholds defined above, as well as current interest rates, utility rates and property tax bills, MSHA estimates that, to afford a housing unit, a York County household's income should be at least 33.75% of the value of the home. By this standard, if a household earns $50,000 per year, its maximum affordability level for a housing unit would be about $148,000.

The income and home price levels for households in Wells are thus assumed to be:

- Very Low: Income below $3225,5000, home price below $9274,3000
- Low: Income from $32,500 to $52,000$25,000 to $40,000, home price from $92,74,3000 to $15418,1000
- Moderate: Income from $$52,000 to $78,00040,000 to $60,000, home price from $154,100 118,000 to $231178,1000

An issue that is very difficult to quantify is the "invisible" affordable housing inventory in Wells.

There are more thanaround 64,000 seasonal housing and/or lodging units and over 3,800 seasonal units in the Town.. The Town's ordinances limit occupancy of lodging units to no more than 28 continuous days., and the Town has recently committed to enforce this law by assigning a Code Enforcement staff member exclusively to dealing with lodging and campground properties. Even though lodging units may not be occupied long-term, many provide short-term housing to new arrivals and/or temporary workers. In addition, many seasonal units are rented at affordable prices in the off-season, thus increasing the effective supply of affordable housing units in Wells. As a result, household income levels in Wells are fairly modest—as of 202003, MSHA reported the Town's median household income as $76,10950,922, just slightly above the county's median.over $12,000 higher than the county's median.

CURRENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED—GAP ANALYSIS

The current affordable housing gap is measured by comparing Wells' present population's income profile with that of York County. The central assumption in this analysis is that each community in the county should have an equal share of low to moderate income residents and thus bear its fair share of the region's affordable housing need.

Table 210 compares 201900 Census data on very low, low and moderate-income households for Wells and York County to illustrate where the gaps exist.

TABLE 21

Very Low, Low, and Moderate Income Households, 2019

	Wells		**York County**	
	Number	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Very Low (<$35K)	1,225	26.7%	19,108	22.4%
Low ($35-$50K)	465	10.1%	10,588	12.4%
Moderate ($50-$75K)	780	17.0%	16,388	19.2%
Market (>$75K)	2,123	46.2%	38,027	44.6%
Total	**4593**	**100.0%**	**85,314**	**100.0%**

Source: US Census Bureau

TABLE 20
VERY LOW, LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS, 2000

	Wells		York County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very Low (<$25K)	918	23.0%	19,503	26.2%
Low ($25-40K)	793	19.8%	14,150	19.0%
Moderate ($40-60K)	841	21.1%	15,965	21.4%
Market (>$60K)	1,443	36.1%	24,910	33.4%
Total	**3,995**	**100%**	**74,527**	**100%**

Source: US Census; SMRPC

The "gap analysis" conducted to determine Wells' present affordable housing shortage was a matter of determining how many more very low, low and moderate-income households would need to be housed in the Town in order for its income profile to match that of York County.

Table 2~~1~~ illustrates the gap analysis.

TABLE 21
AFFORDABLE HOUSING GAP ANALYSIS

	Current Affordable Units	Units Needed to Match County Ratios	Affordable Housing Gap (Units
Very Low (<$74K)	918	1,045	127
Low ($74-118K)	793	758	0
Moderate ($118-178K)	841	856	15
Total	**2,552**	**2,659**	**142**

Source: US Census; SMRPC

TABLE 22 **Affordable House Gap Analysis**				
	Affordable Units in 2000	**Current Affordable Units**	**Units Needed to Match County Ratios**	**Affordable Housing Gap**
Very Low (<90K)	918	220	1029	809
Low ($90-$150K)	793	346	390	44
Moderate ($150-$250K)	841	846	654	0
Total	**2,552**	**1,412**	**2073**	**853**
Source: US Census Bureau				

As Table 21~~12-2~~ shows, Wells' present affordable housing shortage is estimated to be 853 ~~142~~ units, with ~~127~~ 809 of those units being in the very low-income range (units priced below $90~~74~~,000), 44~~none~~ in the low-income range (priced between $~~74,000~~90,000 and $150,000~~18,000~~) and an excess of 192 units ~~15~~ in the moderate-income range (priced between $150~~18~~,000 and $250~~178~~,000). Since 2000, this gap has increased by 519 units. The gap in affordable housing for the very low income bracket has increased by 682 units, and the gap for the low income bracket has increased by 44 units.

To close the existing gap of 853~~142~~ units, Wells would need to add an average of about 57 ~~9.5~~ affordable housing units over a 15-year period.

Currently, there are 120 workforce housing units planned in the town. Workforce housing will be available for workers that earn between 80% and 120% of the county's median income.

Future Affordable Housing Need

The ~~Maine State Planning Office (SPO)~~Economist projects that Wells' year-round population will increase by 3,038~~2,213~~ persons for the period spanning 2018~~00~~ to 2038~~15~~. Using the Town's 2000 average household size of 2.2~~3~~5 persons, this translates to a net change of 1,350~~942~~ year-round housing units.

Maine's Comprehensive Planning statutes mandate that local Comprehensive Plans ensure that at least 10% of new housing units in each municipality are targeted for affordable housing. Applying that standard to the forecasted change of 1,350~~942~~ units, this would translate to 135~~94~~ affordable units over a 15- year period, or an average of about 9~~6.3~~ per year.

Thus, the total annual target for affordable housing units in Wells through 2038~~15~~ should be 66~~16~~ per year, or a total of about 988~~240~~ total units by 2038~~15~~.

Likely Target Groups for Affordable Housing

To get a more accurate picture of what types of households in Wells may have unmet affordable housing needs, it is useful to look at four specific groups:

- **Moderate Income Households in Homebuying Years** – This group of households is typically headed by individuals who are 25 to 44 years in age with incomes of approximately $~~40,000~~30,000 to$~~50~~60,000. These represented an estimated ~~49~~% of all households in Wells in 2019~~000~~ or approximately 179~~330~~ households.
- **Very Low and Low Income Elderly** – These include citizens that have incomes below the federally established incomes for eligibility in subsidized rental housing units and have a need or desire to rent. As of 2019~~00~~, there were about 20%, or 941~~330~~ elderly, (headed by person aged 6~~7~~5 and up) households that fell within these income guidelines.
- **Very Low and Low Income Family Households** – These include households headed by a person under 65 years and that have incomes below the federally established incomes for eligibility in subsidized rental housing units and have a need or desire to rent. There are an estimated 749, 16%, ~~80~~ such households in Wells as of 2019~~00~~ that fell within these income guidelines.
- **Seasonal Workers** – The employment base in Wells is extremely variable, as many coastal-area businesses either only operate in the summer or add staff during the summer. As such, there is always a need to house workers who come to town only during the peak of the tourism season. Many of these workers have historically tapped into the general affordable housing supply for seasonal rentals, but this supply is getting smaller and smaller, thus creating a need for seasonal worker housing.

These groups provide the most likely target populations for affordable housing in Wells. They together make up about one-third of the Town's total household base and will continue to demand housing into the future.

Analysis

The inventory of Wells' population and demographic characteristics suggest the following implications for the long-range planning of the community.

1. The household population of Wells increased steadily over the past 915 years, while the surrounding region has generally been growing at a slowerfaster rate. As a result of the continued increase in residential development, the Town should review its policies with respect to population growth and determine if those policies can accommodate the recent and projected levels of residential development.

2. Wells has a significantly n older population base in 20192004 than it did in 20041990. The Town therefore needs to continue to assess the most appropriate policies for providing appropriate opportunities and services for this group.

3. Although Wells' household population is increasing, its household size is decreasing. There will continue to be demand for new household formation.

4. Wells' seasonal population grew substantially over the past 15 years, continuing a similar trend since the 1970s. The Town will continue to need to establish policies and strategies to accommodate future demand in a manner consistent with its small town vision.

5. There is a growing shortfall in affordable housing for both the elderly and other families.

6. The Town will need to provide about 988240 year-round housing units (an average of 616 per year over a 15-year period) for low to moderate-income households in order to shoulder its fair share of the region's affordable housing need. This conclusion was based on an analysis of the Town's needs using projections of future growth. This number has increased significantly in the past 15 years. Actual growth rates will need to be monitored to ensure that the Town is, in fact, keeping up with its fair share of affordable housing.

Data Sources and References

- United States Census Bureau
- Maine State Housing Authority https://www.mainehousing.org/policy-research/housing-data
- Town of Wells Code Enforcement Office
- Town of Wells Assessing Department
- Various websites for Wells' Campgrounds

Section 7 -- Historic and Archaeological Resources

Introduction

~~*EARLY*~~ *NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY*

For more than ten thousand years, before Europeans arrived in what is now known as North America, the forests covering Maine were home to an estimated 32,000 to 40,000 indigenous people. In Wells, the Abenaki Native Americans were one of the most prominent tribes and still have a presence in Southern Maine today. They, along with four other tribes, make up the Wabanaki Confederacy. Maine indigenous tribes hunted and fished with expertly crafted stone and bone tools including chipped spears, arrowheads, knives, harpoons, needles, awls, and fishing hooks. They used these tools for hunting the most abundant food in the Southern Maine area - fish and shellfish. Despite the challenges indigenous people have faced during colonization, they are still here. Whether they belong to federally recognized Wabanaki tribes or are descended from the Abenaki peoples who are not federally recognized today, they have persisted. Many of their early traditions have survived and continue to flourish in communities throughout Maine.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

Wells was incorporated in 1653 as the third town in the Province of Maine. Prior to this time there were early settlements on or near the beaches by traders and fishermen. By 1641, Edward Littlefield established a permanent home, sawmill and gristmill at the site of the Webhannet River Falls. Reverend John Wheelright soon followed and in 1642 established a church and a small settlement.

The early settlers took advantage of the numerous rivers and brooks in the area by establishing mills that served clusters of nearby farms. Stores, blacksmith shops and post offices soon grew up in these population concentrations. Original land grants extended 2.5 miles inland from the upper edge of the marsh to what today are Ridge and Branch Roads. Farmsteads, orchards and pasture lands, hay fields and wood lots were soon developed. Just as the Town began to grow the Indian Wars (first the King Phillip's War and then the French & Indian War) that lasted from approximately 1675 until the mid-1700s took a toll on the residents and stunted the growth of this newly formed community.

Following Revolution and the War of 1812, Wells prospered from fishing and shipping trade that sent mainly timber to Europe and imported such products as sugar and rum from the West Indies and Europe. This period flourished until after the Civil War. Although overland travel was difficult, by 1825 there were eight taverns serving stage coach travelers. Historically, three railroads passed through southern and central York County, all in a generally south-north direction, connecting Boston and Portland. ~~The railroad~~Once they were constructed, they provided ~~arrived in the 1840s providing~~ local employment and accessibility from all directions. The one remaining rail line, formerly the Boston and Maine, is now the route of the Downeaster passenger train operated by Amtrak on CRX Railways track. From Dover, New Hampshire, it passes through South Berwick, North Berwick, Wells, Kennebunk, and Biddeford. This section of the Boston and Maine was built in 1873 to compete with the earlier Boston to Portland line, the Portland, Saco & Portsmouth (PSP), then controlled by the Eastern Railroad. Built in 1842, it passed through Kittery, Eliot, North Berwick, Wells Depot, Wells Branch, and Kennebunk

The rails soon displaced much of freight transport previously carried by ships. It was during this period that businessman and other residents from inland cities in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts began to discover Wells' beaches during the summer months. By late in the century the "tourism" business began to materialize. This trend expanded during the 20th century and today Wells has a significant tourist economy.

Although there are remnants of the Wells early history, much of the natural resource-based farming and timber economy has given way to the tourist landscape and residential growth. However, the early settlement patterns have left Wells with a number of village areas including High Pine, Tatnic, Wells Branch and Merriland Ridge.

Types of Resources for Growth Management Planning

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission ~~in establishing~~ establishes guidance for ~~to~~ local communities to~~for~~ address and protect ~~sing~~ historic resources. They inventory ~~has recommended~~ three types of historic and archaeological resources by community.

These are:

- Historic structures—buildings and other above-ground structures;
- Prehistoric archaeological sites—Native American sites prior to European arrival; include campsites, village locations, rock quarries, sites with petrogylphs or rock carvinsgs, and others; and
- Historic archaeological sites—mostly European, after written records; include cellar holes from houses, foundations for farm buildings, mills, boatyards, near shore shipwrecks, and others.

The following discussion accounts for each of these resources in Wells.

Historic Resources and Structures

The town of Wells, settled in 1640/1 and incorporated in 1653, has a wealth of historic resources as a result of its longevity as the third oldest town in Maine. Only during this past century have many of these resources been recognized. For example, the Storer Garrison House was listed as significant in 1936 when it was noted by the National Park Service in its Historic American Building Survey and is noted in the National Archives.

National Register of Historic Places Properties

~~It was not until 1978, when the Wells Historic Preservation Committee was formed by a vote of the town and an inventory of the significant old buildings was begun, did the actual nominations to the National Register of Historic Places begin.~~ In 1978, the Town of Wells formed the Wells Historic Preservation Committee by a vote of the Town and conducted an inventory of local historic structures. This resulted in a number of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. ~~With the assistance of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in January~~ By 1980, 15 cape-style homes were accepted in a thematic grouping known as the "Early Capes of Wells, Maine". These were scattered throughout the community and were significant for their early 18th century

architecture. **See Table 1 below ~~22~~.** Included at the end of this section is map depicting the properties that are currently on the National Register of Historic Places list in Wells. Maps like this represent an opportunity to develop a heritage walk or tour of Wells' historic properties as a way educate the public on preserving the historical character of the community.

Table 1: Properties on the National Register of Historic Places	
Site	**Location**
Austin-Hennessey Homestead	Burnt Mill Rd.
Wells Baptist Church Parsonage	Route 9A
Wells Homestead	Sandford Rd.
Dorfield Farm	Harrisecket Rd.
Early Post Office	Bradon's Crossing
Eaton House	Sanford Rd.
Emery House	Sanford Rd.
Hatch House	Sanford Rd.
Littlefield Homestead	Chick's Crossing Rd.
Mill House	Post Rd.
Littlefield Tavern	Route 9
Littlefield-Chase Farmstead	Route 9
Littlefield-Dustin Farm	Dodge Rd.
Littlefield Keeping House	Route 9B
Lord Farm	Laudholm Rd.
Laudholm Frm	
Laudholm Farm (Boundary Increase)	
First Congregational Church (Former)	Junction of Route 1 and Barker's Lane
Division Number 9 School	Junction of Route 9 and Bragdon Rd.
Libby's Colonial Tea Room	Junction of Route 1 and Harrisecket Rd.

Since 1990, five ~~three~~ additional properties have been added to the register, bringing the current total to 20. These properties were added when the Historical Society of Wells & Ogunquit added the Historic First Church-now the Meeting House Museum in 1992; the Laudholm Trust ~~had~~ added the Wells Reserve Research Facility; ~~added~~ and the Wells Historic Preservation Commission added ~~was instrumental in the placement of~~ the Division 9 Schoolhouse. The other two sites are the Libby Tea Room/Restaurant and a Paleo-Indian site on the Spiller Farm. These properties fall under the perview of the Town of Wells Chapter 22 Historic Preservation land use regulations.

Table 22
Properties on the National Register of Historic Places

1. Storer-Hennessey Homestead	433 Branch Road
2. Wells Branch Baptist Church Parsonage	1384 Branch Road
3. Wells Homestead	232 Sanford Road
4. Dorfield Farm	16 Dorfield Lane
5. Bragdon House-Early Post Office	88 Crossing Road
6. Littlefield House	2077 Sanford Road
7. Emery House	2449 Sanford Road
8. Hatch House	2104 Sanford Road
9. Littlefield Homestead	1458 Branch Road
10. Mill House	502 Post Road
11. Littlefield Tavern	1107 Littlefield Road
12. Littlefield-Chase Farmstead	1485 North Berwick Road
13. Littlefield-Dustin Farm	41 Dodge Road
14. Littlefield-Keeping House	1673 Littlefield Road
15. Lord Homestead	317 Laudholm Road
16. (Former) First Congregational Church	938 Post Road
17. Wells Reserve Research Facility	342 Laudholm Road
18. Division 9 School	1760 North Berwick Road
19. Libby Tea Room/Restaurant	Post Road
20. Paleo-Indian Site	Spiller Farm

Source: Wells Historic Preservation Commission

The National Register designation denotes a property as a significant resource. It does not provide protection unless State or federal funding is involved in a project, such as road widening. Any such project must recognize the historic significance of the National Register resource and be consistent with federal guidelines.

Local Historic Preservation

In 1985, a Preservation Ordinance was enacted and still remains in Wells land use code today. Its purposes are to protect, enhance and preserve buildings and sites possessing historic, cultural or archaeological significance in order to promote the educational, cultural and economic welfare of the residents, property owners and visitors to Wells. To achieve these purposes, this ordinance designates certain areas in Town as historic districts, and sites and certain structures as historic buildings. In 2016, the Town of Wells adopted architectural design guidelines for historic structures as part of its land use code. These standards include set of regulations and review standards that are applied to any development, redevelopment, or site alteration proposed at designated historic sites to prevent inappropriate exterior alterations to or demolition of historic buildings.

~~A Preservation Ordinance for Wells was enacted in 1985 that changed the previous Preservation Committee status which had an unlimited number of members to a Commission with five members. (The number of members was amended at the 2000 Town Meeting – it now has nine members.)~~ Historically, many of the local historic preservation activities were completed by dedicated volunteers. The Town had a local Historic Preservation Committee as early as 1978 and a Historic Preservation Commission since 1985. While currently inactive, the purpose of the Commission is to protect, enhance and preserve buildings possessing historical, cultural or architectural significance; designate significant districts, sites and structures with regulation; and review standards applied to prevent inappropriate exterior alterations, demolition of historic buildings and destroying of historic sites.

Between 1999 and 2004, the Preservation Commission developed a survey of historically significant properties and sites in Wells. A report on the locations of the many small family cemeteries was produced with the assistance of the Department of Public Works in 1997. By 2005, the Wells Preservation Commission had placed nine (9) properties on the local historic register and of these, four (4) are also on the National Register of Historic Places (Littlefield-Keeping House, Littlefield-Dustin Farm, Former First Congregational Church, and Division 9 School). The other five locally identified properties include the Moulton Homestead (61 Post Road), the Rankin School (1817 Post Road), the Eldridge Tavern (6 Eldridge Road), the Oliver West Farm (359 Bald Hill Road), and the Rose Cottage (224 Sanford Road).

~~The purpose of this Commission is to protect, enhance and preserve buildings possessing historical, cultural or architectural significance; designate significant districts, sites and structures with regulation; and review standards applied to prevent inappropriate exterior alterations, demolition of historic buildings and destroying of historic sites.~~

~~The Preservation Commission worked to place nine properties on the local register. Of these, four are on the National Register (Littlefield-Keeping House, Littlefield-Dustin Farm, Former First Congregational Church and Division 9 School). The other five properties are:~~

- ~~The Moulton Homestead - 61 Post Road~~
- ~~The Rankin School - 1817 Post Road~~
- ~~The Eldridge Tavern - 6 Eldridge Road~~
- ~~The Oliver West Farm - 359 Bald Hill Road~~
- ~~The Rose Cottage - 224 Sanford Road~~

~~After a lapse in meetings in the middle 90s, the Wells Historic Preservation Commission was reactivated in the fall of 1999. An in-depth survey of significant properties and sites in Wells was once again begun. The survey was completed in 2004 and presented to the Board of Selectmen. A community informational program on preserving historic properties is planned to commence in the near future.~~

In 2003/2004, the Wells Historic Preservation Commission, in partnership with the Wells-Ogunquit Historical Society, generated an inventory of historically significant buildings and sites to be considered for the local register. **See Table 23** for the full inventory. ~~As of this writing, at least 90 buildings, over 200 cemetery sites and six monument locations are being considered.~~ [**We are**

currently collaborating with a representative from the Historical Society to revise this list and to remove any buildings that are no longer standing, etc.]

~~See Table 23 for the building inventory.~~

Table 23
Inventory of Significant Buildings Being Considered

1.	William Parson House -	6 Tatnic Road
2.	Holiday House -	68 Post Road
3.	Division 4 School -	145 Post Road
4.	WinnBragdon House -	345 Post Road
5.	Enoch Furbish House -	365 Post Road
6.	George H. Moody House -	387 Post Road
7.	The Williams House -	392 Post Road
8.	The Phillips House -	449 Post Road
9,	The A. Wheelwright House -	525 Post Road
10.	The M. Wheelwright House -	563 Post Road
11.	Division 3 School -	32 Eldridge Road
12.	The Beach Farm -	97 Eldridge Road
13.	The Moody Home -	664 Post Road
14.	The Augustus Littlefield Farmstead -	694 Post Road
15.	The Ivory Littlefield House -	12 Vera Lane
16.	The Hill Homestead -	27 Mile Road
17.	The Junior High School -	1470 Post Road
18.	The Milbray Freeman House -	Post Road
19.	The Parker House -	1516 Post Road
20.	The Capt. Wells House -	1532 Post Road
21.	The N. Littlefield House -	1544 Post Road
22.	The Sayer/Gilman Homestead -	42 Harbor Road
23.	The Lindsey Tavern -	1619 Post Road
24.	The Hubbard House -	1615 Post Road
25.	The Samuel Curtis House -	1637 Post Road

26	The Congregational Church -	1695 Post Road
27.	The S. Littlefield House -	1784 Post Road
28.	The J.P. Rankin House -	1820 Post Road
29.	The W. Rankin House -	1823 Post Road
30.	The S. Rankin House -	1830 Post Road
31.	The JR. Rankin House -	1853 Post Road
32.	The Hobbs Home -	1863 Post Road
33.	The J. Storer House -	1871 Post Road
34.	The Lord & Buzzell House -	Post Road
35.	The E. Stevens House -	Post Road
36.	The J. Littlefield House -	1902 Post Road
37.	The M. Bragdon House -	1908 Post Road
38.	The M. Richardson House -	1914 Post Road
39	The D. Eaton House -	1983 Post Road
40.	The Goodale House -	1996 Post Road
41.	The E.Pope House -	1999 Post Road
42.	The M. Bragdon House -	2010 Post Road
43.	The Gooch Homestead -	2011 Post Road
44.	The S. Bragdon House -	2016 Post Road
45.	The Wm. Hemmenway House -	2022 Post Road
46.	The R. Hemmenway House -	2023 Post Road
47.	The Bean Home -	2033 Post Road
48.	The Elms School -	2083 Post Road
49.	The Wells Homestead -	2104 Post Road
50.	The N. Cole Farm -	2208 Post Road
51.	The Smith Home -	2204 Post Road
52.	The L. Cole Farm -	2232 Post Road
53.	The S. Parks Home -	19 Laudholm Road
54.	The Blacksmith Shop -	Laudholm Road
55.	The Sammy Wells House -	Skinner Mill Road
56.	The Skinner Mill House -	167 Skinner Mill Road
57.	Libby's Restaurant -	2721 Post Road
58.	Wells Branch Community Hall -	1411 Branch Road
59.	The Goodwin Farm -	83 Chick Crossing Road
60.	The Taylor /Penney Homestead -	144 Chick Crossing Road
61.	The Gowen/Littlefield Homestead -	336 Chick Crossing Road
62.	The D. Chick Store & Post Office -	617 Chick Crossing Road
63.	The S. Chick Farmstead -	779-1 Chick Crossing Road
64.	The Clark Farm -	202 Clark Road
65.	The Weeks/Goodwin Farm -	1285 Branch Road
66.	The Spiller/Wells Farm -	1140 Branch Road
67.	Capt. Theodore Wells House -	936 Branch Road
68.	The Hobbs/James Farm -	189 Hobbs Farm Road
69.	The Benjamin Storer House -	Meetinghouse Road
70.	The Hilton Farm -	2010 Sanford Road
71.	The Hutchins Home -	2007 Sanford Road
72.	The Dodge House -	1852 Sanford Road
73.	The Brick Oven House -	2039 Sanford Road
74.	The Sanitarium -	2124 Sanford Road
75.	The Division 14 School	
76.	The Homestead -	176 High Pine Loop
77.	The Bragdon Farm -	1389 Bragdon Road

78.	The Wideman Homestead -	22 Sunset Ridge Road
79.	The Johnson/Tobey Farm -	1939 North Berwick Road
80.	The Harris Home -	604 North Berwick Road
81.	The George Gray Home -	1607 North Berwick Road
82.	The Lydia Littlefield Tavern -	1401 North Berwick Road
83.	The A. Getchell Homestead -	27 North Berwick Road
84.	The J.F.Littlefield Farm -	65 Merriland Ridge Road
85.	The Curtis Farm -	367 Loop Road
86.	The Merrifield Farm -	504 Hilton Lane
87.	The Littlefield Farm -	553 Hilton Lane
88.	The Hilton Farm -	1105 Tatnic Road
89.	The Kimball Farm -	1643 Tatnic Road
90.	The A. Bragdon Farm -	1735 Tatnic Road
91.	The Hobbs/Matthews Cottage -	567 Ocean Avenue
92.	The George W. Moody Home -	698 Ocean Avenue
93.	Dr. C. Horsch -	702 Ocean Avenue
94.	The Minnetonka/Grey Gull -	475 Webhannet Drive
95.	The Lester Kimball Home -	393 Webhannet Drive
96.	The Webhannet House -	371 Webhannet Drive
97.	The Cambridge Cottage -	174 Webhannet Drive
98.	The Bon-Aire Cottage	19 Atlantic Avenue
99.	The Eaton Farm -	97 Shady Lane

Source: Wells Historic Preservation Commission

~~The monuments include:~~

- ~~The Storer State Park & Monument~~
- ~~The Monument at Webhannet Falls~~
- ~~The Monument at site of Edmund Littlefield's house~~
- ~~The Monument at site of the first church~~
- ~~The Monument recognizing Col. John Wheelwright's garrison~~
- ~~Founders Park Monument – recognizing early families (1653-1734)~~

In 2011, the Maine Department of Transportation and the Maine Turnpike Authority conducted a study titled the "Central York County Connections Study" to develop strategies to improve connectivity between central York County and the major transportation corridors along the coast. As part of this effort, an in-depth review of historic and archaeological resources in each of the communities within the study area, including Wells. According to this report, there are a number of identified eligible districts and sites for the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. These include the following.

- Wells Branch Community Building, 1411 Branch Road
- Wells Branch Fire Association Building, 1291 Branch Road
- Residential Structure, 936 Branch Road
- Residential Structure, 1010 Branch Road
- Residential Structure, 1140 Branch Road
- Residential Structure, 1285 Branch Road
- Residential Structure, Sanford Road by tollgate
- B&M Railroad Underpass Bridge #5337
- Old Buffum Bridge #0821

~~The Commission with the assistance of the Department of Public Works produced a report on cemeteries – *Cemetery Locations in Wells*, Maine in 1997. A second *report – Veteran's Gravesites in Wells* was produced in January, 2000. These reports provided information on name and location of the cemetery as well as brief descriptions of each site.~~

~~In 2003, the Commission designed and published a self-guided driving tour of historic sites in Wells.~~

~~In 1976, the Bicentennial Committee (an ad hoc group) renovated School House # 9 on the Berwick Road, furnished it with furniture and equipment and gave it to the town for public use.~~

~~The John Wells House, which dates from ca. 1710, is being restored as a museum showing early construction. This will be the only museum of its kind in Maine. The museum is scheduled for opening by early 2005.~~

A FEW OF WELLS' LOCAL HISTORIC PLACES

Bridge of Flowers at Webhannet at Webhannet Falls Park
This historic site was developed through a collabrative effort between the Webhannet Garden Club and the Historical Society of Wells & Ogunquit. This site pays tribute to the parcel of land where Edmund Littlefield established the first permanent mills on the Webhannet River banks in 1640-1641. It is located on Route One just south of 876 Post Road (Route One), the Coast Village Inn & Cottages property.

Founders Park
Located just off of Post Road (Route One) onto Sanford Road between the Wells Town Hall and Wells Elementary School, this historic site includes ~~a~~ the first settlement home of Wells and a monument that lists the names of Wells' founding families. It also has a light walking trail and picnic area.

Col. John Wheelright's Garrison
Just north of Howe's Floor Store on the east side of Route One (1785 Post Road), a historic marker sits to identify the site of Col. John Wheelwright's Garrision. It was from this site that Mrs. Esther Wheelwright (1696-780) was captured by Native Americans and taken to Canada in 1703. There she became a nun and eventually, in 1760, Mother Superior of the Ursuline Convent in Quebec.

School House Division No. 9
This historic schoolhouse was built by the Town of Wells between 1899-1901 on a half acre of land at a total cost of $848.72. The Town of Wells restored the site in 1976. The Schoolhouse is located on North Berwick Road (Route 9) about 5 miles from Sanford Road (Route 109) and offers tours of the Schoolhouse by appointment.

Storer Park
This historic site memorializes the battle between the early Wells residents and the Native Americans who allied with New France. This small park is located off of Route One adjacent to

the Garrison Suites Motel at 1099 Post Road, the former location of the historic 'Garrison House' which has been located to the Mike's Clam Shack Restaurant property. Commander of the garrison, Captain James Converse, successfully repelled the raid despite being greatly outnumbered. A granite monument in Storer Park now marks the site of Lieutenant Storer's garrison.

Perkins Cove/Mousam River Heritage Coastal Area

A portion of the Perkins Cove/Mousam River Heritage Coastal Area (HCA) is located in Wells. Perkins Cove, which is part of the Heritage Coastal Area (HCA), is a popular tourist destination with seaside views, remnants of Wells fishing industry, and its unique arts colony era historic significance. Within Wells, the HCA includes the beaches and marsh systems from the Ogunquit River to Branch Brook. The Heritage Coastal Area Program is designed to identify, document and protect areas of significance to the State's coastal heritage.

A survey of Wells' Coastal Area was undertaken by the Institute of Maritime History in the fall of 1999 and the spring of 2000. Many wharf and dock sites were documented as part of Wells' Working Waterfronts from the settlement years and into the 20th century. Wrecks of derelict ships were found and examined. A maritime history was written documenting the uses of the Webhannet River inlets, the marsh, the harbor and the beaches from the "Age of Sail", when residents were dependent upon navigation, to the present.

Veterans Cemeteries

Wells has a number of cemeteries in Town where veterans are buried including veterans who serve in the Revolutionary War, Civil War, and other significant events. These sites are included in the table below.

Family Name	Address
Witham, Littlefield	Avandah Way lot #10
Field Stones	203 Post Rd.
Williams Cemetery	412 Post Rd.
Furbish, Perkins Cemetery	Ridge Top Trail
Wheelright Cemetery	563 Post Rd.
Eldridge, Littlefield, Winn Cemetery	Post Rd.
Cole, Hammon, Littlefield Cemetery	753 Post Rd.
Unmarked Winn Cemetery	41 Brown Lane
Chute Cemetery	67 Buzzell (in old apple orchard)
Hill Cemetery	1413 Post Rd.
Ocean View Cemetery	1485 Post Rd.
Keyes, Littlefield	35 Webhannet Harbor
Coles Corner Cemetery	2181 Post Rd.
Taylor, Grant Cemetery	Willow Way/Pike Rd.
Bragdon, Storer Collins	279 Harrissecket Rd.
Storer, Ricker, Goodwin Cemetery	NE side Harrissecket Rd.

Littlefield Cemtery	385 Harrisseket Rd.
Jeffers Cemetery	57 Jefferds Way
Littlefield, Shorey, Penny Cemetery	106 Chick Crossing Rd.
Goodwin/Penney Cemetery	106 Chick Crossing Rd.
Pine Hill Cemetery	52 Pine Hill Rd.
Oak Grove Cemetery	1342 Branch Rd.
Clark, Littlefield, Mildrum Cemetery	294 Mildrum Rd.
Hatch Cemetery	Faxon Drive
Annis, Ford Cemetery	95 Branch Rd.
Hilton Cemetery (Ivory Civil War)	79 Lindsey Rd.
Unid. Civil War Cemetery	58 Crediford Rd.
Annis, Morrison, Hubbard Cemetery	27 Nella St.
Crediford Cemetery	W. side Crediford Rd. opp. Nella St.
Littlefield, Lowe Cemetery	874 Merriland Ridge Rd.
1812 Moses, Littlefield, Dockham, Joy Cemetery	114 Merriland Ridge Rd.
Littlefield, Maxwell, Dickerson Cemetery	1014 North Berwick Rd.
Merriland Ridge Cemetery	1488 Berwick Rd.
Grant Cemetery	1620 Berwick Rd.
Jepson Cemetery	188 Boyd Rd.
Getchell Cemetery (Robert War 1812)	Bragdon Rd.
Bragdon Crossing Cemetery	16 Forgotten Lane
Hatch Cemetery (Elijah Rev War)	1253 Bradon Rd.
Bennett Cemetery	1353 Bragdon Rd.
West Cemetery	1966 Bragdon Rd.
Benntt, Hatch, Hilton Cemetery	461 Swamp John Rd.
Murray, Penney Cemetery	476 Bragdon Rd.
Hatch, W.G. Manson Cemetery	243 Bragdon Rd.
Parsonage Lot	126 Meetinghouse Rd.
Hobbs, Hatch Cemetery	688 Meetinghouse Rd.
Holmes, Kimball, Storer	N. Orens Rd.
Godowin, Avery, Chase	879 Meetinghouse Rd.
Lord, Littlefield	Wire Road
Emergy, Getchell, Hatch Cemetery	2511 Sanford Rd.
Mills, Perkins, West Cemetery	152 Horace Mills Rd.
Perkins Cemetery	841 Quarry Rd.
Grant, Johnson, Jon Perkins Cemetery	648 Quarry Rd.
Taylor Cemetery	386 Perry Oliver Rd.
Colarossi Cemetery	322 Bald Hill Rd.
Jon Hatch, Kimball Cemetery	259 Bald Hill Rd.
Elm Brook Cemetery	115 Sanford Rd.
Littlefield Cemetery	2155 Sanford Rd.
Chadbourne Cemetery	2141 Sanford Rd.
Hatch, Colby, Gordon Cemetery	2196 Sanford Rd.
Hatch, Littlefield Cemetery	1941 Sanford Rd.

Hill Cemetery	1568 Sanford Rd.
Brown, Hatch Cemetery	1367 Sanford Rd.
Hubbard Cemetery	1224 Sanford Rd.
Bradon Cheney Cemetery	750 Sanford Rd.
Daniel Cheney, Cook Cemetery	Bramble Lane.
Littlefield Cemetery	1042 Littlefield Rd.
Littlefield, Stover, Dresser Cemetery	1107 Littlefield Rd.
Stuart Cemetery	393 Hilton Lane
Rogers, Stuart Cemetery	395 Hilton Lane
Welch Cemetery	95 Hilton Lane
Curtis Cemetery	368 Loop Rd.
Chaney, Johnson, Littlefield	40 Green Rd.
Littlefield Cemetery	544 Littlefield Rd.
Stuart Cemetery	Newhall Rd.
Williams, Kimball Cemetery	1673 Littlefield Rd.
Sargent Cemetery Amos	NW side Cheney Woods Rd.
Baston Cemetery	Tatnic Rd.
Allen Chaney Cemetery	62 Tufts Rd.
Kimball, Young Cemetery	1643 Tatnic Rd.
Field Stones – Jim Place	Tatnic Rd.
Hilton Cemetery	28 Sacred Oaks off Tatnic Rd.
Littlefield Cemetery	840 Tatnic Rd.
Stewart/Stuart	Cable Tower Lane
Hilton, Littlefield, Stevens, Evertt	473 Tatnic Rd.
Stuart, Stevens Cemetery	128 North Village Rd.
Maxwell Cemetery	263 Old County Rd.
Kimball	182 Old County Rd.
Toby	84 Boyd Rd.
Durfee	854 Chick Crossing Rd.
Sheehy	38 Slavin Drive
Estes Cemetery	4201 Swamp John Rd.
Roland, Ford Cemetery	841 Quarry Rd.
Vance	1791 Tatnic Rd.

Archaeological Resources

As of March 2021, ~~September 1999,~~ the Maine Historic Preservation Commission has inventory data on ~~the following~~ 33 archaeological sites in Wells:

~~ME 467-01 Little River Site (mid-1600s)~~
~~ME 467-01 Jefferd's Tavern Site (ca 1750-1790)~~
~~ME 467-05 Storer Garrison Site (ca 1680-1750)~~
~~ME 467-09 Laudholm Farm (19th century)~~
~~ME 467-10 J. Bennett Farmstead Site (19th century)~~

~~ME 467-11 George Bennett Farmstead Site (19th century)~~

TABLE 3: Historic Archaeological Sites Maine Historic Preservation Commission			
SiteName	**Sitenum**	**SiteType**	**Periods of Significance**
Little River	ME 467-001	settlement	c. 1620- c. 1675
Mary E. [F.] Pennell	ME 467-003	wreck, schooner	Built 1868, wrecked July 6, 1915
Rising Sun	ME 467-004	wreck, schooner	Built 1852, wrecked 1906
Storer Garrison	ME 467-005	garrison house	c. 1680 - 1750
Halcyon	ME 467-006	wreck, vessel	August 12, 1845
Arctic	ME 467-007	wreck, schooner	Built 1865, wrecked January 17, 1873
Isadore	ME 467-008	wreck, vessel	1842
Laudholm Farm	ME 467-009	farmstead	ca. 1800-1900, perhaps earlier
J. Bennett Farmstead	ME 467-010	farmstead	1800s
George Bennett Farmstead	ME 467-011	farmstead	1800s
Upper Landing	ME 467-012	shipyard and wharf	As early as mid 17th century. Structural alterations in 1801.
Lower Landing	ME 467-013	shipyard and wharf	Early 1700s, but most activity in 19th century.

TABLE 3: Historic Archaeological Sites Maine Historic Preservation Commission			
SiteName	Sitenum	SiteType	Periods of Significance
Mile Road Landing	ME 467-014	shipyard and wharf	possibly 18th century but first reference 1851
Six-Acres Shipyard	ME 467-015	shipyard	1723-1800s
Mile Road Dike	ME 467-016	dike	1890s
Drake's Island Dike 1	ME 467-017	dike	1890s
Drake's Island Dike 2	ME 467-018	dike	1890s
Wells Harbor Jetty	ME 467-019	jetty	Earliest known construction in 1825, stone jetty in 1960s and 1970s
Wells Harbor Shipwreck	ME 467-020	wreck, ship	Construction elements suggest 18th century.
Pine Island Shipwreck	ME 467-021	wreck, ship	Construction elements suggest 19th century
Emma S. Osier	ME 467-025	wreck, schooner	Built in 1875, date of abandonment or wreck unknown.
Mary E. Caswell	ME 467-026	wreck, schooner	Built 1867, wrecked April 24, 1881
Loella	ME 467-027	wreck, schooner	Built 1849, wrecked August 17, 1882
Mustado	ME 467-028	wreck, gas screw	Built 1899, stranded October 12, 1917
Daniel Clark Sawmill	ME 467-029	mill, sawmill	c. 1860 - c. 1910

TABLE 3: Historic Archaeological Sites Maine Historic Preservation Commission			
SiteName	Sitenum	SiteType	Periods of Significance
Jefferds Fulling and Grist Mill	ME 467-030	mill, fulling and grist	c. 1754 to c. 1820
Samuel H. Pike Farm	ME 467-031	farmstead	Constructed c. 1832
Samuel H. Pike Woolen Mills	ME 467-032	mill, carding and fulling	c. 1834- c. 1895
Littlefield Farmhouse	ME 467-033		
mill #1	ME 467-034	dam, mill	could be as early as 1681
mill #2	ME 467-035	structure, unidentified	probably 19th c
Buffum Hill Cemetery	ME 467-036	cemetery	1713 or earlier to 1847

~~Wells potentially contains numerous sites from the earliest period of English settlement that need documentation. Since very limited professional survey work has been conducted to date in Wells, there is a need to identify, evaluate and protect these resources. The sites of mills, working waterfronts, derelict vessels and garrison houses are but a few to consider.~~

There have been no professional town-wide surveys completed in Wells for historic archaeological sites. Future archaeological surveys should focus on the identification of potentially significant resources associated with the town's agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the 17th and 18th centuries.

PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

As of April 2021, ~~August 2000~~ the ~~State~~ Maine Historic Preservation Commission has documented five prehistoric archaeological sites in Wells. Spiller Farm, which is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is the highest significant site on this list. The other four sites have been categorized as not significant or are not well known enough to make a

determination of significance. Areas in Wells that have a relatively high probability of containing prehistoric sites, based on our predictive model of site location (water proximity, soils) include land around the Branch Br., Hobbs Br., Ogunquit River, Webhannet River and marsh). Ground disturbing activity in these areas should be preceded by an archaeological survey. ~~lists the following sites:~~

~~4.13 Spiller Farm, highly significant (on National Register as of 2004)~~
~~4.12 Ceramic Period Site, small site at the location of the proposed gas storage tank. Not significant.~~

~~From maps provided to the Town by Dr. Arthur Spiess, archaeologist from the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission, potential sites of archaeological resources in Wells are the tidal marshes, the areas surrounding all local rivers and the heath areas in town.~~

Cultural Resources

There are many cultural resources available in the town of Wells.

The Wells Public Library opened in 1979 and provides resources, programs and services to the public using updated technology for all age groups. Over 35,000 titles are available along with videos, audiocassette books, large print books, copier for public use and an automated circulation and catalog system.

The Meetinghouse Museum with its Historical and Genealogical Research Library is maintained by the Historical Society of Wells & Ogunquit. The Auditorium of this former First Church of Wells is used for historical, educational and cultural events. The annex has Exhibit Rooms displaying artifacts and memorabilia from the Wells & Ogunquit area. The upstairs Annex houses the Esselyn Perkins Memorial Library where a sizable collection of historical and genealogical volumes are used by folks from all over the country researching their roots.

The Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, established in the mid 1970s as the Coastal Maine National Wildlife Refuge, has purchased much of the marshlands of Wells thus providing great opportunities for research and wildlife observation of this area. The Refuge is committed to preserving wildlife habitat and waterfowl migration routes along Maine's coastal estuaries. Visitors experience a mile-long accessible self guided trail, the "Carson Trail", at the refuge headquarters on Port Road.

Wells' National Estuarine Research Reserve was established at Laudholm Farm in 1986. The Research Department is housed in the buildings that were once used as the farmstead. Today this area contains exhibits, a Welcome Center and meeting room. Seven miles of trails give visitors a view of habitats of a variety of wildlife. The Educational Department provides day and evening nature programs through tours, talks, slide shows, school and group field trips, summer camp, artist's workshops and kayak adventures.

The Wells/Ogunquit Community School District, Adult Education Programs, the York County

Technical College as well as the seven churches in the town provide educational, cultural programs as well as concerts to the community as a whole. The Senior Service Committee of the town provides additional cultural enrichment for the community's seniors.

Note: Much of the information for this section of the Comprehensive Plan Update was provided by Hope Shelley of the Wells Historic Preservation Commission.

HISTORIC PROPERTIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Much like parks, schools, and town buildings, a community's historic properties contribute to the unique local character and create a sense of place. They are also vulnerable to the effects of climate change including erosion, high water, intense storms, high winds, and wildfire. While most of Wells' historic properties and structures are located inland, there are a few cultural resources on the coast, including Laudholm Farms, the Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge, and the Wells Reserve.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has developed a GIS map that depicts the locations of properties in Maine listed in the National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmarks or museums/archives along with layers depicting potential threats to these properties including flood, fire, sea-level rise, storm surge. The map also shows current NOAA hazards and watches. In Wells, none of the National Register of Historic Places sites are within the projected sea level rise storm surge scenarios.

Analysis

The Town of Wells has a wealth of historic, archaeological and prehistoric resources. The Historic Preservation Commission has made significant progress in identifying and documenting many of these resources. However, additional work could be done to further identify and document both historic and prehistoric archaeological sites.

The Town has also adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance for the protection of local historic resources. The current work by the Commission will identify additional resources that will come under this ordinance. The Commission will need to continue to pursue its efforts to identify, document and protect these valuable resources.

At present, the Town is not a Certified Local Government for purpose of receiving matching funds from the state for historical and archaeological research and projects. With such valuable resources in the Town, such a designation would be a significant step in protecting and maintaining the Town's historic and archaeological assets.

Data Sources and References

1. Inventory Data for Municipal Growth Management Plans – Prehistoric Archaeological Sites, Historic Archaeological Sites, and Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects. Maine Historic Preservation Commission.
2. Weathering Maine: Mapping Threats to Maine's Historic and Cultural Resources. Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

3. The Historical Society of Wells and Ogunquit. https://www.wellsogunquithistory.org
4. Town of Wells Historic Places. https://www.wellstown.org/442/Historic-Places
5. Central York County Connections Study. https://www.wellstown.org/DocumentCenter/View/2817/Central-York-County-Connections-Study---Full-Report-April-2016?bidId=

Section 8 – Existing and Future Land Use

A. FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURAL LAND

Forestry

Much of the undeveloped area of Wells is in forest. A significant amount of land is being actively managed as forest land or is enrolled in the Tree Growth Tax Law or the Maine Tree Growth taxation program. ~~A total of almost 4,000 acres on 131 different parcels are covered by the tree growth program.~~ As of 2021, 4,034 acres across 67 parcels of the land within Wells are enrolled in the Tree Growth Program. These lands are restricted from development while in the program and subject to a timber management plan. The Maine Forest Service compiles data on timber harvest based on end of year landowner reports. In Wells, from 1991 -2018, a total of 12,669 acres of timber were harvested, at an average of 452 acres per year. 88% of the harvest was selection harvest, 10% was shelterwood harvest, and 2% was clearcut harvest (DACF – Maine Forest Service). ~~The holdings range from approximately 10 acres to 286 acres, with 10 owners controlling 100 acres or more. The current average size of parcels in the program is 30.5 acres, reflecting a trend toward smaller individual parcels in the program~~

The ~~Soil~~ Natural Resources Conservation Service rates soils for forest ~~production~~productivity. Productivity is based on the total yield of wood per hectare of mature trees, indicating the potential productivity of the soils for wood crops. Soils rated as for productivity for wood crops are found largely west of Route 1. ~~The Town contains a limited amount of area with soils rated as very good for tree production. These soils are located primarily along Branch Brook, in the Hobbs Brook area, near the Merriland River, along the Sanford town line and around the Green River in the southern part of Town. In addition, large areas of the Town have soils which are capable of supporting commercial forestry use.~~

Agriculture

As stated in the Town Code, agriculture is defined as the business of producing or raising plants and crops, including gardening for commercial use, greenhouses not for wholesale business, tree farms, and nurseries. Timber harvesting is not included within the scope of agriculture, nor is the extraction of water for agricultural use (Town Code, Chapter 145, Article V, 145-10). The use of land for agricultural purposes in the Town has diminished over the years. There is still a small amount of land in active agricultural production, including the Spiller Farm and Chick Farm ~~and Rigby farms~~ in Wells Branch, ~~the Merriland Ridge farm on Route 9, Hilton's farm on the Tatnic Road,~~ and a number of horse farms in the Tatnic area. As of ~~2004~~ 2021 there are ~~17~~ 22 parcels encompassing 1,~~028~~ 071 acres of land within Wells enrolled in the ~~Farm and~~ Open Space Tax ~~Act~~ program and 21 parcels encompassing 931 acres enrolled in the Farmland Tax Program. ~~These parcels only account for about three percent of the Town's total land area.~~

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has identified those soil types that are highly suited for

agricultural purposes. This land is divided into two categories, prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance. ~~prime farmland and agricultural soils of statewide significance.~~ The Town has a very limited amount of prime farmland soils, ~~. These are~~ located primarily in the Bragdon ~~farm area~~Road area adjacent to the town border with North Berwick, and in the Wells Branch area. ~~There is also a limited amount of soils of statewide significance primarily in these same areas.~~Large areas of the town are considered farmland of statewide importance, including the northwestern half of the town and land between Interstate 95 and Route 1.

B. RECENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Residential Development

During the 1970s, Wells experienced a large amount of land subdivision activity. The 1980 Comprehensive Plan identified 73 approved subdivisions in Wells with a total of 1,790 lots during this period. These subdivisions were scattered throughout the Town. Almost half of the subdivisions and almost 60% of the approved lots were located east of the Maine Turnpike in Moody, along Route 9-B, near Route One and near Cozy Corner. The remaining subdivisions were located west of the Turnpike concentrated in the Perkinstown-Ell Pond area, the High Pine-Route 109, scattered along the 9-B area, the Bragdon Road area and Wells Branch. This activity created a substantial inventory of approved lots in Wells.

During the 1980s the level of subdivision activity was significantly lower than that experienced during the 1970s. From January 1980 through August 1988, the Town approved only 19 subdivisions with 5 or more lots and a total of 217 approved lots—less than 15% of the lots approved during the period from 1970 to 1980. Most of this activity occurred in the area west of the Turnpike. During this same period, the Town approved 5 condominium projects with a total of 71 units and the Stephen Eaton elderly housing project with 40 units of subsidized housing for older and handicapped households.

While the level of new subdivision approvals slackened during the 1980s, the Town continued to experience significant development of new housing. Much of this development occurred as single-family housing on the inventory of lots created during the subdivision boom of the late 1970s. Between January 1, 1980, and September 1, 1989, the Town issued building permits for approximately 850 to 900 new single-family homes. In addition, the Town issued permits for approximately 125 new housing units in multifamily structures. Over this same period, permits were issued for locating approximately 200 mobile homes. During this period, the Town had a growth ordinance in effect that limited construction to a maximum of 132 new units per year.

During the early part of the 1990s the level of subdivision approvals and building permits continued to remain static. The pace of development picked up in the latter part of the decade. The level of subdivision activity was much higher than the previous decade. In 1999 alone there

were more subdivision lots approved (245) than during the nine-year period between 1980 and 1988 (217). The bulk of these lots occurred in two developments: The Forest (120 lots) and Spinnaker Ridge (54 lots).

Subdivision activity ~~has actually~~ slowed ~~since~~ in the early 2000s, partly in response to the abundance of lots approved in 1999. Between 2000 and 2003, ~~In the four-year period of 2000 through 2003,~~ there were just 122 new subdivision lots approved in Wells, an average of 30 per year. ~~As of~~Subdivision developments picked up again later in the 2000s; in 2004, there weare an estimated 152 approved but unbuilt subdivision lots in the town. However, in 2010, only 2 subdivision lots were approved, significantly less than the 99 subdivision lots approved the year prior in 2009. Similar to the previous decade, much of this subdivision activity occurred west of the Maine Turnpike, although there was significant subdivision activity between US Route ~~One~~ 1 and the Turnpike in the Burnt Mill Road area and the Moody area between Tatnic and Edgewood Roads.

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~~On the other hand, the number of building permits for single and multifamily housing was limited to a certain extent by the Growth Ordinance. Between 1995 and 2003 there were 794 growth permits issued. The lowest year was 1997 with 62 permits issued. The highest was 2003 with the maximum of 132 permits issued. See below for more discussion about the Growth Ordinance.~~

From 2010 – 2019, an average of 47 subdivision lots (63 dwellings) were approved every year. The year with the most subdivision lots approved was 2015 (150 lots), and the year with the lowest number of lots approved was 2011 (4 lots). In total, 423 lots were approved (571 dwelling units). From 2010-2019, 994 single family building permits were approved for an average of 124 building permits per year.[1] During this time period, in total, 747 acres of open space were designated to meet the open space land use code requirements for the developments, for an average of 83 acres per year. In 2020, the trend seen during the previous decade was continued; 51 new lots were approved (93 dwelling units) and 160 new single family building permits were approved. Approximately 100 acres of open space were designated in 2020. From 2010-2020, an average of 1.2 acres of open space were created for every dwelling unit.

Non-Residential Development

During the 1980s, Wells experienced a substantial increase in transient/tourist housing accommodations. In 1985 and 1986, the Town approved over 700 units in condo-hotels. The Town also approved 10 motel developments during the 1980s with a total of 329 rooms. Virtually all of this development occurred in the Route 1 ~~One~~ Corridor or at Wells Beach.

Wells experienced a large amount of commercial development between 1980 and August 1988. The industrial park saw Shaw's construct a 240,000 square foot distribution center in 1983 and a 230,000 square foot expansion in 1987. During this period, the Town approved over 100,000 square feet of retail and office construction primarily in the Route ~~One~~ 1 area. Since 1988, the Town has approved the construction of a new supermarket at the intersection of Route ~~One~~ 1 and

[1] 2010 data is not included in building permit summaries.

the Mile Road adjacent to the existing shopping center.

~~By comparison during the early part of the 1990s commercial development was not as rapid during the 1980s.~~ While non-residential growth has been steady since the middle 1990s, it generally has been smaller scale. There ~~have been~~were two additions to the Spencer Press and smaller retail growth such as Rite Aid and Canon Factory Outlet. One of the most significant non-residential developments ~~has bee~~was the York County Technical College.

~~Since 2000~~In the early 2000s, there ~~has~~ was a~~been~~ growing reinvestment in older commercial properties in the Route 1 corridor. The Ames department store shut down in 2002 ~~,~~but was redeveloped as a Marden's store that opened in 2004. As Wells' residential base continues to grow other aging shopping centers and stand-alone commercial properties will likely become more attractive for reinvestment.

Comment: We recommend deleting this section as it appears to no longer be current (Chapter 175 of Wells Town Code expired in 2008).

~~Residential Growth Management Ordinance~~

~~In 1980 Wells adopted a Residential Growth Management Ordinance (presently Chapter 175 of the Municipal Code) to limit the number of residential building permits for new dwelling units in a given year. The ordinance has been modified three times since then: in 1986,1993 and 2003, to be more reflective of the growth situation at that time and to provide a more efficient and equitable system for managing the issuance of residential growth permits. This ordinance was adopted in an effort to provide for a predictable residential growth rate so that the Town could reasonably plan for community facilities and services such as education, fire, police and roadway maintenance and construction, while protecting valuable natural resources and open space. The Town recognizes that protection of its natural resources enhances its attractiveness for tourism and natural resource-based industries.~~

~~At present, the limit on the number of permits is 132 per year with no more than 11 being issued~~
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~~in any one month. This growth ordinance has monthly lottery system that further limits the type of permit issue. It allows up to four permits per moth for non-subdivision dwelling units and seven for dwelling units in subdivisions. There are exemptions from the growth ordinance for accessory dwellings, affordable housing units and elderly affordable units. Any individual or corporation building an affordable unit also receives an exemption for one non-affordable unit. From 1993 through 2002, the limit was never reached. In 2003, however, the maximum number of subdivision growth permits was reached. As of September 2004, the waiting time for a growth permit in subdivisions is at about two years.~~

~~There are now 16 other communities in York county with similar such ordinances. There has been some question about the legality of these regulations. Though the state Supreme Court upheld the Town of Eliot's growth ordinance in a 2000 case, the Maine Legislature has amended state statutes on these types of ordinances. The State Planning Office's interpretation of the~~

~~legislation now requires towns to make a strong need based case for maintaining growth caps. A change to the state statute in 2002 explicity encourages municipalities to make use of differential growth caps that limit growth in rural areas but encourage growth in urban or urbanizing areas.~~

~~With this in mind, an analysis of the fiscal issues related to Wells' need to maintain its residential growth cap can be found in the Fiscal Capacity chapter (Chapter 10).~~

C. CURRENT LAND USES

Introduction

This element of the Comprehensive Plan Update focuses on existing land uses in Wells. The pattern of land use in Wells gives the community its special character. This character is also shaped by a variety of natural, historical, and cultural features that are intertwined with Wells' historical pattern of growth. The traditional settlement pattern that defines much of Wells' character consists of a major highway corridor with associated commercial, retail and institutional uses, several commercial/residential village centers, one industrial park, scattered residential neighborhoods, and rural areas that are marked by single family housing, agricultural lands and forested areas.

In addition to an understanding of the Town's natural resource opportunities and constraints, an analysis of existing uses is necessary to plan for future growth and change. The accompanying maps and discussion of land use trends help to determine where development has occurred to date and where it is likely to occur in the future. Comparison to existing zoning districts is provided and inconsistencies are identified. This information identifies the needs and problems associated with growth in accordance with the Town's current land use regulations~~regulatory and management system.~~

Residential Land Use

Residential land use in Wells is by far the largest use of developed land—about ~~10,300~~ 12,800acres on ~~more than~~about ~~5,000~~ 5,500 parcels, representing approximately 34~~29~~% of Wells' total land area. ~~This includes the~~

~~approximately 400 parcels coded as Waterfront by the Wells Assessor's Office and 68 parcels coded as Residential Condominium.~~ Waterfront parcels are primarily seasonal, but have become increasingly populated by year-round residents ~~in the past few years.~~ **See Table ~~24~~1, Summary of Wells Land Use Data**.

The pattern of residential use in Wells is quite similar to the pattern that was noted in the 1990 and 2005 Comprehensive Plans. ~~In that plan rural subdivisions and centers with established development patterns were considered as one category. Given the additional rural subdivisions that have occurred in the last decade, it would seem appropriate to distinguish it from the established centers. Thus, the~~ I and devoted to residential purposes generally falls into five

broad categories:

- beach development
- development in the Route 1 corridor on public water and sewer
- rural subdivisions
- centers with established development patterns
- scattered rural residential uses along existing roads.

The Land Use Map provides an indication of those areas in which these patterns dominate. The existing residential development on Drakes Island, Wells Beach, and Moody Beach is relatively high density ~~(more than five units per acre)~~ on small lots. The average residential use parcel size in this area is just under a quarter of an acre (approximately 4-5 homes per acre). The majority of these structures are ~~one~~ single ~~and two~~-family homes. These areas are virtually fully developed, with only a small number of vacant, buildable lots. ~~These neighborhoods are quite stable.~~

Residential use in the Route 1 corridor, located along Route 1 and east to the beachfront residential area, varies widely in terms of type and density. Most of these areas are serviced by public sewerage and water. The majority of housing in this area have parcel sizes of a half-acre or less. Furthermore, more than 75% of the parcels are less than one acre. The average parcel size is approximately three-quarters of an acre. ~~Though there are some older areas in the corridor that are built at at higher densities (4-8 units per acre), the bulk of housing in the area is newer housing built at densities of about two units per acre.~~ Housing type varies from single-family homes to multi-unit condominium and apartment developments. There is a higher percentage of multi-family or residential condominiums in the Route 1 corridor than in the beach areas.

West of US Route 1 and the Maine Turnpike there is a greater variety of residential development, but in general it tends to be at a lower density. The size of individual residential parcels is higher than that of the Route 1 corridor or the beach areas, as the average residential parcel size West of Route 1 is approximately 4 acres. There are a number of locations with established residential development areas around the older rural centers. These include such centers as Wells Branch ~~and~~, High Pine, and Hobbs Crossing. These rural centers contain many historic structures on small lots that were developed as railroad villages. ~~T~~though they are built at higher densities, they lack public water or sewer ~~and often have concerns about environmental resources (particularly in Wells Branch).~~, which can threaten surrounding water resources.

Throughout the remainder of the Town, there is a significant amount of scattered residential development along existing public roads. This development is predominantly low density and has on-site septic disposal and water supply.

Generally, Subdivisions and residential clusters built have been built further from old village centers over the last several decades. Development in the rural areas of Wells is often dependent on on-site water supply and septic disposal, although those closer to Route 1 may have public water and sewer.

~~Over the past several decades there have been more and more relatively large residential subdivisions approved that tend to be more scattered and further from the older village centers than prior to this period. In addition, there are a number of newer (built since 1960) densely developed areas in rural Wells such as Perkins Town and the Route 109/Wire Road area.~~

~~Development in the rural areas of Wells is often dependent on on-site water supply and septic disposal, although those closer to Route 1 may have public water and sewer. The predominant housing type in these areas is single-family homes with a small number of two-family or multifamily units.~~

~~Throughout the remainder of the Town, there is a significant amount of scattered residential development along existing public roads. This development is predominantly low-density and has on-site septic disposal and water supply.~~

Table 24
Land Use Summary

Use	Number of Parcels	Total Acres	% of Town
Residential Single-Family	5,020	10,045	28.4%
Residential Condominium	68	244	0.7%
Commercial/Industrial	435	3,422	9.7%
Public	219	2,959	8.4%
Other Exempt (Churches, non-profit)	106	1,818	5.1%
Farm/Open Space	17	1,028	2.9%
Tree Growth	131	3,989	11.3%
Vacant	1,116	11,847	33.5%
Total Land	**7,112**	**35,353**	**100.0%**
Source: Wells Assessor Office, 2004			

Table 1. Land use summary by land use description, including number of parcels, approximate total acreage, and percentage of total town acreage (source: Town of Wells Land Use base layer).

Use Description	**Number of Parcels**	**Approximate Total Acres**	**Percentage of Town**
Commercial	260	1,279	4%
Industrial	69	1,254	3%
Multi-Family/Residential Condominium	442	1,619	4%
Non-profit/Utilities	113	2,163	6%
Single Family	5,016	11,207	30%
State of Federal Property	144	1,776	5%
Town Property	114	1,806	5%
Vacant	1009	14,435	39%
Other	620	1,327	4%
Total Land	**7,787**	**36,866**	100%

Commercial/Industrial Land Use

Commercial use of land in Wells occurs in four~~two~~ principal areas:

- Wells Beach along Mile Road/Wells Harbor
- the Route One ~~corridor~~Corridor
- Maine Turnpike Interchange location (Exit 109)
- Routes 9 and 109

~~The use of land for industrial establishments is limited to the Spencer Industrial Park between Route 109 and the Burnt Mill Road east of the Maine Turnpike. There are a few contractors and similar uses in other areas of the Town.~~

~~In addition, there are a small number of commercial uses scattered in other areas of the Town, a number of which are associated with the traditional service centers or arterial state roads such as Routes 9 and 109.~~ Commercial/industrial use comprises 2,532~~3,422~~ acres of Wells or approximately 7%~~10%~~ of the Town's land area. This amount includes extractive uses located in more rural areas of the town in addition to the commercial and industrial parcels east of the Maine Turnpike.

The Wells Beach commercial area along Mile Rd consists of tourist-related uses including motels, restaurants, and shops, as well as small retail uses servicing the residents of the beach area. The intensity of use is high, but the overall area of commercial use is small and concentrated around Casino Square at the eastern end of Mile Road. The Wells Harbor area supports both marine- commercial and recreational uses. This area contains a marina and associated facilities, a restaurant and public parking lots. The average commercial use parcel size in this area is 0.32 acres.

The densest and most expansive commercial use areas in Wells are along the Route 1 corridor, with an average parcel size of 5.2 acres. The Route One commercial area runs from the Ogunquit Town line to Cozy Corner (Route 9 intersection to Kennebunk). The commercial character of this area varies from segment to segment. From Cozy Corner to south of Drakes Island Road is an intensely developed stretch with a variety of commercial uses, including motels, campgrounds, and retail uses. To the south of this area is a segment with limited commercial development. Within this area, the historical building character has been maintained, even though many older properties have been converted

to commercial use. The area in the vicinity of Wells Corner is extensively developed for commercial uses and to a limited extent functions as the center of the Town. This area includes a mix of retail, restaurant, public, and motel uses.

The area of Route 1 north and south of the Mile Road is the most intensely developed portion of the corridor. This area includes the Town's major shopping facilities, fast food establishments, retail uses, restaurants, and motels. The southernmost section of the Route 1 corridor is centered on the Moody area and is only moderately developed for commercial use. Uses include motels,

campgrounds, offices, and scattered retail uses.

There are a number of commercial activities west of the Maine Turnpike. The main areas of commercial activity are around the Maine Turnpike Interchange (Route 95) where the Wells Transportation Center and storage unit buildings are located, as well as ~~Although they are not concentrated in any specific area, there are commercial uses at the intersection of~~along Route~~s~~ 9 ~~and~~ Route 109, ~~along~~ and Route 9B ~~in the High Pine area, and in Perkinstown~~. ~~These uses are predominantly local businesses serving local markets.~~ There are a variety of commercial uses in this area. These scattered commercial lots are on average larger (approximately 9 acres) than those located East of Route 1.

The use of land for industrial establishments is mostly located west of the Turnpike, with the exception of ~~limited to~~ the Spencer Industrial Park between Route 109 and the Burnt Mill ~~Road~~ Road which uses currently include a Shaw's Supermarket warehouse facility, a UPS distribution center, and other industrial establishments ~~east of the Maine Turnpike.~~. There are a few contractors and similar uses in other areas of the Town, ~~,~~including around the Maine Turnpike Interchange, a mining operation along Route 9 near the North Berwick town line, and along route 109 near Saywards corner.

There are several active gravel pits in Wells, mostly in the western portion of the Town. These facilities are a major source of sand and gravel for the York County area. A major facility for the processing and handling of earth material (sand, gravel, quarry stone, and pavement production) currently is operated by Pike Industries and is located off Route 9 and the Boyd Road near the North Berwick town line.

~~The western portion of the Town contains a number of areas with sandy and/or gravelly soils. These areas are a resource and may be the focus of additional extractive efforts in the future. The utilization of this resource may present conflicts with residential use.~~

Open Space and Recreational Land Uses

Wells has a significant amount of land that is permanently committed as open space. The Town of Wells owns several parcels of land dedicated to open space and recreational use, including the multipurpose fields on Route 9A (~~68~~ 66 acres), the Fenderson Wildlife Commons along the Sanford town line, ~~land near Ell Pond (over 400 acres),~~ and the Wells ~~Heath~~ Great Haith property (~~500~~ 335 acres). In addition, the Town is a ~~major~~ landholder ~~(245 acres)~~ within the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, which is approximately ~~1,600~~2,250 acres in total (Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan, 2019). Further lands held in conservation include: KK&W Water District (1,384 acres), Nature Conservancy (631 acres), Great Works Land Trust (1,159 acres), and the York Land Trust (156 acres). There are approximately 6,331 total acres of conservation land within the town of Wells (17% of total area) (Table 2).

The state and federal governments are also major owners of open space in the Town. The State owns an approximately 200 acres parcel of land adjacent to Laudholm Farm. ~~This land was acquired with the intention of developing a state park. It is now being~~which is used as part of the Wells

Reserve, although there is public beach associated with this parcel. The Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge is also a major owner of land within the community. The refuge has acquired approximately ~~865~~ 1,620 acres of coastal wetlands and adjacent upland in Wells and continues to acquire upland fringe areas adjacent to the wetland in an effort to protect wildlife habitat. These lands are also included in the Wells Reserve.

There are a number of other dedicated open spaces within Wells. ~~There are more than 200 acres of open space land that qualify for state's Farm and Open Space Tax Act under 36 MRSA Sec. 1101.~~ Within Wells, 1,071 acres are enrolled in the Open Space Tax Program. These are public-private partnerships between the York Land Trust, the Great Works

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Regional Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy and the Town of Wells. ~~In addition, t~~The Wells Reserve Management Authority also owns land adjacent to the Wells Reserve. In addition, a~~A~~s part of new subdivisions, a number of areas have been set aside as common open space. From 2009 through 2020, approximately 1,716 acres of open space were set aside from new subdivisions (Town of Wells). ~~These include land in the Hamlin Brothers subdivision, Canterbury Manor, Jeremy Cobb Estates, Ocean 18, and Spicebush. The Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District owns four parcels of land in the Branch Brook watershed for the purpose of protecting the water quality of Branch Brook.~~

~~The Wells-Ogunquit Little League has playing fields on Route 9 near the public works garage.~~

~~Wells also has substantial ocean frontage – about five miles.~~ In addition, t~~T~~here are about five miles of publicly owned beach frontage in Wells. Public access to the beaches is available at four different locations, as outlined in Chapter 4.

Table 2. Total acreage of conserved land in Wells, by holder.

Holder	Approximate Total Acres
Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water Districts	1,058
Great Works Regional Land Trust	939
Laudholm Trust & Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve	287
Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands	188
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife	20
Maine Department of Marine Resources	87
Maine Minor Civil Division	1,431
The Nature Conservancy	574
US Fish and Wildlife Service	1,628
York Land Trust, Inc.	119
Total Acreage	**6,331**

Municipal Lands

The Town of Wells owns approximately 11~~449 properties that have associated lands that range in size from 0.17 acres (the Boy Scout Hall) to 127 acres (Transfer Station/close Landfill).~~parcels, totaling 1,806 acres of 4.9% of the total land area. Uses of town owned

facilities include the Transfer Station/Closed Landfill, ~~Other facilities include the~~ Town Hall site,

Town Hall annex, the Town gravel pit on the Burnt Mill Road, public works garage site, and beach parking areas and accesses. The town also owns a number of vacant parcels of land for municipal use, conservation purposes, and for buffer or right-of-way use. ~~In total there are 553 acres of Town-owned land or 1.5% of the land area.~~
In addition, the Town also owns a number of parcels that are not currently used for municipal purposes. The Town should review these parcels to determine their potential for municipal or conservation purposes.

Forestry and Agricultural Land

The inventory of forestry and agricultural land is discussed in detail under Heading A above.

Analysis

Residential development has continued to increase throughout the Town of Wells over the last few decades and continues to be the largest use of developed land in the town. Wells has continued to experience high rates of subdivision growth over the past 10 years, mainly west of Route 1. The majority of new subdivisions approved each year are single-family homes, with one dwelling per lot. This pattern of development requires the Town to increase public services in these previously rural areas. The densest area of development continues to be the residential homes adjacent to the beaches and coastline.

Expanded development in previously rural areas presents conflicts of interest to traditional natural resource industries such as farming, timber, and gravel extraction. While there is substantial acreage in farm and timber current use programs, these areas are still subject to continuing demand for additional residential and commercial development .In addition development in rural areas can threaten natural resources. Nonpoint source pollution from increased stormwater runoff and impervious surface or malfunctioning septic systems in developed areas pose development related threats to the towns natural resources.

In addition, continued intensive development of the Route 1 corridor for commercial uses and lodging has changed the character of this area and has contributed to traffic problems on Route 1. ~~For the past several decades, residential development activity has been spread over the entire geographic extent of the community. Most new single-family housing, which has comprised the bulk of new housing in Wells, has occurred in the western portion of the community in areas that were previously rural in character. This pattern of development has required the Town to increase public services in these areas. It has also resulted in conflicts between traditional natural resource industries, such as gravel extraction and residential uses.~~

~~At the same time, the trend toward more intensive development of the Route One~~ 1 ~~corridor for commercial uses and lodging has changed the character of this area and has contributed to traffic problems on Route One~~1. ~~While there is substantial acreage in farm and timber current use programs, these areas are still subject to continuing demand for additional residential and commercial development.~~

Wells has three distinct types of existing character: rural, village and tourist-related. It should be a priority of the Town to maintain the distinctions among these three very different types of

places. In addition, the Town will need to continue to monitor mineral extraction (including sand and gravel) activities to not only ensure that they minimize environmental impact, but also to ensure that future non-extractive uses in these locations are compatible with the community's ~~long term~~long-term goals and policies for these areas.

Lastly, the Town may want to consider creating a system of tracking development that allows it to be used as a current and future planning tool.
~~As the Town continues to grow and change, a better system of tracking development needs to be created. The best tool for tracking change is the assessor's database. While the assessor's database is very effective at fulfilling its primary purpose – determining property assessments – it is presently not currently compatible with efforts to use it as a planning tool. Current land use codes that are useful for planning purposes need to be added to the database, as does information regarding the inventory of approved but unbuilt subdivision lots.~~

Data Sources and References

1. US Census. Wells Town, York County, Maine. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/wellstownyorkcountymaine
2. Beginning with Habitat: Conserving Maine's Natural Landscape for Plants, Animals, and People. Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. 2012.
3. Town Code, Town of Wells, ME. Chapter 145 Land Use. "Article I Land Use", "V District Regulations", "VII Performance Standards". https://ecode360.com/WE1006?needHash=true.
4. Maine State Growth Management Program. 2020. https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/30-A/title30-Asec4326.html
5. Town of Wells Conservation Land Data 2011-2019, provided to FBE by Mike Livingston.
6. Town of Wells Subdivision Data 2009-2021, provided to FBE by Mike Livingston.
7. Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry – Maine Forest Service. Summary of Timber Harvest Information for the Town of Wells. State Data Package.
8. Wells Reserve. Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve Management Plan 2019- 2024. https://www.wellsreserve.org/writable/files/WellsNERR_ManagementPlan_2019-2024.pdf
9. ~~8.~~Wells Tax Assessor for acreage in the Farmland, Open Space, and Tree Growth Tax programs.

Section 9 – Public Facilities and Utilities

A. PUBLIC FACILITIES

General Government

The major community administrative functions of Wells are located in the Town Hall building located on Route 109/9 between Route ~~One~~ 1 and the Maine Turnpike. Built in 1988, this two-story structure provides office space for the following departments:

- Town Manger
- Town Clerk
- Assessing
- Planning and Code Enforcement
- Engineering
- Finance and Tax Collection
- ~~Administration~~
- Welfare Administration
- Voter Registration
- Human Resources

The Town Hall also contains meeting facilities on the ~~first~~ second floor for selectmen's meetings and themeetings of other town boards and commissions. Although the Town Hall is only slightly depreciated based on the findings of the Facilities Report, it is crowded and lacks adequate storage and meeting space and customer waiting space. In the fall of 2002, a proposal for an addition to the Town Hall was rejected by the voters, but it was reintroduced at Town Meeting in2004 and approved. The expansion ~~will take place~~was built in 2005.

A personnel plan is being created to document current staffing levels across all departments and to forecast staffing needs over the next five to ten years. This plan is anticipated to be ready in 2022.

Public Safety

As the Town continues to grow, it will face a number of issues with respect to public safety policies, services and equipment needs. The Town has a ~~full time~~full-time fire and police department as well as an emergency medical service. Wells also has mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

~~In December 1998 the Wells Fire Department prepared a two-year Action Plan that addressed equipment, facility, personnel and program needs. A number of the recommendations in that planwere acted on, such as the purchase of a new ladder truck.~~

~~In 2003, there were a total of 679 service calls to the Wells Fire Department, an 11% increasefrom the 2000 call total of 612. Fires only account for a small percentage of calls to the Fire Department as just 9.5% of all calls from 2000 through 2003 were for actual fires. The largestshare of calls for service was for Rescue/EMS (40% of calls). There were also more calls for Hazardous Conditions (13.5%), Service Calls (12.8%) and Good Intent calls (12.3%) than foractual fire calls.~~

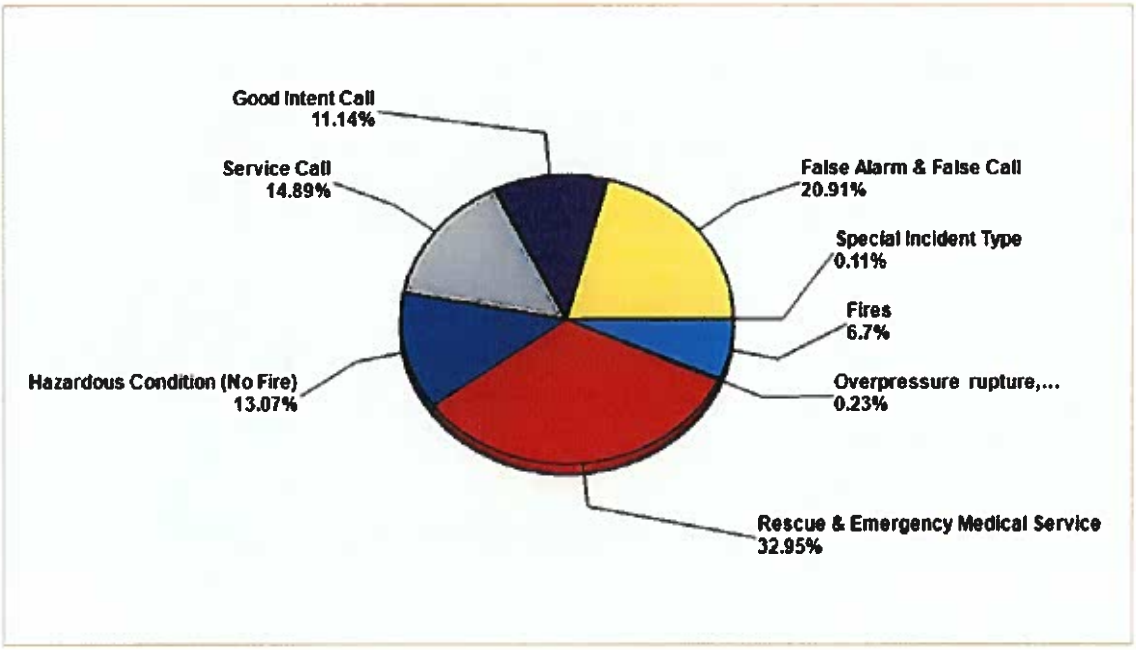
The 2005 Comprehensive Plan detailed the need to replace fire stations, adding additional staffing, and replacing aging fire apparatus. In 2005, staffing increased from two full-time firefighters per shift to three full-time Firefighters. That brought the shifts up to one Captain and two firefighters per shift 24 hours a day. In 2021, the addition of one firefighter per shift was approved by the citizens and we now currently operate with one Captain and three firefighters per shift. The Fire Department now comprises of three shifts of four for a total of 12 full-time firefighters, a full-time Fire Chief, full-time Administrative Assistant and 5 On-Call Members.

In 2019 and 2020, plans were completed to replace the previous three fire stations with the new Wells Public Safety Building on Route 1 and a new substation, Station 2, off North Berwick Rd. Station 2 is the consolidation of the former High Pine and Branch fire stations. Also in 2021, the Town approved the replacement of the Department's 2000 aerial truck with a new 100' aerial tower truck scheduled for delivery in the summer of 2022.

In 2020, there were a total of 880 service calls to the Wells Fire Department. 2020 was a challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the call volume dropped by approximately 100 calls for service compared to 2019. In 2021 Wells Fire Department is on pace to run 1,244 calls for service. The Department has responded to 894 calls as of September 25, 2021.

This is 68% increase from the year 2000 as stated in the previous Comprehensive Plan where the department responded to 612 calls.

Breakdown Incident Type for Date Range 1/1/2020 to 12/31/2020 * Pandemic Year *



Facilities

The Fire Department is housed in three facilities — Corner, High Pine and Wells Branch Stations. The Corner Station is considered the central station and is located at Wells Corner. This facility provides office and administrative space, meeting facilities, equipment bays and facilities for the full-time paid firefighters. This facility houses one engine, a rescue/utility vehicle and an 85-foot ladder truck. In 2000 the Emergency Medical Services vehicles and offices were re-located to a new location associated with the new York Hospital medical facilityin Wells.

Wells Corner Station is becoming too small for the needs of the fire department. Both administrative space and an area for volunteers are needed. It is imperative that the volunteers have a place to call their own, as it is important for the full time staff to have adequate space fortheir requirements.

The High Pine Station on Route 109 in the western portion of Wells was in marginal conditionuntil a number of improvements were made during 1998. It now has a bay for an EMS vehicleand space for a live-in firefighter. The roof was replaced in 2002 and has been adapted into a useful training facility. It would make an ideal meeting and training facility for other town functions.

The Branch Station is a former schoolhouse that has been converted to a fire station. Remodeling was completed in the fall of 2000, allowing an engine to be moved from High Pine.In 2002, a fire alarm system was added to bring the building up to code.

It has been recommended to replace High Pine and the Branch stations. The Department plans tocombine both stations into one station near the Meetinghouse and Sanford Road intersection. This station would be a four-bay, two-deep station, with a community hall, kitchen, dormitoryfor future firefighters as well as an area for storage. The Department is also researching the feasibility of a shared station with the town of Ogunquit along Littlefield or Tatnic Roads. A station in this area would provide the coverage needed in that part of town. An analysis of newfire station needs is found below.

Table 25 -- Fire Stations

Facility/Equipment Type	Year Purchased	Description	Expected Investment Date	Estimated Investment Cost
Wells Corner Station	1988	1st floor 4,110 sq. ft 2nd floor 1,388 sq. ft. 5,500 sq. ft total	2005	$400,000
Highpine Station	1946	1st floor 2240 sq. ft. 2nd floor 1600 sq. ft 3840 sq. ft. total	2006	$1,000,000 to combine Highpine and Branch.
Wells Branch Station	1920 Old School House	2188 sq. ft	2006	Combined station of Highpine and Branch.
Tatnic Road Station	2008	2500 sq. ft.	2028	$450,000

Source: Wells Fire Department

~~The department works closely with the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells (KKW) Water District for installation of hydrants. Outside the hydrant district the department has installed 15dry hydrants.~~

The Fire Department now operates out of two facilities – Corner Station and Station 2. The former Branch Fire Station located at 1358 Branch Rd is no longer being utilized as an operating facility.

The Corner Station was built in 2019 and is considered the main station, located at 1563 Post Rd. This facility provides administrative offices, training rooms, full-time firefighter facilities, workout room and equipment bays. Administrative offices consist of an Administrative Assistant office, Chief's office, Conference room, Deputy Chief's office, Captain's office and Firefighter's office. The training room is a shared space on the first floor used for various town departments and outside organizations. Full-time firefighter facilities include four firefighter bunk rooms and a captain's suite, all rooms currently house a single occupant. Additional firefighter facilities include two full bathrooms, kitchen, and day room (living room). The workout room is a shared space on the second floor used by full-time public safety employees. The equipment bays consist of 3 pull through double length bays, a single length bay, and computer office with service window to the lobby. This facility houses one engine, one tanker, one 85-foot aerial truck (to be replaced in 2022), one brush truck, one utility vehicle, and one command car. Other notable features include training areas such as multi-floor standpipe, bailout windows and mezzanine area. The facility also includes an off-site grass lot that the Forestry UTV is stored on in a covered trailer. Also, located at the off-site grass lot is the Traffic Safety Trailer utilized by both Police and Fire.

In 2000 the town owned ambulances and offices were moved from the Wells Corner Fire Station to York Hospital in Wells at 114 Sanford Rd. To this date that location serves as their base of operations.

Station 2 was built in 2020 and located at 2 Cabin Lane off North Berwick Rd. Station 2 was an operational consolidation of the former High Pine and Branch Fire Stations. This station consists of three single length bays, kitchen, meeting area, two bathrooms, office, and 4 multi-use rooms. This facility houses two engines, one tanker, a jet ski, and a Beach UTV seasonally.

Per the last comprehensive plan, the Department was also researching the feasibility of a shared station with the Town of Ogunquit along Littlefield or Tatnic Roads. A station in this area will provide the coverage needed in that part of town. This plan has not been actively pursued since that time frame, however, there have been discussions within the town to potentially consider a third station located in that area of the community. This plan is being considered to reduce response times to better reflect the recommended 4-minute response rate for all emergency incidents, that cannot typically be reached currently for many parts of the community.

The Department works closely with the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells (KKW) water district for installation of hydrants. Outside the hydrant district the Department has installed 37 dry hydrants.

Apparatus

~~Table 26 presents an inventory of the Fire Department's apparatus, the expected time each piecewill need to be replaced and an estimated replacement cost.~~

Table 26 -- Fire Apparatus

Vehicle Type	Year Purchased	Description	Expected Investment Date	Estimated Investment Cost
Engine 1	1994	Pumper	2014	$500.000
Engine 2	1988	Pumper	2008	$600.000
Engine 3	1976	Pumper	Out of Service	No Cost
Engine 4	1986	Pumper	2006	$450.000
Engine 5	1982	Pumper/Tanker	2002 (OVERDUE)	$450.000
Engine 6	2000	Aerial Fire Truck	2030	$1.000.000
Engine 7	1978	Pumper	1998 (OVERDUE)	$450.000
Squad 1	1996	Rescue/Utility	2016	$150.000
Brush 1	1973	Brush Unit	1993 (OVERDUE)	$60.000
Car1	2003	Chief's Vehicle	2011	$23.485
Car2	1995	Officer's Vehicle	2005	$22.000
H.P. 1	1998	Jet Ski (Water Rescue)	Out of Service	No Cost
Beach 30	1985	Truck	1993 (OVERDUE)	$20.000
Source: Wells Fire Department				

~~The Fire Department has enough fire fighting apparatus to handle the number of calls that it is required to make. Based on the life span for several pieces of apparatus, though, there are a number of items that have outlived their planned periods of service: a pumper/tanker, a pumper,a brush unit, a Zodiac water rescue unit (to replace the Jet Ski) and a utility truck. The total costto replace these five items is estimated at $988,000. Funds for acquiring the brush unit, pumper and water rescue unit were approved at the 2004 Town Meeting.~~

The following table presents an inventory of the Fire Department's apparatus, the expected time each piece will need to be replaced and an estimated replacement cost.

TABLE 26: Fire Department Vehicle Inventory and Replacement Schedule **Source: Wells Fire Department**			
Vehicle	**Year Purchased**	**Description**	**Expected Investment Date**
Engine 3	2006	Pumper	2024
Engine 4	2013	Pumper	2033

Engine 7	2017	Pumper	2036

~~Tower 6~~	~~2000~~	~~Aerial/Quint~~	~~2042~~
Tank 2	2019	Tanker	2039
Tank 5	2017	Tanker	2037
Brush 8	2005	Forestry	2027
Utility 9	2008	Utility	2023
Car 1	2018	Chiefs/Command	2029
orestry UTV	2013	UTV w/ pump	2025
Beach UTV	2016	UTV w/ EMS body	2028
Jet Ski	2014	Personal Watercraft	2026

The above vehicle table would indicate the need for replacement of all the department apparatus over the course of the next 15 to 20 years including estimated costs based on current cost and the rate of inflation of approximately 2.5 to 3% annually.

Personnel

The Wells Fire Department is currently staffed with 12 full-time Firefighters, a Chief, Administrative Assistant, and approximately 5 On-Call Members. There are 4 full-time Firefighters on staff each shift. Shifts are comprised of 3 Firefighters and 1 Captain, trained to a minimum standard of being a Firefighter/EMT. The Department has an ongoing program of training for both full-time and on-call Firefighters, particularly as its areas of responsibility have increased to include hazardous materials response, water & ocean rescue, and emergency medical responses. Personnel currently consist of 3 Advanced EMT's with 2 additional personnel in Advanced EMT class. Wells is continuing to increase the Department's level of service through Advanced/Paramedic licensing of personnel. NFPA 1710 states 15 Firefighters must be available within the first alarm. Even with the additional support of automatic mutual aid the Department still struggles to meet the NFPA 1710 requirement. Staffing will continue to be an issue that needs to be addressed moving forward.

Fire Department personnel currently assist the Code Office with courtesy and certificate of occupancy inspections. Personnel also provide inspection services for residential properties for chimney, wood stoves and other safety needs.

On-call personnel numbers have significantly decreased over the past 20 years nationally and locally. Since the mid-2000's Wells Fire Department has seen that decrease from approximately twenty-five On-Call Members to five. These member's qualifications and training vary per member. Members can choose their level of involvement within the Department to be trained to the level of a support personnel, driver, EMT and/or Firefighter. In past years the Assistant Chief and Deputy Chief positions were filled from long standing On-Call personnel. Those positions have gone unfilled once the members left, due to a lack of qualified candidates. The absence of these positions has left a void in support for the Fire Chief. This executive level officer assists

daily with administration, operations, and personnel management in the Fire Department. Responsibilities would also include leadership in the absence of the Fire Chief. Importance of this personnel need was highlighted in 2019 with the loss of the Fire Chief due to illness, and lack of any additional executive level officers. The Fire Department and town would benefit from filling these vacancies with full-time staff. Fortunately for Wells, even with these staffing challenges to navigate the Department has delivered an excellent level of service to the community.

~~The Wells Fire Department is currently staffed with six full-time firefighters, a chief and approximately 25 volunteer firefighters who are paid an annual stipend. There are two full-time fire fighters on staff each day. New OSHA standards under review by the State of Maine may require additional firefighter(s) each daily shift. The department has ongoing program of trainingfor both full-time and volunteer firefighters, particularly as its areas of responsibility have increased to include hazardous materials response, water & ocean rescue, and emergency medical responses. The department also trains lifeguards in water rescue operations.~~

~~Personnel also provide inspection services for residential properties for chimneys, wood stovesand other safety needs, and would like to expand such services to commercial industrial properties. In addition, the Fire Chief is actively engaged in reviews of applications for residential and commercial development to ensure adequate fire protection for new projects.~~

~~New Station Analysis~~

~~During the summer of 2004, an analysis was performed by SMRPC using Geographic Information System software (GIS) of the coverage of the existing rural fire stations in Wells. (See **Table 27 and Map 14**). Former Fire Chief Dean had identified that the position of the Wells Branch and High Pine substations did not provide adequate coverage to the southwesternquadrant of Wells, south of Route 109 and west of the turnpike. In 1997, Chief Dean identifiedtwo optimal locations for two new rural firestations:~~

1. ~~Sanford & Meetinghouse Roads intersection; and~~
2. ~~Bear's Den & Littlefield Roads intersection.~~

~~Chief Dean proposed at that time that fire protection would be greatly improved in western Wells, and emergency travel times reduced, if the Branch and High Pine firestations were replaced by new stations in those locations. Current Fire Chief Moore has continued to be concerned that the need for new stations has grown since 1997 in the southwestern part of theTown, and asked for the new analysis to be performed. This analysis examines the number and valuation of existing structures in the town located within one and three-mile radii of five locations – the three old stations and the two proposed new stations. The proposal examined here would maintain the Corner station in its existing location, while closing the Wells Branch and Highpine stations and replacing them with the newnew stations.~~

~~The Sanford/Meetinghouse Road station would replace the two closed stations. As Map 14 shows, this location would sit about three miles from the Wells Branch station and about twomiles from the High Pine Station. Only a very small, undeveloped portion of the~~

Town's northern half would lie more than three miles away from either this location or the ~~Corner station.~~

~~The Littlefield/Bear's Den station would provide much-needed fire coverage for the southern half of Wells, as there are presently no stations located in the Town's southern section. This station would serve the developing Route 9, 9B and Tatnic Road corridors, all three of which arepresently miles away from existing fire stations.~~

~~Table 27, which documents the results of the analysis can be found on the next page.~~

Table 27
Analysis of Changes in Fire Protection from Proposed New Fire Stations (Within 3 miles of Station Locations)

	Developed Lots	Vacant Acres	Assessed Value
Existing Stations			
High Pine	1,207	7,901	$47.9 million
Wells Branch	734	7,553	$63.7 million
Corner	3,140	10,568	$506.7 million
Total	**5,081**	**26,022**	**$618.3 million**
Proposed New Stations			
Sanford/Meetinghouse	1,347	12,716	$76.5 million
Littlefield/Bear's Den	1,661	12,393	$146.5 million
Corner	3,140	10,568	$506.7 million
Total	**6,148**	**35,677**	**$729.7 million**
Difference—New vs. Old			
Numerical Difference	1,067	9,655	$111.4 million
Percent Difference	20.9%	37.1%	18.0%

~~The 2004 analysis confirmed the findings of 1997. If the High Pine and Wells Branch stations were closed, and replaced by the two new stations at Meetinghouse and Bear's Den, the assessedvalue of protected properties within 3 miles would increase by over 18% townwide. Leaving theCorner station out of the calculation, the total assessed value covered in the rest of the Town would jump from $111.6 million to $223.0 million – an increase of 99%.~~

POLICE DEPARTMENT

~~The Wells Police Department is located in the former Town Hall building located at theintersection of Rte 1 and Rte 109.~~

~~The Police Department is one of the busiest per officer agencies in Southern Maine and its~~ forcehas seen a dynamic growth in calls for service over the last ten years. For example, the ~~calls for service have increased for the police department over 36% from 1996 through 1999. Since 2000,the calls for service have increased by another 20%.~~

~~Police calls for service now approximate 23,000 a year. The Town of Wells has a relatively high crime rate due to its transient population, its summer influx, and its many vacant daytime homes.As suburban sprawl spreads north the Town has experienced more big city crime and has felt its impact especially in youth related crime, (particularly substance abuse). In 1999, Wells Police, inconjunction with School District Officials, placed a school resource officer in the school to help focus on this particular problem.~~

Currently, calls for service average 40,000 calls per year. That's a 60% increase since the 2000's where call volume averaged 25,000 calls per year. Our agency deals with a disproportionate number of calls for service for our transient and seasonal population, the summer influx – which expands our overnight population by 288% (Southern Maine Planning, 2017). Wells is one of the largest communities in Maine in relation to area – as urban sprawl continues; we will continue to face response time challenges jumping from one part of town to the next. Each season brings new its own challenges – vacant homes in the winter drive burglary crimes, summer brings more alcohol-related crime, domestic violence is more prevalent during the holidays; we continue to assess our assets and deploy pro-active policing to combat and deter crime. We use community policing to engage the public and seek to be transparent, and consistent in our policing practices.

~~The Police Department consists three divisions: Communications, Patrol, and CID (Criminal Investigative Division). Patrol consists of a chief, 2 lieutenants, 4 sergeants, and 12 patrol officers. The Detective Division consists of three detectives. The Department currently also has aSchool Resource Officer who handles all youth related matters.~~

~~The Department utilizes a Community Policing style of law enforcement in which the department addresses traditional criminal activity, but also tries to address non-traditional concerns of the public such as the fear of crime and reduction of crime through prevention andeducation. The department has one of the highest crime clearance rates in Southern Maine.~~

~~The Department has a full time animal control officer who handles over 800 calls a year. TheACO is a highly specialized individual who is currently one of only two nationally certified ACO's in Maine.~~

The Police Department is separated into three divisions: Communications, Patrol and Criminal Investigations (CID). Our agency head is the Chief of Police, then one Captain in charge of Patrol & CID, and another Captain in charge of Support Services and administration. Our leadership team also consists of five Sergeants, and two Corporals. Overall, we have 16 officers or supervisors assigned to Patrol, and 5 assigned to CID or as a school resource officer (SRO). The Department also has mutual aid agreements with adjacent communities.

Many facets of policing have become specialized and we use best practices to continue to change in the evolving world of police from a local, state, and even federal level. Our officers are trained in emerging topics such as de-escalation, mental health crisis, along with practical skills in understanding cell phone forensics, identity theft, and cybercrime. We have specializations we instruct which include police canine, evidence technician, special response and tactics (SRT), drug recognition expert, forensic phlebotomist, non-lethal munitions (taser, pepper spray, pepperball), methods of arrest and control, spike mat operator, and others to name few. We strongly believe we are capable and very willing to adapt as change occurs to best fit the needs of our community.

~~The Communications Division consists of five full time dispatchers who handle all incoming telephone traffic, including emergency calls for the police department, fire department and EMS.They also handle radio and telephone calls for the Highway Department and the lifeguards in thesummer months. Collectively the dispatch receives over 60,000 calls a year. They also maintain all federally and state mandated teletype records, criminal history data, and are responsible for most data entry of the computer generated data screens and internal databases. These specializedpersonnel handle all of Wells emergency calls and began utilizing E-911 as of the summer of 2000.~~

In our support and services, we offer a full-time animal control officer (ACO). This officer handles all domestic animal calls for the town. They coordinate dog licensing in conjunction with the town clerk's office and sets up rabies clinics and offers educational classes through our community partners. In conjunction with domestic animals, the ACO is called on for nuisance animals (skunk, racoons, and even bears). The ACO works closely with the Maine Warden Service along with the Maine Audubon Society protecting the piping plover and least tern found on our beaches. The position is diversified to town ordinance complaints of barking dog all the way to federal crimes regarding tampering with endangered birds.

The Communications Division, also called "dispatch" is manned by seven full-time dispatchers and augmented by seasonal staff as well. The center handles over 70,000 phone calls per year and dispatches for all departments of Wells and Ogunquit (police, fire, highway, lifeguards). Wells is a 9-1-1 transfer center, which means when you call 9-1-1, you'll talk to a public safety answering point (PSAP) which sends you to Wells. At our center we provide Emergency Medical and Fire dispatch based on certain protocols the State of Maine uses. We are bound by law to follow these protocols and are licensed individually and as a center. Dispatcher are

required to complete four weeks of training through the state, then another 12 weeks of in-house training before being signed off on. The center is regularly audited by state and federal criminal justice information systems to ensure compliance. In addition, our center monitors several alarm systems, and views 20+ cameras. We offer a "Good Morning Program" for at-risk individuals to call our center every morning and dispatch police for well-being checks when we cannot reach one of these at-risks persons.

~~The Wells Police Station is located at the Town Hall Annex Building at the intersection of Route1 and Route 109. The current staffing levels of the departments have placed it at capacity. The needs of the department are expected to grow in the future and there is an immediate need for anexpansion or new facility. The Police Department has estimated the necessary investment at approximately $2,000,000.~~

We are appreciative our new combined public safety complex located at the intersection of Post Road and Sanford Road. The building was designed for a 30-year plan to accommodate personnel growth. As calls for service, population, and urban sprawl occurs, we'll seek to add more police officers and dispatch staff to combat the increased work load.

Emergency Medical Services~~Rescue Services~~

Wells Emergency Medical Services is a non-profit corporation~~, owned by the Town of Wells,~~ operated by a Board of Directors who are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Provides ambulance services to the Wells community and its' guests 24 hours a day / 7 days a week, withthree fully equipped ambulances with ~~state of the art~~state-of-the-art equipment, staffed with ~~35~~ 40 part-time EMSlicensed professional employees and a full-time Director.

In 2005 ~~T~~the Service reported ~~responds~~ responding to more than ~~1,000~~1,600 ambulance calls annually (many of the calls involve more than one ambulance and/or more than one patient). By 2018 that number increased to approximately 1,900 ambulance calls annually. ~~The number of calls has steadily risen since 2000, increasing from 1,038 in that year to 1,205 in 2003 – a 16% increase. Through September 2004, there were already 1,202 calls for service, so the 2004 total will be even higher.Of all calls to WEMS, 72% are medical related and 28% are trauma related. Most hospital transfers by WEMS (66%) are to York Hospital, with 25% going to Southern Maine Medical Center, 7% going to Goodall Hospital and 2% to other hospitals~~. The breakdown of these calls is as follows:

- 1206 Transported
- 370 Refusals
- 102 Standbys
- 220 Misc.

A study of Emergency Medical Services in Wells is pending and may provide additional data on call volumes and demand for services.

~~During the summer months there are five people on duty during the day (beginning July 1), at night there are three on duty. The remainder of the year there will be four on duty during the dayand two on at night. Additional assistance is received when needed from Wells EMS and Wells Fire Department volunteers, who are paid for their services, and the Wells Police Department. Inaddition, the Service is beginning to do scheduled transfers, which requires additional employees.~~

Wells EMS is staffed by 4 providers 24 hours. Additional assistance is received when needed from Wells EMS and Wells Fire Department volunteers, who are paid for their services, and the Wells Police Department.

Wells EMS operates from a leased space in the Wells Regional Medical Facility, located on Sanford Road. The approximately ~~3,9004~~,100 square foot space includes: three ambulance bays, Director's offices, EMT office with ~~three~~ work stations~~, a medical supply room~~, kitchen / breakroom, four bedrooms, and two bathrooms/shower. The EMS moved into this facility in October2000 from the Wells Corner Fire Station, which was not designed for another ~~full time~~full-time service.

Public Works~~Highway Department~~

The ~~Highway~~ Public Works Department is located on Route 9 just west of the Route 109/Route 9 intersection. This location contains ~~six~~ five buildings. The department operates out of a garage/office facility on Route 9. This facility includes ~~6~~ ten working bays and a small cafeteria. In addition, there is long shed for storage of equipment and vehicles, and a round shed for vehicle storage~~ and a smaller garagefor storage of smaller equipment~~. Two smaller buildings are located at the facility including a police evidence storage building and a health equipment storage building for the Wells/Ogunquit Health Association. A salt shed was constructed on site in 2009~~At present, salt and sand are stored outside.~~ A town-owned gravel pit provides all the Town's sand and gravel requirements.

The department has ~~10~~ eleven employees including a director, deputy director~~a crew chief~~, foreman, ~~four~~ six ~~heavy~~ equipment operators, one mechanic, and one mechanic operator. ~~and four light equipment operators.~~ At present, the Town Manager is designated asRoad Commissioner. Table 28 identifies the current major equipment that the department has ~~which includes a number of dump trucks as well as a larger vehicle for plowing~~ and which vehicles will need to be replaced in the coming years.

Table 28 – Highway Department Apparatus

Vehicle Type	Year Purchased	Expected Investment Date	Estimated Investment Cost
Mack Dump Truck	1988	1998 (OVERDUE)	$50,000
Mack Dump Truck	1988	1998 (OVERDUE)	$50,000
Mack Dump Truck	1986	1996 (OVERDUE)	$50,000
Mack Dump Truck	1984	1994 (OVERDUE)	$50,000
Ford F350 Truck	2000	2010	$33,773
Ford F450 Dump Truck	2000	2010	$45,630
GMC 1-Ton Truck	1998	2008	$64,000
Ford F350 Truck w/Plow	1997	2007	$75,000
Ford F350 Dump Truck w/Plow	1997	2007	$37,000
Ford Ranger 4x4 (Beach)	1998	2008	$29,000
GMC Sierra Dump Truck	2002	2012	$28,797
Bens Dump Truck	1988	1998 (OVERDUE)	$40,000
GMC Dump Truck	1996	2006	$85,000
GMC Dump Truck	1998	2008	$36,000
International 4900 Plow Truck	1998	2008	$86,000

Source: Wells Highway Department

The department sets a standard for its vehicles to be no more than 10 years old. Currently, there are five dump trucks that have exceeded this age. The total replacement cost of these five vehicles is estimated at $240,000. ~~The department also needs a salt shed for covered storage of salt and sand. Although there is sufficient space for department needs, the main garage is old andhas a number of building deficiencies. In the past the department has prepared long-term capital equipment replacement programs, but budget constraints have made implementation of such programs difficult.~~

Table 28: Public Works Department Vehicle Inventory and Replacement Schedule
Source: Wells Public Works Department

Vehicle Type	Year Purchased	Replacement Year
INTERNATIONAL HV507	2020	2030
INTERNATIONAL 7400	2013	2027
GMC Sier 3500 HD	2015	2023
10-Wheeler Western Star 4700SF	2015	2029
#5 FREIGHTLINER M3	2009	2018
Ford F550 Powerstroke	2009	2019
2011 International 6-Wheeler	2011	2031
Chevy Silverado	2017	2027
Ford F550	2021	2031
Ford F450	2021	No year specified

Public Works Truck – International HV507	2021	No year specified
Public Works Truck – HV507	2021	No year specified
Wells Rec. Vehicle 3500 / Searria	2015	No year specified
Multihog CX 75 Sidewalk Tractor	2019	No year specified
John Deere Excavator 75D	2008	2028
John Deere Backhoe 310SG	2002	2015
John Deere Backhoe 310SL	2019	No year specified
Tennent Street Sweeper	2001	2009

Solid Waste

The Town operates a transfer station and recycling facility at the former landfill site on WillieHill Road of Route 109. This facility is under the auspices of the ~~Highway~~ Public Works Department. The landfill has been closed for over ~~ten~~ twenty-five years and was officially capped in 1998 based on an approved closure plan from the Maine DEP. The Town has a contract with Casella Waste management ~~the Maine Energy Recovery Company (MERC)~~ to dispose of the Town's domestic solid waste at the Juniper Ridge Landfill~~MERC, incinerator in Biddeford.~~

At present residents haul trash to the transfer station where it is dumped into one of several covered bays. The waste is then loaded into trailers and the hauled to the Juniper Ridge Landfill ~~MERC facility~~. Table 29 identifies the major equipment that is associated with the facility.

Table 29
Transfer Station Apparatus

Equipment Type	Year Purchased	Cost	Expected Investment Date	Expected Investment Cost
GMC Tractor	1984	$49,805	2003	$80,000
Great Dane Trailer	1987	$2,500	Not to be replaced	
Freuhauf Trailer	1980	$2,500	Not to be replaced	
Freuhauf Trailer	1979	$2,500	Not to be replaced	
ACE Trailer	1987	$32,362	Not to be replaced	
BOBC Trailer	1989	$2,500	Not to be replaced	
DEMP Trailer	1984	$29,165	Not to be replaced	
DEMP Trailer	1984	$29,165	Not to be replaced	
BENS Trailer	1988	$36,448	Not to be replaced	

Source: Town of Wells

The Town operates a voluntary recycling program at the transfer station for aluminum cans, glass, newspapers and cardboard. The goal of the program is to reduce the volume of waste thatmust be sent to ~~MERC~~ thereby working toward the state's recycling goals. ~~The Town has~~

~~recycling rate of over 68% – the highest of any York County municipality~~. The recycling rate in Wells, and likely in other communities, has dropped as the value of these commodities has dropped in recent years. Currently, cardboard is collected and glass/cans are comingled. The facility has no capacity issues currently, and no plans to expand.~~This high rate is in part the result of recycling efforts by the large businesses in the Spencer Industrial Park. The facility is at capacity and plans are currently in process to expand the transfer station and allowfor separate disposal of cardboard and glass/cans for recycling.~~

Recreation Facilities and Programs

The town operates a year-round recreation program for its residents. The Recreation Department offices are located at the Wells Recreation Park on Rte 9A. The 70-acre park consists of two ballfields, 4 tennis courts, 2 basketball courts, a playground, ~~2~~ 3 storage sheds, public bathroom, a two-bay garage/maintenance area, a 100 x 30 pavilion/multi-purpose room,~~a small office/maintenance building~~, a split level ranch housing the Recreation Department's offices and art room, and nature trails surrounding Hobbs' Pond. In addition to the Route 9A facility, the department operates and maintains a playground on the Mile Road and Harbor Road.

The department services mostly children's programs that are offered weekly but also offers some adult sports leagues and special events that target adults. Some of the special events include the entire family, and overall ~~T~~the department operates a wide variety of recreational programs for community members of all ages. Some of the more popular programs include Summer Day Camp for grades K-9, youth swim lessons, and youth sports. Programs are operated at a variety of venues including the schools, Walter Marsh Recreation Area, the and the Wells Activity Center. ~~Other non- sport related classes include children's theater, arts &crafts, mad science, and preschool~~ players. ~~Most of these programs are operated in the schools. Some activities are offered at the Wells Activity Center in rented space.~~ Outdoor programs are held at the school fields or the fields at the Recreation Park on Route 9A. Swim lessons are held at the Elmwood Resort located on Route One. According to participation data collected and analyzed by the department, out of 3,893 participants in recreation programs in Wells in 2019 about 25% were adults and 75% were children. This includes the programs for pre-schoolers (ages 3-4) through 9th graders (ages 14-15), and the Adult Men's basketball league includes 4 teams of 12 players.

Special events and school vacation field trips are always well attended. The Department offers holiday events such as a Haunted Halloween Hayride~~Halloween hayride~~, Christmas programs, and an Easter Egg Hunt. ~~Dances and socials are held for grades 4-8 throughout the year.~~ In the winter snowshoes andcross county skis are rented to town residents.

~~The Recreation Commission is currently working on a strategic plan for the next five to ten yearsfor the Department. The Commission has not lost sight of possibly getting a field house built at the Recreation Park on Route 9A. Table 30 lists the Recreation Department's facilities and equipment.~~

The Recreation Department offers over 100 programs and special events a year. More CIP projects are in the works including installing new playground pieces at the Walter Marsh Recreation Area and developing a small playground at the Wells Activity Center. Plans are also being made to refurbish the 4 tennis courts located at the Walter Marsh Recreation Area. Extended parking has been recently installed at the park and we are looking forward to more projects in the future with our ever-growing community. Table 30 lists the Recreation Department's facilities and equipment.--

Table 30 -- Recreation Department Equipment and Facilities

Facility/Equip Type	Year Purchased	Cost	Expected Investment Date	Expected Investment Cost
Facilities				
Office/Maintenance bldg	1970s			
Admin office bldg	2000	75,000	2013	$1,000,000
Wells Activity Center				
Mile Road Playground				
Rec Park Playground				
Septic Tank	1998	6,000	2020	$8,000
Public Restroom	1998	48,194	2020	$60,000
16x20 Storage Shed	1999	6,000	2013	$30,000
8x10 Storage Shed	2002	0	not replace	
2 Bball Dug out			2004	
Tennis Hut			2010	$2,000
Outdoor Bleachers			2005	$5,000
Equipment				
445 John Deere Tractor	1997	8,200	2005	$20,000
Golf Cart	2000	2,000	2010	$5,000
Sm John Deere Tractor	1992	?	2010	
Ford E350 Van	1999	22,494	2004	$36,000
GMC Dump Truck	2002	28,797	2013	$35,000

Table 30: Recreation Department Equipment and Facilities Inventory
Source: Wells Recreation Department

Facility / Equip Type	Year Purchased	Cost	Expected Invest date
Office/Maintnce bldg	1970's		
Admin Offidce bldg	2000	$ 75,000.00	2013
Wells Activity Center			
Mile Road Playground			
Rec Park Playground			
Septic Tanks (3)			

Public Restroom	1998	$ 48,000.00	2024
16x20 Storage Shed	1998	$ 6,000.00	2025
8x10 storage shed	2002	$ -	not replace
Dug Outs (2)	2018		

Pavilion	2009	$ 100,000.00	
Multi-Purpose Field	2018	$ 150,000.00	
Equipment			
Kabota L324 OHST	2008	$ 20,000.00	2023
2014 Gas Utility Vehicle	2018	$ 5,000.00	2025
E350 15 Passenger Van	2013	$ 27,000.00	2022
E350 15 Passenger Van	2013	$ 27,000.00	2022
Sierra One Ton Dump Truck	2015	$ 51,000.00	2025
Gator	2011	$ 9,000.00	2024
Security system	2014	$ 12,000.00	2022
Hustler Super Z Mower	2021	$ 14,000.00	2026

Wells is fortunate to also have recreation facilities and team sport opportunities provided by area organizations. This includes the Wells-Ogunquit Little League, Wells Soccer Club, and the Wells-Ogunquit Youth Football and Cheering Association.

Library

The Wells Public Library opened in 1978. The library expanded with an addition in 1993, adding a spacious children's area. The latest addition, completed in 2018, added a community room, a quiet study room, a Friends of the Library room, technical services space, and staff offices, bringing the library to approximately 15,000 sq. feet. The library has a staff of nine which consists of four full-time positions (director, deputy director/youth services librarian, adult services librarian, and cataloging librarian) and five part-time positions. ~~is housed in a building on Route One that is part of the school complexdescribed in the Education Section of this chapter. The use of the library has grown steadily overthe past ten years.~~

The collection consists of over 41,000 ~~40,000~~ physical items~~materials~~, which include adult and children's books, reference books, audio books, ~~videos~~DVDs, magazines, CDs,~~children's CD ROMs~~ and large print adult books. In addition, the library has a collection of over 47,000 ebooks, e-audiobooks, and streaming movies. In FY2020, the library circulated 60,878 items, a reduction due to several months of closure during the pandemic. In FY2019 (the last "normal" year), 79,064 items were circulated. ~~In 1999 the library added a total of 1,366 items.~~ In addition to providing reading and viewing materials,

the library is a vibrant gathering place for the community. In FY2019, the library presented 473 programs with a total attendance of 8,882 persons. The community and meeting rooms were used 257 times by outside groups.

The library also provides wifi, ten public computers, a printing station, and copier for public use. ~~Circulation in 1999 was 85,880 down slightly from 1998, which is attributed in part to the opening of the York County Technical College library. The number of reference questions has increased significantly—2,123 in 1999compared to 1,530 in 1998. This phenomenon is attributed to having a part-time reference librarian.~~

In 2020 ~~1998~~ the Library Trustees completed a long-range Strategic Plan that provides a set of goals, objectives and tasks to be undertaken by the library and Trustees through 2025~~2004~~. These tasks dealwith library services, buildings, ~~and~~ infrastructure and technology needs, ~~-~~ and funding.

~~At present the library is over capacity and the conditions are very crowded for the staff. Alongwith the need for additional office space, other possibilities include a community room and technology area. Library trustees are continuing to examine space requirements for all of theseuses.~~

Health Care

In October of, 2000 the Wells Urgent Care Facility opened near the Town Hall on the Sanford Road(Route 109). This is a two-story 19,000-square foot urgent care, walk-in facility with associated laboratory services and diagnostic facilities including x-ray, mammography and ultrasound. The Facility is managed by York Hospital The second floor has physician specialist offices for oncology, minor surgery, obstetrics/gynecology and orthopedics. In addition to health care services, the facility has incorporated the Wells Emergency Medical Service facilities. The facility is open seven days a week from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM including holidays.

There are a number of physicians and other health care providers within the community, most ofwhich are located in the Route One corridor. ~~Other h~~Hospitals are available in York, Sanford, andBiddeford. The Wells-Ogunquit Health Association also provides a tremendous service to families and individuals in need of healthcare related equipment and assistance. The Town of Wells should find a way to support and continue this valuable community healthcare service into the future.

Education

Public education in Wells is provided by the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District. The district serves students residing in Wells and Ogunquit. ~~In 2003, the district ended its agreementthat provided education for secondary students from Acton on a tuition basis due to capacity concerns at Wells High School.~~

As of October 1, 2020 there were 1,325 students enrolled in the district. Most of the students in the district reside in Wells— 1284 compared to 41 for Ogunquit. **See Table 31**.

~~As of October 1, 2003 there were 1,507 students enrolled in the district, excluding holdover students from Acton who are still enrolled at Wells High. Most of the students in the district reside in Wells – 1,439 compared to 68 for Ogunquit. See Table 31~~

1998	Wells	949	426	1375
	Ogunquit	59	14	73
1999	Wells	981	408	1389
	Ogunquit	57	21	78
2000	Wells	999	434	1430
	Ogunquit	51	18	69
2001	Wells	993	438	1431
	Ogunquit	38	21	59
2002	Wells	983	467	1450
	Ogunquit	43	17	60
2003	Wells	979	460	1439
	Ogunquit	51	17	68

Note: Figures exclude secondary Acton tuition students
Source: Maine Department of Education

Table 31 - School Enrollments - WOCSD 2004 - 2021				
2004	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	507	472	463	1442
Ogunquit	14	21	19	54
2005	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	502	455	478	1435
Ogunquit	15	19	15	49
2006	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	475	432	453	1360
Ogunquit	18	17	17	52
2007	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	502	427	459	1388
Ogunquit	25	22	17	64
2008	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	501	423	464	1388
Ogunquit	19	15	18	52

2009	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	474	425	440	1339
Ogunquit	23	13	18	54

2010	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	473	439	423	1335
Ogunquit	26	16	13	55
2011	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	450	435	414	1299
Ogunquit	27	14	17	58
2012	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	426	428	409	1263
Ogunquit	20	21	16	57
2013	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	440	402	435	1277
Ogunquit	21	16	13	50
2014	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	424	391	430	1245
Ogunquit	20	20	15	55
2015	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	434	387	415	1236
Ogunquit	13	24	12	49
2016	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	469	360	423	1252
Ogunquit	13	21	15	49
2017	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	484	390	398	1272
Ogunquit	9	25	21	55
2018	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	528	386	398	1312
Ogunquit	8	21	21	50
2019	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total

Wells	525	399	405	1329
Ogunquit	8	17	22	47
2020	WES	WJHS	WHS	Total
Wells	493	416	375	1284
Ogunquit	10	12	19	41

~~The total enrollment by students living in the district has increased slowly but steadily since 1990, rising from 1,446 to 1,507. This represents an increase of just 4.2% over the 13-year period, though. Enrollment by Wells students increased from 1,370 in 1990 to 1,439 in~~ 2003, ~~again of 5.0%. From 1990 to 2000 the total year-round population of Wells grew by 21%.~~

~~The population of the town therefore grew at a rate that was more than four times greater than public school enrollment. This fact bears out two demographic trends being experienced in Wellsand throughout Southern Maine. First, people moving to the town are older and thus have no children enrolled in the schools. Second, birth rates are down overall. The national birth rate peaked in the early 1990s when the youngest of the baby boomers turned 30 and have been in decline ever since. Thus, there has been a spike in enrollment throughout the region among children born between the years of 1987 and 1992. The oldest of this group will graduate from high school in 2005, and enrollments are expected to begin to decline as a whole from that point forward.~~

The District presently operates ~~four~~ three buildings, all in the Town of Wells. ~~In August 2004, the State's Fire Marshal ordered the Ogunquit Village School closed and the School Committee is inthe process of returning the building to the municipal officers in Ogunquit.~~

~~The remaining elementary school is~~ Wells Elementary School~~, a facility which~~ opened in 2003.This facility is located on Route 109, just north of Town Hall. The building houses all students in grades K-4 from both Wells and Ogunquit. Designed to accommodate 600 students, the September ~~2004~~ 2020 enrollment is ~~525~~ 503 students.

~~The~~ Wells Junior High School is located on Route 1 and serves grades 5 though 8. The building has undergone many additions since the original building was constructed in 1936. A renovation of the junior high began in July 2004 and was completed in 2005~~is expected to be completed by October 2005~~. ~~When complete, t~~The building ~~will~~ finds the 6th, 7th and 8th grade occupying the 1930s and 1980s buildings, a new fifth grade wing where the "old elementary school" once sat, renovated allied arts and Ward Gym area as well as the Office of the Superintendent moved to the 6 classrooms on the south end of the campus. The renovation has 28 classrooms (7 per grade) and can accommodate 560 students. The October 2020 enrollment was 428 students. ~~The September 2004 enrollment is 510 students.~~

Wells High School is located between the other two campuses and is accessed through the accessdrive shared with Town Hall. The school was built in 1977 and a six-classroom third floor addition and expanded library space was completed in 1989. In 2014 Wells High School was completely renovated, with an entirely new academic wing constructed. The high school shares space with Adult Education ~~and has converted many areas into small classroom spaces~~program. ~~The school, throughlocal donations, built a health facility to accommodate its physical education and athletic needs. Currently, lacking adequate storage, conference space, social services areas, technology suites, and adult education daytime programming, the high school will undoubtedly need to be renovated in the near future.~~

The renovation can accommodate 600 students. The October 2020 enrollment at Wells High School was 394 students.

Based on the current growth in the community and the recent enrollment changes, the District is projecting slow, but steady growth for the next several years. It is important to note that as classroom sizes have decreased and the teacher student ratios have changed to meet evolving education standards there are related space considerations. However, recent investments to school facilities should maintain them in an adequate condition to deliver a quality education for many years to come.

Costs for operating the district are borne almost exclusively by the property tax in the two communities. Due to the high property valuation in Wells and Ogunquit, the district receives very little in the way of state aid. As of 2020, only about 5% of the Town of Wells' education budget was funded by the State of Maine

~~The district had enrollment projections prepared in 1999 by the New England School Development Council. Such projections are most accurate for the for the two-to-three year periodafter the projection. By the school year 2003-04, total district enrollment was projected to reach 1,506 or an increase of seven students over the current enrollment. This has proven to be exactly correct.~~

~~Based on the current growth in the community and the recent enrollment changes, the District isprojecting slow, but steady growth for the next several years. Recent investments to school facilities should maintain them at in an adequate condition for many years to come.~~

~~Costs for operating the district are borne almost exclusively by the property tax in the two communities. Due to the high property valuation in Wells and Ogunquit, the district receives very little in the way of state aid. As of 2003, only about 5% of the Town of Wells' educationbudget was funded by the State of Maine.~~

Cemeteries

The Ocean View Cemetery Association owns and operates the Ocean View Cemetery on Route One. This Association is a private organization, although the Town provides financial support forburial of paupers and the maintenance of veterans' graves. There are available gravesites and an undeveloped area within the cemetery. **Any other active Cemeteries to mention?**

Harbor Facilities

An inventory of harbor facilities is found in Section 4 – Marine Resources.

B. PUBLIC UTILITIES

Wastewater Treatment System

Public sewer service in Wells is provided by the Wells Sanitary District (WSD). ~~The district is an~~WSD is an independent entity with its own elected trustees.

WSD's Mission - "To provide the highest quality wastewater collection and treatment services at the lowest possible cost to our customers while protecting public health, the environment and Wells beaches and marshes".

~~The district operates a sewer system with approximately 36 miles of sewers, including 9 pump stations. The sewage treatment plant can treat up to 2 million gallons per day (mgd). The service areaincludes most of the beach areas, Route One corridor and adjacent areas. There are some unsewered developed areas within the general service area, primarily along the west of Route One. The district'smaster plan proposes providing service in these areas.~~

WSD was incorporated in 1970 and turned 50 years old in 2020. Operations began in 1980 with a treatment facility capable of handling 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD). During the past 40 years, the treatment facility has gone through several upgrades to improve efficiency, treat more flow and meet more stringent discharge limits set by the Department of Environmental Protection. Currently, the wastewater treatment facility is licensed for 2 MGD.

~~During 2003, the district treated 279.1 million gallons of sewage with a peak summer flow of approximately 1.6 million gallons a day. In that year, 2,243 cubic yards of biosolids were generated,processed and disposed at district permitted sites. The district presently has enough reserve capacityto meet the town's needs for many years.~~

~~In 1998, the district began an ambitious program to upgrade its twenty-one year old treatment facility. Construction on the $4.2 million renovation and modernization project that was completed in2002. The district's treatment facility should not require any major modifications until 2022.~~

~~The district's policy is to provide sewer service and to expand the system as necessary to accommodate new users. To date it has been the policy of the district to require that new users pay the costs for enlargements and/or extensions of the system. In 2003 the district approved two sewerline extensions to private subdivisions.~~

~~Although the Wells Sanitary District is a separate entity, its policies and actions play a major role in the growth and development of the Town. The availability of public sewerage is key developmentfactor and is necessary for certain types of nonresidential development and for moderate or higher density residential development.~~

WSD also operates a collection system with 42 miles of sewers and 10 pump stations. WSD collects wastewater from residential and commercial properties in the area between the Maine Turnpike and the ocean. There are some neighborhoods in this area that are still not connected to public sewer. WSD's Master Plan includes providing sewer to some of these neighborhoods in the future. Recent Master Plan projects completed include the upper half of Royal Heights and Dike Street in 2018, and Wilson Avenue and Brook Lane in 2021. Providing public sewer service helps the Town of Wells implement the Comprehensive Plan.

WSD is committed to continually improve wastewater services to our 4,500 customers. WSD has a capital improvement program to manage our assets, replace aging equipment, and improve our systems to meet 21st century challenges. For more information about WSD, you may visit the website at https://wellssanitarydistrict.org/.

In 2020 the WSD completed a Climate Adaptation Plan for the district area. The focus of this plan is on:

- The possible effects of climate change to the Wells, Maine region;
- Identifying and assessing possible climate change-related threats specific to the District's wastewater treatment and collection systems and their reliability;
- Evaluating potential adaptation measures to the identified hazards; and
- Providing a cost-effective implementation plan to help protect the District's critical assets and maintain wastewater treatment and collection system reliability.

The recommended adaptation measures are grouped into one of two categories, operational or asset-specific measures. Operational adaptation measures are tasks or procedural changes that District staff could undertake at minimal cost to prevent or mitigate potential hazard consequences. Asset-specific measures include non-routine or one-time tasks, in-depth studies or evaluations, design modifications, or capital expenditures to achieve the goal of preventing or mitigating the potential hazard consequence.

Water Service

Public water service in Wells is provided by the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells WaterDistrict (KK&W), that was established in 1921. The district is an independent, legislatively created public district that is governed by a four-member Board of Trustees. KK&W is regulated by both the Maine Public Utilities Commission and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Drinking Water Program.

The system services portions of Wells, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Ogunquit, Arundel, Biddeford and York. In Wells, the service area consists primarily of the beaches, the Route OneCorridor and adjacent areas ~~(Figure). In Wells, the district had 3,000 residential users (of which929 are seasonal customers) and 378 commercial or industrial users (of which 113 are seasonal customers) as of the end of 2003.~~ Service west of the Maine Turnpike is very limited. As of 2021, the public water system in Wells had 4486 service connections of which 339 are commercial or industrial.

~~The primary source of water for the district is Branch Brook. The district is able to draw and treat a maximum of 5.1 million to 5.3 million gallons per day (gpd) from Branch Brook. This volume is more than adequate to meet the year-round base usage of approximately 3 million gpd. Peak summer water use has grown significantly in recent years and reached 6.8 million gpd on thepeak day of 2003 (July 7).~~

KK&W utilizes both high quality surface water and groundwater as supply sources. Surface is the primary supply and is obtained exclusively from Branch Brook, a largely spring fed, naturally flowing Class A water body that originates in Sanford and forms the town line between Kennebunk and Wells. KK&W is able to withdraw and treat a maximum of 5.1 million gallons per day (mgd) from Branch Brook which has been continuously used a public water supply since 1895. In addition to Branch Brook, KK&W obtains groundwater from four naturally developed gravel well sites. Combined, the wells can produce a maximum of 5.3mgd for short durations with an estimated annual safe yield of around 665 million gallons. On average, ground water supplies around 37 percent of KK&W's annual water supply needs. These supply sources are more than adequate to meet the year-round base demand of approximately 3mgd. Peak summer water usage continues to increase due to customer growth and the expanding use of residential irrigation systems. A new single day record of 7.47mgd was reached on June 28th (2021).

To meet ~~this~~ the seasonal ~~excess~~ increased demand, KK&W has an interconnection with the ~~Biddeford-Saco Water District and can draw upon their supply for up to an additional 2,000,000 gpd. In practice, KKW onlydraws a very small amount of supply from Biddeford-Saco. In 2003, of the total of 1.09 billion gallons of water used by the KKW system, just 5 million were purchased from Biddeford-Saco.~~ three interconnections with neighboring water utilities. To the South, KK&W has an interconnection with York Water District, and there are two interconnections with the Public Water Utility in Biddeford Saco to the North.

~~The District has been involved in a program to replace old or inadequate mains and to improve its storage capacity. With the recent upgrading of the Route One main to 16 inches, the spine of the Wells system is in good shape to service future needs. The District continues to improve its Supervisory Control & Data Acquisition (SCADA) System to allow the entire water system to monitored by computer form the filtration plant. This system provides for real time monitoring of allowing flexible, efficient management of the water system such as allowing the plant to shut downduring low demand periods.~~

KK&W has an aggressive capital infrastructure renewal and replacement program that focuses on improving system hydraulics, reliability and storage capacity. In addition, KK&W is nearing completion of a major upgrading to its metering system using a state-of-the-art fixed based meter reading collection system which provides daily meter readings without the need for staff or vehicles. These daily meter readings provide a tremendous benefit to customer in the form of early leak detection and water consumption monitoring.

~~The District's policy is to meet the needs of future growth and development. This would include bothsupply and distribution. The district presently passes the cost of system expansion on to new users either in the form of construction costs or system development charges.~~

Growth of the public water system is developer funded through water main extensions and contribution to the district. Capacity improvements due to growth are funded through a system development charge for each new service connections.

Utility Rights-of-Way

Wells is crossed by four utility rights-of-way, all of which run in a north-south direction. Verizon (formerly New England Telephone) has two of these and Central Maine Power has theother two.

Verizon has a right-of-way (ROW) that runs through the marshes between Route ~~One~~ 1 and the beaches. Bell Atlantic had removed the lines and has no need for this ROW. Some adjacent property owners have been able to obtain portions of the right of way from the phone company.Verizon also has a ROW that runs along the Sanford-Wells town line.

Central Maine Power (CMP) has two rights-of-way through the town. One, lies between the Maine Turnpike and Route ~~One~~1. This ROW has not yet been developed and is in reserve for future expansion of transmission capacity. Given the pressure for residential development in thissection of Wells, the potential is great for future land use conflicts around this ROW corridor, as some property buyers may not be aware of this area's status. CMP also has a ROW in the western partof Wells running from the North Berwick town line near Route 9 to Branch Brook west of Chicks Crossing Road. In addition to the existing transmission lines, there is now a natural gas transmission pipe located within this right of way.

The fourth right way is the old Eastern Line, the ordinal right of way of the Boston and Maine Railroad. Rail Service was discontinued when the rail was relocated to the east. In the 1960s, theright of way was purchased is now used for an interstate natural gas transmission pipe. This rightof way is under investigation for use a non-motorized trail as part of the Eastern Trail. See the discussion in the Transportation Section.

Analysis

The inventory of municipal facilities and services identified a number of issues that need to be addressed in order for the Town to ensure a proper level of service in an efficient manner.
These include:

1. The need to provide facilities that provide adequate space and working conditionsto allow municipal employees to serve the needs of Wells' growing population.
   Such facilities include space for general administration, the library, recreational activities, police and fire and public works.

~~1.~~2. All municipal facilities should be equipped with an asset management plan.

~~2.~~3. The need to properly serve the areas of the community west of the Maine Turnpike in anefficient manner, ~~without encouraging more~~while ensuring that growth in that part of the town is in keeping with the future land use plan.

~~3.~~4. As the Town continues to grow, ensure that there is adequate personnel to ensure thehealth and safety of its citizens.

~~4.~~5. The need to maintain strong mutual aid agreements with adjacent communities.

~~5.~~6. The need to continue to coordinate with the Wells-Ogunquit Community School Districtto maintain adequate school facilities well into the future.

7. Planning for future development along the Central Maine Power easement in order to minimize future conflicts between property owners and the utility company.

Data Sources and References

- Town of Wells Municipal Departments
- Wells-Ogunquit Community School District
- Wells Sanitary District
- Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District
- York Hospital

Section 10 -- Fiscal Capacity

Assessed Valuation and Tax Rate

The Town's taxable real and personal property, also known as the Town's total assessed valuation, is an important component of the Town's fiscal health. The Maine Department of

Revenue maintains its own estimates of local valuation for all municipalities in the state—these estimates are termed the "state valuation." Since state valuation, unlike local valuation, is continually adjusted, it is therefore not sensitive to revaluations. This section compares state valuations and local valuations for Wells.

In 2004, the state valuation stood at nearly $1.8 billion. By 2009, that number reached approximately $3 billion, representing an annual growth rate of 11% and an overall increase of 68%. Wells' state valuation began to dip ~~from a high of $1,049,950,000 in the year 1992 – 1993~~ in 2009, falling 5% down to $2.8 billion by 2014 ~~to a low of $932,000,000 in the year 1994 – 1995. The decline in assessed valuation of $117,950,000, or 11.2% of the total, was significant for the Town of Wells.~~

~~This decline was largely attributed to the economic decline and consequent out migration of the early 1990s. New England and Maine in particular were adversely affected by the economic recession and loss of high paying civilian defense jobs that occurred in the early to mid 1990s. The closure of the Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, NH coupled with the reduction in work force at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine adversely impacted the economic well being of many communities in Southern Maine and Seacoast New Hampshire, including Wells. With federal assistance, the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission prepared a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region for the purpose of attempting to diversify the region's economic base.~~

However, since that time, the State's valuation of Wells has climbed consistently, reaching nearly $3.5~~1.8~~ billion ~~for 2004/2005~~in 2020. This represents a 27~~78~~% increase from ~~1998/1999~~2014. ~~Since the mid-1990s, rising~~Rising demand for both year-round and seasonal properties in Southern Maine has driven sale prices for residential property to new highs. The median home price in the Town has increased 93% from 2014 to 2019, and from 2010 to 2019 the number of seasonal homes increased almost 20%. Contributing to the jump in assessments ~~Causing assessments to jump dramatically~~. **See Table 32.**

TABLE 32
State Valuation of Taxable Property in Wells

Year	State Valuation	% Change
2010	$2,934,900,000	-2.6%
2011	$2,874,800,000	-2.0%
2012	$2,810,250,000	-2.2%

2013	$2,800,800,000	-0.3%
2014	$2,773,550,000	-1.0%
2015	$2,932,900,000	5.7%
2016	$3,034,200,000	3.5%
2017	$3,105,700,000	2.4%
2018	$3,165,600,000	1.9%
2019	$3,328,650,000	5.2%
2020	$3,533,050,000	6.1%
Source: Municipal Valuation Statistical Summaries; Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services Revenue Services		

Table 32
State Valuation of Taxable Property

Year	State Valuation
1992 / 1993	$1,049,950,000
1993 / 1994	$1,001,650,000
1994 / 1995	$932,000,000
1995 / 1996	$944,600,000
1996 / 1997	$943,000,000
1997 / 1998	$966,100,000
1998 / 1999	$978,550,000
1999 / 2000	$1,001,200,000
2000 / 2001	$1,047,100,000
2001 / 2002	$1,171,200,000
2002 / 2003	$1,320,900,000
2003 / 2004	$1,468,800,000
2004 / 2005	$1,788,050,000

Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary 1992/1993 to 2004/2005, Maine Bureau of Taxation and Assessor's Office, Town of Wells

~~Local assessed valuation followed a similar pattern as state valuation. Beginning in year 1995-1996, the Town began to see the assessed valuation increase. By 2003-2004, the Town assessed value had risen to $1,692,473,168, which far surpasses the valuation in year 1992-1993.~~

As indicated in Table 33, the Town's local assessed valuation experienced incremental annual increases of approximately 1% to 2% from 2010, where it stood at $2.9 billion to the year ~~1998-1999~~2013, where it stood at $3 billion, when there was a decline of $~~5,720,703~~ 148,376,956 or 4.9~~r0.5~~%. The following year showed a ~~very~~ healthy increase of $~~50,387,245~~110,377,506, or 3.8~~4.6~~%. ~~In the year 2000-2001, there was another increase of $27,965,739 or 2.4%.~~ Since 201~~600-2001~~, there has continued to be an ~~been a dramatic~~ uptick in local valuation, with an overall growth rate of 8~~-54~~% from 2016 to 2019.~~1998-1999 through 2003-2004. The largest jump was between 2002 and 2003 when the assessment jumped by 32% due to a townwide revaluation.~~

Table 33 Local Assessed Valuation	
YEAR	*LOCAL VALUATION*
1992 / 1993	$1.047.202.853
1993 / 1994	$1.057.776.367
1994 / 1995	$1.064.560.931
1995 / 1996	$1.084.072.027
1996 / 1997	$1.098.314.480
1997 / 1998	$1.105.598.065
1998 / 1999	$1.099.877.362
1999 / 2000	$1.150.264.607
2000 / 2001	$1.178.230.346
2001 / 2002	$1.256.924.050
2002 / 2003	$1.652.034.307
2003 / 2004	$1.692.473.168

Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary 1992 – 2003; Assessor's Office, Town of Wells

TABLE 33 Local Assessed Valuation in Wells		
Year	Local Valuation	% Change
2010	$2,916,529,150	0.5%
2011	$2,976,032,721	2.0%
2012	$3,006,525,404	1.0%
2013	$3,039,040,053	1.1%
2014	$2,890,663,097	-4.9%
2015	$3,001,040,603	3.8%
2016	$3,042,534,224	1.4%
2017	$3,103,810,973	2.0%
2018	$3,174,708,336	2.3%
2019	$3,238,016,613	2.0%
Source: Municipal Statistical Summaries from the Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services Revenue Services, Town of Wells 2016 Annual Report		

During the 912-year period from year ~~1992-1993~~ 2010 through ~~year 2003-2004~~2019, the Town's property tax commitment (the amount of the budget raised through local property taxes) increased from $~~9,466,714~~25,087,956 to $~~17,916,821~~33,740,133 for a net increase of $8,~~450,107~~652,177 or 3~~489~~%. **See Table 34**. During the same period, the Town's local valuation increased from $~~1,047,202,853~~2,916,529,150 to $~~1,692,473,168~~3,238,016,613 for a net increase of $~~645,270,315~~321,487,463 or 11~~62~~%.

Table 34 Property Tax Commitment and Tax Rate			
Year	Commitment	Tax Rate per $1,000	Assessment Ratio
1992 / 1993	$9.466.714	$9.04	110%
1993 / 1994	$9.847.899	$9.31	110%
1994 / 1995	$9.879.125	$9.28	110%
1995 / 1996	$10.298.718	$9.50	110%
1996 / 1997	$10.521.856	$9.58	110%
1997 / 1998	$10.856.973	$9.82	110%
1998 / 1999	$11.394.136	$10.20	110%
1999 / 2000	$12.077.816	$10.50	110%
2000 / 2001	$13.431.827	$11.40	95%
2001 / 2002	$14.916.690	$11.87	84%
2002 / 2003	$17.808.947	$10.78	100%
2003 / 2004	$17.916.821	$10.75	100%

Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary 1992 – 2003; Assessor's Office, Town of Wells

TABLE 34 Property Tax Commitment and Tax Rate			
Year	Commitment	Tax Rate per $1,000	Assessment Ratio
2010~~2019~~	$25,087,956 ~~$33,740,133~~	8.43~~10.42~~	100%
2011~~2018~~	$25,946,316 ~~$32,762,990~~	8.63~~10.32~~	100%
2012~~2017~~	$26,226,915 ~~$31,534,719~~	8.63~~10.16~~	100%
2013~~2016~~	$26,362,847 ~~$30,607,894~~	9.12~~10.06~~	100%
2014~~2015~~	$28,037,627 ~~$29,860,354~~	9.5~~9.95~~	100%
2015~~2014~~	$29,860,354 ~~$28,037,627~~	9.95~~9.5~~	100%
2016~~2013~~	$30,607,894 ~~$26,362,847~~	10.06~~9.12~~	100%
2017~~2012~~	$31,534,719 ~~$26,226,915~~	10.16~~8.63~~	100%
2018~~2011~~	$32,762,990 ~~$25,946,316~~	10.32~~8.63~~	100%
2019~~2010~~	$33,740,133 ~~$25,087,956~~	10.42~~8.43~~	100%

Source: Municipal Statistical Summaries from the Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services Revenue Services

In this section, "tax rate" refers to the total assessment levied on property owners in Wells— this includes Town, ~~county~~county, and school district assessments. During the period from ~~1992-93~~2010 to 20~~03-04-~~19 the Town's tax rate increased by $2.0~~1.6~~9 or 24~~19~~%. The assessment ratio ~~declined from 110% in 1992-1993 to 84% by 2001-2002, spurring a townwide revaluatio~~has remained at 100% consistently in the last ten years~~n~~. As indicated in Table 35, as of 2019~~003~~, Wells had the second lowest tax rate among its surrounding communities, with only ~~York's~~ Ogunquit'srate being lower.

TABLE 35 Tax Rate Compensation		
Municipality	**Tax Rate (2019, per $1,000)**	**Full Value Rate (2019, per $1,000)**
Wells	**$10.42**	**$8.98**
Kennebunk	$13.75	$12.76
North Berwick	$12.35	$11.55
Ogunquit	$8	$6.93
Sanford	$20.7	$19.13
South Berwick	$18.8	$16.72
York	$11.15	$10.54
Source: Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services Revenue Services		

Table 35 Tax Rate Comparison		
Municipality	**Tax Rate (2004, per thousand)**	**Full Value Rate (2004, per thousand)**
Wells	$10.75	$10.28
Kennebunk	$10.90	$12.19
North Berwick	$13.70	$13.31
Ogunquit	$12.87	$8.41
Sanford	$16.42	$18.83
South Berwick	$13.90	$13.78
York	$9.70	$10.66

Source: Town Assessor's Office in each municipality, Maine Municipal Association

Operating Revenues and Expenditures

This section investigates the sources and revenues used to operate the municipal government and the school system and how the Town spends those resources.

According to Table 36, for the year ending June 30, 2019~~003~~, the Town of Wells generated revenues of $~~21,109164537,498,610~~ with $~~17,670,96632,817,463~~ or about 87.44% of the total, derived from local property taxes.

Excise taxes accounted for about $2~~1~~.98 million or 7.5~~8.6~~% of ~~the~~ total revenues. Excise taxes includes the Town's share of motor vehicle registrations. Miscellaneous revenue, which represents about 1.8~~3.7~~% of the total, includes such items as fees from beach parking, building permits, licenses and penalties on unpaid taxes. Intergovernmental revenue includes federal and state assistance such as funding from the Rachel Carson Reserve, State of Maine revenue sharing, Maine Department of

Transportation funding, the Tree planting program among others. Because of its high level of assessed valuation, the Town receives very little State education assistance.

Table 36
Municipal General Fund Revenues by Major Category
Year Ending June 30, 2003

Category	Amount	% of Total
Property Taxes	$17.670.996	84%
Excise Taxes	1.805.938	9%
Intergovernmental revenue	850.860	4%
Miscellaneous Revenues	781.851	4%
Total Revenues	**$21,109,645**	**100%**

Source: Town of Wells Financial Audit Report, June 30, 2003

TABLE 36
Municipal General Fund Revenues by Major Category
Year Ending June 30, 2019

Category	Amount	% Of Total
Property Taxes	32,817,463	87.4%
Excise Taxes	2,911,394	7.5%
Intergovernmental Revenue	940,579	3.2%
Miscellaneous Revenues	829,174	1.8%
Total Revenues	**37,498,610**	**100%**
Source: Town of Wells Financial Audit Report FY 2019		

For the year ending June 30, 2019 ~~2003~~, the Town expended $~~19,630,963~~6,339,826, 18% of the Town's total ~~to~~budget, to ~~operate the municipal government~~on general government and $19,833,029, 55% of its budget, to operate the Wells school system. **See Table 37.** ~~Of that total amount, the Town spent 55% or $10.7 million on public education.~~ The percentage of the budget allocated to education is consistent with other nearby communities. For example, ~~Kittery~~ Kennebunk spends about 6~~0~~50% of its budget on education, Sanford spends 63%, South Berwick spends 55% and Ogunquit spends 37%. ~~General government and public~~Public safety accounted for the next ~~two~~ highest categories at $~~1.6 million~~4,511,107 (13~~8~~%). ~~and $2.7 million (14%).~~

Table 37
Municipal General Fund Expenditures by Major Category
Year Ending June 30, 2003

Category	Amount	% of Total
General government	$1.557.935	8%
Public safety	2.663.819	14%
Health and Welfare	541.747	3%
Recreation & Culture	203.891	1%
Beach and harbor services	302.678	2%
Education	10.744.507	55%
Public works	951.829	5%
Library	234.156	1%
Debt Service		

TABLE 37 Municipal General Fund Expenditures by Major Category Year Ending June 30, 2019		
Category	**Amount**	**% of Total**
General government	6,339,826	18%
Public Safety	4,511,107	13%
Health and Sanitation	764,971	2%
Recreation and Culture	388,941	1%
Beach and Harbor Services	292,385	1%
Education	19,833,029	55%
Public Works	822,291	2%
Library	541,993	2%
County Tax	1,688,904	5%
Unclassified	649,093	2%
Debt Service Principal Interest	430,000 832,081	4%
Total Expenditures	**35,832,540**	**100%**
Source: Town of Wells Financial Audit Report FY 2019		

Between 2010 and 2015, the Town's total expenditures increased by $2,292,841, or 8%. During this 5-year time frame, Wells' public works costs increased 26%, general government costs increased 14%, and education costs increased 13%. In the same period, recreation and culture costs decreased by 40%, from $521,304 to $314,606. Additionally, the Town's unclassified costs decreased by 43%. From 2015 to 2019, the Town's total expenditure increased 18%, from $30,301,224 to $35,832,540. The largest expenditure increase occurred in the Town's unclassified costs, which increase 278% from $171,514 to $649,093. Relatively large increases also occurred in debt service costs (67%), general government costs (55%), library costs (47%), and recreation and culture costs (27%). During this time, public works costs decreased by 47%.

TABLE 38 Changes in Expenditures in Wells					
Category	**2010**	**2015**	**% Change, 2010-2015**	**2019**	**% Change, 2015-2019**
General government	$3,583,593	$4,090,331	14%	$6,339,826	55%
Public Safety	$3,729,611	$3,873,914	4%	$4,511,107	16%
Health and Sanitation	$467,981	NA*	NA*	$764,971	
Recreation and Culture	$521,304	$314,606	-40%	$388,941	24%
Beach and Harbor Services	$245,757	$229,900	-6%	$292,385	27%
Education	$15,340,618	$17,407,098	13%	$19,833,029	14%
Public Works	$1,228,845	$1,546,345	26%	$822,291	-47%
Library	$337,099	$369,615	10%	$541,993	47%
County Tax	$1,440,785	$1,540,101	7%	$1,688,904	10%

Unclassified	$301,855	$171,514	-43%	$649,093	278%
Debt Service Principal Interest	$668,986 $141,949	$630,000 $127,800	-7%	$430,000 $832,081	67%
Total Expenditures	**$28,008,383**	**$30,301,224**	**8%**	**$35,832,540**	**18%**
Source: Town of Wells Annual Report FY 2010, 2015 and 2019					

*Data for health and sanitation were not reported from 2014-2018.

Principal	128,986	<1%
Interest	50,606	<1%
York County tax	1,039,603	5%
Unclassified	1,211,206	6%
TOTAL EXPENDS.	**$19,630,963**	**100%**

Source: Town of Wells Financial Audit Report, June 30, 2003

Many communities have the responsibility for the maintenance and long-term operation of a municipal water system and a municipal wastewater treatment plant. In Wells, the Kennebunk,

Kennebunkport and Wells Water District provides water and the Wells Sanitary District provides sewer service. Users of the service and not Town taxpayers pay for these two services. Town wide charges for water or wastewater do not appear in the Town's Financial Report.

From ~~1999~~ 2015 through 201~~903~~, both the Town's revenues and expenditures increased by 18~~47.5~~% ~~while the Town's expenditures increased by 41.5%.~~ **See Table 38.**

Table 38
Increases in Town Revenues and Expenditures
1998 – 2003

Year	Revenues	% Change	Expenditures	% Change
1998-99	$14,311,695		$13,877,688	
1999-00	$15,008,352	4.9%	$14,418,586	3.9%
2000-01	$15,292,602	1.9%	$14,253,437	(1.1%)
2001-02	$17,944,141	17.3%	$18,138,483	27.2%
2002-03	$21,109,645	17.6%	$19,630,963	8.2%

Source: Town of Wells, Financial Audit Reports, June 30, 1998 through June 30 2003, Fiscal Year 2004 Tax Worksheet

TABLE 398
Increases in Town Revenues and Expenditures
2015 – 2020

Year	Revenues	% Change	Expenditures	% Change
2015	34,438,166		31,119,940	
2016	35,971,738	4.5%	34,190,233	9.9%
2017	37,058,189	3.0%	35,754,070	4.6%
2018	39,172,369	5.7%	36,843,441	3.0%
2019	40,638,319	3.7%	36,870,321	0.1%
2020	39,153,246	-3.7%	35,706,961	-3.2%
Source: Town of Wells Financial Audit Reports, FY 15 – FY 2020				

Debt

Wells has a very modest level of long-term debt relative to its borrowing capacity. Debt obligations in Fiscal Year 2020 ~~2004~~ amounted to about 1.05% of the total municipal valuation ($3,238,016,613), in fact. Maine law limits the amount a municipality may incur in long-term debt to 7.5% of its state valuation. Given Wells' 2019 ~~2004~~ state valuation of $3,533,050,000~~$1,788,050,000~~, the Town could legally borrow up to $265~~134~~ million.

As of June 30, ~~2003~~2020, the total amount of long-term debts carried by the Town of Wells was $ 16,213,148 ~~1,267,902~~. ~~At Town Meeting in 2004, the Town approved a General Obligation bond of $4,225,000 to finance land acquisition around the old Town Dump and other capital projects. Adding these figures together, Wells' total long-term debt as of June 2004 is about $5.5 million, or about 0.3% of the Town's state valuation.~~

In addition to the Town's debt, Wells owes a much higher level of debt to the Wells-Ogunquit Consolidated School District. As of June 2020 ~~2004~~, the CSD's total outstanding debt level was $22,948,385~~$26,808,919~~ ($22.25~~19.52~~ million in principal, $723,385 ~~$7.29~~ million in interest). ~~In addition, the voters of Wells and Ogunquit approved an additional $1 million in June 2004 for an interest-free revolving fund, for which $200,000 is forgiven by the state, so the CSD's debt level is increased by $800,000. Thus, the district's total debt comes to $27,608,919.~~ Of the total amount, Wells' current share is set at 78.77~~77.45~~%. This is pegged to present levels of enrollment and property valuation and changes each year as the two variables change. At the current level, though, Wells' obligation is estimated to be $18.04 million~~21.38 million~~.

Adding together Town and School debts, the total debt level of the Town of Wells as of June 202~~004~~ is $34,289,590~~$26,876,009~~, or 1.05% of the Town's total property valuation. The Town therefore has substantial capacity to take on additional debt to finance capital projects if it so chooses.

Fiscal Implications of Residential Growth Ordinance~~e~~

~~As discussed in Section 8,~~The Wells' Residential Growth Ordinance (growth cap) was ~~originally~~ enacted in the 1980s as a means of ensuring that the Town would grow at a predictable rate. As of 2008, the Town no longer has a growth ordinance in place.

There were a number of concerns that originally prompted the implementation of a growth cap such as controlling the rate of spending increases for local government services. ~~One of the benefits of predictable growth is to control the rate of spending increases for local government services.~~

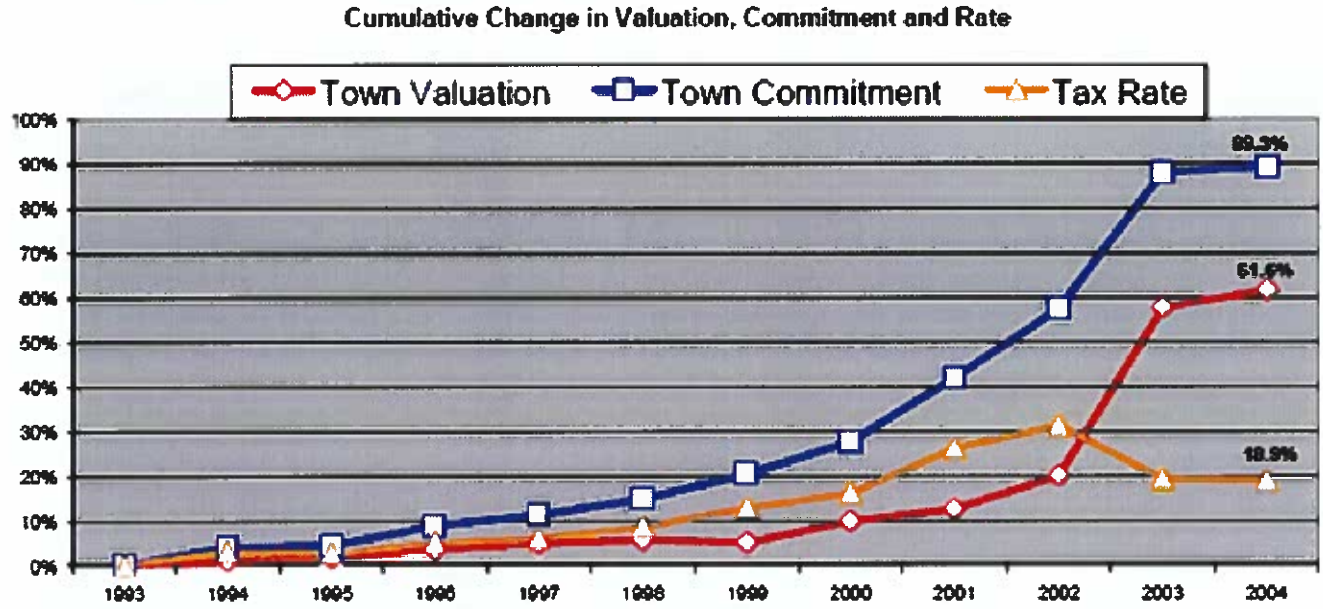
Education spending was one of the primary concerns surrounding the growth cap debate as it grew rapidly in the early 2000s due to increasing enrollment and increasing costs per pupil. In 2004, education accounted for 55% of all municipal spending in the Town. It has maintained a relatively consistent portion of the Town's budget since that time, still standing at 55% in 2019. ~~Education spending is the largest line item in the Town budget and has therefore been at the heart of the growth cap debate for the past 25 years. As outlined above, education spending:~~

1. ~~Accounts for about 55% of all municipal spending in Wel~~

~~Comes almost exclusively from the Town's own resources, as very little state aid goes to the Wells-OgunqHas been rising rapidly in recent years~~

~~There are two reasons for the last fact. First of all, unlike many other school districts in southern Maine, enrollment in the Wells-Ogunquit CSD has actually been on the rise. Secondly, the cost per pupil to educate children has been rising rapidly in recent years due to increased pressure to meet both federal and state-mandated performance measures.~~

Also key to the growth cap issue ~~is~~ was the fact that both property assessments and the property tax rate ~~have~~ had been on the rise, leading to large increases in the tax bills among property owners in Wells during that time period.

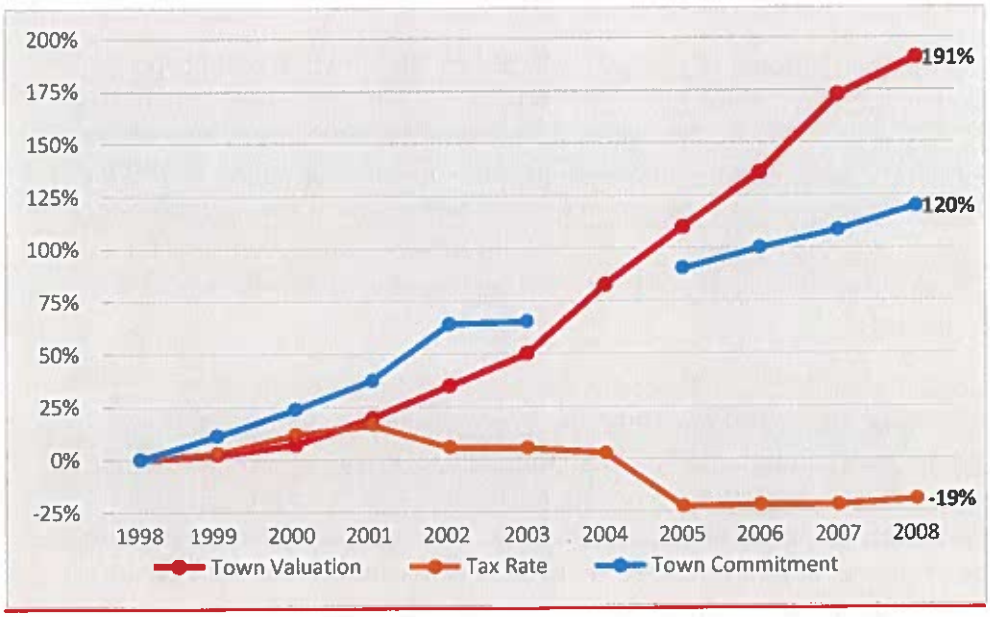


The following graphics illustrates trends over ~~the past 10 years~~two different ten-year periods of time for three different fiscal factors: property valuation, municipal expenditures, and the property tax rate. The first period of time is from 1998 to 2008 when the growth cap was still in effect and the second period is the first ten years after the growth cap lapsed.

The cumulative change in the Town's property tax commitment from 1998~~3~~ to 2008~~4~~ was ~~89.3~~120%~~%, or about 6.0% annually~~ and property valuations rose 191%. ~~.~~ Property valuations~~Even as property valuations~~ grew at a much slower ~~slowly~~ rate than tax commitment during the mid-1990s ~~the town's tax commitment continued to rise~~and up until 2002 when the ~~. The gap closed somewhat with the 2002~~gap began to close with the 2002 revaluation~~,~~. By 2005 the Town valuation was growing at a faster rate than its property tax commitment~~but overall the valuation's growth rate of 61.6% still lagged far behind the growth in tax commitment~~. ~~-~~ Until 2005, ~~Accordingly, the~~the Town's property tax rate was increasing during the period up until 2002. In 1998, it stood at $10.20. In 2005, the tax rate decreased by 25% from the previous year, falling from $10.48 to $7.89 per $1,000. ~~increase~~At the end of this time period when the growth cap ended the tax rate was $8.22. ~~d by 19% during the period, from $9.04 to $10.75 per $1,000.~~

By these measures, a property that was valued at $100,000 in 19983 would have been valued at $~~161,600~~220,000 by 20084. The annual tax bill on this property would have increased from $1,020~~904~~ in 19983 to $~~1,737~~1,808.4, an increase of $~~833~~ 788.4 or 77~~92~~%. ~~This represents a compound annual growth rate in tax bills of 6.1%.~~

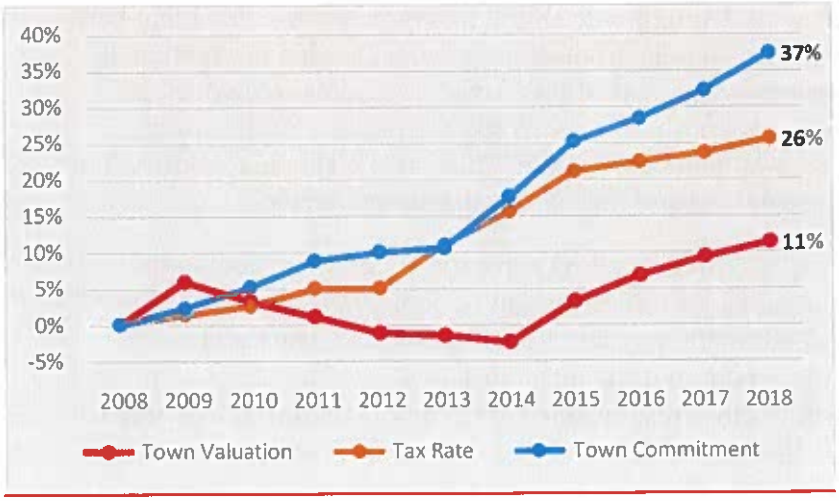
Cumulative Change in Valuation, Commitment and Rate (1998-2008)



The Town's property tax commitment and valuation grew at a much slower rate from 2008 to 2018. The cumulative change during that time period in the Town's property tax commitment was 37% and valuation rose 11%.

The tax rate rose 26% during this period to $10.32 in 2018. The property valued at $220,000 in 2008 would have been valued at $244,200. The annual tax bill of $1,808.4 in 2008 would have increased to $2,520.14, an increase of $711.74 or 39%.

Cumulative Change in Valuation, Commitment, and Rate (2008-2018)



Continued development pressure in Wells has ~~further inflamed concerns~~ continued conversations about growth, as the pace of housing development ~~since 2000 has reached levels not seen since the 1980s~~ has continued over the last several years. The Town's population, however, has grown 23.58% in the past ten years. A significant increase in population growth rate compared to the previous ten years, when it increased by 2.01%. ~~As mentioned above, the cap for subdivision lots was finally reached in 2003. The question must be asked: since the cap is now "working," what effect is it having on the rate of growth in municipal expenses?~~

"Tax commitment" refers to the total amount of money collected by the Town in real property taxes. As Wells' population has increased since the mid-1990s, the Town's tax commitment has shown a clear upward trend. After showing modest gains for most of the 1990s (less than 5% per year), the annual growth rate in the tax commitment began to spike upward beginning in 1999, as it grew around ~~6.0~~11% ~~during 1999.~~each year from 1999 to 2001 and grew 19.4% in 2002. Since 2002, the highest annual growth rate was in 2015 at 6.5%. ~~The following three years saw the tax commitment grow by 11.2% during 2000, 11.1% during 2001 and finally 19.4% during 2002 before leveling off to 0.6% in 2003.~~

~~The increased rate of residential growth has undoubtedly been a contributor to the Town's rapidly rising spending since 1998.~~ From 1995 to 1999, the Town issued an average of 74 permits per year. From 2000 to 2003, though, the average jumped to 106. In the years following the 2008 recession, the average fell to 56.5. It has since increased to 149.25 permits per year between 2016 and 2019. However, as shown above, the increase in valuation of real property in the Town has mirrored that of the tax commitment, so there has been a substantial increase in revenues brought in by new development to help defray the costs of serving the new development.

There is no doubt that new lots and homes are selling at ever higher rates. Even for homes that house schoolchildren, there is a point above which the annual property tax bill covers the amount of public services used. Although no such study has been done for Wells, this point commonly occurs for a household with two children in public schools when the assessed value of a home exceeds $300,000. With so many homes in Wells now valued at or above this level, the net fiscal impact of new construction may actually be positive, especially for households with no children in public schools.

Complicating this discussion is the issue of demographic shifts. It is typically assumed that new households with children enrolled in public schools produce the greatest burden on municipal budgets, as school spending comprises more than half of the Town's spending. However, as noted in Chapter 10, the number of students enrolled in the Wells-Ogunquit CSD has been growing at a much slower rate than the population as a whole. Thus, new residential construction has not been a strong indicator of increased demand for public educational services.

A final point in regard to the growth cap is that of bonding capacity. As outlined above, the Town of Wells is only using about ~~one-sixth~~13% of the amount of debt that it is legally allowed to take on, though voters may be reluctant to approve additional borrowing. Thus, as new development creates the need for major capital investments, the Town may have to pass along the capital costs created by new growth to those responsible for development through an impact fee system.

Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge

Sea level rise and accompanying storm surge is expected to have a large impact on businesses and residences in Wells. The Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC) recently studied two sea level rise scenarios and storm surge scenarios, 1.6 feet and 3.0 feet, consistent with the "Maine Won't Wait" report issued by the Maine Climate Council. Under the 1.6 feet scenario, residential properties valued at over $860 million – 20 percent of the assessors table – are located within the inundation zones. Under 3.0 feet of sea level rise and storm surge, residential properties valued $1 billion – 25 percent of the assessor's table – are located in the inundation zone. The tax revenue associated with these properties represents 38 percent and 48 percent of the town's most recent budget. Moreover, 16 businesses representing over $15 million in sales in 2019 will be affected by 3.0 feet of sea level rise and storm surge. Of course, just because a property is located in the inundation zone does not mean that the property will lose all of its value. However, the potential revenue implications are large.

~~In conclusion, the core reason for Wells to desire a growth cap – maintaining a predictable level of growth – is a legitimate concern. Growth pressures in Wells are as strong as ever and the Town faces the prospect of having to make major capital investments in many different types of public facilities to serve new development. However, the exact relationship between the public costs of new residential growth and the tax revenue it produces is not clearly understood. In order to truly understand the dynamics of a growth cap, this issue must be further investigated.~~

Analysis

1. The town has managed its finances in a conservative and prudent manner.

2. The Town of Wells has a very~~fairly~~ modest amount of debt relative to its valuation and consequently has the capacity to issue additional debt if required. ~~At the request of the Board of Selectmen, the Town staff prepared a report entitled *Facility and Infrastructure Report*. This report identifies needed capital projects that the Town should consider for future investment.~~

3. Wells is a "property rich" community, but not necessarily an income rich one, as its 2003 median household income level of $~~50,922~~66,578, $1,252 ~~is only about $2,500~~ below~~above~~ the York County median. The high property valuation in Wells also means that the Town does not qualify for any noteworthy amount of State education aid. Given the growing gap between income and property value in Wells, the Town needs to advocate for the state to consider other economic indicators in its school funding formula such as lower per capita income, underemployment and a community's overall ability to pay.

4. ~~Wells' Residential Growth Ordinance was created so that the Town could reasonably plan for the additional costs of providing public services and facilities for new households. While new residential growth is undoubtedly contributing to rising public spending and growing tax bills, there are other issues at play as well. These include increased property values and a lack of federal/state support for mandatory educational~~

~~initiatives.~~ One of the reasons the Growth Ordinance was repealed was that it was no longer justified by municipal spending or was a strain on the Town's infrastructure.

5. ~~The relationship between public costs to serve new residential development and the tax revenues brought in by it is not clearly understood at this time. The Town therefore needs to better understand the real effects of new residential development on its fiscal health when making decisions regarding controlling the pace of residential growth.~~

Data Sources and References

- Municipal valuation return statistical summaries from Maine Department of Administrative and Financial Services Revenue Services
- Audited financial statements and town reports from the Town of Wells
- Wells School District
- United States Census
- State of the Cities Data Systems (SOCDS)