

Town of Wells, Maine  
Comprehensive Plan Update

# SUPPLEMENT

AS VOTED ON  
May 16, 2024  
By the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

# **Town of Wells, Maine Comprehensive Plan Update**

*Submitted To:*

Comprehensive Plan Update Committee  
Wells, Maine

*Submitted by:*

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Commission

*In Cooperation with:*

**Town of Wells Planning Department**

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# Part 1 -- Introduction

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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 as “policies”, and the steps they will take together to make this vision a reality are known as “implementation strategies”.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PURPOSE AND USE

The Comprehensive Plan’s purpose is to document the direction and actions needed in Wells to achieve 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 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 Growth Management Act (M.R.S.A. Title 30-A, Chapter 187) and related state and regional development policies.

[The Town of Wells maintains its rights to Home Rule per State Statutes.](#)

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ORGANIZATION

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

### **Part 1: Introduction**

This section describes the Plan’s purpose, use, planning process, and plan adoption.

### **Part 2: Policies and Implementation Strategies**

This section addresses key issues facing the town and new opportunities and identifies implementation actions that will be pursued.

### **Part 3: Implementation Program**

This section organizes the many implementation actions identified, assigns primary responsibility, and determines the level of priority.

### **Part 4: Appendix**

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

The Comprehensive Plan is a living document. As 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 Comprehensive Plan are always welcome. The Town of Wells will establish 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 in 2005 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. The 2005 Comprehensive Plan was completed by this Task Force. 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 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update will be presented to the citizens of Wells for adoption at ~~the June 2024~~ 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, except those under the jurisdiction of the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC), develop a 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.

# Part 2 – Policies and Implementation Strategies

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## Chapter 1 The Vision for Wells

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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. This Vision addresses the overall character of the 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 ~~in the year 2032, and~~ have a clear image to work towards through the many implementation actions identified in this Plan.

### THE VISION FOR WELLS ~~IN 2032~~

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.

## **Policies**

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

1. Ensure that residential growth 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, and that have low risk of exposure to natural hazards (e.g., flooding) and that are not environmentally sensitive.~~
2. ~~3.~~ 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. ~~4.~~ 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**

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Establish a standing Growth Management Committee to review the 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 monitor regional growth trends, research and provide examples of ordinances and other growth management techniques 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.

16. Negotiate greater protections of watercourse in the Branch Brook, Merriland River, and Webhannet River watersheds by purchasing development rights and easements from 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. The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee will review and assess the quality of current wetland management within Wells and, if deemed appropriate, ~~revise or 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 and 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) as "significant wildlife habitat. These areas should be revised based on MDIFW updates and revisions of these habitat areas and performance standards.
2. 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 Tatic 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.

# Chapter 6 Existing and Future Land Use Policies and Strategies

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## 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 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.
2. Safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources.

### Wells Goals:

1. Growth does not exceed the capacity of municipal facilities and services.
2. Wells has a balanced pattern of land use that respects its diverse natural, cultural and historic resources.
3. ~~Allow~~ Guide growth that is respectful of the Town's village, rural and beach/waterfront areas.
4. Growth management strategies should be employed to ensure growth is compatible with meeting a goal to reduce carbon emissions.
5. Impact of new growth on environmental, open space and fiscal resources is minimized.
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.

1. See existing land use regulations including the requirements for Town Streets and Sidewalks.

## **Implementation Strategies**

### **Cooperation with the Maine DOT**

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 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.
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.
- ~~5. Explore the possibility of a land bridge over the Maine turnpike to provide both a wildlife corridor and an important pedestrian/bicycle connection between the west side of town and the coastal corridor. Such a facility could connect the Eastern Trail with the coastal community and provide an economic multiplier for local businesses that serve visitors.~~

### **Regional Transportation Planning**

6. 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.
7. Support and coordinate with York County Community Action (YCCA) on regional transit solutions.
8. Identify locations in Wells and funding opportunities for establishing additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

# Chapter 14 – Fiscal Capacity Policies and Strategies

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## 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 ~~with the one exception being Ogunquit~~. 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.

### 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.
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 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.
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. Capital Improvement Planning Process

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. 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 <del>a form-based code</del> , access management plan, and streetscape standards to guide future development activity.	Planning Board / CPIC / Selectboard	Short
<del>65.</del> Adopt a Development Plan for Route 109 east of the Turnpike including <del>a form-based code</del> , access management plan, and streetscape standards to guide future development activity.	Planning Board / CPIC / Selectboard	Short
<del>76.</del> Continue to implement and expand upon the Development Plan for the Wells Transportation Center.	Planning Board / Selectboard	Short

87. Adopt an ordinance to regulate the placement of merchandise in building setbacks.	Planning Board / Planning Staff	Short
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### Transportation and Circulation Implementation Program

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	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	<del>Long</del> 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	<del>Long</del> 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**

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 applications.	Selectboard	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 impacts of sea level rise, storm surge, and more frequent and intense precipitation events on stormwater infrastructure.	Planning Staff	Ongoing
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	<del>Long</del> 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	<del>Long</del> 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 through 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

- Furbish Road at Stevens Brook
- 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, erosion and inadequate drainage capacity. Specific improvements have not been identified, however, the Town has 3 On Call Engineering firms to develop engineered solutions and obtain the proper Federal and State permits for construction. 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 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: 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.

*Priority Rating: Necessary*

**Structural Projects:**

The town has recently completed a high-level engineering assessment of major infrastructure elements. None of the infrastructure elements are in danger of imminent failure, but several are in need of immediate attention. The proposed budget included a bond to finance