

**2005 Update
of
The West Bath Comprehensive Plan**

Prepared by
The West Bath Comprehensive Plan Update Commission

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WEST BATH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE COMMISSION, 2005

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PART I - THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2005

INTRODUCTION

The 2003 Town Meeting established the Comprehensive Plan Commission to update the Town's 1995 Comprehensive Plan for presentation to the 2005 Town Meeting. The Update Commission is composed of nine citizen volunteers, who have met twice monthly, sometimes more often, over 18 months from January, 2004 to May, 2005 in the preparation of this Update. The Commission has directed the Greater Portland Council of Governments and Saco River Planners as consultants on the technical aspects of the planning process.

ROLE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is to be a guide for coordinating public and private decisions on the future of West Bath. The Plan attempts to integrate all the functions of town government in order to make more efficient and cost-effective the delivery of desired public services and the management of the changes that are confronting the community over the period 2005-2015. To accomplish this mission, the Plan assesses where we have been as a community, where we are now and where we are likely to be going in the future. Trends in population, housing, land use, public facilities and services, natural and marine resources, open space, historic and cultural resources are explored. Policies are formulated that clarify and prioritize actions needed to steer the trends towards the expressed community goals of the townspeople. While change is inevitable, we can also respond. This Plan is our response.

The Plan has been done in conformance to the State Growth Management Program (30-A MRSA, Sect. 4312). This requires municipalities to update their comprehensive plans every 10 years, structure their goals and policies with regard to 10 State goals, 9 State Coastal Management Policies (38 MRSA, Sect. 1801) and to cover specified topics in order to be judged in conformance to the State Growth Management Statute. Municipalities with conforming plans enjoy greater eligibility for certain State grants and programs. Zoning amendments and impact fees are required to be in conformance to a comprehensive plan. In addition, this updated Comprehensive Plan conforms to 10 State Smart Growth Principles, which outline ways to invest and grow in a more sustainable manner as an alternative to sprawl. (See APPENDIX Document for State Growth Management Goals, State Coastal Management Policies and Smart Growth Principles).

PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A comprehensive plan is only as successful as the extent to which it reflects the range of interests in a community. The West Bath Comprehensive Plan seeks to integrate diverse townspeople interests into a consensus within which all segments can find benefits but also share community responsibilities that we can all trust are fair and equitable. Consensus building was started at a visioning session held May 1, 2004 to which a diverse array of townspeople were invited to share their opinions on the future of the Town. Special places in Town worth preserving were identified and discussion focused on how six identified areas in Town should look and function in 2015. After studying the array of opinions from the visioning session, the Update Commission produced a map and video of their understanding of where consensus lay among the expressed interests. The Commission presented the Vision Statement video and map in October, 2004 to the Selectmen and the public. The Vision Statement was subsequently used to help review the goals, policies and implementation recommendations of the 1995 Comprehensive Plan for updating to meet the Town's current needs for the 2005-2015 period. Three public hearings in April and

May, 2005 were held on the draft 2005 Goals & Policies, Implementation Actions and future Land Use Plan to solicit further townspeople comments. All Update Commission meetings were open to the public and posted on the Town website.

PAST AND PRESENT PLANNING ACTIVITIES

West Bath separated from Bath in 1844 in large part to maintain its rural farming and fishing pursuits in contrast to the more urbanizing shipping and ship building pursuits of the deep water port of Bath. During the 19th and 20th centuries through World War II, while still drawing upon Bath's urban shopping, cultural and recreational amenities, the Town maintained its rural economy and small-scale government. But after the War rural life began to change with the location of several small factories in Town, the slow decline of family farming and fishing and the increase in automobile commuting to jobs both within and outside town. A Town survey in 1979 revealed that residents wished to maintain rural character while addressing the new forces that the expanding commuter population residing on smaller suburban-scale lots were presenting. The Town produced its first comprehensive plan in 1985, which dealt with essentially the same concerns as we are dealing with 20 years later in 2005 - conservation of the Town's natural resources, guiding development for balanced growth while preserving rural character and provision of a level of municipal services to maintain the first two objectives. The 1985 land use plan proposed removing heavy industry from north of New Route One, but expanding the State Road light industry/commercial district north and south on New Meadows Road; and the district is still configured this way today. With the passage of the State's Growth Management Statute in 1988, the Town updated its comprehensive plan in 1992 and further amended it in 1995 to meet the new State mandates. While maintaining the basic policy thrusts of the 1985 Plan, the 1992/95 plan addressed such additional concerns as growth and rural areas, affordable housing and capital investments. The 1995 future land use plan refined the 1985 plan by extending the three-acre rural residential zone all the way down to Birch Point while relocating the two-acre residential zone south of the State Road business district to buffer the Rural Residential houses to the south from the commercial uses to the north.

During the 1990s two issues emerged to the forefront of town concern: pollution of shellfish beds and coastal waters from old overboard wastewater discharge systems (OBDs) located mostly in the cottage colonies in the coastal coves; secondly, the facilitation of business development in the State Road corridor by provision of some kind of collective sewage service. The State DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) produced a study and program to gradually remove the OBDs and replace them with modern alternative land-based disposal systems. As of 2005, this has largely been accomplished and more shellfish beds are being restored to harvesting. The Town in 1997 requisitioned two engineering studies to document alternative collective sewerage collection/treatment schemes to serve the State Road business district and the denser residential areas north and south on the New Meadows Road including, perhaps, the Elementary School and Green Acres Apartments. This 2005 Update incorporates the findings of those studies into this Plan.

Also during the 1990's the trend of 2nd home buyers and new retiree homeowners intensified as this demographic phenomena moved up the Maine coast into the Mid-coast region. Aside from developing the shoreline as densely as zoning allows, these new houses are steadily bidding up the price of land along the shore but also affecting inland prices as well, making it very hard for most working families to find affordable housing in Town. The effects of these two trends are among the concerns balanced by this 2005 Update. On the one hand, the traditional and informal pursuit of shellfishing is being enhanced by improving water quality and bringing more clambers to the Town's shores while additional shoreline uses desired by recent coastal homeowners are increasing for mooring locations and other

recreational pursuits. While less expensive lots along existing roadways are being developed, developers are increasingly looking at traditional interior farm fields and wooded areas that mean so much to the Town's rural character. Balancing these competing demands is also part of the 2005 Update. Among other balances addressed are between provision of community focal points in Town versus continued reliance on recreational and cultural facilities outside town. Benefits from regionalization for delivery of some community services, such as emergency medical services and others, is attempted to be balanced by those community services that may be more efficiently maintained by the Town, such as recycling.

ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan is organized in four parts to make it both relevant and user-friendly for readers with different interests.

PLAN SUMMARY

The Plan Summary, a stand-alone broadsheet separate from this document, provides a brief overview of the major implementation measures of the Plan. It summarizes the Vision Statement of the townspeople's desired future for the Town; it outlines the major policy directives of the Plan; it summarizes the Future Land Use Plan for the Town. The Plan Summary is suitable for wide distribution to residents and visitors alike.

PART I - THE PLAN

Part I is the action document upon which Town departments, boards and commissions are guided on what and when to implement in order to translate the Plan into reality. Besides Town officials and employees, Part I is available at libraries, schools and regional agencies. It can be purchased at Town Hall.

PART I sets forth the plan for 2015 so that a reader may understand how and why the implementation recommendations are arrived at. First the full Vision Statement and an outline of PROJECTED GROWTH trends from 2005 to 2015 are presented. These are followed by the ANALYSIS - GOALS - POLICIES - ACTIONS Section, which summarizes facts, trends and issues as the basis for the goals, policies and implementation actions for each of 10 major community concerns. The goals, policies and actions provide the basis for the FUTURE LAND USE PLAN, which itself provides the context for further zoning, open space, conservation and public utility recommendations. Following is the IMPLEMENTATION PLAN containing a schedule for the step-wise sequencing of the implementation recommendations into the short-term, mid-term and long-term time periods up to 2015. This schedule also directs which town department, board or commission is tasked with accomplishing the specific implementation measure. The CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN sequences those implementation facilities or capital goods (such as a boat landing, etc.) that costs money to acquire or construct, outlining the estimated cost and the possible funding sources. Finally, the REGIONAL COORDINATION Section sets forth the ways the West Bath Comprehensive Plan is integrated with neighboring municipalities in terms of abutting zoning along mutual boundaries, sharing of community services (such as mutual dispatch) and public projects such as the Androscoggin-to-Kennebec Bikeway or a Gateway Corridor project.

PART II - APPENDIX

The Appendix Document is a stand-alone document for those town employees such as a planner, administrator, department researcher or student who needs to review in greater detail facts, trends or issues comprising the background information for one of the 10 Goals/ Policies categories in Part I. The

Appendix Document is only available at Town Hall or at the Greater Portland Council of Governments.

The Appendix Document contains UPDATED INVENTORIES for 12 community elements:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| (1) Demographics | (7) Education & Culture |
| (2) Local Economy | (8) Historical & Archeological Resources |
| (3) Natural & Marine Resources | (9) Recreation & Open Space |
| (4) Public Facilities | (10) Land Use |
| (5) Fiscal Capacity | (11) Housing |
| (6) Transportation | (12) Community Character |

These 12 Elements in the APPENDIX satisfy inventory requirements of the State Growth Management program.

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS FROM INVENTORIES analyses anticipated effects from the ongoing trends on the Town from each of the 12 community elements. While some of these effects are in accord with desired trends in Town, some are subject to the goals and policies to manage their undesired aspects.

RESULTS OF THE VISIONING PROCESS presents summaries of data collected during the Visioning Session.

STATE PLANNING GUIDELINES presents the State Growth Management Goals, the State Coastal Management Policies and the state Smart Growth Principles.

A VISION FOR WEST BATH

On May 1, 2004, approximately 65 West Bath citizens from all areas of town came together to talk about the Town's special places and discuss a vision for the Town's future. The following defines the town of West Bath today and reflects the information gathered at the visioning session.

WEST BATH TODAY

West Bath is a rural community nestled on the north of Casco Bay between the town of Brunswick to the south and the city of Bath to the north. Much of West Bath retains its rural charm from past livelihoods such as farming and fishing. In the 21st Century, the Town provides quiet rural living for working families who commute to jobs in Bath, Brunswick, Topsham and other urban areas. Retirees seek West Bath for the shoreline homes, which are used both seasonally and year-round. In spite of recent growth, large subdivisions have not taken all the remaining historic farmhouses and fields, which continue to add to the rural charm of the community. Many of the 18th Century roads remain largely intact allowing access to blocks of interior forested lands and hills.

Surrounded by the New Meadows River and picturesque tidal coves, the beauty of West Bath's shoreline is unsurpassed. One would hardly know, except for the daily tides, that the gentle waters of Back Cove, Mill Cove, Dam Cove and Brigham's Cove are connected to Casco Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Some of the most productive shellfish beds in Maine are contained in these coves and are reputed to be at the northernmost limit of the Quahog clam. Town landings provide boat access to coves and Casco Bay from Bull Rock, Mountain Road Neck, and Sabino. Other less formal footpaths provide traditional access for clammers and nature lovers.

Merritt Island off Mountain Road Neck is a wildlife preserve supervised by Bowdoin College. The Hamilton Audubon Sanctuary located on Foster's Point between the New Meadows River and Back Cove is a haven for birders. Interior freshwater ponds, including Whiskeag Mill Pond, Lily Pond, Campbell Pond and Houghton Pond provide additional wildlife habitat as well as open views within the wooded interior. On Berry's Mill Road the historic farmhouses, barns and fields of the Ireland, Hanson and Small properties exemplify the Town's agricultural heritage and provide settings for sledding, skiing and snowmobiling. A variety of wooded trails and fields lend themselves to horseback riding, hiking and other recreational pursuits.

In addition to the historic farms, several historic buildings add to West Bath's sense of place. The West Bath Meeting House and Littlefield School on Berry's Mill Road as well as the Grange Hall on the New Meadows Road reflect the history of the town in years bygone. At the shoreline, Sabino, King's Point, Brigham's Cove, Winnegance Pond, Quaker and Birch Points retain many of the charming seasonal "cottage colonies" from the early 20th Century. Present day sense of community is enhanced by the Elementary School on upper New Meadows Road; the Conference Center at the Fire Station on State Road; and the Town Hall at the corner of Foster's Point and King's Point Road. A variety of residential settings are appreciated from the village scale mix of single-family and multi-units of the Old Bath Road/upper New Meadows Road/Sanford Crossing neighborhoods in the north end.

State Road (Old Route One) is the primary commercial area of town and the main local connector to both Bath and Brunswick. Currently, it exhibits suburban strip commercial characteristics prevalent to automobile-based commerce. Because State Road is zoned for commercial uses, it is regarded as the logical place for evolution into a more diversified center for locally based businesses such as local offices, retailing and research activities.

A VISION FOR WEST BATH IN 2015

The following vision statement reflects the input received from the West Bath residents at the Visioning Session held in May and is intended as the basis for formulating goals for the Town of West Bath in 2015 and for the vigorous enforcement of those goals.

Land Use

The community's desire to retain West Bath's rural charm was strongly expressed during the visioning session with the following areas specifically noted. The bay side area of town south of State Road will retain its rural charm by protecting the remaining farmlands and large interior blocks of wooded land through a variety of approaches. Large lot zoning coupled with a beneficial clustering option for new subdivisions, Tree Growth property tax abatement, and supplementation by the Open Space (farmland) Tax Abatement Program will be the main techniques for controlling the rate of residential development. Partnering with a land trust, the town will work to secure ownership and conservation easements of key land parcels and overland trails. An historic site designation in the town Land Use Ordinances will provide an option for private historic farmhouse owners to sustain their properties with Town assistance for cooperative uses. For example, such use could include an easement for cross-country skiing.

Foster's Point will meet the rural vision by expanding open space adjacent to the Audubon Sanctuary on the Davenport property and by a new town waterfront park on the New Meadows River. One method of protecting open space will be exploration of local property tax reduction through adoption of conservation covenants and easement by private property owners. In the Mountain/Hill area, the wooded spine of Mountain Road Neck will be protected as well as the views from Hill Road of Mill Cove.

The South end will remain the most rural part of town by the application of the Town's conservation measures for interior open spaces, low-density single-family housing and protection of the shoreline. The only provision for multi-units (likely duplexes) will be in the already built up neighborhood of Birch Point compatible with shoreline protection and provision of a town water front park.

The remaining southern portions of town in the Mountain/Hill, Berry's Mill and south end area will also seek to maintain their rural character. Existing open space in large unfragmented internal blocks of land between roads will be conserved. Incentives include using a combination of large lots and the beneficial cluster option for new subdivisions and tax reduction for conservation easements. Other incentives such as Tree Growth and Open Space tax reductions for actively farmed land and Land Trusts for the purchase out-right or by conservation easement may be emphasized. Water views at selected coves and points of land will be protected by town ownership or easement and possible waterfront parks established within the limitations of an affordable tax rate.

There will also be a more formalized development of town public easement trails connecting town facilities centered towards the Elementary School and a town central park with direct connection to the regional bike path along New Route One. Interconnecting trails will use the old railroad bridge over the New Meadows River and shoulders of local roads including the New Meadows Road, State Road, Berry's Mill and Foster's Point Road as well as use of smaller local roads.

Community focus in the Berry's Mill and Mountain/Hill areas will be a new town park. This will be the central park in town to which all the other parks will be connected by bike paths, road paths or walking trails. The park will provide a landing, picnic area and playing fields. Likewise, a waterfront park will

be explored for north Winnegance Pond near the Bath Line.

Interior blocks of wilderness land will remain largely undeveloped through the conservation devices applied by the Town through Land Use Ordinances.

Town Buildings/Community

Several buildings will be the focal points for use by the community. The existing Elementary School will be developed into more of a community center for possible public meetings, gym-based sports, and outdoor playing fields. The town will develop a parcel of land into a suitable location with recreation and picnic areas. The existing Town boat landings will be enhanced in a neighbor respecting way to also function as mini-satellite parks with sufficient parking to accommodate normal use. These will include the Bull Rock and Sabino landings and a new Birch Point mini-park. Public access and a waterfront mini park will also be studied for Winnegance Pond.

The Old Meeting House, Grange Hall, and Sabino Community Hall will be preserved and adaptively reused, where appropriate, for local neighborhood meeting places or museums. With assistance from the town, zoning ordinances, tax incentives, grant funding sources and/or a land trust, preservation of historic buildings which add to the towns charm may be maintained.

Housing

Single-family residences will continue in the Residential (R-2) Zone between New Meadows River and the New Meadows Creek along New Meadows and Sanford Crossing roads. Mobile homes will continue to be limited to the existing trailer park adjacent to the State Road. An expanded mixed-use zone will allow for multi-units in other areas. Upper New Meadows Road will allow for some additional multi-units, perhaps in buildings containing no more than two to four units. There is no consensus on whether additional apartment complexes the size of Green Acres will be acceptable. Perhaps provision of public sewer will be the deciding factor. Multi-units south of State Road to Bull Rock Road either in an expanded Business/Commercial (BC) Zone or at the very northern most portion of the Residential Zone stretching along State Road just south of the BC will be considered. Provision of public sewer and access from State Road will be important factors along with possible limitations on the number of units allowed per building. An expanded commercial mixed-use zone may be appropriate for retirement housing and assisted living housing.

The entire portion of town south of State Road will remain a rural area preserving coastline, farmland and woodland through scattered rural residences and small neighborhoods on the coves and points. While new single-family houses will be either scattered on large lots or clustered to preserve surrounding open space, multi-units will be confined to the area immediately south of State Road in the two-acre limit Residential Zone, regulated by an overlay zone lifting the number of units per building. Availability of sewer coming out of Berry's Mill Road a short distance (1,000 feet or so) and by local roads accessing only to State Road. The only commercial activity allowed in the southern part of Town will be home-based occupations. Scattered single-family houses will prevail. There will be consideration of the benefits and issues of increasing the minimum lot size for new houses between the New Meadows River and the new Meadows Road. To allow for appropriate growth, there will be a transitional area between the State Road's commercial uses and the rural uses south of King's Point Road. This transitional area will be suitable for transitional type uses and housing densities.

The only other multi-units considered (possibly duplexes) will be in the already more densely developed neighborhoods of Winnegance Pond in the Residential (2 acre) Zone.

There will be vigorous enforcement of the Town's Land Use Codes on properties throughout the town.

Commercial

As West Bath continues to remain rural it will strive to become a more self-sufficient community. Increasing commercial growth will be a high priority to maintain affordable property tax rates for all residents. The majority of employment opportunities are located outside of town while more local enterprises will expand in the State Road commercial area. Designated the Commercial area, State Road contains a growing array of enterprises including office, design, research opportunities and local-scale retailing. Heavy industrial activities remain elsewhere in Bath, Brunswick and Portland with some presence possible in Wing Farm. Associated small-scale specialty vendors, such as component designers will also be located in West Bath at the Wing farm area.

The north end of West Bath from the State Road will be the primary commercial and community center of town. The Business/Commercial (BC) Zone along State Road will be expanded to the north and also to the south, perhaps 500 feet from State Road to 1,000 feet southward. Even though the majority of the residents (Vision Session attendees) favor some commercial expansion north, there is no clear consensus on how far north to expand in order to meet the vision of enlarging the tax base and providing more local employment opportunities. Possible commercial activity could be expanded to the CMP right of way, new Route One, railroad line and/or the Wing Farm. Another option would be to extend the BC zone to the Old Bath Road east of the New Meadows Creek within the existing Rural-Residential (RR) three-acre Zone. The residential neighborhoods within these boundaries are highly regarded by Town residents and need to be preserved and respected. In addition to environmental quality and spatial concerns, further commercial development will require expansion of public water and provisions for public sewer services, either out from Wing Farm or along State Road. Sewer service up the New Meadows Road to the Elementary School and the Green Acres apartment as well as down Foster's Point Road to King's Point will environmentally benefit the affected residential neighborhoods. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) will be considered among other budget-savings techniques to afford a town sewer expansion to other town facilities.

Whatever the extent of the expanded BC zone, it will contain a diverse array of commercial businesses; either in a mixed-use zone regulatory framework or in a reconfigured BC Zone that encourages high-scale activities such as offices, research and design facilities, service and retailing businesses and community facilities. There will be appropriate setback, out-of-the-way parking provisions and aesthetic requirements such as buffering. There will be consideration of a size cap on retail establishments to maintain them as a local scale such as a maximum of 25,000 square foot floor area. The only place for regional-scale commerce or heavy industry will be Wing Farm.

As we move into the new century, we will work to manage anticipated growth in the community, enhance commercial development, develop a strong sense of community and maintain the underlying rural character and independent spirit of West Bath.

PROJECTED TRENDS: 2005-2015

The mix of trends forecast to affect West Bath between 2005 and 2015 are outlined below. These are described in more detail in the Analysis/ Issues summaries in PART I and in the Background sections of PART II - APPENDIX document.

Population and Housing While West Bath's population between 2000 and 2015 is projected to increase modestly by 11%, there will be large changes in the composition of the Town's population. About three quarters of the increase will likely be from in-migrants, mostly retired people. There will also likely be a lesser number of younger family households moving into interior portions of town. There is projected to be continuing loss of the Town's young people 18 to 29 years of age as they go off to college or vocational-technical schools and seek jobs elsewhere; a projected 33% decrease. The projected 19% decrease in the family-forming and child-bearing 30-44 year age group by 2015 will contribute to the slowing increase of the Town's population by 2015. In contrast, reflecting the start of the country-wide retirement (2011) of the baby boomers, there will be 16% more retired people 65 years and older in Town.

It is predicted that 101 to 110 new housing units will be needed in West Bath between 2000 and 2015. If the same ratio of owned to rental units is to be maintained, then 80 new housing units would need to be owner-occupied and 21 renter-occupied. To meet the State's minimum requirement for affordable housing, at least 10% of new housing units would need to be affordable to households with 80% or less of the median household income for the region. In West Bath this is an annual income (in 2003 dollars) of \$40,408. This indicates that 1 to 2 affordable housing-units would need to be brought to market each year. During the planning period to 2015, because about 36% of the Town's households are classified as Low and Very Low Income households, there is actually greater need than the standard of 10% of new housing being affordable.

Land Area Demanded Of the 110 new single-family houses expected between 2005 and 2015, 10 to 20 of them could be new mobile homes. Between 10 to 20 new significant commercial developments are also expected. This projected new development may convert from 37 to 290 acres of undeveloped land to developed land, resulting in converting up to 9% of the available undeveloped land. While the projected 2005-2015 development trend may be easily absorbed space-wise by the Town, easy availability of land along existing roads may become increasingly harder to find prompting developers to begin looking to the large wilderness blocks of interior land between the roads for new subdivisions.

Price of Land and Housing In 2003, a household earning the West Bath median income of \$50,510 could afford to buy a \$150,056 house. It is reasonable to assume that there were few houses offered for sale in West Bath in 2003 (or thereafter) priced at or below \$150,056. Approximately 153 year-round dwelling-units are rental units in West Bath, about 16% of all housing. In 2000, more than 70% of rental units were affordable to low income households earning less than \$36,261 annual income. It is surmised that because about one third of the Green Acres Apartments units are subsidized this provides the bulk of affordable dwelling-units in Town. In 2000, 18% of West Bath owner-households paid more than 35% of their income for housing; 13% of renter-households paid more than 35% of their income.

Changes in Community Character The character of West Bath in the early 21st Century may be described as being a mixture of three groups: native families owning former farmland and coastal fishing property; working families, some recently moving to Town from the region's urban centers or having been brought to the mid-coast from elsewhere by, among others, the Bath Iron Works or Bowdoin College. There is also a growing number of retirees and vacation home people, many from

other parts of the country coming to Town. This mixture is ever evolving, but seems to becoming more diverse over time.

Marine Resources Maintaining traditional public access to the shoreline and clam flats is a continuing issue as the coastline continues to receive new homes with owners who may not be familiar with the traditional informal access to coastal water practiced by long-time residents. Continuing occasional disputes between new shoreline home owners and traditional boat owners over location of moorings may prompt the Harbor & Waterways Committee to contemplate an enhanced town-wide moorings plan that lays out mooring areas that are sensitive to both new and traditional boat owner's mooring access needs, the location of potential aquaculture sites and for the overall ease of navigation.

Agriculture & Forestry To the extent that small-scale farming operations on relatively small lots can serve the local fresh/organic market, there may be opportunity to do so in West Bath with help from the Open Space tax program, which lowers the property tax on such land. Similarly, there may be expanding opportunity to supply local artisans and crafts persons with wool and other fiber from local farms. To the extent that subdivision of large 'land-locked' interior parcels of land for new houselots occurs during the planning period to 2015, there will be a loss of land for truck farms and timber growth. This suggests that if these larger interior parcels are to be preserved in forest or agriculture land, the Town may need to act sooner rather than later. There is also opportunity for multi-uses of the remaining interior forest land for town parkland and wildlife habitat as well as for wilderness preservation and timber management. The Tree Growth Tax reduction program for timber land allows for such multi-uses of designated Tree Growth land. The 910 acres of Tree Growth land in 2003 demonstrates that with careful management including selective cutting and shelterwood regenerative cutting, small woodlots in West Bath can continue to be a profitable commercial venture that also allows for multi-uses.

Elementary School Uses Regionalism in public education will likely continue to be an important issue. In the future, whether the West Bath Elementary School has school children in it or not, the school building would remain a significant town-owned public facility situated on significant public open space. The changing demographic of West Bath includes more retirees as well as commuting families, both who are likely to be seeking more community space within which to meet, recreate and socialize. The Elementary School building may become available to meet larger community uses in the future.

Changing Public Services Responsibilities Two trends are pressuring changes in delivery of town services. The aging population is prompting new training and facilities to better respond to retiree emergency medical, recreational, social, cultural and transportation needs. The generally increasing cost of delivering public services is causing an on-going assessment of the benefits and costs of regionalizing some services, such as public education, fire fighting or emergency medical services. West Bath itself is becoming a regional center for recycling.

Changing Town Government Services Responsibilities Mid-Coast regional trends will continue to impinge upon West Bath, prompting greater regional cooperation with neighboring municipalities. But West Bath government will also be subject to townspeople sentiment for putting into place ordinances, policies and programs to help protect West Bath's individuality and rural character in face of the regional trends. Town government will be challenged to find better ways to manage the location of future residential subdivisions with respect to protecting rural character as well as historic agricultural and forest lands and by finding ways to support some form of community focal point and town center. If the Town decides to respond to future trends by expanding some functions of Town government, such as a

full-time codes enforcement officer, then ways to pay for these desired services while maintaining an affordable tax rate will be an ongoing challenge. The task will be to generate greater revenue to the Town and more savings to tax payers than the costs for providing the needed governmental services. This Comprehensive Plan Update is an important part of the Town Government's response to townspeople's desires for the future of the community.

Open Space, Recreation, Historic and Cultural Resources The first decades of the 21st Century are bringing more opportunities to connect to regional recreation facilities. The Androscoggin-to-Kennebec bikeway passes through Town along New Route One without, as of 2005, a direct connection to/from West Bath. There are opportunities to work with neighboring towns on boat mooring area, boat landings, marinas and harbors as a sequel to the real advances in water pollution abatement in the region. But within Town, as development continues, the tradition of informal access to the shoreline and interior woodlands may become increasingly problematical. Measures to maintain informal public access balanced by measures for maintaining private landowner privacy are likely to remain part of the Town's conversation with itself. Possible town ownership of some parkland and trails is likely to be part of this conversation. West Bath historic buildings are likely to be advocated to play a larger role in community life as local public meeting places, local museums and cultural venues in the service of maintaining town character.

ANALYSIS - GOALS - POLICIES - ACTIONS

TERMINOLOGY

In order to clarify the meaning of the terms: goals, objectives, policies, standards and regulations, the following definitions are used herein. The definitions are designed to reflect the intent of the Comprehensive Plan as well as explain how the terms are related to implementation actions.

Goals: General statements of preference and aspiration. A general purpose or condition which would be desirable to attain.

Objectives: Specific statements of intent toward which effort is directed.

Policies: Definite statements to direct present and future decisions.

Implementation: Requirements, actions or procedures officially taken by one or more West Bath governmental body to translate an objective or policy into reality. For example, implementation actions could include amending the Land Use Ordinance, starting a new town committee or developing the financing for a major town expense such as rebuilding a town road.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

LAND USE

Background

Building Permit Projection: 2005 - 2015 (based on 1996 - 2003 trend)

- 110 new single-family houses - about 11/year average
- 20 new mobile homes and apartments - about 2/year average
- 20 new significant commercial. buildings and non-residential. structures - about 2/year average

Land use Trend: 1996 - 2003

- Estimated total 232 acres converted from open space to residential, commercial or non-residential use - about 29 acres/year average
- Estimated 160 acres of 232 converted to residential land uses - about 20 acres/year average
- Estimated 72 acres of 232 converted to comm. and non-res. uses - about 9 acres/year average

Land Use Projection: 2005 - 2015 (based on 1996 - 2003 trend)

- About 290 acres of undeveloped land is projected to be converted to developed land
- About 200 acres of 290 projected to be converted to residential land uses
- About 90 acres of 290 projected to be converted to commercial and other non-res. land uses

Trends

It is probable that the recent land use trend of 1996-2003 will continue, as an upper projection, during the planning period 2005-2015. Barring a major oil crises to slow or stop the current suburbanization trend, the outward movement of households from Bath, Brunswick, even Portland and Lewiston-

Auburn, will continue to seek houselots in West Bath among other rural towns. As long as it is perceived that it costs less to commute to work into urban work places rather than to pay the characteristically higher taxes for also living in those urban work places, the mid-coast suburbanization trend will likely continue to 2015.

On the other hand, the desirability of coastal retirement homes for recent retirees and seasonal homes for affluent families will likely continue to bid up the cost of land in West Bath. As these costs for increasingly scarce shoreline land rises, the cost for near-shore land may be expected to also rise and spread slowly inward. The few full-time coastal fishing families remaining on the Town's coastline are likely to experience continued upward tax bills for their increasingly higher valued coastal land. In 2005, the State Legislature gave some relief to coastal fishing families by approval of current use taxation for working waterfronts.

Analysis/ Issues

At some point, either before 2015 or after, most of the available frontage along the existing roads in Town will have been developed prompting developers to turn toward the abundant interior land behind the roadside lots. Whether this becomes true or not, it may be assumed that interior lots may be increasingly subject to research by developers for possible subdivision development during the planning period 2005 - 2015. To the extent that the large parcel interior landowners sell their land because of higher taxes, attainment of retirement age or any other reason, a new land use trend may begin. Because it is expensive to build new subdivision roads into interior land, it is likely that developers may seek larger subdivisions to capitalize on the economy of scale by offering more subdivision lots per road length rather than fewer. If and when the Town's interior parcels begin to be developed, issues concerning how to best use these lands will become important. Should all the former interior land be used for residential subdivisions? What portion, if any, should remain in open space, either developed or undeveloped. New year-round commuter families may support some developed open space such as for Little League or for other playing fields. Coastal retirees may desire paths into and through the former interior areas for strolling, bicycling and birding. There may be desire to seek development of more job opportunities closer to home, where current interior land could be used for expansion of the Business Commercial or Wing Farm Urban Zone. Could these new commercial areas be designed for business park or research opportunities? How would new commercial areas relate to the existing State Road Commercial area and its evolution?

Planning considerations for the 2005 - 2015 period will, therefore, need to seek balances between both the competing and complementary land use trends and desires between working families, retirees and natives in order to blend and guide the land use pattern toward the town character the townspeople envision.

Goal: To chart a course of future development that is logical, timely, economical, ecologically sound, enhances the quality of life; and that preserves the rural character of West Bath

Objective: Create a Mixed Use Zone.

Policy: Establish a mixed used zone encompassing the State Road Commercial Zone up to Route 1.

Implementation:

- Rewrite Town ordinances to allowing mixed uses and higher densities in the Mixed Use Zone.

- Develop a public sewage system to encourage higher density affordable housing.

Objective: Enhance the quality and diversity of commercial development in the Mixed Use Zone to create development which is attractive and has safe access.

Policy: Minimize ingress from and egress to public roads.

Maintain the rural character of the town by requiring landscaping and buffering of commercial property.

In the Mixed Use Zone allow a diverse range of commercial uses.

Implementation:

- Work with MDOT and local municipalities in development of the Gate Way project. (Project with Bath on aesthetic enhancements along Route One in both communities concerning streetscape amenities such as lighting fixtures, street trees, benches, planters, fountains, flagpoles, flags, banners, information kiosk, landscape site improvements, interpretive signage, pedestrian walk area improvements, traffic calming measures, regional signage and other enhancements.)
- Enforce West Bath Land Use Ordinances and Development Review Ordinances for road access, setback, parking, lot lines, curb cuts, open space, cluster development and buffering requirements as they pertain to businesses.
- Continue development of a (Business) committee made up of town volunteers to encourage village scale business growth along state road and development of village scale business to Route One.
- Require professional landscaping plans and landscaping maintenance plans as part of Planning Board approval for Mixed Use Zone business.
- Work to establish a public sewage system for the Mixed Use Zone.
- Require that new commercial or industrial developments within the Mixed Use Zone retain a majority of their present road frontage and side lot line length as vegetated buffer strips with a minimum depth of 20 feet.
- Encourage proposed commercial developments in the Mixed Use Zone to locate their parking areas alongside or behind buildings, to share access points from the highway and to preserve sections of their frontage as undeveloped open space by offering incentives such as reduced frontage, minimum lot sizes and/or setbacks.
- Strictly enforce impervious cover and setback requirements for commercial development in the Mixed Use Zone.
- Require that all new municipal facilities be located in the Mixed Use Zone.

Objective: Preserve the general rural character of residential neighborhoods.

Policy: Discourage high-density development in residential and rural residential zones.

Implementation:

- Maintain open spaces and other scenic vistas.
- Maintain existing densities in the residential and rural residential zones.
- Create a Mixed Use Zones as a town center along State Road and extending to Route One.
- Enhance and support the development of affordable, higher density housing within the Mixed Use Zone.
- Enforce West Bath Land Use Ordinances and Development Review Ordinances for road access, setback, parking, lot lines, curb cuts, open space, cluster development and buffering requirements as they pertain to residential development.
- Require that subdivision development in the rural residential zone be a cluster type development with permanent open space unless the subdivider pays a fee in lieu of permanently preserving some open space.
- Encourage open space preservation through conservation easements, view easements and town acquired property.
- Inform subdivision applicants of new technologies in septic systems which would facilitate a cluster type development.
- Require well and septic plans for subdivision approval.
- Strictly enforce existing densities in the residential and rural residential zones.
- Develop public water and sewer systems to facilitate low cost, higher density housing within the Mixed Use Zone.
- Create a buffering transition area between the Mixed Use Zone and residential/rural residential zones.
- Encourage home occupations which do not change the character of the neighborhood in terms of appearance, noise environment, light pollution, business type, and traffic to include both volume and frequency.
- In rural residential areas limit permitted land use to single family residences, natural resource-based commercial uses, such as agriculture, horticulture, silviculture, roadside stands for products grown on premises; and aquaculture.
- Strictly regulate development in conservation areas and fragile environments e.g. wetland, deer yards and vernal ponds.
- Maintain a resource protection zone ordinance and review the zoning ordinance and map to

facilitate protection of sensitive areas.

Goal: 35% of less of new residential growth between 2005 and 2015 to occur in the designated Rural Areas of Town.

Objective: In 2005 determine if the Land Use Ordinances need to be changed to meet the goal of directing less than 35% of new residential development into the designated Rural Areas and 65% or more into the designated Growth Areas. If so, change the Land Use Ordinances accordingly.

Implementation: Planning Board and CEO report to the Board of Selectmen on the number, type and location of new residential permits annually. By 2010, if more than 35% of new residences have gone into Rural Areas, reexamine the Land Use Ordinances and propose bolder revisions to redirect a lesser percentage into the Rural Areas.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Background

West Bath has a town meeting/selectmen/town administrator form of government. An elected three member Board of Selectmen exercises executive decision-making and authority, including hiring and supervising the Town Administrator, who is delegated the day-to-day administration of the Town. Within Town Hall, the Town Administrator supervises two full-time employees who manage clerical functions and interact with the public: the Treasurer/Tax Collector and Town Clerk. Also, several part-time employees are directly responsible to the Town Administrator: the Assessing Agent, Code Enforcement Officer, Shellfish Warden, the Harbor Master, Deputy Treasurer, Animal Control Officer and Fire Chief.

In addition to the Selectmen, other elected officials include five members of the West Bath School Board and the Road Commissioner. All other town officials are appointed by the Selectmen. Residents volunteer their time and efforts on 11 town committees, boards and commissions.

Trends

In the early 2000s, West Bath Town government is serving a larger year-round retiree population, principally along the coast, as well as new working families inland, only about 9% of whom work in town. As the land less costly to develop along existing roads continues to be converted to houselots, the cost throughout Town for houses continues to increase. While more leisure activities, community services and availability of safety services such as emergency medical services may be assumed to be desired by the retirees, the cost of providing such services is of concern to the working families as well as the long-term landowners in Town.

Analysis/ Issues

On the one hand, regionalization of some municipal services such as public school education and police, fire and emergency medical services is seen as a possible way of reducing the town taxpayer costs, but there is also concern that too much regionalization may reduce the community's unique rural character. Town government is challenged with seeking to meet the increasing costs of providing services to the townspeople, such as, for example, expanded enforcement of the Town's building and land use

regulations, balanced with the desire to maintain an affordable tax rate. There is a desire to expand the tax base by promoting more businesses in town, but also to expand the recreational opportunities for the townspeople, for instance at the Town's boat launches. One mitigating factor from the aging population of the Town is that retirees bring a wealth of experience available to be tapped for volunteer boards and committees.

Goal: To provide an appropriate range of community facilities and services which offers the greatest citizen benefit, appropriate opportunities for economic development, and reflects the Town's identified need, vision and financial capabilities.

Objective: Provide that State and Local regulations governing land use, plumbing, sewage disposal, and development are administered in a fair, conscientious, and even-handed manner.

Policy: Provide appropriate resources and support to enable enforcement of town ordinances.

Implementation:

- Establish dedicated clerical support for Codes Enforcement, Planning Board, Board of Appeals and other town committees and boards.
- Increase hours for Codes Enforcement to a full time or full time equivalent position or study the appropriateness of a regional Code's Compliance Officer for plumbing, building, and electrical codes.
- Review fees annually at town meeting for Codes Enforcement, Planning Board applications, and Board of Appeals applications to off set costs for codes enforcement and decrease general fund reliance for Planning Board and Board of Appeals review.
- Develop a job description that describes the qualifications and responsibilities for Codes Enforcement Officers and committee clerical support as a guide in the performance of their duties.
- Require developers of major projects to submit an impact fee study and require appropriate impact fees to be used by the town to purchase conservation areas for wildlife habitat, forestry and recreation benefits for West Bath citizens.

- Provide information and point of contact services for interested citizens and applicants to various boards to encourage informed participation at the appropriate meetings.
- Develop and utilize resources to enable the Planning Board to improve its review of projects against plans, ordinances, standards and references.
- Within thirty days of adoption of the Comprehensive Plan at West Bath town meeting the selectmen shall publish at the town hall, on the website, and via other media as determined by the selectmen a schedule of fines and other penalties for violation of the town ordinances.
- Develop ordinances and other general procedures to further implement the goals of the Plan, particularly the natural elements.

Goal: Support the appropriate implementation of the plan.

Policy: Establish an Implementation Oversight Committee, under the direction of the Selectmen, to provide for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan over a ten-year period with the authority to task appropriate committees and town staff. Membership shall be seven members to include at least one member of the Planning Board, one member of the Board of Appeals, and one Selectman and other citizen volunteers and town staff as the Selectmen deem appropriate.

Implementation:

- Within thirty days of adoption of the Comprehensive Plan at town meeting the Selectmen shall charter the Implementation Oversight Committee.
- The Implementation Oversight Committee will brief the Selectmen monthly with progress reports on the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal: Avoid unnecessary duplication of services and promote committee cooperation within West Bath.

Objective: Promote efficiency in achieving goals of West Bath’s volunteer committee.

Policy: Encourage communication.

Seek to increase efficiency.

Implementation:

- Continue the quarterly committee chair meetings. Review and reorganize tasking for town committees to eliminate duplication of services.
- Explore ways to reduce duplication of services and actions that work at cross purposes with other towns, agencies, and jurisdictions.

PUBLIC WORKS & SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Background

The Town has a contracted Road Agent who oversees the maintenance of town roads, culverts, roadside ditch maintenance and snowplowing. Residents contract on their own with private haulers for trash pick-up. A Recycling Committee advises the Selectmen in overseeing a contractor for recycling from the Town's Transfer Station. The Bath Water District serves the business Zone in West Bath along State Road and nearby portions of New Meadow Road. The water supply service area includes Wing Farm, the County Court House, Sanford Road, the Elementary School and Green Acre Apartments.

Trends

Roads: The large amount of town roads constructed before the 1970s are beginning to break-down due to heavier trucks and greater traffic in the 21st Century. Considerable repair and upgrading of local roads are needed to meet today's heavier vehicles and traffic including better sub-base, drainage, shoulders, ditches and culverts. Upgrading is needed at the Sabino Boat Launch/ parking area. The other town boat launch/parking areas may also be desired for upgrading in the future.

Solid Waste: In 2004 the town-owned Carter Transfer Station became the focal point for the Town's solid waste management and recycling program. Townspeople and businesses have a choice between contracting on their own with private haulers for curbside pick-up of their solid waste or to bring it themselves to the Transfer Station for disposal for a fee. The Town has a contract with a private firm to manage the Transfer Station and haul (at least every 24 hours) the collected solid wastes away for disposal, currently (2004) to the MERC (Maine Energy Recovery Company) incinerator in Biddeford. The Town rents the Transfer station to the private contractor/operator and, in addition, collects a 'host' fee from the contractor/operator of \$1.65 for each ton of solid waste going through the Transfer Station, totaling to about \$43,000 a year. The host fee is charged because people from other towns can bring their solid wastes to the West Bath Transfer station for the private contractor/operator to haul along with West Bath's to the Biddeford incinerator. West Bath residents can also drop off bulky solid wastes such as used mattresses for a fee of \$5 per 100 pounds at the Transfer station.

Recycling: The Transfer Station operator also manages the Town's Recycling Drop-Off Center at the Transfer Station. West Bath residents and businesses may deposit for free cardboard, tin cans, glass, plastic milk jugs and other #1 and #2 plastics, newsprint, mixed paper, metals and white goods such as stoves or refrigerators (freon removed). The operator then markets the collected recyclables for his own profit. Free curbside pickup of recyclables from householders on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month is also provided by the Transfer station operator as part of its contract with the Town.

The Town Recycling Committee is seeking to expand the Town's recycling services at the Drop-Off Center to include tires, appliances, bulky household wastes and e-waste (computer components with sometimes heavy metals within). The Committee is also seeking ways to reduce illegal gypsy dumping of solid wastes, such as tires or heavy appliances, in the woods and along rural roadsides.

Analysis/ Issues

If the Town's responsibility for more town facilities and services increases over the planning period to 2015, it might include the following considerations. Significant reconstruction of dated, pre-1970s local roads plus maintenance of former state-aid roads and new subdivision roads would place an expanded work-load on the Road Commissioner. (But if the Town did not take over new subdivision or other private roads, there would be no extra cost to the Town.) On the cost side, there might be the maintenance of possible new Town-owned community meeting place(s): parks, ball fields and expanded or new boat landing facilities. Expansion of the State Road Business/Commercial Zone may make it

cost-effective to expand public water supply to new businesses and possibly for a new public sewer system serving the same area, but also south of State Road and down Fosters Point Road to the Bull Rock and Kings Point densely populated shoreland areas.

The seemingly inevitable increase in costs for solid waste management will continue to challenge the Town and Recycling Committee to respond to resident's demand to maintain an affordable tax rate. The only way to reduce the Town's solid waste management costs are to reduce - reuse - and recycle the solid waste stream. In 2004, the Recycling Committee was trying to move solid waste management toward a pay-as-you-go system based on fees charged to resident householders and businesses at the Town Drop Off Center. The fees would be for accepting solid waste that would need to be transferred to the Bath land fill, Biddeford incinerator or some other disposal facility; however drop off of recyclables would be free. Eventual elimination of curbside pick-up of trash was being contemplated by expanding the Drop Off Center's services and facilities to recycle (for free for residents) more kinds of solid wastes. The market for recycled goods is likely to grow over the long term thus providing some income to the Town from a contract with a vender for some percentage of the profits, or, if the Drop Off Center were completely operated by the Town. Alternately, consideration was being given to expanding the Drop Off Center to a regional transfer station to capture more fees and greater revenue from greater volume of recyclables sold. Thirdly, consideration was being given to relocating the Drop Off Center, thereby expanding its space for new recycling services and facilities.

Objective: Maintain and update local roads to handle the needs of West Bath.

Policies: Continue to provide an updated five-year plan for road improvements as part of the annual budget process.

Implementation:

- Set aside funds annually for road improvements.
- Use the five-year plan as a guide when prioritizing each year's road projects.

Objective: Continue to plan for the Town's waste management needs to meet anticipated growth.

Policies: Continue an education program to encourage citizens to recycle and compost.

Use incentives to stimulate more recycling.

Implementation:

- Study methods used by other towns to encourage recycling
- Budget annually for recycling outreach education to town citizens.
- Continue publication of informational guides that explain the cost associated with waste disposal and the potential savings associated with waste reduction and increased recycling. Particular emphasis will be placed on the environmental and personal benefits of reducing purchases of non-recyclable goods.
- Consider methods for monitoring the improper disposal of waste that should be recycled.
- Research the merits of creating a town composting program.

- Consider working with the State, region and other towns in installing a light rail station in the New Meadows area for commuter use.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Background

The components of the Town's public safety services include police services provided by the Sagadahoc County Sheriffs Department comprised of routine patrolling and anytime response to calls for assistance. Dispatch services are also provided by the County, located in the City of Bath, which are integrated with the Town's Fire/Emergency Medical Station. The WINS (West Bath Innovative Solutions) Committee is composed of 10 volunteers including a Chair, secretary and Treasurer. Funded by a federal grant, Committee members have worked with several VSA (Volunteers in Service to America) people in creating innovative programs and activities for West Bath's young people as alternatives to more self-destructive activities. Animal control is administered by Town Hall staff and conducted in the field by an on-call Animal Control Officer appointed by the Selectmen. In 2004 the West Bath Fire Department was an all-volunteer operation consisting of a Fire Chief, a Deputy Chief in charge of administration and fire ground command, a 2nd Deputy Chief in charge of departmental operations; 2 Captains, one in charge of testing hoses and ladders, the other one in charge of truck maintenance and of records; 2 Lieutenants and 1 lieutenant Safety Officer who assist the Captains in general upkeep; and 35 volunteer firefighters. Fifteen of the firefighters have EMT (emergency medical technician) licenses; 2 are licensed paramedics and 2 are EMT Intermediates, who can administer IV (intravenous) injections and medications.

Trends

The changing social environment in the Mid-Coast region with the arrival of more retirees and second home dwellers along the shoreline but also more working families spread out among the inland portions of the suburban towns surrounding the region's employment centers, is increasing the work-load of public safety providers. In West Bath, the responsibility to respond to retiree needs for sometimes rapid medical attention, such as a heart attack, and for providing a sense of security in sometimes spread-out houses along the coast and inland, is coupled with West Bath's responsibilities to provide back-up rescue services to neighboring towns, themselves increasing in retiree and working family populations. In addition, the West Bath Fire Department needs to be prepared to respond effectively, if called upon, for security-type emergencies at the Bath Iron Works and the Brunswick Naval Air Station (whether it remains an air field or changes due to base closing).

Analysis/ Issues

The key to meeting the demands of the changing social environment is believed to be education of both the public safety personnel and West Bath residents. The Town will have the opportunity during the planning period (2005 - 2015) to support the Fire Department personnel in acquiring more knowledge of and proficiency in using new fire fighting, rescue, security-emergency and hazardous material equipment and techniques. In addition, Fire Department personnel will need to keep up with evolving federal and State life safety codes to provide knowledge, advise and education to the Town's property owners while fairly enforcing the life safety codes. Preparation of integrated regional protocols and education of County and municipal public safety personnel in implementing these protocols is likely to be as important as having the latest public safety technology such as two-way telecommunication devices, ambulances and hazardous materials handling equipment. Well thought-out regional cooperation protocols, known and practiced in advance by the Mid-Coast participating municipalities, will likely not only save money for West Bath but also potentially save lives and reduce injury during

emergencies if they ever arise.

Objective: Provide a reasonable level of emergency services.

Policy: Continue to study opportunities for cost-effective delivery of emergency services.

Implementation:

- Maintain communication with neighboring municipalities and state agencies with regard to the provision of services such as police, marine warden, codes enforcement, animal control and other first responder services.
- The Selectmen will monitor emergency and other first responder services on a quarterly basis to provide for adequate coverage in the future.
- Encourage citizen volunteer emergency and other first responder services where appropriate.
- Continue to explore methods to generate revenue through grants or activities such as an ambulance service to off set equipment costs for emergency services.

Objective: Avoid unnecessary duplication of services and reduce actions that work at cross purposes within neighboring municipalities, state and federal agencies, and jurisdictions.

Policy: To provide a reasonably high level of inter-municipal coordination in public actions and policies.

Implementation:

- Encourage communication with neighboring municipalities and state agencies to facilitate efficient provision of services to the citizens of West Bath and to address areas of inter-local and regional concern.
- The Selectmen shall consider inter-municipal coordination as a standard element of all public decision making as a way to reduce costs to the citizens of West Bath.

EDUCATION & CULTURE

Background

Education: West Bath Elementary School, located on Upper New Meadows Road, is part of School Union #47, which includes the towns of Arrowsic, Georgetown, Phippsburg and Woolwich. West Bath Elementary School serves about 144 students in grades Kindergarten to Grade 6. Most of our secondary students go to the Bath Middle School and Morse High School, though the Town pays the approved state tuition rate for private school secondary placement. West Bath Elementary has a school board of 5 members and meets monthly. The cost of public education accounts for the majority of the Town's annual operating budget, generally in excess of 60% of the Town's overall budget.

Currently, our school provides quality education to all children. The results of the Maine Education assessments, given to our fourth grade students, produce results that are at or above state average.

Currently we offer foreign language (French), a reduced version of physical education, art, music, guidance, computer lab and library services. We provide space for a before and after school day care service run by the YMCA.

Culture: West Bath benefits from the museums and other larger cultural institutions in Bath and Bowdoin College in Brunswick, including, auditoriums, studio spaces and outreach programs for performing arts, graphic arts and lecture series. West Bath helps fund, and its residents fully participate in, the book and other materials lending programs and the other activities of the Patten Free Library in Bath.

Trends

Education: The West Bath Elementary School underwent some minor capital improvements in 2004 that made a real difference to the education and administration of the School. With \$40,000 capital improvement allocated, the School added office space, special education classroom space, a new central office space, a small nurse's office and other small but significant improvements. The School Board has acknowledged further needs in regular maintenance and upgrades to the building and have resolved to allocate reasonable resources for prudent maintenance in order to maintain the integrity of the School that will help improve the instructional climate for our students.

Culture: The West Bath Historical Society provides local opportunity for the collection, preservation and presentation of the whole range of historic artifacts found in Town: Journals, memoirs, photographs, oral histories, vehicles, implements, household objects, historic landscapes, old farms as well as historic buildings. One of the missions of the Historical Society is to be a resource for the Elementary School in involving the students in community learning and community service programs.

Analysis/ Issues

Education: The West Bath Elementary School is a significant town-owned public facility located within significant public open space. The School as a community focal point might serve the changing demographic of West Bath including more retirees as well as commuting families, both who are likely to be seeking more community space within which to meet, recreate and socialize. There may be opportunity to bring adult education to the School, performing arts and graphic arts and crafts, also recreational uses such as early morning senior walking, basketball, volleyball leagues, aerobics classes, etc. Space available, there could be meeting rooms and perhaps a branch library exchange. Expanded playing fields, perhaps little league fields, outdoor basketball and tennis courts, could extend the School's community usefulness through the summer months.

Culture: West Bath's cultural resources will remain regional in scope from throughout the Mid-coast, centered upon the larger cultural institutions in Bath and Brunswick as well as the Patten Free Public Library. As the West Bath Historical Society continues its local collection, preservation and protection efforts, local cultural resources will also evolve.

Goal: Recognizing that the success of public education is essential to the future of our town, state and nation, the citizens of West Bath seek to provide the best possible education for its children and strengthen community interest and involvement.

Objective: Continue to provide for the education needs of the children and adults of West Bath.

Policy: The physical plant of the West Bath School shall be maintained in order to support its educational programs and to meet current building and handicap codes.

The School Board shall examine cost-effective ways to comply with various state and federal requirements to meet current building and handicap codes.

The Town Recreation Committee shall work with the School Board to utilize the West Bath School facilities for programs to address the adult and children's recreational needs and adult educational needs.

A rolling five-year plan to address facility, educational programs and administrative needs will be submitted annually to the Selectmen by the School Board.

LOCAL ECONOMY

Background

West Bath functions as a bedroom community for the Bath-Brunswick Labor Market Area. In 2000, over 60% of residents commuted to the principal employment centers of Bath and Brunswick for work. Due to the presence of Bath Iron Works (BIW), the State's second largest employer, manufacturing represents the primary source of employment for West Bath residents and the largest industry sector in the Bath-Brunswick Labor Market Area. With the presence of the Brunswick Naval Air Station (BNAS), Government is the second largest industry sector in the labor market. Thus manufacturing (25%) represents the largest industry sector in the Bath-Brunswick Labor Market Area, followed by Government (13%). Collectively, Bath Iron Works and the Brunswick Naval Air Station employ over 11,000 workers representing one third of all employment in the Bath-Brunswick Labor Market Area. Locally, there are less than 400 jobs in West Bath, mostly in the area of Trade, Transportation, and Utilities. This fluctuates from a low of 351 in March to 451 in August. According to the 2000 Census, 9% of the labor force is self-employed, which is typical of the county as a whole.

In the Bath-Brunswick region, the largest retail sector is Automotive sales, which includes all transportation related retail outlets, including auto dealers, auto parts, aircraft dealers, motorboat dealers, and automobile rental. The smallest sector is Other Retail, which represents a wide selection of taxable sales not covered elsewhere, including dry goods stores, drug stores, jewelry stores, sporting goods stores, antique dealers, morticians, book stores, photo supply stores, and gift shops. The dollar value of retail by sector in West Bath is too small to disclose. But overall, West Bath captures less than one quarter of the sales that would be expected for a town of its size.

The New Meadows River watershed has supported a fishing economy in the region since the 1600's, including lobstering, clamming, and aquaculture. Over 30,000 bushels of soft shell clams are harvested per year in the watershed, accounting for 15% of Maine's landings and over \$2 million dollars per year in direct impact. West Bath accounts for 1% of Maine's landings. The Town's major shellfish harvesting areas are located in Mill Cove, Brighams Cove, and Winnegance Bay.

For tourism marketing purposes, West Bath is part of Maine's Mid-Coast region, which stretches from Brunswick to Belfast. One in five Maine trips, approximately 7.6 million per year, include time spent in Mid-Coast Maine. Top activities include touring the region's small towns and villages, enjoying the beaches and coastline and shopping. Almost half of the region's visitors come from outside the six New England states, traveling a significant distance to visit the Mid-Coast.

Trends

Between 1990 and 2000, the Bath-Brunswick Labor Market Area gained 2,410 jobs, representing a modest 8% increase compared to 12% for the State as a whole. Historically, residents of the town have

enjoyed higher levels of employment than other residents in the County, State, or Nation.

From 1996 to 2002, the dollar value of retail sales in West Bath more than doubled, from \$3,109,402 to \$6,900,900. Regionally, the greatest retail growth occurred in the category of Building Supply, which grew from \$45,260,688 to \$65,813,000, or \$20,552,312, a 45% increase. Other Retail grew \$13,957,320 from \$41,035,680 to \$54,993,000, a 34% increase. The greatest decline was in the category of Food Stores, which shrank 11% from \$64,606,080 to \$57,447,000, a loss of \$7,159,080.

Compared to the other towns in the watershed, shellfish harvests in West Bath have declined. According to the New Meadows River Watershed Project, much of the shoreline along West Bath still remains closed to harvesting due to both point and non-point source pollution, such as failing septic systems and outhouses.

Regionally, tourism growth in the Bath-Brunswick area is sluggish. From 1998 to 2002, restaurant and lodging sales increased just 2%, from \$85,484,928 to \$87,098,000, compared to 8% for the Mid-Coast region as a whole.

Analysis/ Issues

Both the Bath Iron Works (BIW) and the Brunswick Naval Air Station (BNAS) are considered vulnerable targets in the continuing downsizing of the U.S. Department of Defense; BIW, because the Navy is ordering fewer destroyers and considering the consolidation of these orders at one shipyard, and BNAS, because of the latest round of base closures scheduled to be announced in Spring, 2005. Collectively, BIW and BNAS host over 11,000 jobs representing one third of all employment in the Bath-Brunswick Labor Market Area. Historically, BIW and BNAS, residents of the Town have enjoyed higher levels of employment than other residents in the County, State or Nation. So downsizing or closure of these facilities would undoubtedly affect the employment of local residents, who may not be able to find good paying jobs right away in the labor market. Diminished household income would then have a ripple effect on the retail and service businesses in the Town. Planning for Brunswick was underway in 2005 to anticipate a range of options for possible future uses of the Naval Air Station property. Factors possibly affecting Bath Iron Work's future are always closely monitored in Bath and the State and will continue to be so during the planning period, 2005-2015.

The continued viability of the clamming, lobstering, and aquaculture will depend on many global variables as well as the health of the watershed, including the effect of adjacent land uses, density, and sewage treatment, including replacing the remaining OBDs (overboard wastewater discharge systems) along the shore.

For Mid-Coast Maine, long-term challenges in tourism include attracting more visitors in the shoulder seasons, developing new products to increase the number of long-haul visitors and increasing the number of nights spent in the region on each trip. Capacity to house tourists in West Bath, however, remains small.

Goal: Expand and support a diversified local and regional economy which will offer a stable economic base, provides adequate year-round employment opportunities and recognizes the unique limitations and opportunities of the Town.

Objective: Encourage the growth of industry and business within West Bath.

Policy: Aggressively support industry and commerce within the Mixed Use Zone, Wing Farm and with

home occupations in the residential and rural residential zones.

Implementation:

- Explore and possibly establish a public sewage system through grants and/or cooperation with neighboring municipalities in the Mixed Use Zone and at Wing Farm.
- Adopt a liberal interpretation of “home occupation” as long as it complies with the appropriate zoning requirements and does not alter the character of the neighborhood.

HOUSING

Background

Housing Stock: In 2000 there was a total of 985 housing units in West Bath, 778 year-round units (79% of total) and 207 seasonal units (21%). The vacancy rate was 2.6% accounting for a mere 27 units being empty and available for occupancy. 80% of all housing was owner-occupied; 20% renter-occupied.

The housing stock was dominated by 813 single-family detached houses (82%), which included, it may be presumed, nearly all the seasonal homes. The next most numerous housing were 84 mobile homes (9%), mostly in the State Road mobile home park, but also some located on scattered individual lots. There were 46 dwelling-units in buildings containing 20 or more apartments (5%) accounting for the Green Acres Apartment complex on New Meadows Road. The remaining 52 dwelling-units were arrayed in attached single-family houses, other duplexes or in 3-unit to 19-unit structures.

Housing Costs: West Bath averages about 15 home sales a year. Between 2000 and 2003, the median price for waterfront housing sales in West Bath increased more than 2 times faster than the Bath-Brunswick region, but more than 4 times faster than a sales price that would be affordable to the median income of West Bath residents. Prices for sale of inland houses in Town were likely to have been somewhat less than on the coast.

Trends

Between 2000 and 2003 the median price for a house in West Bath doubled from \$126,400 to \$265,000. An annual household income of \$89,200 would be required to purchase a \$265,000 home. The median income of west Bath households was \$50,510 allowing for only the purchase of homes up to \$150, 050 (based on expenditure of 30% of annual income on housing). Lower income households (earning 80% or less than the median income) of \$40,120 or less were largely priced out of the market in West Bath.

The influx of retirees to the shorelines of the mid-coast since the 1990s will likely continue to contribute to bidding up house prices throughout the planning period to 2015. This will continue to shift the demographic of West Bath towards a more retirement type community. As fewer young working families will be able to find an affordable house, fewer town employees including teachers, firemen, policemen, clerks, public works crew members and professionals such as accountants and inspectors will live in town. This will continue to shift demand more toward elderly services such as community meeting places and less so on community playing fields.

Analysis/ Issues

The housing market will continue to cater to what it can realize as the highest profits. If West Bath

wants to retain a community with more young families as well as more retirees, the Town would need to take active steps to do so. It would not be enough to create more jobs in Town by expanding the Business/Commercial Zone out from State Road unless some of those new jobs paid considerably higher than the region's median (2002) annual income of \$46,610. Changes in the Town land use ordinances would also be necessary to reduce land costs. In order to provide some smaller lots or some duplexes, four-plexes or other multi-units, only provision of public water and sewer services would enable lot sizes less than a half-acre. It would not be enough to change the Town's rules for cluster development to make it more attractive to developers, such as allowing a bonus of more houses if clustered, but to also require that some of those clustered houses be affordable to those families earning 80% or less than the Town median income.

To meet the State Growth Management mandate, the Town would need to strive to make 10% of its new housing affordable over the planning period; this would entail about 10 new dwelling units out of the 101 forecast for the 2005-2015 period. To maintain the 2004 mix of owner and rental units, 80 new owner-occupied units and 21 renter-occupied units would need to be constructed. This results in an average of one new affordable dwelling-unit per year between 2005 and 2015 plus two new rental units per year.

Clearly, a combination of zoning changes and provision of public water and sewer services coupled with Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) programs is one consideration the Town is grappling with. One MSHA program is the Section 8 rental supplements to landlords who rent to Section 8 participating households. In 2004 there were nine elderly households who participated in the Section 8 program in Town. Also, the Town could participate with charitable groups, such as Habitat for Humanity, by providing, for example, Town acquired tax default lots at no cost to build affordable houses. Without a mix of Town measures, the current trend of pricing working families largely out of purchasing a house or renting a dwelling-unit will likely continue in West Bath.

Goal: Encourage and provide opportunity for the development of safe, sanitary, affordable, and adequate housing, satisfying the needs of all residents of the Town with a variety of lifestyles, while maintaining the Town's rural character and protecting the environment.

Objective: Aggressively explore ways to increase affordable housing within West Bath.

Policy: Develop an environment for private development of a variety of affordable housing opportunities within the Mixed Use Zone.

Policy: West bath will seek to achieve to meet the requirements of the Growth Management Act and Comprehensive Planning Criteria Rule regarding affordable housing.

Implementation:

- Pursue community development block grants for sewage to develop higher density affordable housing in the Mixed Use Zone.
- Cooperate with neighboring municipalities to develop higher density affordable housing.

Goal: Promote housing opportunities and services for elderly as the demographics of our population requires.

Objective: To provide housing and services for the elderly

Policy: Encourage the opportunity for small scale retirement housing projects.

Implementation:

- Continue to allow elderly housing facilities in all zoning districts of town. Review and amend the Residential and Rural Residential Zones for accommodating appropriate multi-unit elderly housing.
- Work with neighboring municipalities to develop an appropriate level of public services and the opportunity for the provision of private services.
- Review the availability and appropriate level of support provided through local and regional sources and to authorize funding at town meeting as may be appropriate.

WATER RESOURCES

Background

Soils: The vast majority of Town has severe limitations for the development of properly functioning wastewater septic systems, including steep slopes and unsuitable soils. The areas in West Bath with moderate soil limitations for development do not coincide with the existing built-up areas.

Watersheds encompassing West Bath: New Meadows River and Kennebec River - both flowing into Casco Bay and the Gulf of Maine.

Freshwater Wetlands: New Meadows Creek, Back Cove Creek and Dam Cove Creek.

Brackish Wetland: Winnegance Creek.

Tidal Flats: Back Cove, Mill Cove and Dam Cove

Wetlands and Tidal Flats: Provide water purifiers for groundwater recharge and discharge and help protect surface water quality downstream and in lakes downstream; reduce flood hazards by absorbing rapid runoff like a sponge and then releasing it slowly to surface water; reduce erosion and sedimentation and absorb phosphorus in stormwater runoff.

West Bath Wetland Regulations: Resource Protection Zone; Shoreland Overlay Zone; Development Review Ordinance. Shorelands and Floodplains: West Bath's Shoreland Zone restricts the type of land uses within 250 feet of designated streams, wetlands and the coastal shoreline. The land uses that are allowed are compatible to maintaining the natural functioning of these riparian areas. Setback of all buildings is required to be 75 feet from the water. The combined effect of compatible uses with setback of buildings helps maintain water quality but also a natural riparian corridor for wildlife between larger blocks of wilderness. Buildings are restricted from the 100-year floodway of streams and lakes. The types and design of buildings, to raise them above the 100-year floodway (the area beyond the floodway that receives standing water during a 100-year flood), also reduces human and property risk during

floods, but also helps maintain wildlife corridors along streams.

Threats to Surface Water and Groundwater: Pollutants in stormwater run-off; Phosphates from residential lawns; Failing/inadequate wastewater septic systems and active OBDs (overboard wastewater discharge systems); Agriculture, grazing and use of mineral fertilizers; Accidental spills of hazardous/toxic materials; Saltwater intrusion.

Maine DEP List of Watersheds "Most at risk from new development": New Meadows Estuary from bacteria, low level of DO (dissolved oxygen), commercial marine resources from oil, gas, septic spills, which all comprise threats to the Estuary's high ecological value.

West Bath Water Quality Protection: Planning Board requires from developers - Erosion and sedimentation control program; Lake phosphorus control plan in Campbell Pond watershed; Setbacks from water bodies for new development. Planning Board can require hydro-geological impact assessments for subdivisions and site plans.

Water Quality Protection Efforts: New Meadows River Watershed Program - West Bath, Brunswick, Harpswell and Phippsburg. Town - OBD (overboard wastewater discharge) removal, erosion and sedimentation controls, phosphorus control in Campbell Pond watershed subdivisions. Casco Bay Estuary Project - Sustainable Shellfisheries Program. DMR (Me. Dept. of Marine Resources) - Friends of Casco Bay Water Quality Testing Program and OBD removal.

Overboard Discharge (OBD) Systems: In West Bath insufficient soil depth preventing the installation of leachfields for wastewater effluent disposal is the cause that there are still remaining OBDs in Town.

OBD Inventory in Town: 4 active OBDs in 2006 located at Kings Point.

Removed OBDs: 1998 - 7 OBDs removed in Brighams Cove, Winnegance Bay, New Meadows River Lake. 2000 - 4 OBDs removed at Brighams Cove and Sabino. 2001 - 3 OBDs removed at Sabino

Groundwater: There are no sand-and-gravel aquifers in West Bath. There are seven bedrock aquifers - New Meadows Creek; New Meadows River; Mill Cove; Campbell Pond; Winnegance Bay. The State is developing data on high-yield bedrock wells but it was not yet available in 2005. There is one public water supply well and wellhead protection area at Camp Davenport (off lower Fosters Point Road).

Threats to Groundwater: Saltwater intrusion; Contaminated surface water; Failing/inadequate septic systems; Spills, leakage or dumping of chemicals.

Trends

With the demand for year-round housing continuing and as the relatively few remaining developable waterfront parcels disappear, there will be greater pressure to develop upland areas close to the shore on slopes from 0% to 15% - and great care would need to be taken.

Groundwater: In general its quality is considered good and its volume adequate, however, groundwater is a very important resource. Existing groundwater supplies are all privately owned with only one public water supply well. Information on the location of bedrock aquifers and allowable yields are especially important in planning for the future development of Town.

Continuation of the joint State-West Bath program to remove and replace old OBDs (overboard

wastewater discharge systems) along the shore is one of the key elements in securing and maintaining coastal water quality. Continued application of this program along with the Town's and State's various ordinances and regulations will continue to upgrade the coastal water quality to its specified State standard for fishing, shellfishing and swimming.

Shorelands and Floodplains: West Bath's Shoreland Zone restricts the type of land uses within 250 feet of designated streams, wetlands and the coastal shoreline. The land uses that are allowed are compatible to maintaining the natural functioning of these riparian areas. Setback of all buildings is required to be 75 feet from the water. The combined effect of compatible uses with setback of buildings helps maintain water quality but also a natural riparian corridor for wildlife between larger blocks of wilderness. Buildings are restricted from the 100-year floodway of streams and lakes. The types and design of buildings, to raise them above the 100 year floodway (the area beyond the floodway that receives standing water during a 100 year flood), also reduces human and property risk during floods, but also helps maintain wildlife corridors along streams.

Analysis/Issues

In West Bath, areas with more than 20% slope should be prohibited from future development and their existing natural vegetative cover and runoff properties preserved and maintained.

Soils: The Soil Suitability Map for West Bath indicates that the vast majority of the town has severe limitations for the installation of properly functioning septic systems, including limitations from steep slopes and ledge conditions. In general, the areas with moderate limitations do not coincide with the existing built-up areas. There are no areas of soil associations with few/slight limitations; however, small areas of individual soils may qualify for this rating. Irregardless of the soils suitability, if the Town were ever to desire to have an area with high density, then some sort of sewer system other than individual septic systems would probably be needed.

Groundwater: Threats to groundwater in Town potentially include nitrates, saltwater intrusion, chemical contamination and accidental spills. Future development will likely result in higher risk on groundwater contamination from underground fuel tanks, malfunctioning septic systems, infiltration of pollutants from roads, pesticides and pet wastes from domestic lawns.

Saltwater Intrusion: Blasting for construction and over-drilling for drinking water wells can so deplete near-shore groundwater that coastal sea water infiltrates inland into the depleted groundwater space.

OBD Removal: Continuation of the joint State-West Bath program to remove and replace old OBDs (overboard wastewater discharge systems) along the shore is one of the key elements in securing and maintaining coastal water quality. Continued application of this program along with the Town's and State's various ordinances and regulations will continue to upgrade the coastal water quality to its specified State standard for fishing, shellfishing and swimming.

Goal: Protect and improve the ground and surface waters in the Town and area.

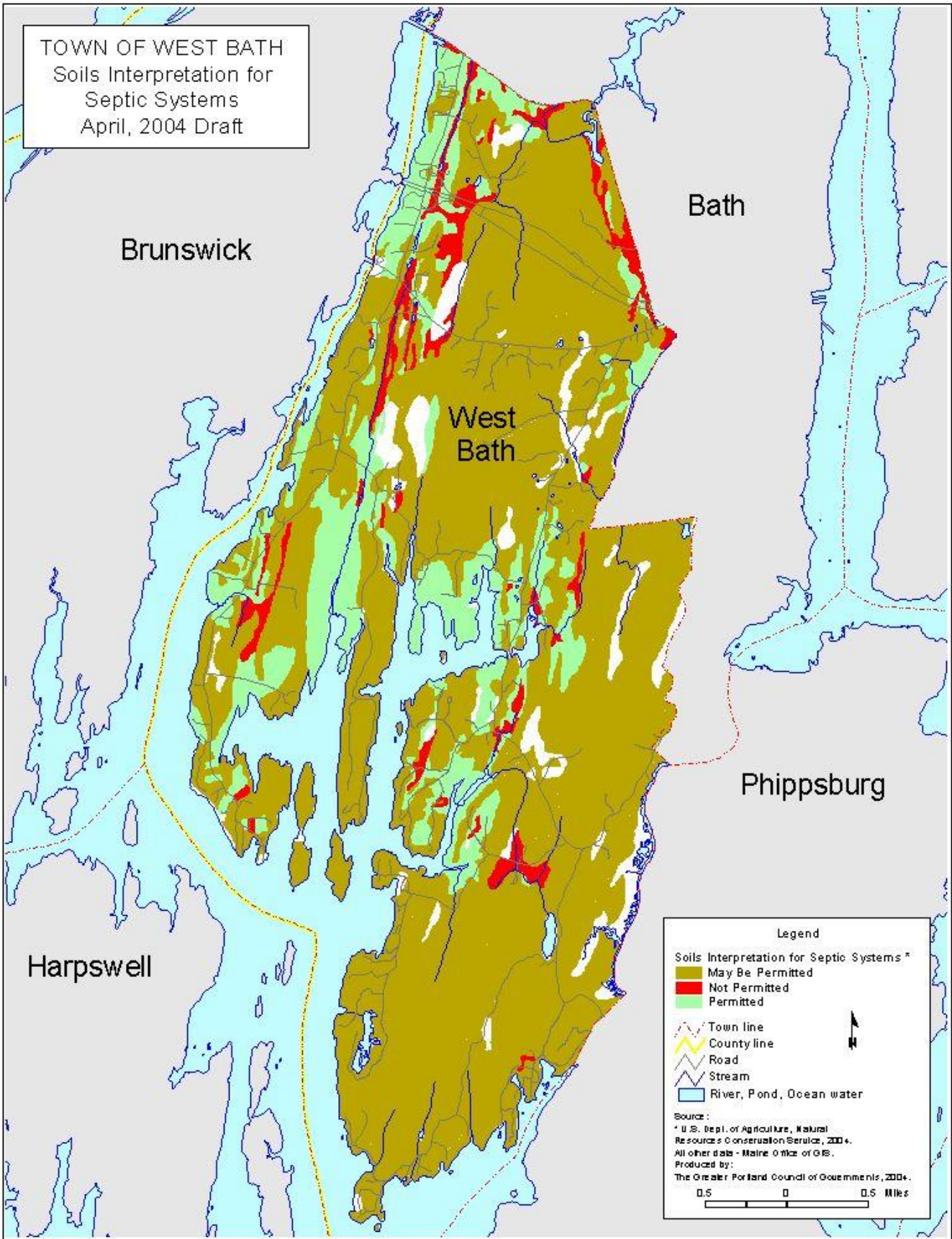
Objective: Protect ground water from pollution.

Policy: Identify at risk areas such as but not limited to sensitive soil types, contamination, shoreline, wetlands, vernal ponds and other areas of concern.

Implementation:

- Revise the Land Use and Development ordinances to place strong restrictions on the type and size of subsurface waste disposal in identified areas of concern.
- Require all new subdivision proposals to provide a septic design for Planning Board approval.
- Continue to seek state funding for overboard discharge remediation.
- Continue to enforce the Town's ordinances limiting development in areas with slopes greater than 20%.
- Monitor septic systems and ground water for pollution. Work to correct any identified pollution sources.
- Monitor ground water in the resource protection zones that are within 250 feet of a subdivision.
- Adopt strict standards for management of storm water quality and quantity on new developments.
- Provide resources for the necessary levels of enforcement of town ordinances with which to protect ground water and marine resources.

TOWN OF WEST BATH
 Soils Interpretation for
 Septic Systems
 April, 2004 Draft



CRITICAL NATURAL RESOURCES

Background

West Bath provides a wide range of habitats and ecological niches, including soft mud in sheltered bays and coves for shellfish.

Wetlands and Tidal Flats: These provide West Bath with unique habitat, spawning and nesting areas for animals and fish, including waterfowl, shellfish, fish, insects, reptiles, amphibians and many mammals.

Riparian Habitats include 250 foot areas adjacent to ponds and lakes (10+ acres) and 75 foot buffer zones along streams. Riparian Habitats are the transitional zones between open water, wetland habitats and upland habitats. 85% of terrestrial vertebrate animals use these areas for part of their life cycle: e.g. wood frog, spotted salamander, blue-toed salamander and spotted turtle.

Vernal Pools are (early Springtime) seasonally flooded depressions that play critical roles in the life cycles of many species. These have not been mapped by the State in West Bath or anywhere else. They are easy to lose to development without ever knowing it.

Significant Value Habitats: Bald Eagle nest site - Upper New Meadows Lake with Brunswick.

Wading Birds/Waterfowl Habitat: Back Cove Creek, New Meadows Creek, Winnegance Creek, Dam Cove, Back Cove and New Meadows River.

Deer Wintering Areas: Birchwood Pond, Campbell Pond Road.

Rare Plant and Animal Species: None recorded in West Bath as of 2005.

Large Habitat Blocks and Conservation Land: Hamilton Audubon Sanctuary is a 74-acre preserve straddling lower Fosters Point Road managed by the Maine Audubon Society. There are 1.5 miles of trails with benches overlooking Back Cove.

Undeveloped Habitat Blocks: The Beginning With Habitat Program identifies 10 large blocks of interior land set back 500 feet from major roads in Town. These blocks vary in size from 334 acres to over 1,000 acres; two blocks spilling over into Bath and Phippsburg.

Trends

Besides undeveloped open space blocks, the 'Beginning With Habitat' Program has compiled a wealth of information from State and federal agencies on wildlife habitats and critical natural resources for West Bath. The 'Beginning With Habitat' information on West Bath is available at Town Hall and is adopted in its entirety as an Inventory Section of this Plan.

Plants, fisheries and wildlife add significantly to the beauty of West Bath in both visible and invisible ways and are important economic and recreational assets. The Town is home to a variety of fish, shellfish and coastal habitats, multiple species of mammals and birds. Although no formal inventory has been made, species in Town such as bald eagles, waterfowl and deer are of special concern in the region and should be protected through public acquisition, easements and similar regulations. Gradually the State is providing more data to the Town and region to more effectively take protective measures of critical natural resources.

Potential regional partners in natural resource protection and conservation include the New Meadows River Watershed Program, which is a collaboration between the riverside towns, regional and State agencies. The published 'New Meadows Report' serves as a compilation and summary of currently available information on the present status of the marine environment and resources of the New Meadows River. The document includes information on water and sediment quality, population demographics and current land use within the watershed. The Casco Bay Estuary Project (CBEP) has secured a Sustainable Development Challenge Grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency with two goals: to remediate pollution sources keeping clam flats closed to harvesting and to investigate options for sustaining the harvest. Because of obvious potential socioeconomic benefit from opening clam flats, one of the goals of the 1996 Casco Bay Plan is to actively participate in OBD (overboard wastewater discharge systems) removal in partnership with the Maine DEP and West Bath. 'Friends of Casco Bay' provide staff support in water quality monitoring and sampling programs. Continued regional collaboration on natural resources of regional scope would obviously continue to benefit the Town.

Analysis/ Issues

From an ecological perspective, intensive development should be restricted in areas immediately adjacent to identified natural habitats. In addition, ecological principles of biodiversity, key species, habitat size and connectivity (between habitat blocks) should be integrated in the land use regulations and future planning of the Town.

Goal: Protect and improve the critical natural resources, such as wetlands estuaries, plant and animal habitats, coastal areas, forest lands and the like, in the Town and area.

Policy: Protect natural habitats of animals, birds, fish and plants.

Implementation:

- Use mapping provided by Beginning with Habitat to identify areas vital to various plant and animal species, remaining undeveloped open spaces and to update resource protection zones.
- Develop strict protections for the resource protection zones in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
- Allow complementary uses in the resource protection zones.
- The Town use impact or other fees collected from subdividers, developers and homebuilders to purchase conservation areas for wildlife habitat, forestry and recreation benefits for West Bath citizens.
- Planning board request, as applicable, applicants to present documentation from state and federal agencies such as Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Department on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission showing that there will be no impact on habitats of animals, birds, fish, plants and historic areas.
- Require that any blasting or filling permit be issued only after presentation of documentation from state and federal agencies such as Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Department on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission showing that there will be no impact on habitats of animals, birds, fish, plants and historic areas and review by the Planning Board.

- Develop standards for filling, removal of soils or blasting to include volume, traffic to and from the site, and duration.
- Require that any permit for filling be reissued on a yearly basis after review by the Planning Board.
- Require that any permit for blasting is valid for only 30 days and must be reviewed by the planning board for issuance or reissuance of that permit.
- The Town should use a wildlife habitats/open space purchase fund, supplied by collected fees from new subdivisions and other developments, to purchase critical wildlife habitats, significant natural resource areas and recreational open spaces.

MARINE RESOURCES

Background

Marine Flora and Fauna: In West Bath waters can be found: lobsters, softshell clams, European oysters, scallops, mussels, quahogs (hardshell clams), crabs, sea urchins, kelp, sea cucumbers, whelks, periwinkles and green crabs (a nuisance invasive species).

Local Marine Habitats: Shellfish areas, clam flats, eelgrass meadows and worming areas.

Shellfish Harvesting Prohibition: There is a considerable area along the West Bath-Phippsburg shoreline of the New Meadows River that is closed to shellfish harvesting for one or more reasons, but certainly including the continued presence of one or more remaining licensed OBDs (overboard wastewater discharge systems).

Shellfish Harvesting Volume: Over the five-year period, 1998 - 2002, West Bath contributed 1.17% (2,750 pounds +/-) of the total softshell clam landings from non-commercial harvesters in Maine

Navigability: West Bath's coastal waters are generally navigable for small watercraft. The New Meadows River has 7 feet of water at MLW (mean low water); Back Cove and Mill cove have 10 feet at MLW. Winnegance Bay near West Bath generally has 22 feet at MLW.

Marine Access: There are three town boat ramps: Bull Rock Ramp - 30 vehicle parking spaces; Sabino Ramp – no parking lot; Mountain Road Point. There is no town dock to tie up floating watercraft in West Bath. In the past, New Meadows Inn provided access to the New Meadows River but the docks there have fallen into disuse and disrepair. There are public boat landings in Brunswick and Bath.

Marinas: There is no commercial marina to store boats over the winter in West Bath. There is the New Meadows Marina in Brunswick just across the River from West Bath; there is the BFC Marina in Bath.

Water access: Only a few potential shoreline locations were identified in the 1995 Town Comprehensive Plan as feasible for prime sites for water dependent uses (such as a marina or town dock), but only if significant compromises were made concerning neighborhood use, provision of utilities (electricity, etc.), land cost and possibly environmental impact.

Moorings: There were over 260 moorings in 2004 in West Bath. For larger vessels staying over in West Bath for extended periods, there is no septage pump-out facilities available nearby. The New Meadows River Watershed Project (NMRWP) has been exploring with neighboring towns the locating of a pump-out facility in the lower New Meadows River, primarily near the Sebasco area in Phippsburg.

Trends

Town Marine Resources Board: In 2003 the Board licensed 19 resident commercial shellfish diggers; three non-resident commercial shellfish diggers; and an unlimited (actually 90) recreational shellfish diggers. In 2004, the Board was only setting harvesting limits for softshell clams although there were a few hardshell (Quahog) clams in Town as well. The Committee also oversees conservation planning and regulations for maintaining the Town's shellfish resources, clean-ups of selected shellfish beds, clam surveying and reseeded and conducts water quality testing in the upper New Meadows River. In seeking to expand shellfish harvesting in Town, the Board has been looking at ways to increase tidal flows to reclaim Berry's Mill Cove, Dam Cove and the New Meadows Lake.

Commercial Shellfish Harvesting: In the early 2000s large commercial companies are becoming more active in the Mid-coast with the resources to harvest up to the legal limit in a number of towns at the same time, to then consolidate these harvests, clean large batches of clams (depuration) and to market them far and wide. Such companies would have the resources to engage in large-scale clam reseeded programs and aquaculture such as oyster farms in designated locations by the State, likely near Merritt Island and in the New Meadows River.

Marine Facilities and Services: The fees collected from the more than 260 boat moorings in the Town's waters supports the Harbor Master's salary and the Harbors & Waterways Committee. Due to continuing residential development along the coastline, there has been about 10 to 15 applications per year for new moorings, mostly for pleasure watercraft and not for commercial fishing boats. The Harbor Master and Harbors & Waterways Committee has consequently been called upon to resolve conflicts between new shoreline landowners who desire their own mooring adjacent to their property versus existing traditional moorings, in some instances for traditional commercial fishermen already located there. In general, as the number of moorings has increased so too have disputes over their locations requiring Harbor Master and Selectmen resolution. The Harbors & Waterways Committee has found that it needs to legislate more guidelines to regulate new moorings locations.

Analysis/ Issues

To continue to capitalize on recent gains in coastal water quality and the reopening of closed clam flats, the Town will need to maintain its comprehensive but flexible approach to clam flats and aquacultural development. The natural abundance of clam seedlings produced by the Town's clam flats can be enhanced by holding clam license holders to their full commitment to reseeded. This could make possible the sustainable sale of seedlings to commercial clammers, producing revenue to support the Town's marine resources. Additional clam flats could possibly be opened at Berry's Mill Cove, Dam Cove and New Meadows Lake by facilitating greater tidal flows to these areas. Receptivity to development of identified mollusk aquaculture sites compatible to maintaining navigation and shoreline owners access rights, especially for oyster farming, could further enhance town revenue. Vigorous monitoring of bird-borne pollution events by exploring ways to legitimately control duck populations and migrating geese populations may be needed. Pollution control methods may include monitoring of bird flock accumulations, strategic chasing away or by maximizing hunting season periods and bag limits, or a combination of these plus other measures.

To further capitalize on the first-rate shellfish productivity of the Town's shellfish beds, the remaining OBD (wastewater overboard discharge systems) along the shoreline would need to be removed as well as cooperating with Phippsburg on regional pollution control programs. The Town could become one of the premier clam seedling propagation locations on the Maine Coast as well as hosting, if desired, aquaculture such as oyster farming. The area around Merritt Island and Back Cove are identified as suitable for aquaculture. Both activities could become a source of income to the Town.

As the shoreline continues to be residentially developed, the cost of maintaining public access to the Town's coastal water will certainly rise. Additional parking at the 3 existing town boat ramps at Bull Rock, Dam Cove and Sabino Cove is likely to be desired, whether on-site or nearby in satellite parking lots. Possibilities for additional access in Back Cove, Mountain Road Point, Mill Cove, Winnegance Creek and the lower New Meadows River may become very difficult to achieve in the near future. Some of the informal pathways to coastal shellfish beds may also become more problematic for clambers without selective protection by the Town. It is hoped that the informal accesses may continue but a shoreline access and facilities plan might become a consideration to addressing future access issues.

Continuing pleasure watercraft owners desire for moorings in the Town's sheltered coves may be filling up the available spaces. These coves can only serve smaller boats as their mean low water depth is only around 10 feet. As mooring may continue to increase (recently an average of 10 to 15 new ones a year), the Town may need to do an overall plan for mooring areas, perhaps considering Winnegance Bay. The Bay has generally 22 feet depth at mean low water and can accommodate larger boats. Development of suitable mooring areas in Winnegance Bay would likely entail cooperation with Phippsburg and Harpswell.

Continuing occasional disputes between new shoreline home owners and traditional boat owners over location of moorings may prompt the Harbor & Waterways Committee to contemplate an enhanced town-wide moorings plan that lays out mooring areas that are sensitive to both new and traditional boat owner's mooring access needs, the location of potential aquaculture sites and for the overall ease of navigation.

Goal: Protect and improve the marine and coastal resources required by the commercial and recreational marine interests.

Objective: To enhance and preserve the heritage of marine business and water way use in West Bath.

Policy: Develop policy and ordinances to protect traditional commercial marine uses and provide for recreational waterway use.

Implementation:

- Enact strict shoreline protection ordinances to ensure that the shoreline is developed in a way that protects the shoreline from over-development and does not impact traditional marine and fishing operations.
- Ensure that traditional marine and fishing operations and methods are allowed to continue.
- Examine ways to protect working waterfronts and provide opportunities for small-scale fishing operations to use boat ramps, anchorages, and waterways.
- Explore using fees generated from marine related activities to improve boat ramps including but not limited to parking.
- Develop recreational water use plan that will protect marine business.
- Create a natural environment which encourages the establishment of new marine operations or the reestablishment of former marine operations, as permitted in the shoreline protection zone.
- Work with neighboring municipalities to develop usages for harbors and waterways.
- Seek funding through grants and other sources for development and improvement of boat ramps, anchorages, overboard discharge remediation, and waterfront parks.
- Protect and conserve the marine environment to obtain the best possible harvesting of marine resources.
- Develop ordinances and establish fines to control mooring usages.
- Work to protect existing clam flats and assure that they remain productive.
- Establish shoreline ordinances limiting the space, bulk and height of structures. Prohibit cutting of vegetation within 75 feet of the shoreline, the location of any structure and the setback of water and septic systems from the shoreline.
- Require that any reconstruction of a non-conforming structure in the shoreline zone be reviewed by the Planning Board with the objective of decreasing the non-conformity.

AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

Background

Agriculture: In 2004 there was only one commercial farm in West Bath, a commercial sheep and wool farm. The agricultural heritage of the Town is, however, evident with the open fields along old roads, old farms and barns. These properties are used now mostly for personal horse and occasionally steer pasturage, for recreation such as snowmobiling, skiing and sledding and for hay production, some of which may be sold to out-of-town farmers.

The number of active farms and amount of farmland remained steady in Sagadahoc County as a whole

between 1978 and 1997: about 120 farms +/- and 18,000 acres +/- in farmland, which averages to about 150 acres per farm indicating the small-scale family type farming carried out in the County.

In 2003, there were three farmer's markets in Sagadahoc County, 17 farm stands, 5 pick-your-own-farms (likely mostly apple orchards) and 5 restaurants that served Maine-grown produce.

Forestry: Harvestable timberland is contained within one of the 10 large interior blocks of woodland within characteristically small lots (compared to large paper company holdings in the North Maine Woods). The forested open space blocks cover approximately 4,246 acres or about 56% of Town. Of this, 910 acres, 21% of the open space, are protected by the Tree Growth Tax abatement program. West Bath's open space landowners have characteristically allowed a fair amount of public access on their land for informal recreational uses such as hiking, skiing and snowmobiling.

Between 1992 and 2002 in West Bath, an average of 2 timber harvests occurred annually affecting about 31 acres per year: 28 woodland acres per year by selective harvesting; an average of about 2 acres per year for 'shelterwood' harvesting, presumably for firewood. During the 10-year period 1992 - 2002, only 2 acres were clear-cut thus removing all trees, but 16 acres changed from forested to some other land use, likely to new houselots.

Trends

In West Bath and Sagadahoc County, the existing amount of residential and commercial land coupled with the relatively small size of land parcels still in open space, precludes the easy development of large-scale commercial agricultural or timber harvesting operations compared to Aroostook or Piscataquis Counties. Transportation-dependent and chemical-intensive agribusiness cultivation and marketing of agricultural produce and livestock from elsewhere in the U.S., and the enormous paper company holdings in the Maine North Woods, are likely to continue to maintain the low prices at local supermarkets and lumber stores during the near future against which the family farm in West Bath or elsewhere will continue to have such a difficult time competing.

Analysis/ Issues

However, the growing consumer trend for more organically cultivated produce and livestock may create expanding opportunities during the first decades of the 21st Century for new West Bath farming operations dedicated to supplying local natural food and fresh food consumers - so-called truck farms. College towns, for instance, are notorious consumers of fresh/organic foods. Such farming operations could be either full-time or part-time. There was one 'community farm' in Sagadahoc County, to which customers pay in advance for fresh produce from the farm as it becomes available over the growing season. The contract with the customers is for whatever fresh produce results from that growing season out of the array of vegetables and fruits planted, so that vagaries of weather and pests detrimental to one crop but not to another, cushions the farmer from financial ruin. So, to the extent that small-scale farming operations on relatively small lots can serve the local fresh/organic market, there may be opportunity to do so in West Bath by employing the Open Space tax program, which lowers the property tax on such land. Similarly, there may be expanding opportunity to supply local artisans and crafts persons with wool and other fiber from local farms. In any case, care is needed on what is put on agricultural land in West Bath, such as fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, due to the prevalence of shallow soils that permeate quickly to groundwater.

To the extent that subdivision of large 'land-locked' interior parcels of land for new houselots occurs during the planning period to 2015, there will be a loss of land for truck farms and timber growth in Town. This suggests that if these larger interior parcels are to be preserved in forest or agriculture land,

the Town may need to act sooner rather than later. There is also opportunity for multi-uses of the remaining interior forest land for town parkland and wildlife habitat as well as for wilderness preservation and timber management. The Tree Growth Tax reduction program for timber land allows for such multi-uses of designated Tree Growth land. The on-going 910 acres of Tree Growth land in 2004 demonstrates that with careful management including selective cutting and shelterwood regenerative cutting, small woodlots in West Bath can continue to be profitable commercial plus multi-use ventures.

Goal: To provide the opportunity for the development of specialty agriculture, and forestry operations, as appropriate, within the Town.

Objective: To preserve and protect the agricultural and forestry heritage of West Bath.

Policy: Maintain Forests as a viable resource.

Encourage good forest management.

Implementation:

- Using the Beginning with Habitat maps, identify and seek ways to preserve the large woodland parcels.
- Encourage the preservation of forest land through tax incentives.
- Provide for small-scale forestry operation in the zoning ordinance.
- Require documentation from state and federal agencies such as Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Department on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, showing that there will be no impact on habitats of animals, birds, fish, plants and historic areas before harvesting of forest resources.

HISTORIC & ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Background

The Town owns one building listed on the National Register of Historic Places, **Mill Cove School**, aka Littlefield-Small School, on Berry's Mill Road. The Town also owns three other historic buildings that may be eligible for National Register listing: **West Bath Grange Hall** on New Meadows Road; **West Bath Lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars, #297**, located next to the Grange Hall; **Old West Bath Meeting House** used by the West Bath Historical Society. There is one historic house owned by a non-profit, the **Hamilton House**, as part of the Hamilton Audubon Society Bird Sanctuary on Fosters Point Road. There are eight privately-owned historic homes plus several historic roads that the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission recommends for study for possible inclusion in the National Register. Other historic artifacts may also be eligible, such as the Sabino Meeting Hall.

Wetlands and Tidal Flats provide scenic, historic and/or archeological values. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) lists 3 historic archeological sites in Town: **Baker Mill Dam**; **Berry Complex**; and the **Chandler R. Shipwreck**. However, townspeople do not seem to know exactly where these sites are as they are not readily visible. The MHPC recommends that the Town concentrate on

identifying the earliest English settlement in Town from the 17th Century for possible future excavation, study and explication. The MHPC identifies the entire New Meadows River shoreline, portions of Back Cove, Merritt Island, Mill Cove, Dam Cove, Birch Point, Brighams and Perry Coves, and the entire shoreline of Winnegance Creek as potential prehistoric Native American archeological sites. Initial surveying of the New Meadows River shoreline has identified 35 Indian archeological sites, 30 of which have been deemed potentially National Register worthy. These are mostly ancient shell middens, piles of discarded shellfish shells, probably from long-ago clambakes.

Trends

By knowing how the Town's character was formed, we can better preserve those aspects of the rural character that contribute most to enhancing the future vision for the Town. The West Bath Historical Society is instrumental in providing this essential community planning function of researching, identifying, collecting, preserving and protecting the Town's historic resources. As a private non-profit, the Historical Society can be a bridge between the Town's (Planning Board's) public policies and the private landowners who own significant historical artifacts and sites. This could include working with land owners in preserving historic farms, farmland and right-of-ways for limited public uses, such as pedestrian/equestrian trails, in exchange for some benefits from the Town through such means as conservation easements or assistance on seeking tax abatement.

The identification, excavation, study, collection and archiving of archeological artifacts extends the knowledge of West Bath, the Mid-coast and Maine father back into the past. But archeological sites, not only because they are below ground but also presumed to be mostly located along shorelines, are less endangered in West Bath than historical buildings and structures. State shoreland zoning requires as one of its purposes to protect archeological and historic resources. This zone extends 250 feet inland from the shoreline. The State Subdivision statute requires review by municipalities on impacts from proposed subdivision on historic sites.

This includes both National Register designated and non-Registered historic buildings, structures, sights and archeological sites.

Analysis/ Issues

Historic buildings, either Town owned, non-profit or privately owned, could assist in the cultural life of the Town, especially for retirees, by providing museum and archival space and meeting rooms for community groups such as book groups or for small group musical presentations. In cooperation with the Town and affected landowners, the Historical Society can lead the efforts in having historical properties gain National Register of Historic Places status. Such designation can confer federal and State tax abatement for rehabilitation projects on non-residentially used buildings.

To maximize use of historic buildings and sites for public uses, there would need to be review of the Town Land Use Ordinance to determine if such uses would be possible. One approach might be an overlay historic zone allowing for identified non-residential uses for designated historic properties, especially those historic buildings located in residential zones, such as the lower Berry's Mill Road area. In effect, careful mapping of historic resources can be a prime element of the overall pattern of land use in West Bath, as part of the mix of public and private uses permitted in Town.

The MHPC recommends that municipalities put in place methods to review all construction and ground-disturbing proposals in designated historic and archeological areas. The MHPC is prepared to be contacted by West Bath for its expert review and opinions to assist the Town in preserving and protecting its historic and archeological resources. This can be done by imposing appropriate conditions

as part of building, land use and subdivision permits issued by the Town to landowners who have identified historic or archeological resources on their property.

Goal: To preserve local historic and archaeological resources.

Objective: Maintain sites of historic significance in West Bath.

Policy: Protect sites which have historic or archaeological importance.

Implementation:

- Support the efforts of private historic preservation groups.
- Planning Board, request as appropriate, documentation from state and federal agencies such the Maine Historic Preservation Commission or West Bath Historic Society showing that there will be no impact on historic sites before issuance of any permits or approvals from the Planning Board.
- Use, as appropriate, the site plan review process to identify the potential impacts to sites of historic or archaeological importance.
- Establish a historic overlay zone to protect historic sites (National Register or National Register eligible) that are voluntarily nominated by either the Town or private landowners.

RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Background

The Town owns three boat launch ramps: (1) Bull Rock Boat Ramp at the New Meadows River; (2) Mountain Road Boat Ramp; (3) Sabino Boat Ramp at Sabino. The Bull Rock Ramp has about 30 parking spaces; the Mountain Road site about two; and the Sabino Ramp has none.

There are no town-owned parks in Town. However, there are playing fields and a playground at the West Bath Elementary School open to the public. There is the gymnasium and lunchroom/kitchen at the School available for occasional public use. The Town Fire Station has a meeting room available for occasional public use.

West Bath residents have traditionally been able to use all recreational facilities in Bath including playing fields and the YMCA facilities.

There has traditionally been informal access to the shoreline for recreational clammers, boaters and strollers; likewise into interior fields and wooded areas. Interior undeveloped open space accounted (in 2004) for about 4,246 acres or 56% of the Town in 10 large blocks of land.

Trends

While the tradition of informal access to the shore for walkers, clammers and boaters and access to the interior woods in town has served West Bath residents well in the past, there may be more pressure for closing off coastal access and recreational use of interior woodland in the 21st Century due to increased

subdivision of land and subsequent new house development. New comers to Town may not be as public minded as some of the traditional landowners. But with more people in Town, some native large landowners may also becoming more reluctant to increasing the public's access to their land. Liability from accidents is a concern.

Analysis/ Issues

The same recreation issues continue in the 21st Century that were expressed in the 1992 Comprehensive Plan concerning the development and protection of erstwhile informal trails before continuing development pressure changes open space into house lots. The 1992 Plan cited 4 possibilities for trails: (1) Coastline Trail; (2) Ridge Line, Pond & Wetland Trail; (3) Seniors Path, Cross Country Skiing Trail; (4) Nature, Wetlands Trail. And more recently, a town connector to (5) the Androscoggin - to - Kennebec Route One Bike Trail.

Continuing from the 1990s, there appears to be some attention to the fact that there is no developed water front/water access park for West Bath residents. Such a park could have picnic facilities, playground and playing fields for volleyball, etc., and perhaps a boat landing (instead of or in addition to just a launch ramp) for tie-ups for visiting boaters. Perhaps a small restaurant/convenience store and refueling facility would be considered appropriate.

Smaller neighborhood parks as a focal point for discrete neighborhoods may also be a continuing concern in town. The nucleus for a North End community park exists at the Elementary School site. The traditional coastal cottage colonies, such as at Sabino Cove, offer coastal neighborhood parks. If new large-scale residential subdivisions occur in the 21st Century, clustering provisions could be used to create small neighborhood parks for these developments. Otherwise, it is likely the Town would need to buy parcels in order to create neighborhood parks.

Lack of public access to the upper New Meadows River and to Winnegance Pond, other than from road right-of-ways, are also cited as ongoing concerns. These may be only the most prominent coastal areas in Town that could benefit from formal town access to complement traditional informal accesses. Other coastal areas may be the lower New Meadows River, Fosters Point, Mountain Road Point and Birch Point.

Goal: Offer recreational programs and opportunities appealing to a diverse (age, gender, interest, income) population that will encourage community spirit and cohesiveness.

Policy: Utilize the West Bath Elementary School as a focal point and destination for the community for recreational use and education.

Implementation:

- Change the School's zoning from 'residential' to 'mixed use/ Low impact business' for easier transition if regionalization occurs that results in the School no longer being used for elementary education in the future.
- Obtain an inventory of indoor and outdoor recreation spaces within the School and space allocation schedules for use of the facility by the Town's citizens: Recreational (basketball pick-up games, aerobic classes, football, soccer, indoor walking in winter, dance classes, art classes, etc.) and Educational (adult ed, babysitting, chess club, etc).

Policy: Create a West Bath park system within a town-wide open space plan.

Implementation:

- Create a "Recreation Committee" to facilitate and spearhead a "recreation department" and "park system," composed of a least one member representing the School Board.
- Use communication outlets available to communicate recreational activities (i.e.; local cable channel, town web page and press releases to local papers: Times Record, Coastal Journal).
- Utilize town assets and committees that are already established: i.e.; Elementary School, boat landings, Audubon Trail, the Harbor & Waterways Committee, WINS Committee (West Bath Innovative Neighborhood Solutions) and West Bath Historical Society, etc.

Goal: Continue to support and develop new relationships with local and regional recreational facilities and programs for use by the community.

Policy: Continue relationships with Patten Free Library, Bath YMCA and develop new relationships with the surrounding town's recreation departments where applicable.

Implementation:

- Communicate with the Bath Country Club, Bowdoin College, the Sebasco Resort and Brunswick Navel Air Station, etc., for possible use of their facilities.
- Work with the State and the towns of Bath and Brunswick to continue the Route One Bike Path through West Bath to Bath along the highway and/or New Meadows River.

Goal: Enhance outdoor recreation opportunities for the Town's citizens consistent with the rural character of the Town.

Policy: Update existing and develop new outdoor facilities.

Implementation:

- Acquire parking at the Sabino boat landing and consider purchase/development of new landings at Winnegance Bay and Birch Point.
- Communicate with local businesses and landowners about easements, tax incentives and Maine's liability law provided to property owners who allow recreational use of their land by the public.
- Take advantage of low-cost opportunities for grants and encourage land trusts and private donations to the Town through tax incentives to create the West Bath Park System.
- Amend the Open Space Tax Program to include lands used for recreational-type agricultural purposes, i.e. large-scale personal vegetable/ fruit/ flowers production with the option for some road-side selling to the public.

Goal: Create open/park space for the Town's citizens to use and enjoy.

Policy: Develop trails (walking, hiking, cross country, ATV, snowmobile), fields (baseball, football, soccer, ice skating), tennis courts, sledding areas and open space for concerts, performances, and community gardens.

Implementation:

- Work with town of Bath on the possibility of a shared park at the Wings Farm, Winnegance Bay or other suitable shared boundary lines.
- Take an inventory of all town owned land and set aside a percentage for the West Bath Park System.
- Create an "adoption agency" for maintenance of newly created facilities and open spaces; on the likes of Adopt-A-Highway or Adopt-A-Bike path, etc.. These can be local committees, individuals or school children. Sell sponsorships for new facilities. The sponsor would take care of or possibly donate land, etc., in exchange for recognition by a sign or having the facility named after them.

Policy: Take advantage of economic opportunities to enjoy the Town's undeveloped areas.

Implementation:

- Establish "open space impact fee" paid by developers of all non-residential and residential developments under 10 acres which do not set-aside open space as part of the project; and impact fees on all individual persons purchasing a building permit in Town.
- Establish "open space acquisition program" that uses the open space impact fees to purchase land or easements to be used for newly created West Bath Park System.
- Establish "open space creation policy" that requires all new developments or subdivisions over a certain size or housing complexes with more than a certain number of dwelling units to set aside a portion for permanent open/park space.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan depicts spatially the Town's land use policies in the form of land use areas on the Future Land Use Map. The Map shows the desired pattern of land uses in 2015; it builds upon the zoning districts in place in 2005. State law requires that municipal zoning ordinances be based upon a municipal comprehensive plan. The Future Land Use Plan and Map is the basis for recommended zoning changes.

GENERAL PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT IN 2015

The West Bath Future Land Use Map incorporates the broad principles of the Visioning Session and the Goals and Policies of this Comprehensive Plan as guidelines for managing future land use trends impinging upon the Town. In 2015 the West Bath land use pattern should reflect the following principles.

1. West Bath should remain a rural town by conserving the bayside portion south of State Road for open space, town parkland, shoreline access, passive outdoor recreation, agriculture, forestry, historic farms and farmland and low density, primarily single-family housing. The only exception would be moderate-density elderly housing complexes where public or innovative on-site communal wastewater systems could be proved to function properly. The only commercial activities would be home occupations, agriculture and farm stands, aquaculture, forestry, non-profit recreational country clubs, scientific, educational or nature study facilities and possibly water-dependent uses such as a marina or aquaculture docks and landings.
2. In order to be a rural town and not merely a rural suburb, there should be a modest town focal point or points that provide a sense of West Bath identity by allowing for some employment, shopping and public facilities such as a community building in a central place. Accordingly, the north-end of Town, north of State Road up to New Route One, should evolve into a mixed-use area that can accommodate village-scale uses such as municipal buildings, modestly-sized retail and service businesses, light commercial, research & development facilities and the like. This mixed-use zone would be the primary area for accommodating multi-unit housing for both families, elderly and for assisted living arrangements. It would be the principal area for accommodating affordable housing in the community. If the allowable densities of buildings were less than one-half acre, then some form of community sewage collection and disposal would be required.
3. North of Route One the existing rural residential (3 acre) and residential (2 acre) areas would remain. Except the area along New Meadow Road would be connected to the mixed-use area along State Road. This could allow (if there were public sewerage) an appropriate building density for a mixed-use neighborhood center to evolve around the Elementary School and Green Acres Apartments on New Meadows Road to serve the north-end residents.
4. The Wing Farm area, zoned 'Urban Development Park' would remain the primary area for campus-style office, business or research & development park or for a higher-rise hotel if public sewer were introduced to this area. At present, there is only vehicular access to Wing Farm from Bath.
5. In order to accommodate a mixed-use zone and the Wing Farm urban development park zone, extension of the Bath Water District public water supply service area would be needed. To accommodate the wastewater needs of a more dense mixed-use zone, public sewage collection

would need to be provided to the State Road, New Meadows Road and Fosters Point Road areas. A 1997 Study shows the possibilities of extending the Bath sewer system out through Wing Farm to State Road or, alternatively, the development of a self-owned West Bath sewer system. Further deliberations would be needed to work out the most cost-effective and politically feasible way to provide a public sewer system in Town. The major issue is that in order to afford a public sewer along State Road, New Meadows Road and Fosters Point Road, there would need to be high enough density to pay for it. If the Town does not choose to allow higher densities in the proposed Mixed Use Zone (old Business/Commercial Zone), then it is likely that a public sewer would not be financially cost-effective. Without public sewer, there could still be a mixed use zone with a wider array of permitted uses than in the existing Business/Commercial Zone, but remaining at the existing density of one building per acre.

6. In order to fully benefit from public water and sewer services, if approved by town_meeting, a transition zone would be located south of State Road between the mixed use zone and the residential zone to the south. This would provide a smooth transition between the more developed and the more rural parts of town. Four-plex housing (but not any commercial uses) would be permitted in this transition zone by connection to the public sewer system and would be located on roads that connect directly to State Road. This would be part of a town affordable housing strategy. The transition zone would also extend down Fosters Point Road to the Town Hall and over to King's Point to serve the dense cottage colony there. This should provide real environmental benefits to the New Meadows River for shellfishing, aquaculture and recreation.
7. The entire south-end of town including Foster's Point, Back Cove, Mill Cove, Dam Cove, Sabino, Birch Point and Brigham's Cove areas will continue to be a mixture of low-density, primarily single-family housing, historic farms and cottage colonies, fields and interior forested open spaces. While the shoreline will have more retiree and vacation homes, State law (as of 2005) will protect the remaining commercial fishermen's properties. It is recommended that the Town secure additional shoreside mini-parks, boat landing enhancements including parking, perhaps a town dock/marina and functioning informal pedestrian accesses to the shoreline for clambers, birders and nature lovers.
8. The existing resource protection areas around inland ponds and wetlands and the shoreland overlay zones along streams and the entire saltwater shoreline will remain protected. Study of critical natural resources, wildlife habitat areas and wildlife corridors from the State Planning Office's 'Beginning With Habitat' Maps will be undertaken to determine if any additional resource protection areas should be put to town meeting vote for protection.

GROWTH AREAS

The State Growth Management program requires that municipal comprehensive plans show planned growth areas, rural areas and transitional areas. The recommended growth, rural and transitional areas in town are presented below based upon both proposed new zoning districts and continuation of existing ones with and without recommended modifications.

The Growth Area is located on the north side of town around State Road, New Meadows Road and Fosters Point Road and includes the following zoning districts.

Village Mixed Use Zone

Status: Proposed

Purpose: Provide community center area for municipal buildings, business, commercial, office, research, retail uses, multi-family, affordable and elderly housing.

There should be a buffer strip (e.g. 50 feet wide) required on all lots abutting Route One to shield Route One from any signage or views of backs of buildings, other structures, equipment, vehicles, etc. in the back yards of properties. Conversely, the buffer strip would shield West Bath properties from viewing by Route One vehicles and from highway noise, fumes and headlight glare.

Location: North-end. Encompasses existing Business/ Commercial Zone along State Road and New Meadows Road and proposed to extend to the Elementary School - Green Meadows Apartments - Sanford Road intersection area to enable a mixed-use neighborhood center.

Land Uses: All existing Business/ Commercial permitted uses plus light industrial, retail, multi-unit residential, affordable housing and elderly housing complexes

Because there are a number of wetlands on either side of State Road, study should be done to determine a final configuration of the proposed Mixed Use Zone to avoid, where possible, such non-buildable areas. Also, study should be done to separate and buffer established residential enclaves in the State Road, New Meadows Road and Foster's Point Road areas that would not want to be part of an expanded Mixed Use Zone.

Consider requiring a landscaping & permanent maintenance plan as part of any newly approved or substantively amended commercial use in the Mixed Use Zone.

Utilities: Public water system; proposed public sewer system.

Density: Existing (Business/ Commercial Zone) - one acre. Proposed for consideration if town meeting approves a public sewer, higher density: such as, for example, eight dwelling units for multi-unit buildings or complexes per acre; and 10,000 square foot minimum lot size for single-family or duplex houses and for individual businesses and institutional uses, or other appropriate minimum lot size and density. If higher densities became possible, then changing frontage and building setbacks, as appropriate, should be considered for the Mixed Use Zone.

Urban Development Park Zone - Wing Farm

Status: Existing, except new public sewer would allow campus style office, business and research & development parks and higher-rise hotels.

Purpose: Provide area where urban and commercial land uses could locate in a campus-like setting.

Location: North-end. Along Bath Town Line north of Route One adjacent to a Bath sewer line; vehicular accessibility only from Bath

Land Uses: Full range of residential, multi-family, mobile home park uses and commercial uses similar to the Mixed-Use and Mobile Home Park Overlay Zones. Available to be considered for campus style office, business and research & development park uses.

Utilities: None, but adjacent to Bath public water supply and public sewer system.

Density: 20,000 square feet for residential uses; 1 acre for all other uses. If public sewer were provided, higher densities could be considered.

Mobile Home Overlay Zone

Status: Existing, except if new public sewer were provided, it would allow for higher density.

Purpose: Full range of mixed-uses. Affordable housing is encouraged in this zone, especially if a public sewer system resulted in lower cost lots of less than 20,000 square feet size.

Location: North-End. Abuts north side of State Road at Bath Town Line

Land Uses: Full range of residential, commercial and institutional uses similar to the Mixed-Use Zone, plus mobile home parks

Utilities: Bath Water District public water supply. Would likely be part of a public sewer service area in the event a public sewer was installed in Town.

Density: Existing - one acre; but with public sewer, minimum sized lots could be less than one-half acre, e.g. 5,000 square feet (for mobile homes in parks) or 10,000 square feet for other principal uses, or some other suitable densities.

Special Industrial & Transportation Overlay Zone

Status: Existing. Is a sub-area of the proposed Mixed Use Zone (existing Business/ Commercial Zone).

Purpose: Special areas set aside for bulk transportation-related facilities and operation of bulk storage facilities for materials including hazardous substances.

Locations: Three specific areas with direct access to State Rd., New Meadows Rd. and Fosters Point Rd. (all near the 4-Corners/ State Rd. intersection) within the Mixed Use Zone.

Land Uses: Trucking and freight terminals, bulk petroleum and propane facilities, gas stations and the management of bulk hazardous materials in addition to the range of commercial and residential uses permitted in the underlying Mixed-use Zone. Special provisions for isolating and screening the transportation and bulk materials uses for the safety of land uses on adjacent lots. Hazardous materials subject to regulations in the West Bath Development Review Ordinance (Article 14.7).

Utilities: Public water system; proposed public sewer system.

Density: Existing – one-acre minimum lot size. Not proposed to be changed unless further study reveals that public safety and aesthetic screening could be maintained on lots less than one acre.

TRANSITIONAL AREAS

Transitional areas provide a buffer between the more dense mixed-use residential, institutional and commercial Growth Area and the surrounding lower density Rural Areas. The proposed Transitional

Zoning District would allow all the land uses of the Residential Zone but at higher densities if public water and sewer were provided. If so, this would create a surrounding village-scale residential area around the community center including opportunities for some moderate density multi-unit housing.

The proposed Historic District Overlay District would allow some hitherto historic residential and farm buildings the opportunity to be used for institutional and educational purposes to help afford their upkeep as historic artifacts contributing to the town's character.

Transitional Zone

Status: Proposed. Only possible if public sewer were made available. If not, then the existing Residential Zone should remain.

Purpose: Provide intermediate density between the Village Mixed Use Zone and the Residential Zone. Same land uses permitted as in the Residential Zone with the addition of multi-units and elderly housing complexes. Study is recommended on whether to allow a maximum of 4-plex or 8-plex multi-unit housing per acre.

Location: Along the southern boarder of the new Mixed Use Zone (existing Business/ Commercial Zone) and down New Meadows Road to Kings Point Road.

Land Uses: All existing permitted uses of the Residential Zone uses plus multi-unit residential housing and elderly housing complexes.

Utilities: Proposed public water system; proposed public sewer system.

Density: Proposed higher density based on presence of public water and sewer services; four buildings or dwelling-units per acre, 10,000 square feet minimum lot size. Consideration of multi-unit housing of up to 8 units per acre to extend the 8-plexes recommended in the adjacent Mixed-Use Zone out into the Transitional Zone.

Historic District Overlay Zone

Status: Proposed.

Purpose: To protect the external architectural features of historic buildings to maintain the Town's heritage and sense of individuality. Consider whether historic designation would be mandatory or voluntary for owners of historic buildings. Owner acceptance of historic designation would enable (appropriate) non-residential, e.g. non-profit institutional or educational, uses of hitherto residential and farm buildings.

Locations: Proposed (but not necessarily) to cover all National Register or National Register-eligible historic properties in the entire town: found mainly along portions of Berry's' Mill Road, New Meadows Road, lower Fosters Point Road, possibly other areas. For National Register or National Register eligible structures, the overlay zone would protect external historic features. The right to change the interior of designated buildings would remain with the owner.

Land Uses: Same as underlying zone, but should also permit non-profit institutional uses such as for museum, educational, arts-related or community buildings so that historic buildings could be used for these purposes within otherwise residential areas.

Utilities: Same as underlying zone.

Density: Same as underlying zone, except that non-residential uses of designated historic buildings could retain the same minimum lot size as neighboring single-family houses if reasonable parking accommodation can be achieved on-site at the historic building or nearby.

RURAL AREAS

Rural areas in 2015 would preserve the Town's historic rural character by a variety of means and incentives to maintain existing open spaces on the shore, on historic farmlands and in large internal blocks of forested land. The existing larger lot zoning of 2 and 3 acres would be continued but with the requirement for new subdivisions to either be clustered and to permanently preserve a portion in open space or to provide a fee for the Town to purchase critical wildlife habitat or recreational open space elsewhere in town. Review and amendment, as appropriate, of the Land Use Ordinance and the Development Review Ordinance (Article 10.8) would be needed if the choice between cluster subdivisions or paying into an open space fee system is to be made mandatory. Consideration may be given to allowing additional houses in new subdivisions if more than the minimum open space is preserved (and sewage disposal is proved reliable). Town purchase of critical wildlife habitats, shoreland or easements thereto, along with cooperation with a land trust in conservation purchases and easements would be undertaken. Historic district designation (perhaps voluntary by landowner) of historic farms plus encouragement for placement of forest land into the Tree Growth Tax abatement program and working farms into the Open Space Tax abatement program should be pursued. The Town should study how taxes might be abated for individual property owners who place, in cooperation with the Town, conservation easements or recreational access easements on their land for townspeople use. A fee system for new subdivisions in lieu of providing permanently deeded open space, will be considered; and an impact fee for individual house and commercial buildings will be considered for being put into place to collect money for a town open space/ recreation fund. The 'Beginning With Habitat' maps will be studied to see if any additional land in town should be zoned 'resource protection.' Other methods for open space preservation may also be studied including transfer of development rights.

Old town roads, such as the old 'County Road,' used currently only by walkers and snowmobilers, should be considered by the Planning Board to be incorporated by subdivision applications in which they are located, for upgrading to present-day subdivision road standards. This may help in providing local vehicular circulation and local road inter-connectivity.

Residential Zone

Status: Existing.

Purpose: Maintenance of existing rural character in already somewhat built-up areas along existing roads and shoreline areas. Proposed that new subdivisions be required to be clustered and permanent open space dedicated or a fee be paid in-lieu-of-dedicated-open space to a town critical habitats/open space purchase fund.

Locations: South of State Road (where some of the land nearest State Road may be put into the proposed new Transitional Zone); up New Meadows Road; down Fosters Point Road on the New Meadow River side; and around Winnegance Pond in the south-end of Town.

Study is recommended on whether to change the land along the shoreside of Fosters Point Road south of King's Point Road from the Residential Zone (2 acre minimum lot size) to the Rural Residential Zone (3 acre minimum lot size). Issues to be addressed concern how to balance the landowner's ability to subdivide one's land versus the environmental benefits of fewer houses along the shoreline of the New Meadows River.

Land Uses: Existing. Single-family and duplex residential uses (no multi-family) and traditional rural uses concerning passive recreation, resource utilization including farming, forestry, fishing and aquaculture. Commercial uses are prohibited except for home occupations and home day-care (8 or less).

Utilities: On-site water and sewage disposal. Study is recommended on new communal wastewater treatment/disposal systems as to their permit-ability for clustered subdivisions. Review and consider amending, as appropriate, the Development Review Ordinance, Article 10.5.C.

Density: Existing. Two-acre minimum lot size with individual on-site septic system; one-acre minimum with a "municipal" wastewater system. Allow clustered houses in cluster subdivisions on approved single or multi-user wastewater systems to have reduced house lots of 1 acre. Continue (or change as appropriate due to new technologies being accepted by the State such as 'septi-tech' so called and others) the requirement for a back-up multi-user septic system for all primary multi-user septic systems. The definition of cluster subdivision herein is single or double family houses on 1 acre lots that have been reduced from 2 acres. The land not included within the clustered lots would be required to be common open space owned by a homeowner's association, the Town or an approved land trust.

Rural Residential Zone

Status: Existing.

Purpose: Maintenance of existing rural character in the sparsely populated historic farming areas and the large undeveloped blocks of forested land in the road-less interior. Proposed that new subdivisions be required to be clustered and permanent open space be dedicated.

Locations: North End. North of Route One, east of New Meadows Creek and west of Bath town line
South End. Entire interior portions of the southern part of Town south of State Road

Land Uses: Existing. Single-family and duplex residential uses (no multi-family) and traditional rural uses concerning passive recreation, resource utilization including farming, forestry, fishing and aquaculture. Commercial uses prohibited except for farm stands, veterinary shops, home occupations and home day-care (8 or less).

Utilities: On-site water and sewage disposal. Study is recommended on new multi-user wastewater treatment/disposal systems as to their permit-ability for clustered subdivisions.

Density: Existing. Three-acre minimum lot size with individual on-site septic system. Allow clustered houses in cluster subdivisions on approved single or multi-user wastewater systems (Development Review Ordinance, Article 10.5.C) to have reduced house lots down to one acre (see definition of cluster subdivision above). Continue (or change as appropriate due to new technologies being accepted by the State) the requirement for a

back-up multi-user septic system for all primary multi-user septic systems.

High Density Shoreland

Status: Existing. Remain the same.

Purpose: Preservation of the historic cottage colonies on the shoreline.

Locations: Bull Rock, King's Point, Rockhaven, Fosters Point, Sabino, Birch Point, Brighams and Shoal Coves.

Land Uses: Existing. Single-family and duplex residential uses (no multi-family), passive recreation, resource utilization including agriculture, orchards, horticulture forestry, fishing and aquaculture. Commercial uses prohibited except for home occupations and home day-care (8 or less).

Utilities: On-site individual water and sewage septic systems. Old overboard wastewater discharge systems (OBDs) are being replaced, since the mid-1990s through a joint Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Town program, with new on-site individual and off-site multi-user septic systems.

Density: 30,000 square feet minimum lot size. Consider enlarging the minimum lot size to one acre (40,000 square feet) or larger if significant difficulties persist in finding suitable septic leachfield sites. And/or, consider allowing off-site leachfield sites, where appropriate.

Shoreland Overlay Zone

Status: Existing. Remain the same. But may be amended, as appropriate, to remain in conformance with any changes in the State model shoreland ordinance.

Purpose: Protect the shoreline, shellfish beds, coastal waters and freshwater ponds, wetlands and streams in Town from pollution, environmental degradation and to maintain environmental quality.

Locations: Land within 250 feet of the entire coastal shoreline in Town; land 250 feet from the freshwater wetlands and ponds including Mill / Whiskeag Pond, Campbell and Winnegance Ponds; land 75 feet from the stream running from Campbell Pond to Dam Cove and Back Cove Creek.

Land Uses: All uses permitted in the underlying zoning districts, but subject to shoreland zone performance standards.

Utilities: The water and sewer systems available in the underlying zoning districts.

Density: The minimum lot size of the underlying zone except lots abutting a pond, river or stream must have at least 200-foot frontage on the water.

Resource Protection Overlay Zone

Status: Existing. But may be amended, as appropriate, to remain in conformance with any changes in the State resource protection regulations. There may also be additions to Resource Protection areas due to application of 'Beginning With Habitat' maps.

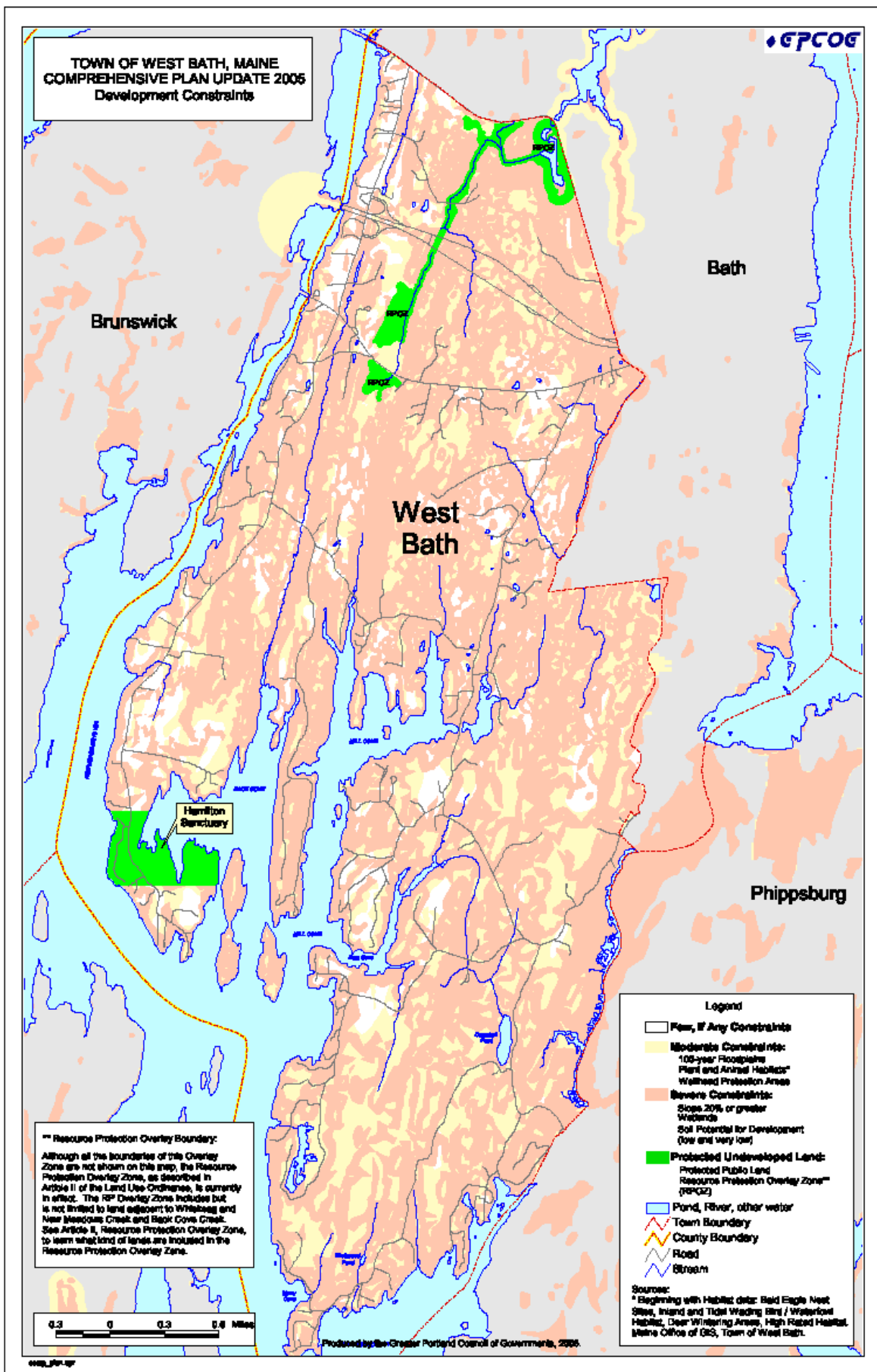
Purpose: Protection of important wildlife habitats, high value wetlands for environmental quality maintenance.

Locations: Mill/ Whiskeag Pond, New Meadows Creek wetland; unconnected wetlands of two or more acres; one located near State Road; areas within the Shoreland Overlay Zone with slopes over 20%.

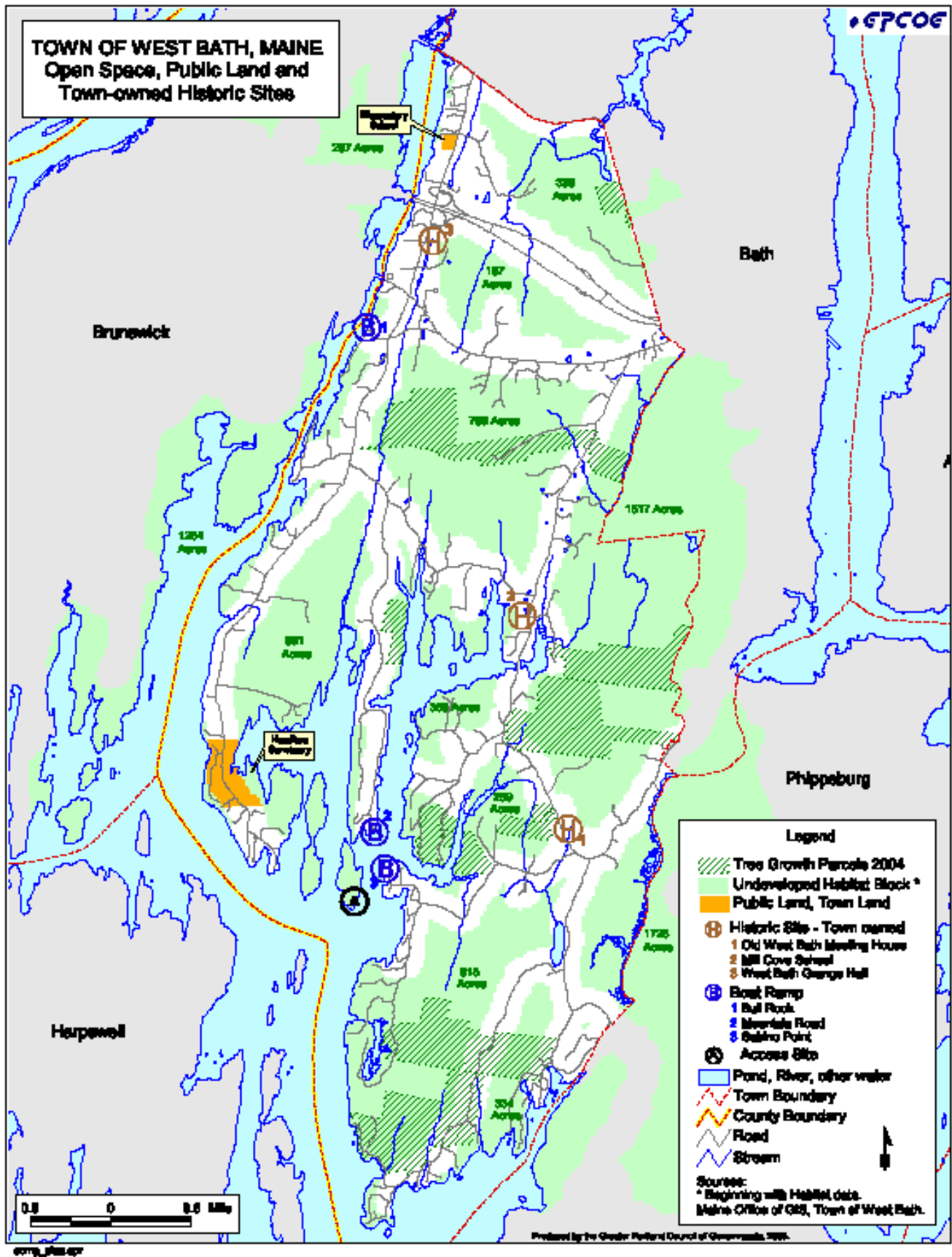
Land Uses: Passive recreation, individual campsites, small scientific, research or educational facilities.

Utilities: None, except to serve an approved scientific, research or educational facility. Electric utilities and other utilities, as already permitted, may continue.

Density: Similar to the Shoreland Overlay Zone.



A larger version of this map is available at the West Bath Town Office.



A larger version of this map is available at the West Bath Town Office.

TOWN OF WEST BATH

Comprehensive Plan Update 2005

Future Land Use

Maple Pond water quality requires protective support system and controls in Great Pond watershed. West Bath has two Great Pond Catchment Ponds and Mitigation Pond. Although Mitigation Pond is legally classified as a Great Pond, it also receives total phosphorus and water quality is poor. According to the latest DEP report of the water quality program, which enter the pond from runoff are observed by the extensive algae growth along the pond and on an adjacent 1.5 acre pond. In addition, the boundaries of the pond's water quality controls are unclear. For these reasons, the Town will not require phosphorus support system or controls in the Mitigation Pond.

TRANSITIONAL AREA

The depiction of the Resource Overlay Zone on the Town of West Bath Land Use Ordinance District and Overlay Zone Map is merely illustrative of the general location. The boundaries of the Resource Overlay Zone shall be determined on the ground by measurement from the normal high-water line of the water body or the natural edge of a wetland, whichever is the location of the boundary shown on the map.

GROWTH AREAS

Larger scale land uses of shopping and office uses in West Bath, Kings Point, Robinson, Powers Point, Barks, Birch Point and Baginny and Great Cove are shown on the map as a large format version of the map on file at the West Bath Town Office.

RURAL AREA

GROWTH AREA

Map Zones:

- MLU Mixed Use
- EBPZ Enterprise Porter Business / Commercial Zone

Overlay Zones:

- UD Urban Development
- MHPZ Mobile Home Park Overlay Zone
- STPZ Special Industrial and Transportation Overlay Zone

TRANSITIONAL AREA

Map Zone:

- T Transitional

RURAL AREA

Overlay Zones:

- R Residential
- RRL Rural Residential
- HDX High Density Shoreland
- SOZ Shoreland Overlay Zone
- RPOZ Resource Protection Overlay Zone

Features:

- Great Pond
- Wetland
- Water

..... Great Pond Water Shoreline

Produced by the Greater Portland Council of Governments, 2005.

Maple Pond Land Use Map

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following implementation strategy organizes the implementation recommendations of the Goals and Policies and Future Land Use Sections into actions that, if taken over the years to 2015, would translate the Plan into reality.

The Implementation strategy sequences the various implementation measures into logical steps so that initial actions are followed by subsequent actions that depend upon previous ones. A town board or committee is assigned primary responsibility for each implementation action.

- Immediate Actions - Initial steps for administering the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Ongoing Actions – Endorsement, strengthening and continuance of actions already being done that conform to this 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Short-Term Actions (1-2 years) - Initial steps in implementing the Plan. These should be started right away.
- Mid-Term Actions (3-5 years) - Follow -up steps to initial steps in implementing the Plan.
- Long-Term Actions (6-10 years) - Long lead-time projects that may depend upon previous actions having been accomplished.

The Plan recommends that an Implementation Oversight Committee be chartered by the Selectmen with the authority to assign and oversee various town board's and committee's work on the implementation actions. The Oversight Committee itself is responsible for administering this Implementation Strategy by using it as a guide in detailing projects, assigning responsible parties and following up on progress. Most of the Action projects are regulatory or programmatic, but some entail expenditure of town funds for studies or consultants that would need to be considered when scheduling them. Capital projects entailing large sums of money, mostly long-term projects, are listed in the Capital Investment Table in the CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN Chapter.

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
<u>MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT</u> Town Administration		
Immediate (initiate within 30 days)	Establish an Implementation Oversight Committee, under the direction of the Selectmen, to provide for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan over a ten-year period with the authority to task appropriate committees and town staff.	Selectmen Town Meeting
Immediate (within 30 days)	Publish a schedule of existing fines and other penalties for violation of the town ordinances.	Selectmen

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Ongoing	Brief the Selectmen monthly with progress reports on the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.	Oversight Committee
Ongoing	Continue the quarterly committee chair meetings. Review and reorganize tasking for town committees to eliminate duplication of services. Explore ways to reduce duplication of actions that work at cross purposes with other towns, agencies, and jurisdictions.	Oversight Committee
Ongoing	Review and adjust fees annually at town meeting for Codes Enforcement, Planning Board applications, and Board of Appeals applications to off-set costs for codes enforcement and decrease general fund reliance for Planning Board and Board of Appeals review.	Selectmen Town Meeting
Short-Term (1-2 years)	Develop job descriptions for the qualifications and responsibilities of Codes Enforcement Officers and clerical support for town committees as a guide for the performance of their duties.	Town Administrator
Short-Term	Establish dedicated clerical support for Codes Enforcement, Planning Board, Board of Appeals and other town committees and boards.	Selectmen Town Meeting
Short-Term And Ongoing	Produce an all ordinance booklet, and keep updated, for sale to the public to complement the existing published land use ordinances available to the public.	Selectmen Town Administrator
Short-Term	Increase hours for Codes Enforcement to a full time or full-time equivalent position or study the appropriateness of a regional Code's Compliance Officer for plumbing, building, and electrical codes.	Selectmen Town Meeting

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Short-Term	Provide information and point of contact services for interested citizens and applicants to various boards to encourage informed participation at the appropriate meetings.	Town Administrator
Short-Term	Develop and utilize resources, e.g. ‘Beginning With Habitat’ maps, to enable the Planning Board to improve its review of projects with respect to the Comprehensive Plan, other plans, ordinances, standards and references.	Planning Board
<u>GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT</u> Land Use Regulation		
Ongoing	Continue development of a Business Committee made up of town volunteers to encourage village-scale business growth along State Road and in the Route One area.	Selectmen
Ongoing	Enforce West Bath Land Use and Development Review Ordinances for road access, setback, parking, lot lines, curb cuts, open space, cluster development and buffering requirements as they pertain to businesses.	Planning Board
Ongoing	Maintain open spaces and other scenic vistas by strictly enforcing existing densities in the Residential and Rural Residential Zones.	Planning Board
Ongoing	Enforce West Bath Land Use Ordinances and Development Review Ordinances for road access, setback, parking, lot lines, curb cuts, open space, cluster development and buffering requirements as they pertain to residential development.	Planning Board
Ongoing	Inform subdivision applicants of new technologies in septic systems which would facilitate a cluster type development.	Planning Board

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Ongoing	Encourage home occupations which do not change the character of the neighborhood in terms of appearance, noise environment, light pollution, business type, and traffic volume and frequency.	Planning Board
Ongoing	In rural residential areas maintain the limit on permitted land uses to single family residences, agriculture, horticulture, silva-culture, roadside stands for products grown on premises, and aquaculture.	Planning Board
Short-term (1-2 years)	Create a mixed use Mixed Use Zone as a town center along State Road and extending out to Route One.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Short-term	Rewrite Town ordinances to allow mixed uses, higher densities and a diverse range of commercial uses in the new Mixed Use Zone. Densities could only be increased if the Town chose a public sewer system.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Short-term	Require professional landscaping plans and landscaping maintenance plans as part of Planning Board approval for Mixed Use Zone businesses.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Short-term	Require professional landscaping plans and landscaping maintenance plans as part of Planning Board approval for Mixed Use Zone businesses.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Short-term	Require that new commercial or industrial developments within the Mixed Use Zone retain a majority of their present road frontage and side lot line length as vegetated buffer strips with a minimum depth of 20 feet.	Planning Board Town Meeting

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Short-term	Encourage proposed commercial developments in the Mixed Use Zone to locate their parking areas alongside or behind buildings, to share access points from the highway and to preserve sections of their frontage as undeveloped open space by offering incentives such as reduced frontage, minimum lot sizes and/or setbacks.	Planning Board
Short-term	Require that subdivision development in the rural residential zone either be cluster type development with Town Meeting permanent open space or the sub-divider pays a fee in lieu of clustering into a critical wildlife habitat/recreational open space fund.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Short-term	Review the Resource Protection Zone and Zoning map to facilitate protection of sensitive areas and continue to strictly regulate development in conservation areas and fragile environments e.g. wetland, deer yards and vernal pools. Require well and septic plans for subdivision approval.	Planning Board
Mid-term (4-6 years)	Create a buffering Transition Zone between the Mixed Use Zone and the Residential/Rural Residential Zones to the south of the new Mixed Use Zone, but only if public sewer becomes available.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Mid-term	Work with the Maine Department of Transportation and local municipalities in development of the Route One Gate Way project.	Oversight Committee Planning Board
Mid-term	Require that all new municipal facilities be located in the Mixed Use Zone.	Planning Board Selectmen Town Meeting
Mid-term	Encourage open space preservation through conservation easements, view easements and town-acquired property.	Planning Board Selectmen Recreation Committee

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Mid-term	Write an Ordinance to require sub-dividers of major projects to pay into a fee-in-lieu-of preserving-open space fund or impact fees to be used by the Town to purchase open space areas for the benefit of West Bath citizens. A capital investment plan is a required prerequisite to an impact fee ordinance. A Town open space plan would be a prerequisite to a wildlife habitat/open space fund.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Long-term (6-10 years)	Explore and perhaps establish a public sewage system for the Mixed Use Zone to serve higher densities of businesses and residences.	Infrastructure Committee Selectmen Town Meeting
On-going	Planning Board and CEO report to the Board of Selectmen on the number, type and location of new development permits annually. By 2010, if more than 35% of new residences have gone into Rural Areas, reexamine the Land Use Ordinances and propose bolder revisions to redirect a lesser percentage into Rural Areas.	Planning Board Codes Enfrcmnt Offcr
<u>HOUSING</u>		
Ongoing	Continue to allow elderly housing facilities as a permittable use in all areas of town.	Planning Board
Mid-term (3-6 years)	Pursue community development block grants for public sewage system to develop higher density affordable housing in the Mixed Use Zone if the Town chooses to pursue acquiring a public sewer.	Infrastructure Committee Selectmen Planning Board Town Meeting
Long-term (6-10 years)	Enhance and support the development of higher density affordable housing within the Mixed Use Zone if public water and sewer systems are provided.	Planning Board Selectmen
Long-term	Provide housing and services for the elderly by encouraging the opportunity for small scale retirement housing projects.	Planning Board Selectmen

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Long-term	Cooperate with neighboring municipalities to support through local and regional sources public services and opportunity for private services for higher density affordable housing. Authorize funding at town meeting as may be appropriate for elderly housing.	Selectmen Town Meeting

LOCAL ECONOMY

Mid-term (3-5 years)	Adopt a liberal interpretation of “home occupation” as long as it complies with the appropriate zoning requirements and does not alter the character of the neighborhood.	Planning Board
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Long-term (6-10 years)	Aggressively support light industry and commerce within the Mixed Use Zone, Wing Farm and home occupations in the residential and rural residential zones.	Planning Board
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Long-term	Study and explore alternative long-term investment strategies for a possible public sewage system in the Mixed Use Zone and at, or through, Wing Farm by grants and/or cooperation with neighboring municipalities.	Infrastructure Committee Selectmen Town Meeting
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PUBLIC WORKS and SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Ongoing	Continue publication of informational guides that explain the costs associated with waste disposal and the potential savings associated with waste reduction and increased recycling. Particular emphasis will be placed on the environmental and personal benefits of reducing purchases of non-recyclable goods.	Recycling Committee
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<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Short-term (1-2 years)	Use incentives to stimulate more recycling. Study methods used by other towns to encourage recycling.	Recycling Committee
Short-term	Consider methods for monitoring the improper disposal of waste that should be recycled such as appliances tossed in the woods.	Recycling Committee
Mid-term (3-5 years)	Research the merits of creating a town composting program and possibly implement.	Recycling Committee Town Meeting
<u>PUBLIC SAFETY</u>		
Ongoing	Maintain communication with neighboring municipalities and state agencies with regard to provision of services such as police, marine warden, codes enforcement, animal control and other first responder services.	Selectmen Town Administrator
Ongoing	Encourage citizen volunteer emergency and other first responder services where appropriate.	Town Administrator
Ongoing	Continue to explore methods to generate revenue through grants or activities such as an ambulance service to offset equipment costs for emergency services.	Town Administrator Selectmen Town Meeting
Short-term (1-2 years)	Monitor emergency medical and other first responder services on a quarterly basis to provide for adequate coverage in the future.	Selectmen
Short-term	Provide a high level of inter-municipal coordination through communication with neighboring municipalities and state agencies to facilitate efficient provision of services to the citizens of West Bath and to address areas of inter-local and regional concern.	Town Administrator Selectmen

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Short-term	Inter-municipal coordination shall be considered a standard element of all West Bath governmental decision-making as a way to reduce costs to the citizens of West Bath.	Selectmen

EDUCATION

Ongoing	The physical plant of the West Bath School shall be maintained in order to support its educational programs and to meet current building and handicap codes. The School Board shall examine cost-effective ways to comply with various state and federal requirements to meet current building and handicap codes.	School Board
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Ongoing	A rolling five-year plan to address facility, educational programs and administrative needs will be submitted annually to the Selectmen by the School Board.	School Board
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Short-term (1-2 years)	The Town Recreation Committee shall work with the School Board to utilize the West Bath School facilities for programs to address the adult and children's recreational needs and adult educational needs.	Recreation Committee School Board
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WATER RESOURCES

Short-term	Identify and map areas at risk from water pollution such as but not limited to sensitive soil types, contamination, shoreline, wetlands, vernal ponds and other sensitive areas.	Planning Board Marine Resources Board
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Mid-term (3-5 years)	Revise the Land Use and Development Ordinances to place strong restrictions on the type and size of subsurface waste disposal in identified sensitive water pollution prone areas of concern.	Planning Board Marine Resources Board Town Meeting
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<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Mid-term	Adopt strict standards in the Land Use and Development Ordinances for managing storm-water quality and quantity in new developments.	Planning Board Marine Resources Board Town Meeting
Long-term (6-10 years)	Provide resources, staff and material for the necessary level of enforcement of town ordinances that protect ground water and marine resources.	Selectmen Codes Enfrcmnt Offcr Marine Resources Board Town Meeting
Long-term	Monitor septic systems and ground water for pollution. Work to correct any identified pollution sources. Monitor ground water in the Resource Protection Zones that are within 250 feet of a subdivision.	Codes Enfrcmnt Offcr
<u>MARINE RESOURCES</u>		
Ongoing	Protect and conserve the marine environment to obtain the best possible harvesting of marine resources and to ensure that traditional marine and fishing operations and methods are allowed to continue.	Marine Resources Board
Ongoing	Require that any reconstruction of a non-conforming structure in the shoreline zone be reviewed by the Planning Board with the objective of decreasing the non-conformity.	Planning Board
Short-term (1-2 years)	Examine ways to protect working waterfronts and provide opportunities for small-scale fishing operations to better use boat ramps, anchorages, and waterways. Explore using fees generated from marine related activities to improve boat ramps including but not limited to parking.	Harbors & Waterways Planning Board Town Meeting

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Mid-term (3-5 years)	Review strict shoreline protection ordinances to ensure that the shoreline is developing in a way that protects the shoreline from over-development and does not impact traditional marine and fishing operations.	Harbors & Waterways Planning Board Town Meeting
Mid-term	Develop a town-wide recreational water use and mooring plan that will protect marine business and update the Ordinance that establishes fines to control mooring usages.	Harbors & Waterways Town Meeting
Mid-term	Work with neighboring municipalities to develop usages for harbors and waterways.	Harbors & Waterways Selectmen
Long-term (6-10 years)	Create a natural environment which encourages the establishment of new marine operations or the reestablishment of former marine operations, as permitted in the Shoreline Protection Zone.	Harbors & Waterways Planning Board
Long-term	Seek funding through grants and other sources for development and improvement of boat ramps, anchorages and waterfront parks.	Harbors & Waterways Recreation Committee Selectmen Town Meeting

CRITICAL NATURAL RESOURCES

Ongoing	Develop standards for filling, removal of soils or blasting to include volume, traffic to and from the site, and duration. Require that any permit for filling be reissued on a yearly basis after review by the Planning Board. Require that any permit for blasting is valid for only 30 days and must be reviewed by the planning board for issuance or re-issuance of that permit.	Planning Board Codes Enfrcmnt Offcr Town Meeting
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<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Ongoing	Request, as appropriate, that applications to the Planning Board present documentation from state and federal agencies such as Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Department on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission showing that there will be no impact on habitats of animals, birds, fish, plants and historic areas.	Planning Board
Mid-term (3-5 years)	Use mapping provided by Beginning with Habitat Program to identify areas vital to various plant and animal species, remaining undeveloped open spaces and to update Resource Protection Zones.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Long-term (6-10 years)	Develop strict protections for the newly identified critical habitats in the Resource Protection Zones in accordance with state and federal guidelines. But allow complementary uses in the Resource Protection Zones.	Planning Board Town Meeting

AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

Ongoing	Require documentation, as appropriate, from state and federal agencies such as Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Department on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, showing that there will be no impact on habitats of animals, birds, fish, plants and historic areas before harvesting of forest resources is permitted.	Codes Enfrcmnt Offcr Selectmen
Mid-term (3-5 years)	Using the <i>Beginning with Habitat</i> maps, identify and seek ways to preserve the large woodland parcels.	Recreation Committee Selectmen
Mid-term	Provide for small-scale forestry and agricultural operation in the Zoning Ordinance so that landowners may be encouraged to preserve their forest and agriculture land through tax incentives from the Tree Growth and Open Space Programs.	Planning Board Selectmen

HISTORIC & ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Ongoing	Support the efforts of private historic preservation groups who are protecting sites which have historic or archaeological importance.	Planning Board Recreation Committee Selectmen
Ongoing	Use the site plan review process to identify the potential impacts to sites of historic or archaeological importance. Request, as appropriate, documentation from state and federal agencies such as the Maine Historic Preservation Commission or West Bath Historical Society showing that there will be no impact on historic sites before issuance of any permits or approvals from the Planning Board. If any portion of a site has been identified as containing historic or archaeological resources, the development must include appropriate measures for protecting these resources, including, but not limited to, modification of the proposed design of the site, timing of construction, and limiting the extent of excavation.	Planning Board
Long-term (6-10 years)	Establish a historic overlay zone to protect historic sites voluntarily nominated and subsequently designated by town meeting vote in the ordinance.	Planning Board WB Historical Society Town Meeting
<u>RECREATION & OPEN SPACE</u>		
Immediate	Create a town "Recreation Committee" to facilitate and spearhead a "recreation department" and "park system," composed of a least one member representing the School Board.	Selectmen Town Administrator Town Meeting
Ongoing	Continue to provide support to regional facilities such as the Bath YMCA, the Patten Free Library, the Bath Recreation Association, the Foster M. Pratt Senior Citizens Hall and the like.	Selectmen Recreation Committee Town Meeting
Ongoing	Work with the State and the towns of Bath and Brunswick to continue the Route One Bike Path through West Bath to Bath along the highway and/or New Meadows River.	Recreation Committee Planning Board Town Meeting

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Short-term (1-2 years)	Change the School's zoning from 'residential' to 'mixed use/ Low impact business' (as part of a new Mixed-Use Zone) for easier transition if regionalization occurs in the future.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Short-term (1-2 years)	Do long-term town recreation & open space plan. Utilize town assets and committees that are already established: i.e.; Elementary School, boat landings, Audubon Trail, the Harbor & Waterways Committee, WINS Committee (West Bath Innovative Neighborhood Solutions), West Bath Historical Society, etc.	Recreation Committee WINS Committee Town Meeting
Short-term	Obtain an inventory of indoor and outdoor recreation spaces within the School and space allocation schedules for use of the facility by the Town's citizens: Recreational (basketball pick-up games, aerobic classes, football, soccer, indoor walking in winter, dance classes, art classes, etc.) and Educational (adult ed, babysitting, chess club, etc).	Recreation Committee School Board
Short-term	Take an inventory of all town owned land and set aside a percentage for the West Bath Park System.	Recreation Committee Town Meeting
Mid-term (3-5 years)	Use communication forms available to publicize recreational activities (i.e.; local cable channel, town web page and press releases to Times Record, Coastal Journal).	Recreation Committee
Mid-term	Communicate with the Bath Country Club, Bowdoin College, the Sebasco Resort and Brunswick Navel Air Station, etc., for possible use of their facilities.	Recreation Committee

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Mid-term	<p>Acquire parking at the Sabino boat landing and consider purchase/development of new landings at Winnegance Bay and Birch Point.</p> <p>Create canoe portages and aquatic trails along the New Meadows River. Consult experts in this field: American Rivers, Coastal Zone Management Program, etc.</p>	<p>Recreation Committee Selectmen Town Meeting</p>
Mid-term	<p>Work with town of Bath on the possibility of a shared park at the Wings Farm, Winnegance Bay or other suitable shared boundary lines.</p>	<p>Recreation Committee Selectmen Town Meeting</p>
Mid-term	<p>Establish "open space creation policy" (by ordinance) that requires all new subdivisions over a certain size e.g., 6 acres, or housing complexes of 4 or more dwelling units, to either set aside permanently deeded open space, e.g., at least 1 acre of open/park space for each 6 acres of the subdivision or for each 6 acres in a multi-housing project; OR, pay a fee to a town critical wildlife habitat and recreation open space fund.</p>	<p>Planning Board Recreation Committee Town Meeting</p>
Mid-term	<p>Establish (by ordinance) a "critical wildlife habitat/open space fee" paid by developers of all non-residential and residential subdivisions in lieu of setting aside permanent deeded open space as part of their project; and also collect the fee from all individual persons purchasing a building permit in Town.</p>	<p>Planning Board Town Meeting Codes Enfrcmnt Offcr</p>
Mid-term	<p>Establish "open space acquisition program" that uses the wildlife habitat/open space fees to purchase land or easements at critical wildlife habitats or land to be used for newly created West Bath park system.</p> <p>Use the wildlife habitats/open space plan, e.g., a greenbelt-type plan, to direct the Town's purchases of land and conservation/access easements. Also include tax-default land, acquired by the Town and, as appropriate, include as part of an open space acquisition plan.</p>	<p>Recreation Committee Selectmen Town Meeting</p>

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Mid-term	Create an "adoption agency" for maintenance of newly created facilities and open spaces; on the likes of Adopt-A-Highway or Adopt-A-Bike path, etc. These can be local committees, individuals or school children. Sell sponsorships for new facilities. The sponsor would take care of or possibly donate land, etc., in exchange for recognition by a sign or having the facility named after them.	Recreation Committee Selectmen Town Meeting
Long-term (6-10 years)	Communicate with local businesses and landowners about easements, tax incentives and Maine's liability law provided to property owners who allow recreational use of their land by the public.	Recreation Committee
Long-term	Take advantage of low-cost opportunities for grants and encourage land trusts and private donations to the Town through tax incentives to create the West Bath Park System.	Recreation Committee Selectmen Town Meeting
Long-term	Explore amending the Open Space Tax Program to include lands used for recreational-type agricultural purposes, i.e. large-scale personal vegetable/fruit/flowers production with some road-side selling to the public.	Planning Board Selectmen Town Meeting

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

This capital investment strategy outlines those recommended implementation measures of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan that have capital costs - generally one-time large expenses for acquisition or construction of a tangible facility or capital good such as a vehicle, or constructing a building or park. A capital investment strategy is required by the State's Growth Management Program as the basis for a municipal impact fees program. This Plan recommends impact fees be considered for collection by the Town from new site plans and building permits to support an open space and recreation facilities acquisition fund. Impact fees are also being contemplated in the form of hook-up fees for attaching to a new town public sewer system to help pay the Town's share.

Not part of this capital investment strategy are recommendations for possibly increasing the operating expenses of the Town. These include, for example, more code enforcement personnel and hours, more clerical help for the Planning Board and Board of Appeals and for possible consultant assistance in writing an impact fee ordinance, an historic district overlay zone, other recommended ordinance amendment, plus several studies.

A capital investment strategy can assist the Town in:

- Assessing the ability of the Town's facilities to accommodate the anticipated growth and changes in the town's demographics from 2005 to 2015 in accord with the expressed goals and policies of the townspeople in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Identifying the needs for capital expenditures to serve the townspeople's vision for the future of the Town;
- Evaluating the relative priority of various needs for possible capital expenditures.

ASSESSMENT OF TOWN FACILITIES, 2005

As a rural town, West Bath has traditionally relied upon landowner generosity in allowing informal access to interior open spaces and the shoreline. There has been no perceived need for developed community, recreational and cultural facilities when these have been readily available in the neighboring service centers of Bath and Brunswick. The Vision for 2015, however, contemplates maintaining woodland and shore accesses historically enjoyed by the townspeople, but also for more of a community focus within the Town itself. Population increases and demographic changes forecast for 2015 have prompted townspeople attention to the need for more formalization in preserving recreational access and in fostering a community focal point.

CAPITAL PROJECTS RECOMMENDED BY THE 2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Public Sewer System

A public sewer system is recommended to be studied for its feasibility (or not) to serve the State Road/New Meadows Road Business Zone in order to covert it into a Mixed Use Zone. The proposed Mixed

Use Zone would be a mixed-use district with a wide spectrum of permitted commercial, retail and light industrial uses plus higher density housing that would accommodate some affordable housing. The Zone would be the location for municipal buildings and community facilities and function as the center of the community. The sewer service area, if installed, would include Wing Farm as the only part of town in which hotels, research & development campuses or even heavier industry might be located. The new Mixed Use Zone would also extend up New Meadows Road to the area around the Elementary School and Green Acre Apartments as a nucleus for a neighborhood center; and extend south on Fosters Point Road to the Town Hall and Kings Point neighborhoods. The capital cost would be very large, estimated in a 1997 engineering report for a possible system main coming out of Bath through Wing Farm at \$(Very High). Applying inflation, the cost in 2005 dollars would be about \$(Very High). However, through a combination of community development and environmental quality grants from the State, hook-up impact fees, TIF (tax increment financing) and other funding sources plus user fees, an affordable financing plan may be able to be fashioned. A full study would be necessary to assess the long-term affordability and benefits to the Town versus its short-term and long-term costs. If a public sewer were not found to be feasible, the proposed Mixed Use Zone, while possibly broadening the permitted uses over the existing Business/Commercial Zone, would remain at the existing minimum one acre lot size.

Boat Ramp Upgrades

The three town boat ramps at Bull Rock, Mountain Road, and Sabino are recommended for some upgrades, especially to their parking areas. There is also interest in possibly providing additional facilities such as picnic furniture, benches and landscaping. There may be state and federal recreation/open space grants that could help defray some town costs matched by fees from a town recreation acquisition fund. The Comprehensive Plan also calls for looking into the possibility of additional municipal boat launch or boat docking sites.

Recreation Facilities

The Plan recommends a town park, system of trails, scenic roads, overlooks and playing fields by taking advantage of low-cost opportunities for grants, easements and donations. To the extent that State and federal funding sources may require town matches, a town wildlife habitats/open space recreational fund could partially defray the Town's costs.

Affordable and Elderly Housing

The Plan calls for cooperation with neighboring municipalities to support public and private services for higher density affordable housing and for funding approval at town meeting, if appropriate, for elderly housing. Therefore, the Town may be called upon during the planning period to determine if it might financially support one or more regional projects concerning affordable housing and/or elderly housing.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN, 2005-2015

The following Capital Investment Table includes long-term capital projects from the Town's on-going (2005) Capital Budgeting program in addition to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan's recommended projects. This enables a full accounting of anticipated future capital expenditures to assist in the long-term financial planning by the Town.

Due to uncertainty in what ultimately will be the details of the anticipated future capital projects, their estimated costs are presented within four ranges: low, medium, high and very high.

Low cost capital projects: Less than \$10,000; can usually be paid for out of annual operating budgets.

Moderate cost capital projects: \$10,000 - \$100,000; usually for capital items such as a new fire engine that can be saved up for through a sinking fund without having the Town borrow the money.

High cost capital projects: \$100,000 - \$500,000; usually major projects necessitating Town borrowing such as for road reconstruction, a new town building or purchase of land for a park. These projects can involve State, federal or private grants or loans requiring a town match of some percentage, 10% to 50%.

Very High cost capital projects: \$500,000+; large-scale projects, such as a sewer main extension, necessitating the Town to secure any number of State and federal grants and loans; and borrowing of a significant long-term loan through the State's bond bank or on the private market. An array of devices may be employed by the town to meet its debt obligations: TIF (tax increment financing, impact fees, user fees, donations, and others.

WEST BATH CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2005 – 2015

DEPARTMENTS	ITEM	ESTIMATED COST	WHEN	TOWN COSTS	OTHER FUNDING
Comp. Plan 2005					
Infrastructure Committee Selectmen	Public Sewer System	\$Very High (2005 \$)	2011 – 2015	\$ Very High	Grants, TIF*, Impact Fees
Recreation Committee, Selectmen	Park, Trails, Scenic Roads, Scenic Overlooks	\$ High/Very High	2008 – 2015	\$ High/Very High	Land trust, donations, tax programs, grants, loans
Marine Res. Bd., Selectmen	Boat Ramps upgrades	\$ Moderate	2011-2015	\$ Moderate	MaineDOT, State DOC*
Marine Res. Bd., Rec. Com., Selectmen, Town Meeting	Boat Landing – Dock (?) (needs study & approval first)	\$ High	2011-2015	\$ Moderate	State DOC,* other State grants, impact fees
Town Meeting, Selectmen	Elderly housing projects	\$ High	2011 – 2015	\$ Moderate	Town Mtg. MSHA*
Recycling Committee	Composting facility (study first)	\$ Moderate	2008-2010	\$ Moderate	State Planning Office
Town Capital Budgeting					
Road Comm, Selectmen	Town roads upgrades	\$ Very high	2005 – 2015	\$ High	MaineDOT Local Roads Prog.
Recycling Committee	Transfer station upgrades	\$ Moderate	2011-2015	\$ Moderate	State Planning Office, user fees
Policing/Dispatch	Capital Items, vehicles, etc.	\$ High (for Cty.)	2005-2015	\$ Low (shared cost)	Federal grants*
Fire Department	Vehicles, major equipment	\$ 25,000± (fire engine)	2011-2015	\$ Low (annual fund)	Federal grants*
School Bd/Recreation Committee	Rec. facilities at Elementary School	\$ Moderate	2011-2015	\$ Moderate	State DOC,*, user fees
Harbors & Waterways Com. Harbor Master	Boat, major equipment, moorings	\$ Low/Moderate	2011-2015	\$ Low	Mooring fees
Marine Resources Board	Major equipment	\$ Low	2005-2010	\$ Low	Town Meeting Budget
Town Offices	Town Hall septic system upgrade	\$ Low (\$10,000±)	2005-2010	\$ Low	Town Meeting Budget
Assessor Clerk Codes Enforcement Office Administrator	Technical upgrades (new computers)	\$Low \$10,000±)	2005-2010	\$ Low	Town Meeting Budget

* TIF = tax increment financing *DOC = Me. Dept. of Conservation *MSHA = Maine State Housing Authority
* Federal Grants = Federal Emergency Management Administration. Homeland Security Administration

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM
ROADS
Five Year Program
FY 2007-2008 – 2012-2013**

Town of West Bath

<u>Description</u>	<u>Total Estimated Cost</u>
1. Birch Point Road – Ditching, Culverts, Asphalt Phase 3 (& 4 if needed)	\$200,000 - \$300,000.
2. Fosters Point Road – Ditching, Culverts, Asphalt Phases 2 & 3	\$150,000.
3. Quaker Point Road – Ditching, Culverts, Paving	\$60,000.
4. Hill Road – Continue Ditching, Culverts, Paving	\$75,000.
5. Mow/Sweep/Stripe/Signs	\$90,000.
6. Sabino Road – Build-up with Gravel, Repave	\$25,000.
7. Sanfords Crossing Road – Engineer, Culverts, Ditching, Pave	\$150,000.
8. Misc. Overlay Paving	\$100,000.
9. Engineering	\$30,000.
10. Tree Trimming	<u>\$15,000.</u>
TOTAL	\$895,000 - \$995,000.

[NOTE: Roads not listed herein are currently in good condition and should not require any major reconstruction during this period.]

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
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REGIONAL COORDINATION

This section lists those implementation actions that call for cooperation between West Bath and surrounding municipalities. They are listed below by topic according to the order of topics contained in the Implementation Plan section of the Comprehensive Plan. Items in **bold** are additional regional coordination actions to implement and enhance the Town’s own internal implementation actions.

<p><u>MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT</u> Town Administration</p>

Immediate (within 30 days)	Initiate an Implementation Oversight Committee, under the direction of the Selectmen, to provide for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan over a ten-year period with the authority to task appropriate committees and town staff.	Selectmen Town Meeting
Immediate (within 30 days)	Assign the Oversight Committee responsibility for providing guidance to the Selectmen and Town Administrator as needed to accomplish the regional coordination actions listed in this section.	Selectmen
Ongoing	Brief the Selectmen monthly with progress reports on the implementation of regional coordination elements of the Comprehensive Plan.	Oversight Committee
Ongoing	Continue the quarterly committee chair meetings. Review and reorganize tasking for town committees to eliminate duplication of services. Explore ways to reduce duplication of actions that work at cross purposes with other towns, agencies, and jurisdictions.	Oversight Committee
Short-term	Provide information and point of contact services for interested citizens and applicants to various boards to encourage informed participation at the appropriate meetings, including inter-local and regional coordination meetings.	Town Administrator

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Ongoing	Maintain communication with neighboring municipalities and state agencies with regard to the provision of services such as police, marine warden, codes enforcement, animal control and other first responder services.	Town Administrator Selectmen
Ongoing	Encourage communication with neighboring municipalities and state agencies to facilitate efficient provision of services to the citizens of West Bath and to address areas of inter-local and regional concern.	Town Administrator Selectmen
<u>GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT</u> Land Use Regulation		
Mid-term	Work with the Maine Department of Transportation and local municipalities in development of the Gateway project.	Oversight Committee Planning Board Town Meeting
Mid-term	Require that all new municipal facilities be located in the Mixed Use Zone.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Mid-term	Write fee-in-lieu-of-subdivision and impact fee ordinances to require developers of major projects to pay fees to be used by the Town to purchase wildlife habitats and open space areas for the benefit of West Bath citizens. A capital investment plan is a required prerequisite to an impact fee ordinance. Coordinate the use of these funds so as to take advantage of adjacency to open space, watershed protection, or habitat protection efforts in neighboring towns where such opportunities exist or arise.	Planning Board Recreation Committee Town Meeting

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Short-term	<p>Initiate a dialogue with the City of Bath concerning extension of sewer service into West Bath. This will need to be carefully coordinated with the needs of the proposed Village Zone, will require some preliminary design, review and update of the West Bath Wastewater Report.</p> <p>Alternatives Study conclusions and cost estimates developed in the mid-1990s. And it should include capital investment planning probably on both sides of the Town/City line. It may also need to be coordinated with any service changes affecting the Wing Farm as well. Since the Village Zone would need to support densities requiring public sewers, it will also need public water lines. If the area needing public water must also be extended within the Village Zone, dialogue with the Bath Water District should also begin when the Town has identified its needs.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Committee Planning Board Selectmen</p>
Long-term (6-10 years)	<p>Establish a public sewage system for the Village Zone to serve higher densities of businesses and residences. Continue to work cooperatively with the City of Bath to extend sewer collection services into the Village Zone as needed.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Committee</p>
<u>HOUSING</u>		
Short-term	<p>Integrate public sewer and water planning for meeting affordable housing needs into the dialogue called for above with the City of Bath and the Bath Water District as needed to serve the two strategies below involving housing opportunities sought within the Mixed Use Zone.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Committee Planning Board Selectmen</p>
Mid-term	<p>Review all outside funding and financing options available for extension of public water and sewer into the Mixed Use Zone, and examine with the City of Bath the full range of options for applying individually or together to each source.</p>	<p>Infrastructure Committee Planning Board Selectmen</p>

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Mid-term (3-6 years)	Pursue community development block grants for public sewage system to develop higher density affordable housing in the Mixed Use Zone.	Infrastructure Committee Planning Board Selectmen Town Meeting
Long-term (6-10 years)	Enhance and support the development of higher density affordable housing within the Mixed Use Zone based upon the public water and sewer systems.	Planning Board Selectmen
Long-term	Cooperate with neighboring municipalities to support through local and regional sources public services and opportunity for private services for higher density affordable housing. Authorize funding at town meeting as may be appropriate for elderly housing.	Selectmen Town Meeting
Long-term	Encourage the opportunity for small-scale retirement housing projects. Work with neighboring municipalities to develop an appropriate level of public services and the opportunity for the provision of private services. Review the availability and appropriate level of support provided through local and regional sources and to authorize funding at Town Meeting as may be appropriate.	Town Administrator Selectmen Town Meeting

LOCAL ECONOMY

Long-term	Develop the proposed public sewage system in the Mixed Use Zone and at, or through, Wing Farm by grants and/or cooperation with neighboring municipalities.	Infrastructure Committee Selectmen
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PUBLIC WORKS and SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Mid-term (3-5 years)	Research the merits of creating a town composting program. Include examination of whether there are economies of scale that could be gained from a regional approach. If yes, explore options for regional cooperation.	Recycling Committee Town Meeting
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<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
<u>PUBLIC SAFETY</u>		
Ongoing	Maintain communication with neighboring municipalities and state agencies with regard to provision of services such as police, marine warden, codes enforcement, animal control and other first responder services.	Selectmen Town Administrator
Ongoing	Continue to explore methods to generate revenue through grants or activities such as an ambulance service to offset equipment costs for emergency services. Include examination of possible cost savings and/or service improvements might result from a regional or inter-local approach, such as shared staff, equipment or facilities, and what funding options may be available to help support cooperating communities.	Town Administrator Selectmen
Short-term	Provide a high level of inter-municipal coordination through communication with neighboring municipalities and state agencies to facilitate efficient provision of services to the citizens of West Bath and to address areas of inter-local and regional concern.	Town Administrator Selectmen
Short-term	Inter-municipal coordination shall be considered a standard element of all West Bath governmental decision-making as a way to reduce costs to the citizens of West Bath.	Selectmen
<u>EDUCATION</u>		
Ongoing	A rolling five year plan to address facility, educational programs and administrative needs will be submitted annually to the Selectmen by the School Board.	School Board

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
<u>MARINE RESOURCES</u>		
Ongoing	Protect and conserve the marine environment to obtain the best possible harvesting of marine resources and to ensure that traditional marine and fishing operations and methods are allowed to continue.	Marine Resources Board
Ongoing	Continue to participate in the New Meadows River Watershed Project.	Marine Resources Board Selectmen
Ongoing	Make use of water quality and other data available through the New Meadows River Watershed Project, the Friends of Casco Bay and the Casco Bay Estuary Project, to help protect the marine environment and to complement the Town's work with DEP on overboard discharge system removal toward reopening of closed shellfish harvesting areas.	Marine Resources Board Selectmen
Mid-term	Develop a town-wide recreational water use and mooring plan that will protect marine business and update the Ordinance that establishes fines to control mooring usages.	Harbors & Waterways Town Meeting
Mid-term	Work with neighboring municipalities to develop usages for harbors and waterways.	Harbors & Waterways Selectmen
Mid-term	Continue to have dialogue with the Brunswick and Bath and the New Meadows River Watershed Project concerning the best plan for increasing tidal flow into and from New Meadows Lake.	Town Administrator Selectmen Marine Resources Board

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
<u>CRITICAL NATURAL RESOURCES</u>		
Ongoing	Request as appropriate that applications to the planning board present documentation from state and federal agencies such as Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Department on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission showing that there will be no impact on habitats of animals, birds, fish, plants and historic areas.	Planning Board
Short-term	Cooperate with Bath and Phippsburg concerning protection measures for the remaining large undeveloped habitat blocks that straddle the boundaries between West Bath and these two neighboring communities.	Planning Board Recreation Committee
Short-term	Coordinate with the Town of Brunswick with reference to their Habitat Protection Plan, concerning the Significant Wildlife Habitat designated by Inland Fisheries & Wildlife around the Bald Eagles' nest on Upper New Meadows Lake.	Planning Board Marine Resources Board
Mid-term	Coordinate habitat protection and water quality protection measures with Phippsburg concerning the IF& W designated Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat in Winnegance Creek, and with Brunswick for the same designated habitat along the New Meadows River.	Planning Board Marine Resources Board
<u>RECREATION & OPEN SPACE</u>		
Ongoing	Continue to provide support to regional facilities such as the Bath YMCA, the Patten Free Library, the Bath Recreation Association, the Foster M. Pratt Senior Citizens Hall and the like.	Selectmen Recreation Committee

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Ongoing	Work with the State and the towns of Bath and Brunswick to continue the Androscoggin-to-Kennebec Route One Bike Path through West Bath to Bath along the highway and/or New Meadows River.	Recreation Committee Planning Board Selectmen Town Meeting
Ongoing	Work with the State, Bath and Brunswick to implement a West Bath Connector to the Androscoggin-to-Kennebec Route One Bike Trail.	Recreation Committee Planning Board Selectmen
Short-term (1-2 years)	Change the School's zoning from 'residential' to 'mixed use/ Low impact business' (as part of a new Mixed-Use Zone) for easier transition if regionalization occurs in the future.	Planning Board Town Meeting
Short-term	Do long-term town recreation & open space plan. Utilize town assets and committees that are already established: i.e.; Elementary School, boat landings, Audubon Trail, the Harbor & Waterways Committee, WINS Committee (West Bath Innovative Neighborhood Solutions) and West Bath Historical Society, etc. Coordinate the recreation & opens space plan habitat protection and open space plans in neighboring Bath, Brunswick and Phippsburg.	Recreation Committee WINS Committee
Short-term	Obtain an inventory of indoor and outdoor recreation spaces within the School and space allocation schedules for use of the facility by the Town's citizens: Recreational (basketball pick-up games, aerobic classes, football, soccer, indoor walking in winter, dance classes, art classes, etc.) and Educational (adult ed, babysitting, chess club, etc). Include regional facilities and open spaces to which West Bath citizens have access or could possibly negotiate access.	Recreation Committee
Mid-term	Communicate with the Bath Country Club, Bowdoin College, the Sebasco Resort and Brunswick Naval Air Station, etc., for possible use of their facilities.	Recreation Committee

<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION ACTION</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Mid-term	Work with the City of Bath on the possibility of a shared park at the Wings Farm, Winnegance Bay or other suitable shared boundary lines.	Recreation Committee Selectmen
