

Town of Plymouth

Comprehensive Plan

Draft

Prepared by



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Town of Plymouth Comprehensive Plan Draft
August, 2016

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Vision

Having a vision for the town of Plymouth means looking forward and making plans for the future. This vision needs to be put on paper, so that our goals for Plymouth can be assessed by our community and then put into action and addressed.

The completion of the comprehensive plan gives the town the opportunity to work towards future plans for our community that can benefit all ages. It will assist us in preserving the character of this small bedroom community, and in keeping our natural resources clean and available for future generations.

Our principal goals are to have a new town office and fire station built in the next 3 to 4 years. The building that is now housing the town office and post office can be restored to its original as 4 room school house and can be used as a historical society to help preserve the history of Plymouth. A newly created historical society would offer a safe place to store the town's pictures and other memorabilia for posterity. We believe that it's important to be able to look back toward our past, in order to see how to go forward into the future.

Plymouth Pond is one of our town's favorite spots for fishing, swimming, kayaking, and enjoying the view. Ice fishing and ice sailing are also popular pass-times. We need to recognize the local importance of Plymouth Pond and work to conserve its beauty and the habitat for our fish and wildlife, as well as maintain the public access for sporting and leisure activities.

We envision a recreation department that has more equipment for the playground, and community involvement and activities for the children and the adults. In addition, we would like to expand our walking path and encourage outdoor activities and exercise for all the residents. We believe this would attract new residents to the area and increase the community's quality of life.

The vision includes encouraging investment in senior housing for our elderly citizens, so that they may stay in Plymouth and be near family and familiar surroundings, and continue to participate in a vibrant community life.

Encouraging farmers and forestry industries to have a positive effect on the land is an important goal for the future as well.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee believes that the proposed plan for the Town of Plymouth should be exempt from identifying growth areas in its Future Land Use Plan based on the Criteria for Growth Area Exemptions based on minimal or no growth.

(1) Residential

The population of Plymouth was 1343 in 2007 and the current population is 1388. This is an increase of only 3.3% which is well below the threshold of 5% listed

in the criteria. Since 2007, Plymouth has had 27 new housing starts. Again, this is well below the criteria threshold of 50.

(2) Commercial/ Institutional

No change in the last ten years.

(3) Industrial

No change in the last ten years.

Historic & Archaeological Resources

Findings and Conclusions

- Plymouth does not have an organized list of historic and archeological sites and buildings, or a historical committee at this time.
- There is no public location to safely store and exhibit artifacts
- Need exists to encourage residents and others connected with the community's history to share what they have
- Funding is needed to preserve sites on National Historic Register and repair and or maintain other historical sites in town.

Historical Overview

- Town was incorporated by vote of Maine legislature on February 21, 1826.
- There are still buildings that exist from the early settlers, also cemeteries with burials from the Civil War, Mexican War, and War of 1812 that need to be restored.

A Brief Outline of Plymouth's History :

Key events of the history of the town are summarized in the paragraphs that follow. This history was generously written and provided by the late Wade Richardson and Leon Hopkins. Plymouth was incorporated, by vote of the Maine legislature, on February 21, 1826. This action occurred only six years after Maine had gained statehood. The town was created in the southwestern corner of Penobscot County with the western town line abutting Somerset County and approximately one half of the southern town line abutting Waldo County. The remaining town lines abut only Penobscot County towns.

In the early 1800's, the area that became Plymouth was heavily forested with excellent timber and a good water supply. This drew the attention of lumbermen from surrounding areas as well as from New Hampshire and Massachusetts. They believed the lumber and water power would someday make the area a manufacturing center.

Reportedly, the first settler was a Mr. Martin who built a home, near the stream, on a lot that later became known as Moses Holt pasture. He chose this location as he thought when a road was built it would follow the stream. The stream, which is the outlet of Plymouth Pond, was later named Martin Stream.

In 1805, Josiah Hopkins, of Mayflower stock, moved from Unity with a family of eight children and bought the mill property on which a sawmill was in operation at the time. At about the same time, Adoniram Houston came and built a home at the foot of Barbaric Hill.

By 1812, the following families had settled here: Amos Chandler, William, and Ichabod Allen, Daniel Holbrook, William Phips, John F. Palmer, and Jacob Brooks. A large part of the area land was owned by a Dr. Dix of Boston, a philanthropist, for whom the Dixmont Hills were named. Colonel Samuel Butman, a Captain in active service in the war of 1812, and later Colonel of an infantry regiment, was Dr. Dix's land agent.

Butman was a member of the convention that framed the Constitution for the State of Maine in 1820 and was also the first president of the Maine State Agricultural Society. In the Mid 1820's he served as a representative to the Maine Legislature, and in the 1830's he served as a representative to the United States Congress in Washington D.C. and supposedly traveled from Dixmont Corner to Washington by stagecoach. Later, in 1851, he was president of the Maine Senate. Prior to 1820, Mr. Butman built a home in Plymouth village. The building was unique in the sense that it was lined with bricks between the framework studding. The bricks were made at a brickyard at the rear of his property. For many years, during the 1900's, the home was owned by Mr. & Mrs. J.R. Longley. In the mid 1980's the home was destroyed by fire while owned by the Robert Tenny family.

In creating the town of Plymouth, approximately, half of its land area was taken from Etna on the east and Chandlerville (later became Detroit) on the west. The records do not show how the Somerset and Penobscot county line was established, which in turn became Plymouth's western boundary.

In 1821, Mr. Parker Eaton, great grandfather of Mrs. Elsie Clark and great, great grandfather of Mrs. Ruth Clark Bickford, settled here with his family of eight children. In 1824, while still a part of Etna, Mr. Eaton designed and built the floating bridge which evolved into what is now called the long bridge on Route 7. It must have been quite a task in its day.

Being an inland area, population growth was quite slow and it was nearly 20 years before there were enough inhabitants to petition the Maine Legislature for the formation of a town. In the winter of 1825-1826 the petition for the creation of a municipality was forwarded to the Legislature which approved the incorporation of Plymouth on February 21, 1826.

In 1830, the first census taken after incorporation showed the population to be 504 residents. The ensuing censuses revealed the growth, decline, and regrowth pattern of the town.

From the time of incorporation in 1826, Plymouth showed a steady and continued growth for the next 30 years. From 1860, the population started a downward trend, reaching its lowest level in 1940 when census figures showed 462 residents.

Nationally Significant Historical Structures:

Based on preliminary survey data, the following properties may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places:

Plymouth Grange, Rt. 7
 Farmstead, 2035 Moosehead Trail
 Plymouth Town Office (School House)

Archeological Resources:

Archeological resources are physical remains of the past, most commonly buried in the ground or very difficult to see on the surface. Archeological sites are defined as prehistoric or historic. Prehistoric sites are those areas where remains are found that were deposited thousands of years before written records began in the United States. These sites are the only source of information about prehistory. More recent archeological sites, historic, are those sites which occurred after written records began. In Maine, archeological sites are most commonly found within 25 yards of an existing or former shoreline and early roads.

There are no sites that are currently known in Plymouth. No professional prehistoric archeological survey has been done in the township.

Archeological survey is needed around Round Pond and Plymouth Pond, a short stretch of the East Branch, Martin Stream, and the wetlands and streams associated with the esker near Martin Stream.

To date, 4 historic archeological sites are documented for Plymouth:

Site Name	Site num	Site Type	Periods of Significance
Jacob Curtis	ME 353-001	farmstead	mid-19 th century
Z. Arno Homestead	ME 353-002	domestic	mid to late 19 th century
C.F. Gray Farmstead	ME 353-003	farmstead	1860s-1900
R. Gray Homestead	ME 353-004	domestic	mid to late 19 th century

No professional surveys for historic archeological sites have been conducted to date in Plymouth. Future archeological survey should focus on the identification of potentially significant resources associated with the town’s agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Protection of Historical and Archeological Resources

Plymouth has enacted minimal local land use standards for the protection of archaeological and historic resources in subdivision regulations. There are additional standards contained in the Shoreland Zoning and Floodplain Management Ordinances. There are no provisions for the protection of archaeological and historic resources other than for land/structures to be subdivided or within shore land areas.

**Known Archaeological Sites and
Areas Sensitive for
Prehistoric Archaeology* in
Plymouth**
information provided by
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
updated March 2012

*dated material subject to future revision
map 1/1

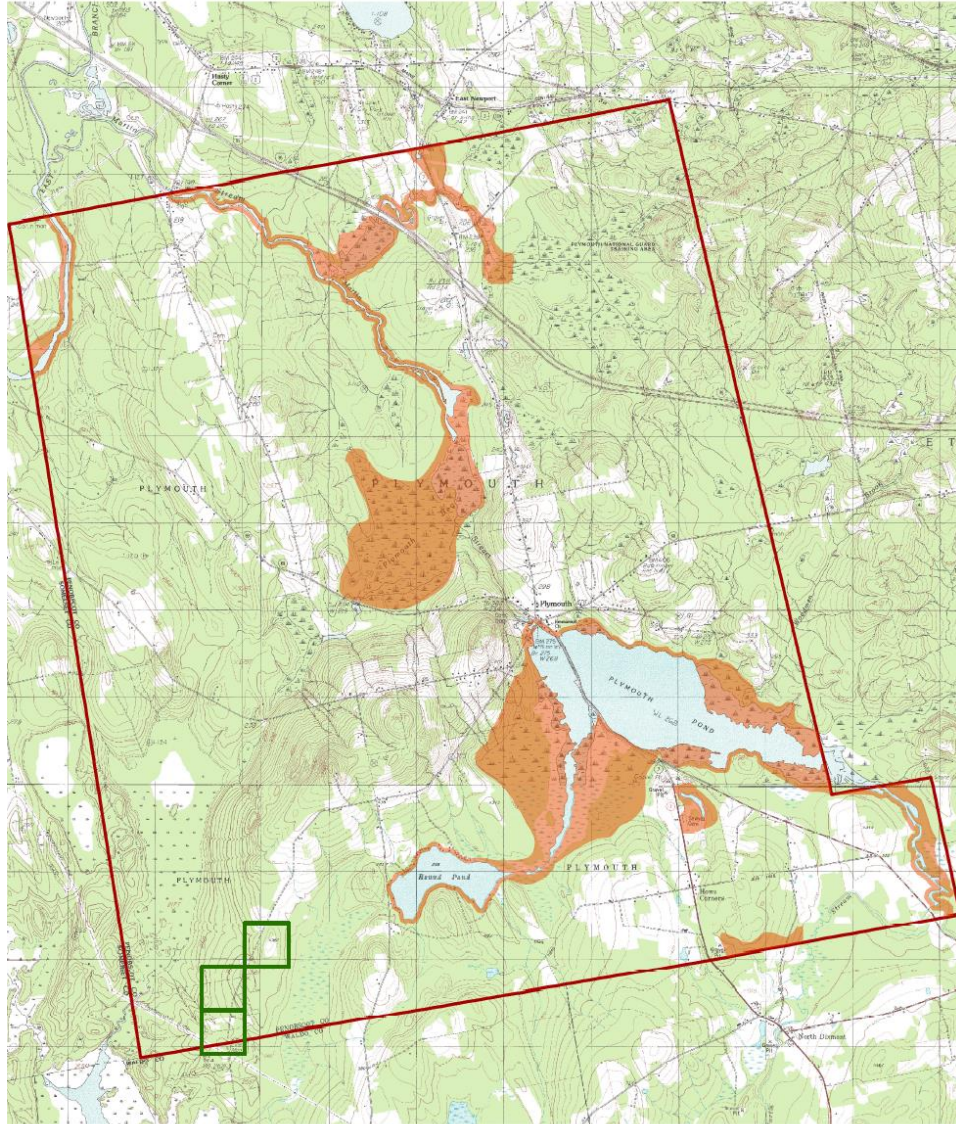


Areas sensitive for
prehistoric archaeology



1/2 k square intersecting a known
historic archaeological site.

There are no known
prehistoric archaeological sites
in the town of Plymouth
at this date.



State of Maine Goals:

To preserve the State’s historic and archaeological resources.

<i>Policies to Address Maine State Goals</i>	<i>Actions and Strategies to address Maine state goals</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Protect to the greatest extent possible the significant historical and archaeological resources in the community Identify and inventory buildings and sites of historic and or archeological significance.	To send out a town newsletter to sign up volunteers to form a Historical Society	Historical Committee	Ongoing
Protect the historic sites and archeological resources in the community. There is no public location to safely store and exhibit artifacts.	Renovate the town office back to the four (4) room school house and use the building for all historical papers, photos and artifacts.	Historical Committee	Long term
Identify and maintain the values of those structures, sites and areas that possess architectural characteristics of historical importance and/or possess historical significance.	Form a Historical Committee	Selectmen	Short term
Funding is needed to preserve sites on the National Historic Register and repair or maintain other historic sites in town.	To use the Town office building as a Historical Site and restore the building back to the four (4) room school house.	Selectmen to form a committee	Short term

Agriculture and Forest Resources

Findings and Conclusions

- Forestry and agriculture are historic industries, which have begun to make a resurgence within Plymouth
- The existence of forest and farm land has a positive effect on community life and property values

Introduction

Both agricultural and forestry industries have been a constant part of Plymouth's economy since the town's founding. In recent years, these two land-based economic sectors have faced challenges from a changing economy. Despite these adversities, agriculture and forestry continue to be present and evolving within the Plymouth community.

Agricultural Resources

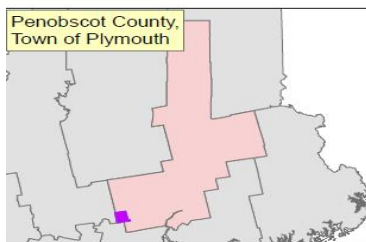
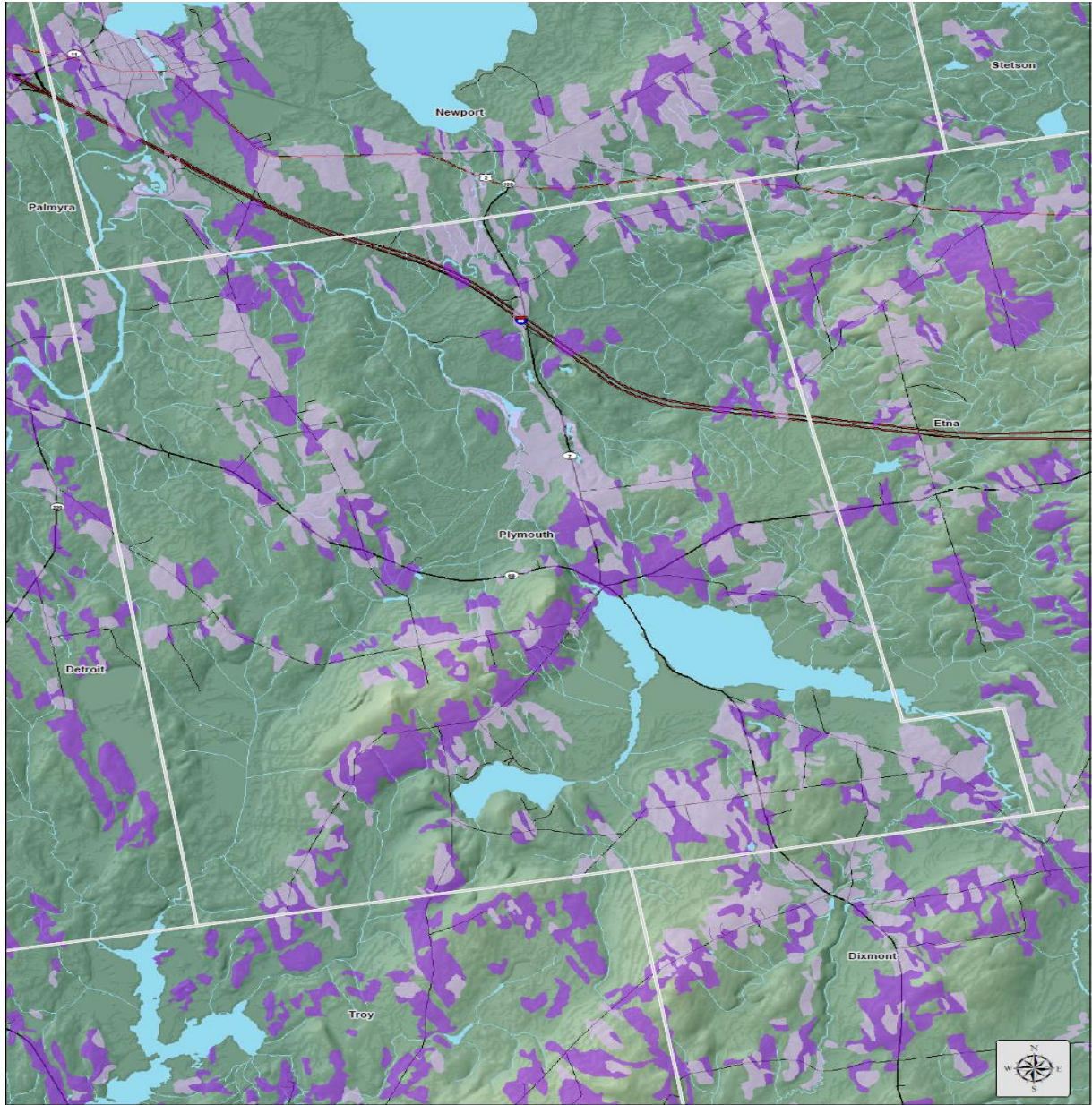
In 2012, Penobscot County had 677 farms, a decrease from 706 farms in 2007. The average farm size was 167 acres, which is an increase from the 2007 size of 162 acres. This increase has been prompted by a rise in the number of farms with between 50 and 180 acres. This has been paralleled by a decrease in the number of larger farms above 200 acres, as well as a slight decrease in the amount, of farms below 10 acres.

Over the past few decades, the agricultural industry within Plymouth has steadily declined. Farms that once lined Moosehead Trail and Clark Rd, have since been replaced by gravel pits. Other farms have simply been abandoned due to the difficult lifestyle that the occupation is accompanied by. In the past five years, however, small scale agriculture has made a slight recovery. Recently, more residents have been turning to small scale agriculture, in order to provide food for their household. This has included residents purchasing a few chickens or cows, as well as the expansion of home gardens.

Additionally, a small scale farm has begun operating which supplies the community with grass-fed beef, while another resident along Moosehead Trail now offers locally sourced apples to the community. The community has numerous parcels of land that are classified as farmland of statewide importance. Much of this fertile land is centered along the Etna and Rutland Roads.

Since 2009, the number of residents identifying agriculture, forestry, fishing or hunting as their primary occupation has risen from 6 to 15. This increase is likely to be concentrated in farms that are larger 10 acres. The existence of farms within a community not only produces agriculture-related employment, it also increases the community's property tax values. According to, the Trust for Public Land, properties adjacent to open land are valued between 5 and 35 percent higher than similar properties which border other types of land users.

In 2016, there were only two parcels that were registered under the Maine State Farmland Tax Program. One parcel was comprised of 70 acres of land, while the second parcel is made up of 45 acres. In order to qualify, for the Farmland Tax Program land parcels must exceed five acres, and also generate at least \$2,000 annually from the sale of agricultural products.



Plymouth Agricultural Resources

Source Data: USDA, MEGIS, Maine DACF
 Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone 19, Meters
 Produced by: Municipal Planning
 Assistance Program, DACF
 October 2016



Legend	
	Municipal border
	Farmland of statewide importance
	Prime farmland
	River/Stream
	Waterbody

Forest Resources

The Town of Plymouth has a long history of logging and forestry. Throughout the 19th and early 20th century the community was populated by many loggers who were a large supplier of wood products to area paper mills. Today far fewer wood-based jobs exist within Plymouth, however substantial land is still owned for the purpose of, forestry. Two local families have been active in the logging industry for decades, and their work has ensured the industry's continuity.

The existence of woodlands within the community offers more than just an economic driver. Forested areas serve as a valuable habitat for wildlife, while also offering recreational opportunities. Additionally, woodlands protect both the quality of water and a community's rural feel.

Over the past 20 years, the number of acres harvested by the timber industry has fluctuated dramatically. Between 1995 and 2000, the annual total of acres harvested in Plymouth ranged from 1,010 to 233. From 2005 to 2010, the total of acres was between 561 and 112 acres. This decrease in logging is indicative of the regional economic trends which have affected much of central and northern Maine. Since 2000, Maine's paper manufacturing industry has lost roughly half of the 13,000 individuals it once employed.

In 2015, 44 parcels in Plymouth were enrolled in the Maine Tree Growth Tax Program. This program provides tax valuation incentives for landowners who own acreage which is used for the commercial harvesting of forest products. Plymouth has seen a steady increase in the number of parcels that have enrolled in the program over the past five years. Currently, 5,158 acres of land within Plymouth are enrolled in the Tree Growth Program. This is roughly 25% of the community's total land, and includes both soft and hard woods.

Goals, Policies, Action Strategies, and Implementation

Introduction

Agriculture and forestry continue to provide an important source of income and character to the town of Plymouth. The creation of policies that allow these resources to be preserved and these industries to thrive are important to the community’s future.

State of Maine Goal that Plan needs to address

To safeguard the State’s agricultural and forest resources from forms of development that has the potential to threaten those resources

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Action strategies necessary to address State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Safeguard lands identified as prime farmland or capable of supporting commercial forestry	Consult with the Maine Forest Service, as well as Tree Growth Program members, if land use regulations pertaining to forest management practices are considered	Planning Board	As Needed
Support farming and forestry and encourage their economic viability	Consult with Soil and Water Conservation District staff if ever any land use pertaining to agriculture are considered	Planning Board	As Needed
	Encourage owners of productive forest and farm land to enroll in state tax programs	Selectmen/ Assessors	Ongoing
	Add provisions in ordinances that accommodate the needs of emerging small scale agriculture, such as roadside stands, greenhouses, farmer’s markets, and pick-your-own operations.	Planning Board	Ongoing

Economic Development

Findings and Conclusions

-Plymouth is a bedroom community that sends the majority of its residents to workplaces in Belfast, Bangor, Waterville, and other surrounding communities.

-Most of the community's employers are small scale, and employ fewer than five individuals.

Regional Economy

Plymouth's location is equidistant between the urban areas of Waterville and Bangor/Brewer. This location allows residents to access two of the largest communities in the State. Additionally, Plymouth's close proximity to Newport/Palmyra allows it to take advantage to the many stores and businesses located in those two communities. As Plymouth is within commuting distance of Bangor, the community is able to access the wealth of employees that exist within Bangor and Brewer. As the largest city in northern Maine, Bangor is a regional hub for government services and private companies. In total, Bangor is home to 3,302 companies. The main economic sectors within Bangor include health services, technical support, transportation, education, and retail. Despite being far smaller than Bangor, Waterville contains 1,226 companies. Waterville's economy is dominated by the health services, education, retail, tourism, finance, and technical services sectors. Additionally, many residents of Plymouth have been able to find employment in Belfast, which is roughly one hour south of Plymouth. Belfast is home to companies such as Bank of America and Athena health, which together employ roughly 1,600 people in the coastal community. Additionally, OnProcess Technology which arrived in Belfast in 2015, employs 160 employees, but is planning to expand to 400 employees in the coming years.

Major employers in Bangor include St. Joseph's Hospital, Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems, Hannaford Supermarkets, L.L. Bean, Bangor Savings Bank, NexxLink, and Bangor International Airport. Within Waterville major employers are Maine General Health, Colby College, Waterville School Department, T-Mobile, Mardens, and Home Depot.

Plymouth's Economy

Historically, Plymouth's economy was dominated by the presence of manufacturing mills along the Martin Stream. These facilities utilized the power of the water to produce cloth, lumber, leather, furniture, and carriages. Throughout the late 19th century, Plymouth was home to ten stores, two hotels, and a number of schools. Additionally, the community contained a booming agricultural industry. Farms previously existed along Moosehead Trail and Clark Road; however, those have since been replaced with gravel pits.

Today, Plymouth is home to roughly 25 businesses, some of these operate out of the owner's home. These range from the Plymouth Village Store to Complete Hydraulics. Over half of Plymouth's employers have less than five employees, while only one company employs more than 20 people. This limited number of large-scale employers, causes most residents of Plymouth to commute to neighboring towns and commercial

centers. Roughly 50% of all residents commute further than 30 minutes each day. In contrast, just 5% of all residents had a commute of less than 10 minutes.

These economic trends have resulted in Plymouth transforming into a bedroom community, where most residents leave the town for both employment and services. With limited retail options, residents must drive to nearby Newport or Bangor for any major shopping. One of Plymouth’s greatest assets is its proximity to I-95. This allows community members to be easily connected with surrounding communities. The continued existence of high quality transportation infrastructure is a cornerstone for Plymouth’s economic development. The community’s location along I-95 also allows Plymouth to tap into the Maine’s broadband cable network, known as the Three Ring Binder. This network enables almost all of Plymouth to have access to fixed wireless internet, which serves as a positive economic driver for the community.

In order to continue to reduce its unemployment rate, the community should focus on expanding the, amount of small-scale employers. It is unlikely that the Town will be able to attract a large-scale employer of upwards of 20 employees. Furthermore, the lack of a substantial downtown business district makes it challenging to attract storefront businesses. Instead the community can craft programs to make itself friendlier to employers of two to three people. Plymouth’s access to Internet and transportation infrastructure is an asset for attracting new businesses. Plymouth should also continue to support the Sebeco Valley Chamber of Commerce, and investigate the possibility of creating additional networking groups for local entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, as a bedroom community the success of Plymouth is tied to the growth, or contraction, of Bangor, Belfast, Newport, and Waterville. By continuing to monitor the economies of these four labor market areas, Plymouth will be able to have a better understanding of its economic outlook.

Labor Force

Today, Plymouth has a median income that is slightly higher than the state and county averages. Additionally, the community has a substantially higher median household income than the surrounding towns of Newport, and Dixmont. Plymouth, however, has a slightly lower median household income in comparison to the Town of Etna.

Plymouth	Dixmont	Etna	Newport	Penobscot County	State of Maine
\$50, 417	\$48,188	\$52,386	\$37,007	\$44,543	\$48,804

Source: U.S. Census

Plymouth’s unemployment rate has been declining over the past five years. In 2010 12.4% of the Town’s labor force was unemployed. Today, roughly 8% of the community lacks employment. In comparison to the surrounding communities, Plymouth has a high unemployment rate. The unemployment rates for communities within a ten (10) mile radius of Plymouth is just 6%, while communities within a thirty (30) mile radius have a rate of just 4.8%. This 30-mile radius is reflective of the Pittsfield Labor Market Area (LMA). In comparison, the LMAs of Bangor, Belfast and Waterville have far more stable levels of employment. In order to increase employment within Plymouth, community members must not only assist home-based entrepreneurs, they must also assist individuals

hoping to access the Belfast, Waterville and Bangor labor markets. This can be achieved by the creation of carpool networks, which reduces the transportation barriers that inhibit employment.

Plymouth	2010	2014	2015
Total Labor Force	732	717	689
Employed	641	655	633
Unemployed	91	62	56
Unemployed Rate (%), Plymouth	12.4	8.6	8.1
Unemployed Rate (%), Pittsfield LMA	N/A	8.3	7.6
Unemployed Rate (%), Bangor Metro LMA	N/A	5.4	4.2
Unemployed Rate (%), Waterville LMA	N/A	5.9	4.9
Unemployed Rate (%), Belfast LMA	N/A	6.2	5.3
Unemployed Rate (%), State of Maine	7.2	5.3	4.2

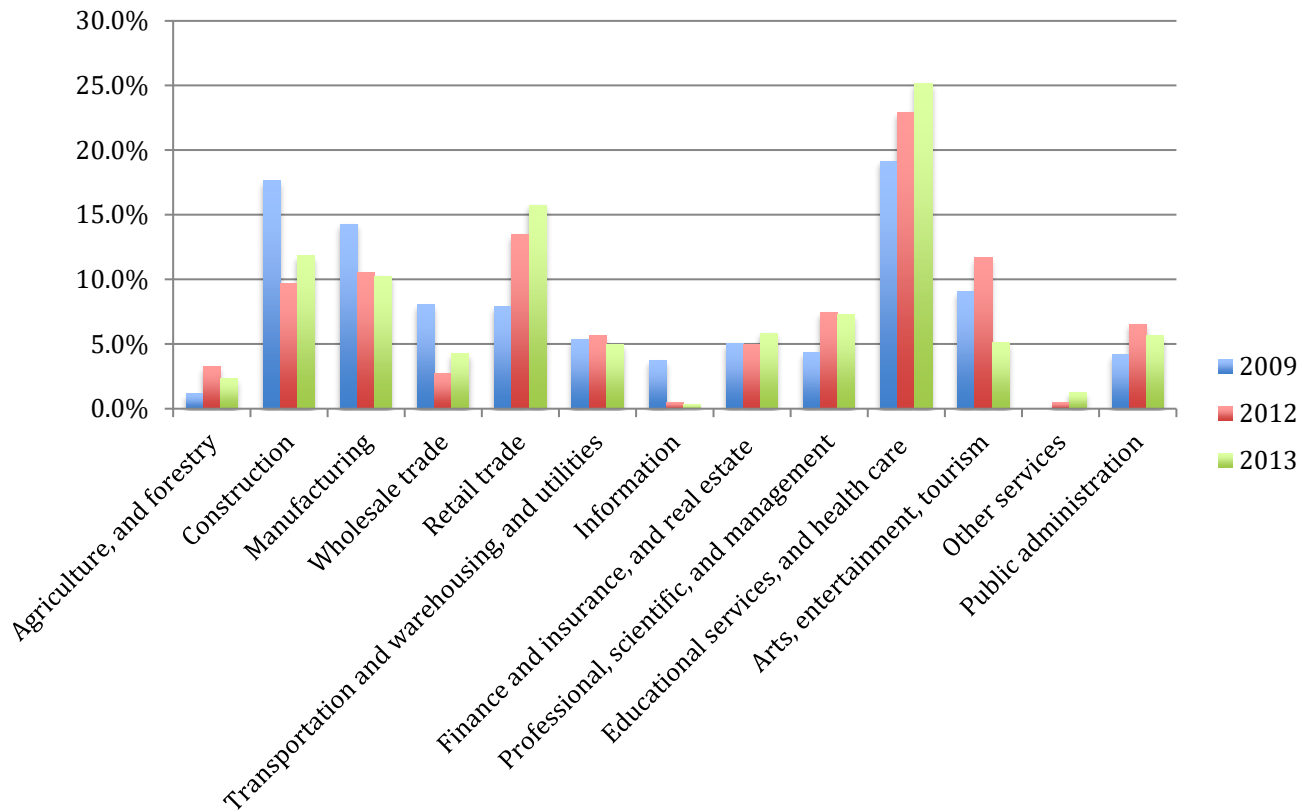
Note: Annual Unemployment Rates are not seasonally adjusted

Source: Maine Department of Labor

Occupation of Labor Force

In order to further assess the needs of the Plymouth community, it is necessary to determine what sorts of jobs the community is currently sustaining. Among residents of Plymouth the highest earning industries are Education and Health Care, Retail Trade, Construction, and Manufacturing. Manufacturing has been declining both in Plymouth and throughout the state over the past five years. In contrast, the Education and Healthcare, and Retail Trade industries have consistently risen. Unfortunately, the declining Manufacturing industry has one of the highest median incomes of Plymouth's industries. Currently, the median annual earnings of a Manufacturing employee are \$40,833, while the average earnings of Retail industry employees is \$28,036. Similarly, the median annual earning for an education or health care professional is \$33,025. In order to spur economic growth, it is necessary to both decrease the community's unemployment rate, while also increasing the amount of high earning professions. Currently the transportation and warehousing sector, has the second highest median income. This industry's workers have an average annual salary of \$55,313. However, this industry area has remained relatively static over the past seven years. The Finance and Insurance sector, which is the community's highest paid sector, has also remained stationary in recent years. Both of these, high paying employment spheres employ just 10% of the community's residents.

Industries of Employment for Plymouth Residents, 2009-2013



Regional Economic Development Plans

Plymouth falls under the jurisdiction of Eastern Maine’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This regional development plan is reviewed by the Economic Development Administration, and maintained by Eastern Maine Development Corporation. Key portions of this plan include increasing entrepreneurs’ access to capital, while further promoting the importance of education to meet the demands of a 21st century economy.

Conclusion

While the State of Maine continues to grapple with a changing global economy, the economic outlook of Plymouth will largely be determined by the actions within its regional economy. As the communities of Bangor, Belfast, and Waterville continue to grow and contract, Plymouth’s success will be tied to their economic actions. In order to avoid the dependence that occurs in the economies of bedroom communities, Plymouth can continue to attract home-based entrepreneurs and telecommuters.

Goals, Policies, Action Strategies, and Implementation

Introduction

Currently Plymouth enjoys a median income which is slightly above the statewide average, while also being affected by a relatively high unemployment rate. As a bedroom community, with less than 10% of its workforce locally employed, the Town of Plymouth has reduced impact on the economic development of its residents. The community must focus on attracting more small scale employees and entrepreneurs, in order to reduce its unemployment rate.

State of Maine Goal that Plan needs to address

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

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Action strategies necessary to address State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Support existing local business owners, while continuing to attract new entrepreneurs to the area	Create local ordinances that identify areas for development, while only regulating small scale and cottage industries if nuisances occur.	Selectmen/ Planning Board	Ongoing
Coordinate with regional economic development organization, neighboring towns, and local chamber of commerce to support economic development	Form local support groups for small business owners to help communicate best practices and create a local professional network	Selectmen	Short term
Ensure that residents are able to access regional labor markets for employment	Cooperate with local commuters to create car pool networks to Belfast, Bangor, and Waterville.	Selectmen	Ongoing
Maintain zoning laws that protect resident’s quality of life, while also identifying areas for further industrial development	Ensuring that the Planning Board remains informed about potential commercial activities and their economic benefits, as well as residents’ concerns	Planning Board	Ongoing

Fiscal Capacity

Findings and Conclusions

- Plymouth has a large amount of borrowing power, due to its low amount of debt.
- Until recently, the Town's Valuation level did not rise with inflation. Over the past year, its property values have risen, which has decreased this deficit.

Introduction

Fiscal capacity refers to a community's ability to meet the need of residents by funding both current and future public expenditures. Currently, Plymouth enjoys a healthy fiscal capacity; however, factors such as static valuation levels and increasing education costs pose a challenge to the community.

Revenues

Within most small towns, property tax serves as the primary revenue source; Plymouth is no exception. In the 2015 Fiscal Year, roughly 75% of the Town's revenue was collected through local property taxes. In 2015, buildings and property assessed in Plymouth came to a total of \$77,319,472. This resulted in a total of \$1,088,558 in property tax revenue. Other major sources of revenue included intergovernmental funding, excise taxes and other service charges

The property tax valuation has been below the rate of inflation since 2010. While inflation fluctuated between 1 and 2 percent over the past five year, the town's valuation has ranged from .21 to 2.22 percent. The Town's 2015 Valuation increase is a promising sign of the community's financial stability. This 2.22% valuation rise allows the Town's revenues to close the gap that inflation rates have created. In the coming years, the tax base will continue to rely on residential property and land for its revenue, as the town has no taxable manufacturing or business equipment.

Fiscal Year	Town Valuation	Annual % Change	State Valuation	Mil Rate
2010	\$73,323,090		\$72,050,000	9.50
2011	\$73,834,590	.70%	\$75,650,000	11.14
2012	\$74,678,880	1.14%	\$74,200,000	11.50
2013	\$75,484,500	1.08%	\$72,400,000	12.35
2014	\$75,641,960	.21%	\$72,650,000	14.50
2015	\$77,319,472	2.22%	\$74,400,000	14.75

In addition to revenue received from property taxes, the Town of Plymouth generates revenue from additional sources including intergovernmental funding, licenses and permits, and investment income. While property taxes fund the vast majority of municipal expenses, these additional revenue sources help to supplement that source of funding.

Fiscal Year	2013	2014	2015
Taxes (Property/Excise)	\$1,112,881	\$1,252,828	\$1,311,103
Intergovernmental	\$134,960	\$113,608	\$123,775
Licenses and Permits	\$10,932	\$10,634	\$9,386
Charges for Services	\$5,349	\$5,233	\$4,652
Investment Income	\$343	\$296	\$268
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$1,271	\$3,359	\$1,608
Total	\$1,265,736	\$1,385,958	\$1,450,792

Expenditures

The levels of municipal expenditures have varied slightly from year to year. With the cost of inflation, municipal spending is expected to increase over time. Between 2013 and 2015, Plymouth expenditures have risen by 15%. The largest increases in the community have been seen in the categories of Public Works (64%) and Education (11%). These increases have caused the community's mil rate to rise from 12.35 to 14.75. In 2015, the highest expenditure categories were Education (49%), Public Works (23%), General Government (11%), County Taxes (7%), and Health and Sanitation (5%).

Fiscal Year	2013	2014	2015
General Government	\$146,890	\$154,534	\$155,696
Protection	\$53,003	\$58,023	\$51,929
Public Works	\$203,838	\$316,441	\$333,502
Health and Sanitation	\$75,125	\$75,044	\$77,823
General Assistance	\$6,541	\$7,212	\$2,335
Culture and Recreation	\$4,033	\$3,001	\$2,612
Education	\$629,079	\$657,415	\$699,495
County Tax	\$88,835	\$91,152	\$93,916
Cemeteries	\$12,220	\$11,181	\$11,152
Other	\$7,268	\$7,804	-
Debt Services	\$21,454	\$21,341	-
Total	\$1,248,286	\$1,403,148	\$1,428,460

Debt

Plymouth is currently a member of Regional School Unit #19. As of June 30, 2015, the Unit had an outstanding debt of \$3,026,789. Plymouth's proportional share of the Unit's debt is \$256,979. Additionally, the Town approved a bond in 2015 for the completion of a public works project. This has resulted in \$480,000 in debt, which will expire in 2020.

The State of Maine regulates the amount of debt that a municipality is able to accumulate. State law limits outstanding debt to 15 percent of the municipality's last state valuation. The State's limit is reduced to 7.5 percent if debts related to schools, sewers, and water and special district purposes are excluded.

Based upon Plymouth's state valuation, the maximum amount of debt that the community can accumulate is \$11.16 million. This level of borrowing, however, should be avoided, due to the dramatic rise in taxes that it would prompt. Should a situation arise where the town would require significant funding, it has the necessary borrowing power.

Capital Improvement Expenditure Funds

As of December 31, 2015, the Town of Plymouth had approximately \$138,606 committed for capital projects in the community. This includes funding for a fire truck (\$12,136), playground (\$2,856), sand and salt shed (\$79,734), municipal building (20,000), and special projects (\$23,340). Additionally, the town has \$9,969 committed for other purposes including a cemetery addition and comprehensive planning.

Fiscal Capacity

In order to have a healthy fiscal capacity, a municipality must be able to fund services and promptly pay their community's operating costs. This is based on the ability of property taxes, borrowing, and other revenue sources to meet the community's financial needs. Two factors must be considered when evaluating a community's fiscal capacity: property values and existing debt. If Plymouth's valuation rises at a higher rate, the community will be able to have adequate revenue without increasing mil rates. However, if the town's valuation level continues to rise at a rate that is equal to or below inflation, it is likely that increased mil rates will be required. Plymouth is increasingly fortunate in terms of existing debt. The community's low debt levels, and high level of borrowing power have ensured that it will be able to prudently take out additional bonds to cover capital investments.

State of Maine Goals:

To plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine Goals</i>	<i>Action strategies necessary to address State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Implementation Responsibility</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Finance existing and needed facilities and services in a satisfactory and cost effective manner.	Collaborate with neighboring communities to explore finance shared capital investments, in order to reduce costs	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
Explore grants available to assist in the funding of capital investments within the community	Complete a relevant grant search and apply for applicable awards	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
Continue the increase of municipal valuations to match inflation rates	Encourage the growth and expansion of building to increase tax base	Board of Selectmen/ Planning Board	Ongoing
Plan for major capital expenditures through the creation of a Capital Investment Plan	Review public facilities and identify upcoming areas of repair or replacement	Board of Selectmen/ Department Heads	Short Term

Natural Resources

Findings and Conclusions

-Plymouth is home to critical species and habitats, which with the cooperation of local actors can be preserved for future generations

-Residents of Plymouth deeply value the natural resources that exist within the community

Setting

Plymouth is located in south western Penobscot County, Maine. The community is bordered by five towns. These bordering towns include Detroit (Somerset County) and Troy (Waldo County), as well as Newport, Etna, and Dixmont (all in Penobscot County). The geographic area of Plymouth is 31.05 square miles, or 19,872 acres. Roughly 4% of Plymouth's area is comprised of water.

The climate of Plymouth is defined by harsh winters and moderate summers. The average high temperature during the summer months (June through August) is 77° F, and in the winter months (December through February) it is 31° F. On average, Plymouth receives 41.9 inches of rain each year, additionally it receives approximately 65 inches of snow annually.

Topography

A community's topography, which deals with the area's physical features, can influence both the natural beauty and development of a region. Two main factors are considered in the profile: relief and slope.

The general height of land, or relief, above sea level and other surrounding areas varies throughout Plymouth. The lowest point of the community is the areas surround Plymouth Bog and Plymouth Pond; here the elevation is in the range of 250 feet above sea level. In contrast, the highest portion of Plymouth is in the vicinity of Ward Hill, where the elevation exceeds 600 feet above sea level.

Within the Town of Plymouth, three topographic areas exist:

- 1) The northern half of the Town of Plymouth is defined by its low character. This region surrounds Plymouth Bog and mainly falls into the Bog's sub-watershed.
- 2) Much of the Town's southwest quadrant lies in a second topographic area. Far higher than the upper portion of the community, and is defined by the presence of Ward Hill. This area is split between the Plymouth Pond and Plymouth Bog sub-watersheds.
- 3) The final topographic portion of the town occupies much of the town's south east quadrant, while also extending along the portions of the town that lie beneath Round Pond. This area is slightly higher than the topographic area around Plymouth Bog. In this region, the elevation is roughly 400 feet above sea level. The area is divided between the Plymouth Pond and Skinner Bog sub-watersheds.

The slope of an area is defined by how quickly or slowly the ground rises or falls in a particular geographic area. The measurement of this variable can, have an effect on the level of development and land use that a community is able to experience. In general, the steeper an area, the more expensive it is for development to occur. This is due to the higher cost of constructing and maintaining roads and utilities in steeper terrain. Additionally, this expense is increased with the higher potential for environmental degradation and erosion. While some variations in slope exist throughout Plymouth, the community is fortunate to be very level. Some steep areas do exist in the vicinity of Ward Hill, as well as along the northwest shoreline of Plymouth Bog. These sloping areas likely formed during the recession of glaciers from the region. Glacial melting in Maine occurred roughly 17,000 years ago, and has also accounted for the formation of dramatic peaks, like Mt. Katahdin, as well as more slopping hills, such as Acadia’s Bubbles.

Soils

The soil composition of a region is an important factor in determining the level of development that a community can physically withstand. The composition of soil is able to determine whether the area is suitable for the building of roads, buildings, or utility pipes, as well as showing if land is usable for agriculture and other industries. Development which occurs on soil that is unable to support such a use may have dire consequences, such as environmental degradation and increased maintenance costs.

The Town of Plymouth is home to numerous soil types. These various soils are scattered throughout the community. Some of the top soil types include: Dixmont Very Stony Silt Loam (DyB), Monarda-Burnham Complex (MrB), Thorndike Very Rocky (TkB), Biddeford Mucky Peat (BoA), and Bangor Very Stony Silt (BnB).

Soil Type	Characteristics	Location
Dixmont Very Stony Silt Loam	Poorly drained	Ward Hill Area
Monarda-Burnham Complex	Poorly drained	Plymouth Pond Shoreline
Thorndike Very Rocky	Somewhat excessively drained	NE Plymouth
Biddeford Mucky Peat	Very poorly drained	Plymouth Bog
Bangor Very Stony Silt	Well drained	NE Plymouth

Source: USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service

Intensive mapping by the U.S. Department of Agriculture offers an in-depth view of soil composition throughout the community. This mapping should be consulted prior to development to determine the soil’s suitability. The above table displays some soil characteristics however the town of Plymouth is home to more than 50 diverse soil types.

Floodplains

A floodplain is the flat expanse of land that extends from a body of water, which has potential to be covered during a flood. Floodplains exist around both fresh and saltwater bodies. Under the Federal Insurance Program, the 100-year floodplain is called the flood hazard area. This space extends to areas that have a 1%, or once in one-hundred years-, probability of being affected by flooding. During a flood, water depths in the floodplain may range from less than a foot in some areas to more than 10 feet in others. Regardless of the depth of flooding, however, all areas of a floodplain are regulated by the requirements of the Flood Insurance Program. Floodplains that border rivers and streams are composed of both a floodway, where water flows, and a flood fringe, where water backs up. The channel will usually include the channel of a river or stream and some land area adjacent to its banks. The portions of Plymouth that fall within the flood plain area are along Martin Stream, Plymouth Pond, Round Pond, the Carlton Bog Drainage Area, and the Martin Stream Drainage Area in northeast Plymouth. Much of the flood plain area remains undeveloped.

The existence of a floodplain within Plymouth qualifies it for the National Flood Insurance Program, which allows residents who fall within the floodplain to purchase insurance.

In 2016, there were two flood insurance policies issued in Plymouth. This amounted to \$254,800 of in-force policy coverage. Since 1978, there have been no flood insurance claims in Plymouth.

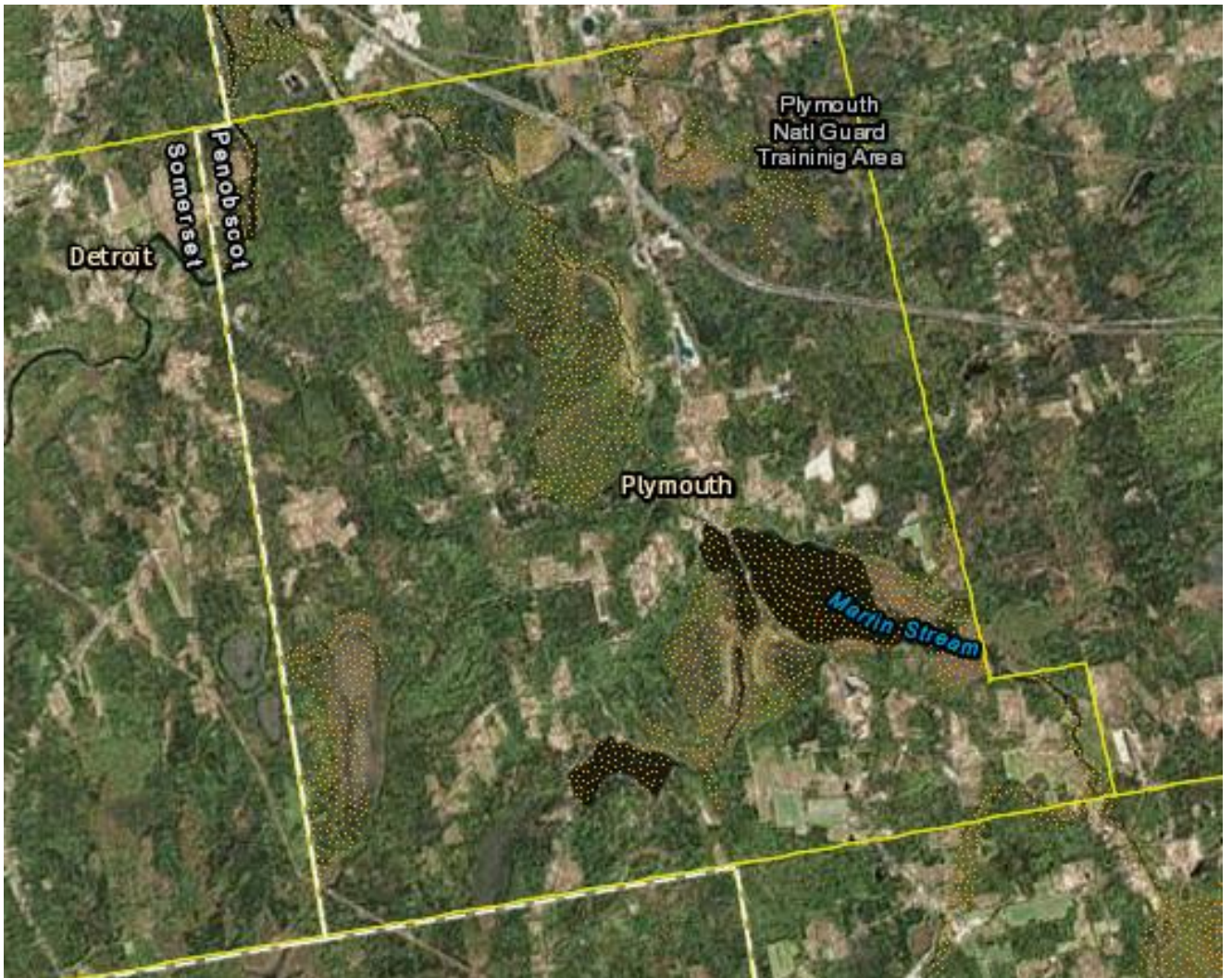
Wetlands

The existence of wetlands within a community offers an important part of an area's ecological fabric. These areas allow for the temporary storage of storm water, which helps to reduce the chance of flooding. Furthermore, these spaces naturally filter water through both chemical and biological action, thus creating purer water in a community. Additionally, they help to decrease the risks of erosion by providing a barrier between water bodies and developed areas, while also offering a breeding ground and habitat for numerous types of wildlife. Finally, wetlands provide recreational opportunities in public access areas, such as bird watching, and kayaking.

Both the U.S. Department of Interior and Maine's Building with Habitat Program have extensively mapped wetland areas. These maps also categorize the wetlands based on their forest composition and seasonal status.

Plymouth has three main wetland areas, all of which protect the area from erosion and provide an outlet for excess storm water and runoff. The first is in the vicinity of Plymouth Bog and the Martin Stream, the second surrounds the southern portion of Plymouth Pond, and the third is the Carlton Bog Drainage Area in southwest Plymouth. These wetland areas fall into a range of categories including seasonally flooded, seasonally saturated, forested and emergent.

Map B: 100 Year Floodplain Area



Source: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry

Wildlife

Wildlife is classified as natural resource, due to the source of livelihood that non-domesticated species offer through the recreation industry. Furthermore, as part of the greater ecosystem, wildlife help to support their habitats and ensure the health of their surroundings. As development progresses, habitat areas can frequently be threatened by human activity. The three major wildlife habitats that should be considered within Plymouth are: riparian and wetland habitats, critical and endangered species areas, and undeveloped habitat blocks.

Wetlands and riparian habitats offer valuable benefits to control both floodplains and erosion. However, these habitats also provide an important service to water-reliant species. Many birds use wetland and rivers as nesting areas, while also providing a home for beavers, otters, and numerous types of fish. Furthermore, this environment assist many more animals on a secondary level, with muskrats, deer, mink, and raccoons relying using this resource for feeding purposes. Within Plymouth, this habitat can be found in the Plymouth Bog, Carlton Bog Drainage Area, Plymouth Pond, and Round Pond vicinities. Portions of the riparian habitat between Martin Stream and Plymouth Bog are classified as an Appalachian-Acadian Basin Swamp Ecosystem. The Carlton Bog Drainage Area has been classified by the Department of Inland Fisheries as a Raised Level Bog Ecosystem.

Other riparian habitats exist along the Martin Stream. These areas give a buffer zone between the river and dry and upland area. This offers a space for birds and amphibians to exist and seek shelter. Furthermore, this barrier assists in the regulation of water temperatures.

Habitat areas that harbor critical or endangered species are also an important area of concern for the Town of Plymouth. According to the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Plymouth is currently home to three birds that fall into either the endangered or special concern categories: Bald Eagles, Black Terns, and Great Blue Herons. The Bald Eagle is currently listed as a species of special concern. Two Bald Eagle habitats have been located along Plymouth Pond; one is found near the south end of the Rt. 7 Bridge, while the second is located along the Pond's undeveloped northeast shore. Black Terns have been listed as an endangered species; however, a habitat area exists within Plymouth Pond. Finally, Great Blue Herons, also a species of special concern, have been located, in western Plymouth, near Clark Rd.

Finally, large undeveloped habitat blocks create beneficial habitats for many local species of wildlife. For example, roughly 4,000 acres of land within Plymouth are classified as Candidate Deer Wintering Areas. These undeveloped regions have the potential to offer shelter for deer during periods of extreme cold or deep snow. Significant areas of undeveloped habitat exist in northeastern Plymouth. 2,065 acres of undeveloped habitat is present in the area between Interstate-95 and the Newport border, a further 1,293 acres exists between I-95 and Rt. 69. Another area of 1,368 acres of undeveloped habitat exists in the vicinity, of Ward Hill. Additionally, 1,192 acres is present between Round Pond and Plymouth Pond.

Each identified area provides support for numerous species of wildlife. In turn these fish, mammals, and amphibians improve the health of both their habitat and the local economy. A loss of habitat for these species will not generally result in an immediate impact on a local community. Over time, however, an accumulation of habitat loss can reduce the carrying capacity and ultimately the prevalence, of wildlife.

Fisheries

The fish contained in Plymouth and Round Ponds are a valuable natural resource and community asset. This healthy fish population has the potential to draw anglers and naturalists alike to Plymouth. Plymouth Pond is a shallow body of water where both small and largemouth bass, chain pickerel, and white perch can all be found. While the bass population was only introduced in 1972, the original stock has created an excellent fishery in the Pond.

Round Pond is considerably deeper than Plymouth Pond, and also offers ample fishing opportunities. The Pond is home to Largemouth bass, Chain pickerel, White perch, and Hornpout.

Martin Stream is also a healthy fishing environment, where residents can find bass, brook trout, and white suckers.

Rare Threatened and Endangered Insects

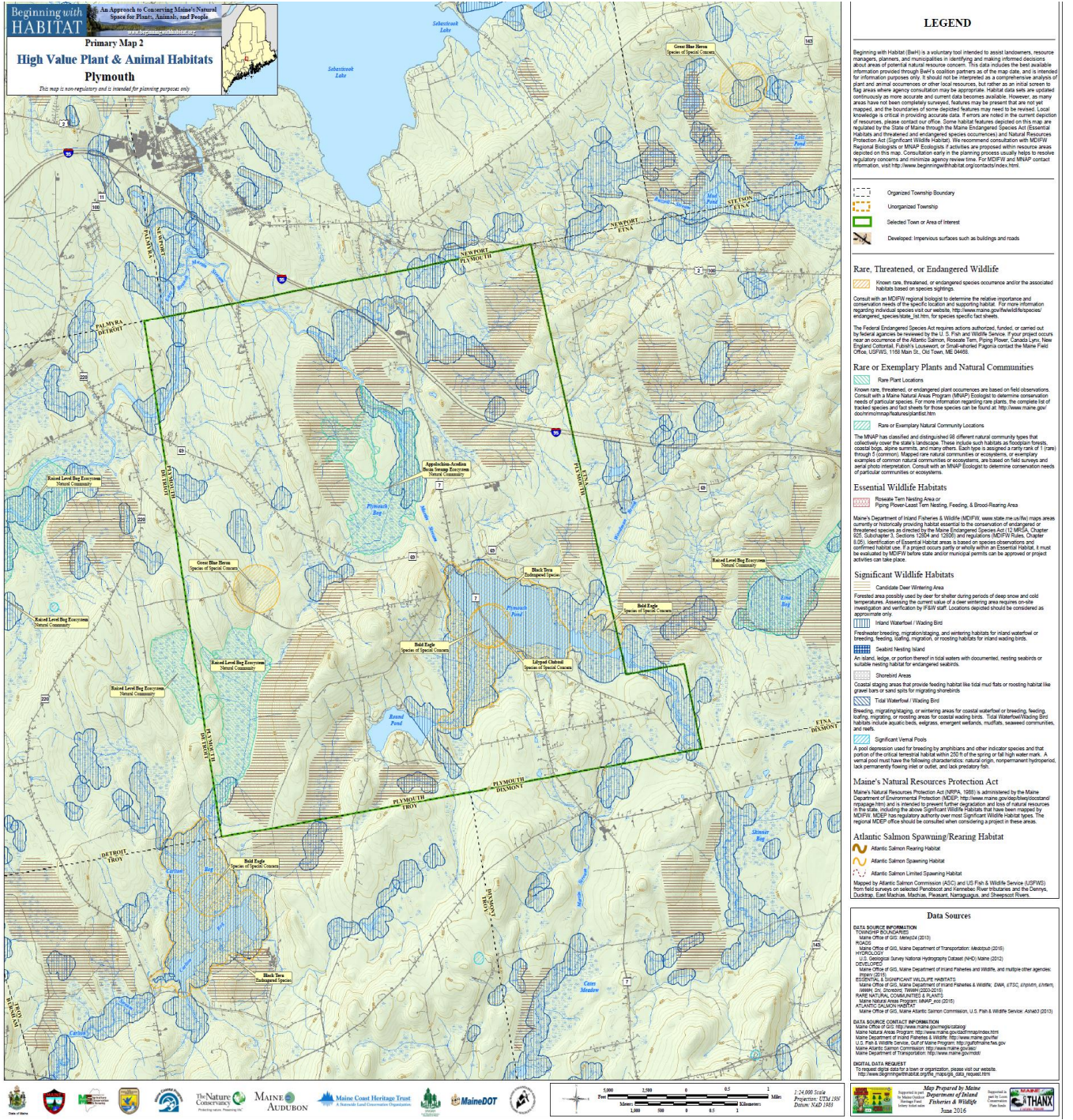
Plymouth Pond is also home to the Lilypad Clubtail, or *Arigomphus furcifer*. This type of dragonfly is listed as a species of special concern by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Lack of knowledge is one factor that the IFW has identified as contributing towards its endangered status. As its name implies, the insect is frequently found perched on lily pads.

Locally Significant Natural Areas

Community members from Plymouth have identified a number of local areas that have significant natural beauty and provide appreciated recreational opportunities. These sights are: Plymouth Pond, Martin Stream, Gray Hill, Small Rd., and Rutland Rd. This collection of natural areas provides space for a number of recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, bird watching, and kayaking.

Plymouth Pond is largely undeveloped, and provides ample opportunities for fishing, bird watching, and boating. The waterbody is fully contained within Plymouth, and provides a relaxing space for residents to enjoy numerous leisure activities. Martin Stream runs through the central portion of Plymouth. This waterway is shared with the surrounding communities of Dixmont, Newport and Detroit. The stream also provides a space for fishing. Gray Hill, is located in western Plymouth. The hill provides scenic views of Plymouth and the surrounding area. Rutland Road cuts across southwestern Plymouth. This thoroughfare is a valued walking path for community residents. Finally, Small Road in south central Plymouth is seen by many as an ideal space or sunset views. Located to the east of Round Pond it offers a beautiful vista for residents to enjoy.

Map C: This Map depicts plant or animal occurrences or other local resources



Scenic Resources

The natural beauty of Plymouth is one of the town's defining factors. Despite being 31 square miles, the community is home to only 1,380 residents. This allows the community to have a population density which is far below the national average. The rural character of Plymouth, combined with the Pond, which serves as a community focal point, makes the Town a naturally scenic area. Plymouth's natural beauty allows residents to enjoy a high quality of life by being just moments away from boating, fishing, hiking, and hunting opportunities. The natural topography, prevalent wildlife, and existing development patterns have made Plymouth a community that is steeped in natural beauty and recreational opportunities.

In order to maintain these scenic resources, the Town of Plymouth has enacted a number of ordinances. These local regulations ensure that landowners appear in front of the Town's Planning Board prior to subdividing any lots. Additionally, the community has a minimum lot size to reduce the risk of high density population.

Protection of Natural Resources

Natural resources are important part of the Plymouth community. Their presence offers a source of livelihood and leisure for many of the community's residents. Furthermore, natural features like wetlands and soil types provide a physical support that allows the community to avoid the costly effects of increased erosion or unstable land.

By adhering to state guidelines that regulate shore land building, the community has been able to ensure that the natural beauty and geologic structure of Plymouth and Round Ponds continues to be preserved. Additionally, the participation of susceptible households in the National Flood Insurance Program prevents at-risk residents from experiencing flood-related financial issues.

The Plymouth Environmental Action Team (PEAT) is a citizen-led group that has helped to preserve and protect the community's natural resources. PEAT has carried out local events such as trash clean ups, while also engaging in activities with state and local officials. Most notably, PEAT has cooperated with state legislators to combat a nuisance odor that has come from an area sewage treatment plant.

Plymouth's residents are very invested in the scenic beauty of their community, and have voiced their opposition to development which will alter the Town's ambiance. For example, in 2014 OTT Communication installed utility poles along the Rt. 7 causeway that crosses Plymouth Pond, which diminished the Pond's scenic beauty. In response, residents approached the Maine DOT and Planning Board and had the poles removed.

Both the State of Maine and the Town of Plymouth have taken steps to preserve natural areas within the community. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife currently manages roughly 700 acres in Plymouth Bog. This land was acquired in the aftermath of industrial pollution within the bog and maintains the safety of the community's water resources. The town of Plymouth has also preserved areas at the Triangle Parcel (1.75 acres) near the junction of Moosehead Trail and Lower Detroit Rd, as well as two acres of land surrounding the Town's Fire Station. Publicly owned

recreation areas also exist at the Town's Playground and ballfield, as well as the community's war memorial.

Map D: Four Areas of Statewide Ecological Significance

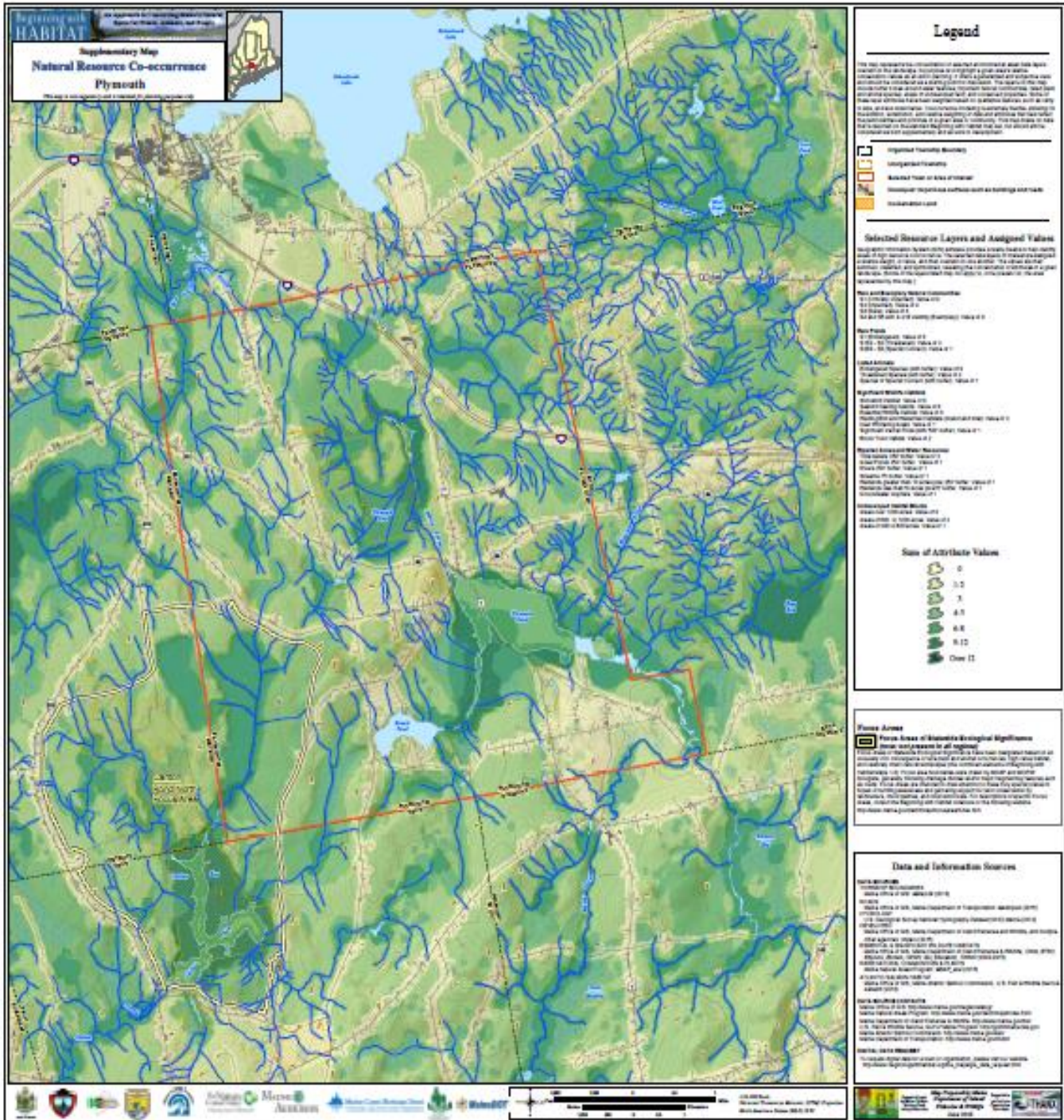
Four Areas are landscape scale areas that contain exceptionally rich concentrations of at-risk species and natural communities and high quality common natural communities, significant wildlife habitats, and their intersection with large blocks of undeveloped habitat.

The Carlton Pond North Focus Area is an extensive wetland complex featuring bogs, emergent marshes, and habitat for at least two rare species, the black tern and the bald eagle. The area is also noteworthy as a large unfragmented block of waterfowl habitat.

Much of the area around Carlton Pond is owned by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and managed as the Carlton Pond Waterfowl Production Area.



Map F: The map below shows selected data layers of interest. The values are summed, classified, and symbolized, revealing the concentration of attributes in a given one landscape.



State of Maine Goals:

To protect the State’s other critical natural resources, including with limitations, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, shore lands, scenic vistas and unique natural areas.

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine Goals</i>	<i>Action strategies necessary to address State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Implementation Responsibility</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Conserve critical natural resources in the community	Develop a Town Conservation Committee and empower them to take on a leadership role.	Board of Selectmen	Short-term
Coordinate with neighboring communities to protect scenic beauty of natural areas	Participate in local and regional efforts to monitor, protect, and improve water quality	Conservation Committee	Long-term
Recognize the local importance of Plymouth Pond and work to conserve the pristine shoreline	Maintain a watchful eye on the Pond and wildlife	P.E.A.T. M.V.L.P. Conservation Committee	Long-term
Maintain fishery and wildlife populations through habitat preservation	Incorporate low-impact development standards into the land-use ordinance	Planning Board	Short-term
Assist vulnerable homeowners by informing them of the National Flood Insurance Program	Inform local landowners of their perceived property risk	Town Office	Ongoing
Cooperate with the Department of Inland Wildlife and Fisheries to continue to preserve the Plymouth Bog area	Volunteers check with the Commissioner of Wildlife and Fisheries periodically	P.E.A.T Conservation Committee	Ongoing
Assist potential builders and developers in avoiding critical species habitat areas	Investigate and develop incentives to encourage landowners to avoid such areas	Selectmen Planning Board	Long-term

Outdoor Recreation

Findings and Conclusions

-The Town of Plymouth has a vast amount of outdoor recreational resources, however many of these are made possible through easements that must be respected and maintained.

-The community's surface water recreation areas are an important part of Plymouth's character, and their access points can continue to be expanded.

Introduction

Recreation and open space are critical to a community's quality of life. The availability of outdoor recreational activities, whether on pristine and undeveloped land or along the banks of mighty rivers, is a central part of the character of Maine. Recreational facilities, such as community buildings, ball fields, playgrounds, beaches and parks provide places where residents can socialize and be active. Open space provides areas for outdoor recreation, such as access to water bodies for boating, fishing, swimming and ice skating, and trails for walking, horseback riding, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, hiking, wildlife and bird watching, and snowmobiling and ATV riding. Furthermore, open space provides a habitat for wildlife and contributes to the scenic beauty of an area. Regionally and locally, open space and other outdoor recreational offerings are considered economic assets for ecotourism and second/seasonal home development. Additionally, outdoor recreation areas attract potential residents and increase a community's quality of life.

Public Outdoor Recreation Areas

Plymouth is home to numerous recreation areas, which are administered by a variety of authorities. The Town of Plymouth has ownership of three main parcels of land. The first parcel, known as the Triangle Lot, is 1.75 acres. This green space is located near the junction of Moosehead Trail and the Lower Detroit Rd, it serves as a gateway to a public trail network that uses land easements to create a recreation area. The second town owned parcel is in the vicinity of the Plymouth Fire Department and includes two acres of land. The final area of land is the community's baseball field and playground. Located along Moosehead Trail, this facility provides a space for residents to come together and socialize while also enjoying recreational baseball games. The baseball area is equipped with electricity and includes a snack bar that provides refreshments during games. The area's playground has been recently expanded over the past few years to fully meet the needs of Plymouth's youngest residents. Additionally, the town has secured an easement near the baseball field which allows attendees to have ample room for parking.

Recreation space is also available through land that is owned and maintained by the State of Maine. The Maine Department of Wildlife and Inland Fisheries operates the Plymouth Bog Wildlife Management Area. This bog habitat offers a protected area for residents to canoe, kayak, hike, and bird watch.

Recreation Department

The Town of Plymouth has an active Recreation Department that is operated by volunteers and provides activities for residents' children. Four coordinators organize a wide variety of events including craft nights, baseball leagues, and soccer camps. Additional athletic programs are carried out through RSU #19. At the high school level, area students, are able to participate in 13 different sports teams that are coordinated by Nokomis Regional High School.

Bodies of Water

Plymouth is home to four main bodies of water: Martin Stream, Plymouth Bog, Plymouth Pond, and Round Pond. Each of these provides distinct recreational opportunities, which are an asset to both residents and wildlife. The Martin Stream begins in Plymouth Pond before flowing north to the Newport border. The stream provides a space for residents to enjoy hunting, wildlife and bird watching. Martin Stream flows into Plymouth Bog. This unique riparian habitat is home to numerous species of plants and wildlife. Additionally, Plymouth Bog is part of a 700 acres Wildlife Management Area that is maintained by Maine's Department of Inland Wildlife and Fisheries. This ensures that a body of water will continue to be publicly accessible and protected. Plymouth's centerpiece is Plymouth Pond, which also provides the community with ample recreation opportunities. The pond is a popular location for boating, fishing, and swimming. The shoreline of 480-acre pond has remained almost completely undeveloped. The majority of shoreline land is owned by private landowners who have opted to preserve the pond's pristine character. Additionally, the pond is accessible due to the existence of a public boat launch; plans for an expansion of this boating facility are currently being discussed. Finally, Plymouth is home to Round Pond. Unlike Plymouth Pond, Round Pond is surrounded by many shorefront homes. The 134-acre pond is also a popular spot for fishing and boating.

Hunting and Fishing

Like many Maine communities, Plymouth is home to numerous hunters and fishermen. This form of recreation allows resident to be immersed in nature, while also carrying out an activity that requires skill, concentration and dedication. Many of Maine's hunter and fishermen are some of the state's most ardent conservationists, as the future of their sport is reliant on healthy wildlife populations. Within Plymouth landowners have been accommodating to traditional land use activities, and only a small amount of landowners have posted their property. Popular hunting areas include Plymouth Bog as well as the undeveloped land in northeast Plymouth. Much of Plymouth is populated with deer, waterfowl, and upland game birds. The community's water bodies provide a wealth of fishing opportunities. Popular fish include Brook trout, Largemouth bass, Chain pickerel, White perch, and Hornpout.

Walking Trails

The Town of Plymouth is home to numerous walking trail systems, which also are accessible for snow shoeing, cross country skiing, horseback riding, and mountain biking. Many of these trail networks, such as the Rutland Rd., are abandoned roads, which ensures that they are level, wide, and conveniently located to Plymouth's residents. Trails also exist in the Town-owned Triangle Lot, with future plans to connect this portion of

the community to the nearby ball field. This trail will be formed through the securing of easements from area property owners.

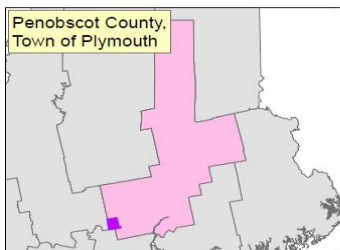
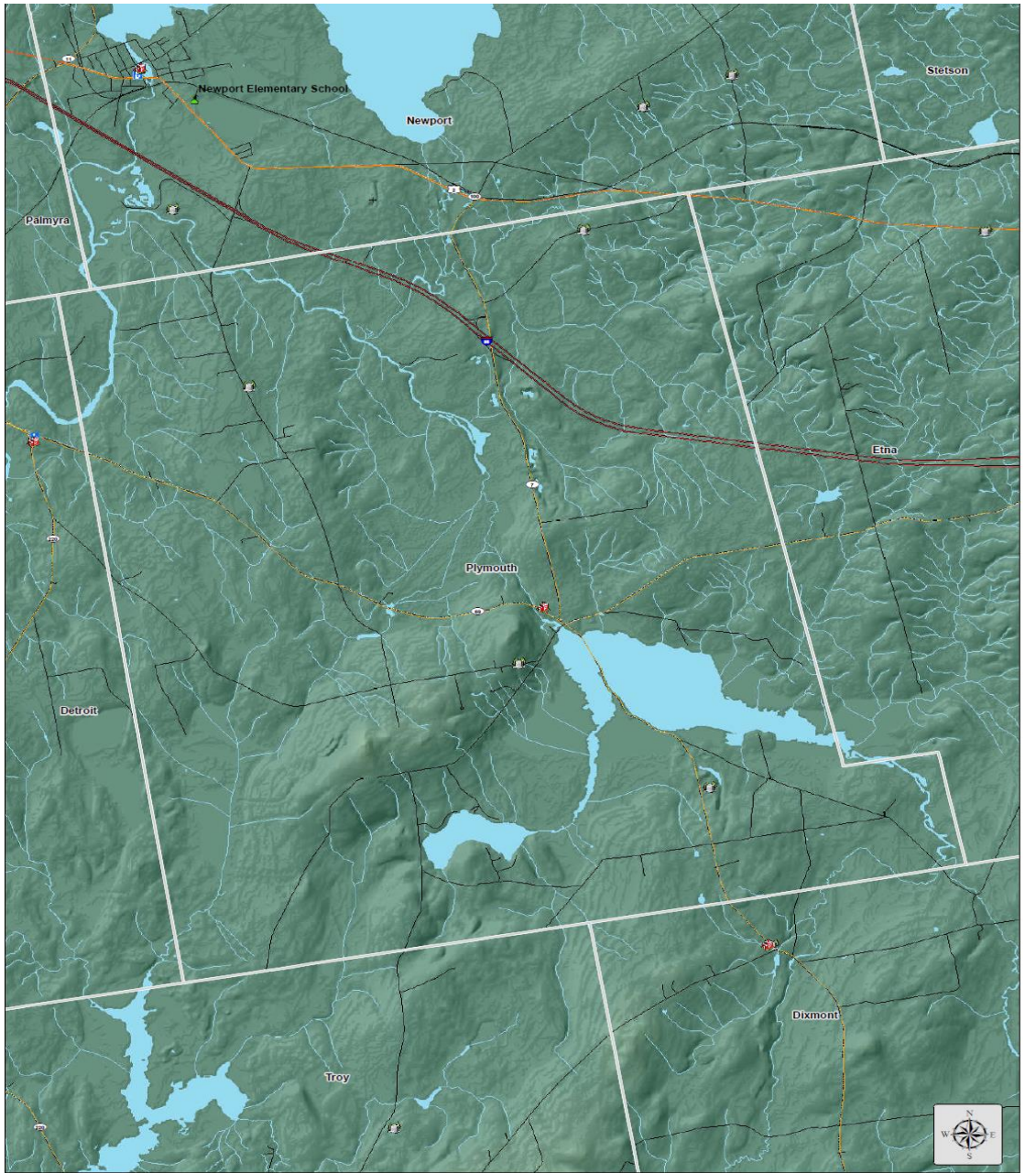
Snowmobile and ATV Trail System

The Town of Plymouth is home to an impressive system of snowmobile and ATV trails, which is both maintained and enjoyed by local residents. The Endless Season Riders Snowmobile and ATV Club is a membership organization that supports 27 miles of snowmobile trails, as well as 24 miles of ATV trails. These trails spread to every corner of Plymouth, which allows for endless amounts of enjoyment. This trail network also connects to neighboring communities, which further expands riders' options. While membership fees are collected, they are set at an affordable rate to allow all residents to take advantage of this resource. Funds that are raised allow for the maintenance of grooming machines. The Department of Inland Wildlife and Fisheries also provides funding through reimbursements for maintenance services. Additionally, Endless Season Riders provides an important line of communication between the sportsmen, land owners, and ATV/Snowmobile riding communities. This ensures that the needs of all three constituencies are being respected, and the best possible outcome is reached for all residents. For example, Endless Season Riders have the ability to close the gates to its trails during hunting seasons. This protects the safety of riders, while also ensuring that game animals are not scared off by the noise of ATVs/Snowmobiles.

Future Recreation Opportunities

Much of the public and private recreation opportunities within Plymouth rely on the creation of easements with private land owners. By maintaining a positive relationship between residents and landowners, the community will be able to safeguard this land access for future generations. Additionally, the community should continue to provide workshops or reading material, which allow residents to understand how to respectfully use private lands.

Map A: Plymouth Infrastructure which includes four cemeteries and one firehouse.



Plymouth Infrastructure

Source Data: USDA, MEGIS, Maine DACF
 Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone 19, Meters
 Produced by: Municipal Planning Assistance Program, DACF
 October 2016



Legend	
	Municipal border
	Fire Station
	School
	Police Station
	Library
	Cemetery
	Airport
	Interstate
	U.S. Routes
	State Routes
	Local Roads
	Railroad
	River/Stream
	Waterbody

State of Maine Planning Goal:

To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including surface waters.

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine Goals</i>	<i>Action strategies necessary to address State of Maine Goals</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Maintain/upgrade existing recreational facilities to meet the need of Plymouth's population.	Incorporate the input of community members, as well organizations such as the Recreation Department, to assess current community needs and concerns.	Selectmen	Long Term
Preserve existing easements which allow the public use of private land	Promote the respectful use of private property through poster campaigns and community meetings, while also following up with property owners to ensure satisfaction	Selectmen Recreation Department	As needed
Improve public access to surface waters	Put in place easements to allow further access to Round Pond, and expand access to Plymouth Pond through the expansion of boating and fishing facilities	Selectmen	Short term
Support programming that introduces Plymouth residents of all ages to outdoor recreation areas	Continue to fund and expand recreation programs for children, while investigating community interest in adult recreation programs.	Recreation Department	Long term

Transportation

Findings and Conclusions

-Plymouth's residents use personal vehicles as their primary form of transport. This requires the community to continue to update and repair municipal roads, which it has done through the approval of a bond.

-Traffic volume has declined on most of the community's monitored roadways.

Introduction

Reliable transportation is vital to the success of Plymouth's residents. The town's rural character requires that community members have access to a vehicle in order to reach services or workplaces. The Maine DOT is responsible for the Town's main arteries, Moosehead Trail (Rt. 7) and Lower Detroit Rd (Rt. 69). However, the Town of Plymouth provides snow removal services on those two roads. Additionally, the Town of Plymouth maintains the remainder of the community's roads.

Highway/Road Capacity

Traffic volume within the Town of Plymouth has remained relatively constant in recent years. As a commuting community, most of the Town's vehicle use is by residents. The Maine DOT records vehicle volume on selected roads throughout the state. These data collection points are updated every two to three years, and are able to show the effect that economic development or decline has on transportation networks.

The Maine DOT monitors 16 traffic data points within Plymouth. Six of these data points, however, are within the I-95 road network, such as entrance and exit ramps. Excluding the I-95 data points, the most heavily travelled area of Plymouth is the intersection of Lower Detroit Rd. (Rt. 69) and Moosehead Trail (Rt. 7). This intersection has an average annual daily traffic volume of 1,920 vehicles. This is a 6% decline from the amount of vehicles using the intersection during the 2011 recording period. This decrease may be attributed to changing commuting patterns, such as increased retirement rates or residents relocating their place of employment to Belfast and points south. The remaining non-I-95 data points have all experienced declines since 2011, however the additional data points all record under 1,000 vehicles daily.

Public Road Conditions

The Town of Plymouth's main thoroughfares are Lower Detroit Rd. (Rt. 69) and Moosehead Trail (Rt. 7). The Maine DOT has identified Rt. 69 as a low priority (Priority 4/5) road for repair and construction. Repairs are slated to begin on the portion of Rt. 69 that extends into Carmel and Etna; it is expected that this will also include culvert repair along portions of the road within Plymouth. Rt. 7 is identified as a medium priority (Priority 3) road. It is not slated for repair during the next two years. State funding has been allocated for the repair of a bridge that carries Rt. 7 over I-95. \$3,400,00 has been appropriated for the replacement of the bridge's deck.

The Town has allocated substantial funding for the repair of municipal roads. A \$500,000 bond that was approved in 2015, will continue to ensure that the community is equipped with adequate roadways.

Bridges

Plymouth is home to nine publicly owned and maintained bridges. This infrastructure offers an important transportation link, within a town that is defined by features such as Plymouth Pond and Martin Stream. The Maine DOT owns and maintains eight of the community's bridges, while the Town of Plymouth maintains one bridge. Most bridges have been rated as in good condition; however, some bridges still fall into the fair/satisfactory categorization.

Bridge Name	Owner/Maintainer	Substructure Class	Length (Feet)	Substructure Condition	Superstructure Cond.	Deck Cond.	Culvert Cond.	Inspection Date
Rt. 7 /I-95	Maine DOT	Bridge on State Highway	549	Satisfactory	Good	Fair	N/A	2012
McIntyr Brook NB	Maine DOT	Minor Span on State Highway	17	N/A	N/A	N/A	Good	2012
Knights	Plymouth	Low Use/Redundant	38	Satisfactory	Good	Good	N/A	2012
Plymouth-Troy	Maine DOT	Bridge on Town Way or State Aid Road	42	Good	Satisfactory	Fair	N/A	2012
Boulier	Maine DOT	Bridge on Town Way or State Aid Road	85	Good	Good	Satisfactory	N/A	2011
McIntyre	Maine DOT	Bridge on State Highway	20	N/A	N/A	N/A	Good	2012
Tannery	Maine DOT	Bridge on Town Way or State Aid Road	121	Satisfactory	Fair	Satisfactory	N/A	2011
Floating	Maine DOT	Bridge on State Highway	48	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	N/A	2012
I-95 SB/McIntyre Brook	Maine DOT	Minor Span on State Highway	17	N/A	N/A	N/A	Good	2012

Motor Vehicle Crash Data

The Maine Department of Transportation (Maine DOT) maintains a database which tracks all reported crashes that resulted in personal injury or at least \$1,000 of damages. Through this data, the Maine DOT is able to identify “High Crash Locations” (HCLs), which have witnessed more than eight crashes during a three (3) year period. Additionally, HCLs have a “Critical Risk Factor” (CRF) that is higher than other locations in the state. In order, to qualify as an HCL, locations must have a CRF that is greater than 1.0.

The Maine DOT has identified two High Crash Locations within the Town of Plymouth. These sites were identified based on information from 2013-2015. The first location is along the portion of I-95 that runs through Plymouth, this HCL is located along the southbound roadway before Exit 161. This corridor has seen nine crashes over the last three years. The second HCL is located on the portion of Moosehead Trail that runs between the Town Office and the junction with Loud Rd. This HCL includes the Plymouth Pond Causeway. Between 2013 and 2015, the site has seen 10 crashes.

Crash Location	Number of Crashes	CRF
I-95 SB/Exit 161	9	1.13
Moosehead Trail	10	1.05

Sidewalks and Parking

The Town of Plymouth has no public sidewalks or paved parking facilities. The Town has secured an easement from an adjacent property owner to allow for parking at the community’s ball field. Neither the building of sidewalks nor the construction of parking facilities is necessary in Plymouth at this time.

Bicycle Routes

There are no marked bicycle routes along Plymouth’s roads, however some of the community’s abandoned roads and trails are perfect locations for biking.

Aviation

The Pittsfield Municipal Airport, which provides general aviation services, is approximately 10 miles away from Plymouth. Bangor International Airport, which offers commercial flights to locations throughout the United States, is roughly 25 miles away.

Public Transportation

Due to its rural location, Plymouth has few public transportation options. Penquis provides limited transport assistance to the towns of Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties through the Lynx program. Lynx bus service serves Plymouth every Tuesday between 8 am and 3 pm. For a \$2 fare, riders can get transportation to Bangor.

Additionally, Plymouth is served by a number of taxi services that are based in Newport, Hermon and Bangor.

Regional Transportation Plans

The Maine DOT compiles numerous transportation plans to identify upcoming and long-range public works projects. As mentioned earlier, Plymouth is currently set to receive upgrades to a bridge along Moosehead Trail.

Additionally, Eastern Maine Development Corporation is responsible for creating strategic plans related to the region's transportation needs. EMDC's "Getting There Maine" program offers resources, such as a ride board, to assist residents.

State of Maine Planning Goal:

To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development

Promote public health, protect natural and cultural resources, and enhance livability by managing land use in ways that maximize efficiency of the transportation systems and minimize increases in vehicle miles travelled.

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine Goals</i>	<i>Actions needed to meet State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Prioritize community and regional needs associated with safe, efficient, and optimal use of transportation systems	Develop, and continue to develop, maintenance and improvement plans for the Town's roads	Selectmen	Ongoing
Safely and efficiently improve or preserve the transportation system	Collaborate with surrounding communities, region, and state in planning efforts	Selectmen	Ongoing
Promote community's health, livability and economy through increasing the efficiency of transport systems	Advertise Penquis existing Lynx program, while investigating the possibility of creating a community carpool network	Selectmen	Ongoing
Promote fiscal prudence by maximizing the efficiency of the state highway network	Actively participate in regional and state transport planning efforts.	Selectmen	Ongoing

Water Resources

Findings and Conclusions

-Plymouth is home to unique water habitats, such as the Plymouth Bog and Plymouth Pond, which are an important part of the community's character and quality of life.

-Water quality within the Town is fairly high; however, the contamination of Plymouth Bog continues to require attention and monitoring.

Introduction

Water resources, both in the form of surface and ground water, provide an important service to the community of Plymouth. Residents of Plymouth are able to tap into plentiful aquifers for their residential and commercial needs. By continuing to ensure that the Town has access to high quality water supplies, Plymouth will be able to use this natural resource as a selling point for continued development.

Surface Waters

Plymouth Pond is the largest body of water within the Town of Plymouth. The pond is 480 acres, and has a maximum depth of 10 feet. The mean depth is 4 feet. The water quality of Plymouth Pond has been rated as "Average" by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. The perimeter of the pond is 4.8 miles. The majority of the Pond's shoreline remains undeveloped. The northern and southern shores of the ponds are dominated by shrub-scrub wetland areas. The eastern shore, near the lake's Etna border, is classified as a forested wetland area. The summer surface temperature is 74 °F, while the bottom of the pond has been recorded at 73°F. This body of water is characterized by its shallowness, which allows the water temperatures to remain high. Additionally, there is a profuse growth of aquatic vegetation. Historically, the pond's principal fish were Chain pickerel, White perch, and Hornpout. In an effort, to increase local fisheries, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife stocked the pond with bass. In June 1972, 50 five to ten (10) inch wild largemouth bass were transferred from a pond at Colby College to Plymouth Pond. Over the past 44 years, this population of fish has successfully expanded. Today, the pond contains both its principal historic fish species, as well as Smallmouth and Largemouth bass, American eels, and Yellow perch. Furthermore, the pond is also home to a nesting colony of rare black terns. Plymouth Pond is accessible through a public boat ramp on Route 7, which allows the pond to be used for numerous recreational activities.

Round Pond, also known as Gray Pond, is located downstream from Plymouth Pond. The pond is 134 acres, and has a maximum depth of 30 feet. Unlike Plymouth Pond, much of Round Pond's shoreline has been developed for residential use. This development has been carried out pursuant to the State of Maine's guidelines related to shore land building, which stipulates that structures built after 1989 must be set 100 feet back from the body's high water mark. Portions of the pond's northern and eastern shores remain undeveloped; these areas are classified as shrub-scrub wetlands areas. Considerably deeper than Plymouth Pond, the summer surface temperature is 70°F. The water temperature at the maximum depth is 54°F. The pond's principal fish include Largemouth bass, Chain pickerel, White perch, and Hornpout. Largemouth bass were first observed in Round Pond in 1993, they are believed to have migrated from Plymouth

Town of Plymouth Comprehensive Plan Draft

August, 2016

Pond. It is expected that this population of Bass will continue to grow in the coming years.

Martin Stream and Plymouth Bog are both located to the north of Plymouth Pond, which serves as the source of Martin Stream. The Bog and Stream area lies between Moosehead Trail (Rt. 7) and Lower Detroit Rd. (Rt. 69). Approximately 700 acres of Plymouth Bog is currently designated as a Wildlife Management Area, and under the management and ownership of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. During the 19th century, the Stream was the site of multiple mills. Today, this wetlands area has been impacted by industrial pollution stemming from an oil disposal facility along Sawyer Rd.. Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s the Portland-Bangor Waste Oil Inc. operated at this site. During this period the company's 17-acre property was seriously polluted. In 2009, the area was granted superfund site status by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency after 10 residential wells were found to be contaminated. The settlement allocated \$11.2 million for the clean-up of the area, including the installation of a pump to draw out ground water and run it through a system of charcoal filters. Due to this contamination ammonia, has been located in Martin Stream. Concerns have also been flagged by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection related to the river's Benthic-Macroinvertebrate assessments. Despite these concerns, the Maine DEP expects the Stream to attain make a complete recovery and attain the organization's benchmarks for water quality. Currently, Martin Stream is classified as an "A" level water body. This is the second-highest water quality rating, and shows that the stream is suitable for the designated uses of drinking water after disinfection; fishing; agriculture; recreation in and on the water; industrial process and cooling water supply; and hydroelectric power generation. The purification pump, which was put in place, according to the settlement guidelines, is still in place and monitored regularly. This apparatus ensures that potentially contaminated water is being continuously treated.

Water Quality

The Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (MVLN), in collaboration with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, has surveyed Plymouth Pond to determine the body of water's quality. Overall the Maine DEP has rated the water as "average." Data from the MVLN, which was collected between 1997 and 2010, shows that the summer phosphorus level of Plymouth Pond has an average somewhere between 22 and 26 parts per billion. This is relatively high; however, this can be partially attributed to the pond's increased levels of humic acid which cause decreased visibility. This combination of factors, as well as the pond's shallow character, leads the MVLN to categorize Plymouth Pond as dystrophic.

Watersheds

A watershed includes all of the land that drains to a common body of water. Due to the interconnectivity of aquatic ecosystems, watersheds are linked by the water, nutrients, pollutants, and sediment that pass through this shared area.

Plymouth, is located in the Kennebec Watershed, which drains to the Kennebec River. Within this classification, Plymouth is part of the Lower Kennebec Sub-watershed. The Town of Plymouth contains five drainage divides: East Branch Sebasticook River Watershed, Plymouth Pond Watershed, Martin Stream Watershed, Round Pond and Carlton Bog Watershed.



Source: Building with Habitat

Note: This map is not exact, and is intended for planning purposes only

Groundwater

Groundwater occurs when precipitation permeates the soil, enters cracks and crevices within the subsoil, and eventually settles in the bedrock, where it sits beneath the water table. This ground water can then be tapped into for both residential and commercial uses. Wells draw from permeable layers in the fractured bedrock and saturated soil.

Aquifers are geologic area where groundwater is prevalent and supported. Two types of aquifers tend to be found in Maine: bedrock aquifers, and sand and gravel aquifers. Wells in sand and gravel aquifers can produce upwards of 10 gallons per minute. Some sand and gravel aquifers can reach production levels of 2,000 gallons per minute. Bedrock aquifers generally yield between 2 and 25 gallons per minute.

Sand and Gravel Aquifers

Mapping from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Beginning with Habitat database shows that two large sand and gravel aquifers are located in Plymouth. The first is just south of Plymouth Pond. This aquifer is located between Moosehead Trail and Loud Rd, it abuts the Plymouth Pond wetland area. The second main aquifer extends north from Plymouth Pond near Rt. 7. This aquifer is located near the confluence of Martin Stream and the Plymouth Bog. A third sand and gravel aquifer is located near the junction of Lower Detroit Rd and Moosehead Trail. This aquifer is located near the public water supply well at the Clifford Bottling Facility.

Bedrock Aquifers

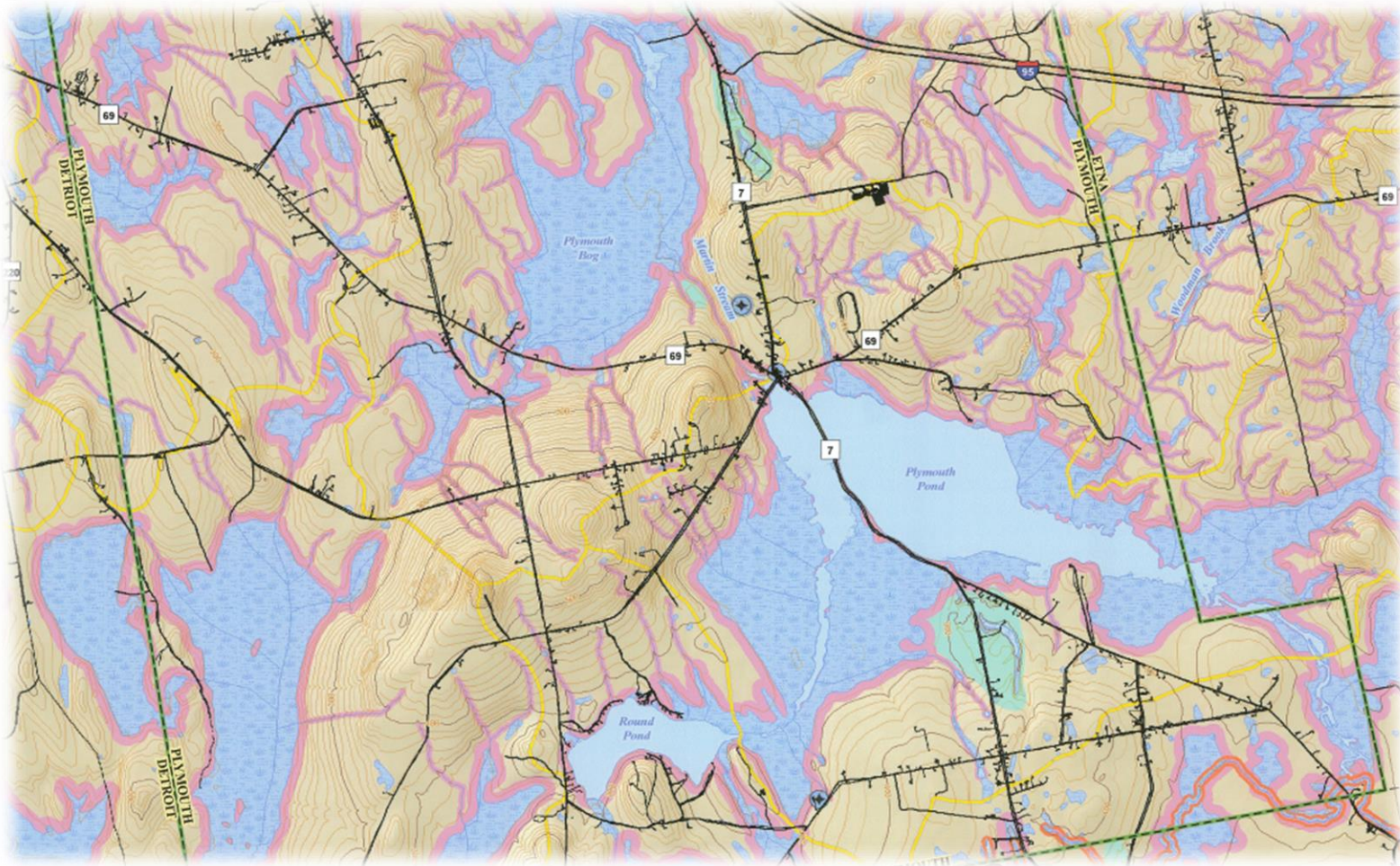
Far less information is available related to Maine's bedrock aquifers. Most residential wells access bedrock aquifers to provide for their minimal water needs. A well 200 feet deep that yields 2 gallons of water per minute will generally supply an adequate amount of water for a residence.

Contamination

Contamination is possible in both sand and gravel aquifers and bedrock aquifers. Some contamination sources include failing septic systems, road salt, industrial pollution, and hazardous substances. The Town of Plymouth's, past experience with contamination that stemmed from Portland-Bangor Waste Oil Inc industrial activities, provide a warning about the susceptibility of ground water to pollution. That being said; the activities surrounding Plymouth Bog have had little effect on the public Plymouth Water District. As of 2015, the Plymouth Water District's test results reveal the radionuclides, inorganics, microbiological, lead and copper levels are all well below the state's requirements.

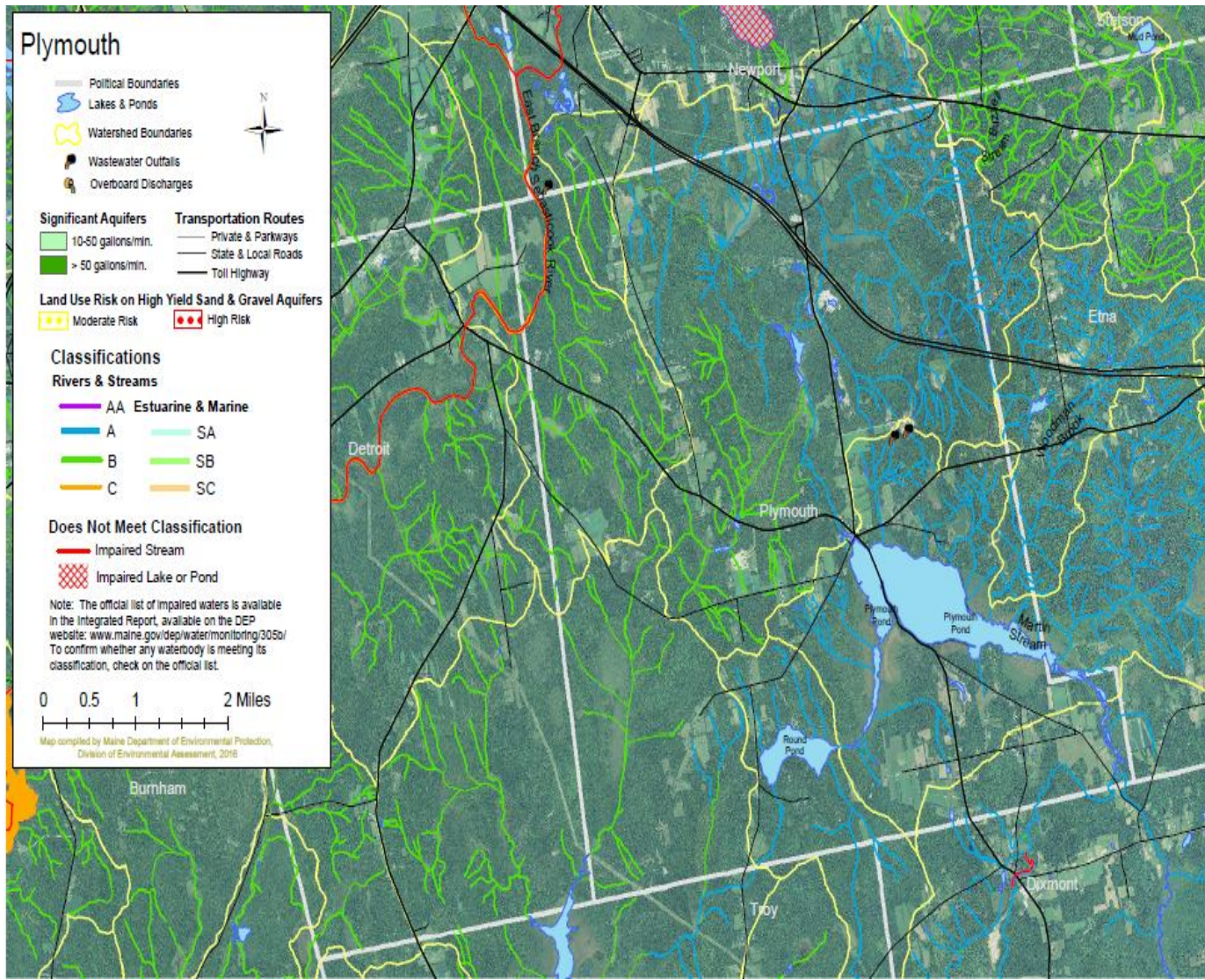
Map A: Water Resources and Riparian Habitats

The below map from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Beginning with Habitat office displays the major surface water bodies of Plymouth. Additionally, it displays the Town's aquifers (cyan), bog preserve (blue), and public water supply wells (stars). The yellow contour lines show the community's watershed drainage divides.



Map : Classifications of Rivers and Streams

The below map from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection displays all water resources within the Town of Plymouth along with the classifications of Rivers and Streams. Additionally, it lists impaired waters that do not meet classification. The only tributary within the Town of Plymouth boundary that's identified as impaired is the East Branch of the Sebasticook River.



State of Maine Planning Goal:

To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State’s water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds and rivers

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine Goals</i>	<i>Actions needed to meet State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Protect surface water resources from pollution and improve water quality where needed	Continue to monitor the Plymouth Bog site to ensure that water quality remains high	DEP P.E.A.T.	Long term
Protect water resources in growth areas, by balancing conservation with development need	Plymouth currently adheres to state guidelines regarding shore land building. Strict enforcement of these regulations will continue to balance conservation and development.	Code Enforcement Officer	Short term
Cooperate with neighboring towns to ensure that shared water resources remain protected	Collaborate with Dixmont to protect the shared Martin Stream from contamination	Selectmen, Planning Board	Long term

Public Facilities and Services

Findings and Conclusions

-Plymouth currently enjoys high quality, local services such as fire protection, electricity, water supply and trash removal.

-Increasing internet connectivity must remain a priority for the community, as high speed internet is critical to economic growth.

Introduction

High quality Public Facilities are vital to the success of any community. These local institutions provide key services that allow for a high quality of life, and increased economic development. Plymouth has demonstrated its commitment to its public facilities by judiciously planning its capital improvements and ensuring the satisfaction of its residents.

Public Water System

Following the environmental damage caused by industrial activity within Plymouth, a water district was created to ensure that private wells were not utilizing contaminated aquifers. The Plymouth Water District currently serves approximately 60 customers. The Water District uses radon removal and some chlorination to ensure that the drinking water meets regulations. The Plymouth Water District has consistently exceeded the Maine CDC's water safety standards.

Sewage Disposal

The Town of Plymouth does not have a public sewer system. Residents utilize private leach fields and septic tanks in order to dispose of waste.

Solid Waste Disposal

The Town of Plymouth currently contracts with Bolster's Rubbish Removal for the disposal of solid waste. The community's contract allows for weekly roadside trash pickup. Additionally, roadside recycling collection occurs once each month. The contract for waste disposal is put out to bid on an annual basis, and has rotated between a number of companies in recent years.

Storm Water Management

There is no piped storm water management system within Plymouth. Streets are drained through existing culverts.

Public Education

Plymouth is a member of Regional School Unit #19, which also includes Corinna, Etna, Hartland, Newport, Palmyra, and St. Albans. Plymouth's students currently attend Newport Elementary School, Sebecook Middle School, and Nokomis Regional High School. Some students also attend Etna-Dixmont School. In 2015, 194 students from Plymouth were enrolled in RSU #19.

Plymouth is also home to a large number of families who have opted to homeschool their children. Currently roughly 25 students are homeschooled within the community.

Law Enforcement

Plymouth does not have a local police force and instead contracts with regional law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement is provided by the Penobscot County Sheriff and the Maine State Police. Emergency calls are dispatched by the Penobscot County Sheriff's Bangor office, as well as through Maine State Police Troop E. The Penobscot County Sheriff and the Maine State Police have divided the region into six rural patrol areas. This subdivision ensures that contracting communities receive adequate coverage. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Game Wardens also provide service to Plymouth, and enforce policies within Plymouth's Wildlife Management Area.

Fire Department

Plymouth is served by a volunteer fire department, which currently has 15 members. Plymouth's fire department is located along Lower Detroit Rd., near the intersection of Moosehead Trail. The structure was built in the 1970s, and is comprised of four bays, which house the Department's three fire trucks. It is expected that upgrades to the fire department's facilities and equipment will be necessary in the upcoming years. In order to account for these financial needs \$12,136 has been allocated for the Department's capital projects.

Emergency Medical Services

The Plymouth Volunteer Fire Department provides emergency medical services to residents of the community. The fire department has mutual aid agreements with surrounding towns in order to ensure that Plymouth's resident receive the best possible protection and care. Additionally, Sebecook Valley Hospital provides ambulance services to the Plymouth community. Their team of on-call paramedics delivers critical care to urgent patient needs. Sebecook Valley Hospital is located in Pittsfield, roughly 10 miles from Plymouth. Advanced medical care and trauma services are provided by Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor, which is roughly 30 miles from Plymouth.

Public Works Department

The Town's road system is maintained by the Department of Public Works. Services that are provided include winter snow removal, brush cutting, and replacement of culverts. The Town's Road Commissioner is elected on an annual basis, and is responsible for the care and upkeep of the community's roads. The Town is responsible for approximately 27 miles of roads.

Public Library

There is no public library within Plymouth; however public libraries are located in both Newport and Carmel. Many Plymouth residents utilize the Newport Library for a small fee.

Town Office

The Town Office is located along Moosehead Trail, near Plymouth Pond. The building is home to the U.S. Post Office, as well as the Town Clerk's office. The space is a former school house, and is an important historic landmark for community members. Regular Selectmen meetings are held in the building. Plans have been discussed regarding the moving of the Town Office to a new facility, and converting the current building into a historical society or museum.

Larger community meetings are held in the Town Grange, which includes a small stage. This community gathering place is also of historic importance to the community.

Town Administration

The government of the Town of Plymouth has been formed in accordance with Maine State laws. The community is governed through the Town Meeting model of government. Citizens assemble annually to discuss town-wide concerns, and to vote on town business matters such as the annual budget. Members of the Board of Selectmen are elected annually on the day prior to the Town Meeting.

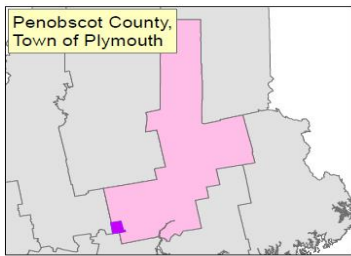
Plymouth's Board of Selectmen is comprised of three members. Each member is elected to a one year term. The Board of Selectmen meets regularly to handle all regular Town business. The Selectmen also serve as assessors and overseers of the poor. Additionally, the Town is governed by a Planning Board. This body make all determinations related to community zoning and building.

Communication

Electricity is provided by Central Maine Power's transmission system, which accommodates the community's energy needs. Cellular telephone service is available. Plymouth's close proximity to I-95 and Maine's Three Ring Binder Broadband Network, allows all residents to access the internet. Portions of the community that lie to the north

of Plymouth Pond have access to high speed internet, while those who live south of Plymouth Pond have a weaker connection. Plans are currently being formed to extend high speed internet to the entire community, in a way that is both efficient and preserves the scenic beauty of Plymouth. Internet connection is provided by OTT communications

Map A: Plymouth Infrastructure



Plymouth Infrastructure

Source Data: USDA, MEGIS, Maine DACF
 Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone 19, Meters
 Produced by: Municipal Planning Assistance Program, DACF
 October 2016



Legend	
	Municipal border
	Fire Station
	School
	Police Station
	Library
	Cemetery
	Airport
	Interstate
	U.S. Routes
	State Routes
	Local Roads
	Railroad
	River/Stream
	Waterbody

State of Maine Planning Goal:

To plan for finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine Goals</i>	<i>Actions needed to meet State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Efficiently meet identified public service needs	Continue to maintain a list of potential capital improvement projects, and ensure that they are incorporated into the Town's annual budget.	Selectmen	Short term
Provide public facilities that promotes growth and development in certain geographic areas	Locate new public facilities in areas which will foster a tight knit community	Selectmen, Planning Board	Long term
Continue to supply services in a financially responsible manner	Collaborate with surrounding communities to explore additional opportunities for shared services.	Selectmen	Ongoing
Solidify internet connectivity, to allow the entire town to benefit from high speed access	Meet with OTT officials to determine the most aesthetically pleasing and technologically efficient manner to connect southern Plymouth with internet	Selectmen, Planning Board	Short term

Housing

Findings and Conclusions

-Plymouth's increase in housing units has occurred at a steady pace, which has matched the increase in population; allowing for a decline in vacant units.

-Like many Maine communities, Plymouth has an aging population that will require additional senior housing options.

Introduction

The Town of Plymouth is currently equipped with an adequate supply of housing. With a declining vacancy rate, and a steady housing unit growth rate, the community does not have a shortage of homes. Like many Maine communities, however, Plymouth faces challenges related to an aging population and a deteriorating housing stock. Roughly 40% of the Town's homes are more than 35 years old. Furthermore, the community has median home price that is far below the state average. In order to ensure that Plymouth retains a quality of life, it will have to encourage residents to renovate and refurbish their homes. Additionally, the community needs to determine a suitable solution for accommodating older residents.

Number of Units

	2000 Census	% of Total	2010 Census	% of Total	% Change
Total housing units	562	100	615	100	+9.4%
Occupied housing units	469	83.5	537	87.3	+14.5%
Vacant housing units	93	16.5	78	12.7	-16.1%
Total population	1,257	*	1,380	*	+9.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Since 2000, the amount of housing units within Plymouth has increased by 9.4%. This increase of housing units within the community has been paralleled by a population increase of 9.8%. This coordinated growth between population and housing units, coupled with a slight dip in household size, has resulted in an impressive decrease in vacant housing units. The current percentage of vacant housing units remains lower than the vacant housing rates for both Penobscot County (14.7%) and the State of Maine (22.8%).

Owner Occupied vs. Rental Properties

	Town of Plymouth	State of Maine
Housing Units, 2014	621	721,830
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2010-2014	83.7%	71.4%
Median gross rent, 2010-2014	\$736	\$772
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2010-2014	\$128,900	\$173,600

Source: American Community Survey

For the last 30 years, Maine has had rates of home-ownership that have been far higher than national ownership rates. This has been especially true in Plymouth. In 2000, while the state average for owner occupied housing was 79%, the owner-occupied rate among Plymouth's residents was 90%. Over the past decade, however, there has been a statewide shift from home ownership to renting. Nationally this has been heavily prompted by the housing crisis of 2008, which not only drove millions of Americans into foreclosure but also reduced the confidence of young Americans who were considering purchasing a home.

The events of the Great Recession continue to be an influence on millennials who are reaching normal home buying age. In 2014, the number of Plymouth residents who owned their own home had dipped to 83%. While this is still above the state average of 71%, it shows that the town's housing situation may be influenced by the uncertainty of young residents. According to the Maine Housing Authority, millennials, are not the only factor affecting state-wide statistics. As the oldest state in the nation, Maine continues to have a higher rate of home ownership than the national average. This is due to the high amount of rural retirees who have opted to age in place rather than move into a new home for retirement. Currently, 14% of Plymouth's residents are above the age of 65. As baby boomers continue to age this percentage will grow. The community's aging population will insure that the Town maintains a home ownership rate that is higher than the national average, however the shift of young people towards rental properties may cause Plymouth's home ownership rate to continue to fall.

Recently, the Maine Housing Authority urged communities to secure additional affordable housing due to the 52% of Maine renters who are utilizing upwards of 30% of their yearly income on rent. Plymouth's low rent has allowed the community to avoid this crisis. Within Plymouth, only 28% of resident renters are utilizing more than 30% of their household income for rent.

Age of housing units

Age of Residential Structures	Occupied Housing		Owner-Occupied Housing		Renter-Occupied Housing	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
2010 or later	2.9%	+/-3.0	3.4%	+/-3.5	0.0%	+/-23.0
2000 to 2009	18.7%	+/-5.4	19.6%	+/-6.2	14.1%	+/-17.1
1980 to 1999	37.9%	+/-6.3	36.3%	+/-6.6	45.9%	+/-22.9
1960 to 1979	22.9%	+/-5.8	22.6%	+/-5.6	24.7%	+/-23.5
1940 to 1959	4.4%	+/-3.2	4.6%	+/-3.5	3.5%	+/-5.7
1939 or earlier	13.2%	+/-5.6	13.5%	+/-6.3	11.8%	+/-10.0

Housing Options for Senior Citizens

As the oldest state in the nation, communities throughout Maine are trying to grapple with growing concerns related to housing aging residents. Currently, 14% of Plymouth’s residents are above the age of 65. This is well below the statewide average of 17%, however this population is projected to increase in the coming years. Currently Plymouth’s largest age group is those between the ages of 45 and 55, this age bracket represents roughly 20% of the town’s population. As this generation shifts from employment into retirement over the next two decades, community leaders may need to consider additional housing alternatives for this aging population.

According to a 2013 report that was compiled by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, more than 50% of all older Americans are now choosing to remain in their own homes as they continue to age. As Americans continue to live to older ages, and as the baby-boomer generation begins to reach retirement age, communities have to seriously consider how to balance senior residents’ quality of life with their quality of care.

A 2015 report, which was commissioned by the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition (MAHC), examines the current housing options and alternatives that are available to older Mainers. This report had a particular focus on the requirements of low-income senior citizens. According to MAHC, Penobscot County is currently home to 45,400 residents who are over the age of 55. Within that age group, 14,400 residents live in low-income households. Among Penobscot County’s low income seniors, more than two thirds are affected by at least one disability. This high level of seniors who are affected by both low incomes and health-related conditions increases the need for assisted and supervised living options for senior residents.

The MAHC has proposed four options for low-income seniors which allow them to remain in their communities, while also receiving adequate health care. The first is the creation of home modification funding programs. While no such program currently exists in Maine, in Massachusetts a state-funded program currently allows low income seniors to access government-funded loans of up to \$30,000 for modifications such as wheelchair ramps or wider doors. The second option is through attaining waivers for Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). This waiver system allows seniors who are eligible for institutional services to access Medicaid-funded services in their home. These waivers have been available to Maine Care enrollees since 1994, and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services is currently reviewing plans to further expand this program. The third option is the creation of Villages, which allow seniors in a small geographic area to access shared services in their own homes through a community network. This model of senior care typically depends on volunteer coordinators, and membership in a Village requires dues that may exceed \$500/year. Grants and other financial assistance can make Villages more affordable for low income seniors. The final option is the utilization of property tax and utility rate reduction programs. Through this model, senior citizens are eligible to receive up to \$900 in credit toward their property tax bill. Under a previous Maine program, which was in effect until 2013, seniors could receive credits of up to \$2,000. This program is especially helpful for seniors who have already paid off their mortgage, but are struggling to deal with the cost of maintaining their home.

MAHC also proposes options for communities who would like to increase the institutional options for aging residents who would like to stay in their community, but can no longer stay in their home. The main option presented is co-housing. This affordable solution houses seniors in smaller residences around a common area. This creates a space that is accessible for residents and supervised by live in staff members. While the overall price to residents may be equal to traditional home costs, this option allows decreased costs for housekeeping, nursing, and other services. Residents of Plymouth have a deep urge to create affordable housing options, which will allow seniors to remain in the community. By offering such housing, the Town will be able to retain its multi-generational character. Such a facility would also increase seniors quality of life, by allowing them to stay close to family, friends, and activities, rather than moving to facilities in Newport or Bangor. Residents believe that a former group home facility along Moosehead Trail would offer an ideal setting for the creation of a co-housing facility.

State of Maine Planning Goal:

To encourage and promote affordable, decent, housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.

<i>Policies necessary to address State of Maine Goals</i>	<i>Actions needed to meet State of Maine goals</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
Support the efforts of regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workplace housing needs	Participate in a regional affordable housing coalition to address regional affordable workplace housing needs, as necessary	Selectmen	Ongoing
Ensure that land use regulations encourage the development of quality affordable housing	On a biennial basis, review the value of newly constructed residences to assess whether 10% of new housing is affordable. If this threshold is not met, prepare affordable housing plans.	Town Assessor and Planning Board	Ongoing
	Review existing subdivision laws to determine if they can be amended in a way that will make land more affordable, while also preserving the community's character	Planning Board	Short Term
Create elder housing opportunities that allow seniors to stay within the community	Investigate the feasibility, and community interest in creating a local community housing senior residences	Selectmen, Planning Board	Short term

Land Use

Findings and Conclusions:

- Preservation of the rural character of Plymouth is a chief consideration when discussing land use policy.
- Plymouth population has declined 0.9 percent since 2009 and is only expected to increase by 0.4 percent by 2034.

Introduction:

Plymouth is a rural community composed of residences, small farms, and a small village center. Plymouth's early economy included manufacturing, forestry, and agriculture. Most of early community economic drivers no longer exist. The town now acts as a bedroom community for Bangor, Waterville, and Belfast. Most commerce occurs outside of town, with the exception of the Plymouth Village Store. The town of Plymouth will plan for its future needs based on past trends and design policies based on the character of the community.

Agricultural Land Use

Over the past few decades the agricultural industry within Plymouth has steadily declined. Farms that once lined Moosehead Trail and Clark Rd, have since been replaced by gravel pits. This is due to individuals using lots for best and most practical uses. However, small scale agriculture has seen a slight uptick. Some residents are turning to small scale agriculture to provide a variety of crops for themselves and the local community.

Most land use is miscellaneous crop farms. These farms are dispersed throughout the community. In 2016, there were only two parcels that were registered under the Maine State Farmlands Tax Program. One parcel was comprised of 70 Acres of land, while the second parcel is made up of 45 acres.

Commercial Land & Industrial Land Use

There is no cluster of commercial or industrial areas in Plymouth. There are a scattering of commercial and home businesses throughout the community. Historically, Plymouth was dominated by the presence of manufacturing mills. Today, there is no use of land that would be considered industrial. Over the next 10 years, Plymouth will continue to be a bedroom community with no new industrial or commercial clusters.

Village Land Use

Plymouth has a small traditional village that services the basic needs of the community as well as hunters, anglers, boaters, snowmobilers, etc. The village includes a post office, town office, fire station, grange hall, convenience store, and Diner.

Public Property

Most of Plymouth's public property is located in village area. Properties include the municipal building, fire station, playground, grange hall, and sand and salt storage. Additionally, the town owns a number of cemeteries, a boat landing, and EPA Superfund site. There is also a tax acquired unbuildable lot located near Martin Stream off Moosehead Trail/Rte. 7.

Land Use Regulations:

To management development there is in minimum lot requirement of 80,000 square feet, subdivision regulations, shore land zoning ordinance, and floodplain management ordinance. To administer these ordinances there is an appointed five (5) member planning board and a part time certified code enforcement officer. The capacity of those involved with planning has been adequate.

Subdivision Regulations

The current Subdivision regulations were adopted by the Planning Board in March 1974 and most recently amended in 2009. In addition to the review criteria contained in the State Subdivision law, it has additional standards including the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and the newly adopted Ordinance Regulating Solid Waste Facilities.

Plymouth's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance applies to all land areas within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-waterline of any great pond or river, or upland edge of the freshwater wetland, and all land areas within 75 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of the stream. The ordinance was adopted in 2015 and follows the current state minimum guidelines. A copy of the Shoreland Zoning map is located at the end of this section.

Three (3) districts have been established in the ordinance including: Resource Protection, Limited Residential, and Stream Protection. The three districts are also officially identified on each of the communities Official Shoreland Zoning map. The zones are described as follows:

- Resource Protection: Areas where development would jeopardize significant natural scenic, recreational and historic resources, including but not limited to flood plains, precipitous slopes, wildlife habitat, and other areas critical to the ecology of the region of state.
- Limited Residential: Areas suitable for residential and recreational development.
- Stream Protection: This district generally includes areas within 100ft of streams.

The Ordinance Regulating Solid Waste Facilities governs all land and all structures within the boundaries of the Town of Plymouth. The purpose of the ordinance is to protect the health and safety of the residents of the Town of Plymouth; to enhance and maintain the quality of the environment; to conserve natural resources; and to prevent water, air and land pollution through regulation of storage and land applications of municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plant sludge and other residuals, and septage.

Floodplain Management Ordinance

Plymouth participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and has enacted a Floodplain Management Ordinance. The ordinance complies with the requirements of the National Floodplain Insurance Program. The Ordinance is administered by the Code Enforcement Officer. Since the ordinance was adopted in 2014, there have been no claims.

Minimum Lot Size and Set Backs

The Minimum sizes for lots upon which structure are to be placed is 80,000 square feet. The minimum front setback is 58 feet, measured from the road centerline and 15 feet from other lot lines.

Land Use Analysis

The residents of Plymouth believe that the town has been striking the right balance. Plymouth is ideally located for a bedroom community that supports Bangor, Belfast, and Waterville communities. In addition, its country living makes this an ideal place for those who work in urban setting but cherish a rural quality of life.

Current population growth has been in decline over the past 5 years. Consequently, there has been little interest in, and no pressure for residential, commercial, or industrial development. The Town is currently equipped with an adequate supply of housing. With a declining vacancy rate, and a steady housing unit growth rate, the community does not have a shortage of homes. However, the aging population and older housing stocks could lead to added expenses and a need for additional town services. The map of current land uses and lack of development pressure allows town officials to effectively maintain existing land uses and prepare and plan for

future land uses by prioritizing those areas of the community which are best suited for residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, forestry, and public uses in the future.

Plymouth has also identified other areas as seen as the development constraints map where little or no growth should be encouraged, such as prime forest lands, wetland areas, areas of endangered natural resources, aquifers, etc. One area the community would like to discourage development is the village center. Ideally, the community would like to preserve the small number of historical buildings and limit further growth. Since there is ample room for additional growth, and little to no growth is anticipated, it will be important to target existing growth in areas that accommodate development and preserve rural resources. To accomplish this, the town has created standards for development along the scenic corridors, Plymouth Pond, Round Pond, and community ridge lines. Additionally, Plymouth will be looking to provide incentives to landowners to keep large parcels of land for farming.

Residents and town officials have sought to build a plan based on what the community sees for the future of Plymouth. It is intended guide the town in future community decisions over the next 10 years.

State of Maine goal plan that needs to be addressed:

To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the state’s rural character, making efficient use of public services, and preventing development sprawl

Policies Necessary to address State of Maine Goals	Action strategies necessary to address State of Maine Goals	Implementation Responsibility	Time Frame
Coordinate land use strategies with other local and regional land use planning efforts.	Meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and learn about regulatory strategies.	Planning Board	Ongoing
Support the locations, types, scales, of land uses desired in the vision for Plymouth	Coordinate with communities to provide emergency services, food banks, land preservation standards, and trail system maintenance agreements for outdoor recreation.	Planning Board	Short Term & Ongoing
Support the level of financial commitment to provide needed infrastructure.	Prepare recommendations to current land ordinances and consider adoptions of new land management ordinances that include: voluntary land use strategy, identify growth and rural areas, updating site and subdivision ordinances, and road repair recommendations	Selectmen	Long term & ongoing
Maintain efficient permitting procedures.		Selectmen	Long Term & Ongoing
Protect critical rural areas from impacts of development.	Budget a Capital Investment Plan anticipated to support proposed land use	Selectman	Ongoing
	Employ a code enforcement officer who is certified in accordance with 30-A MRSA § and provide him/her with tools, training, support, necessary to enforce the land regulations	Code Enforcement Officer	Ongoing
	Periodically evaluate implementation of this plan as outlined in the plan evaluations element.	Code Enforcement Officer	Ongoing

Future Land Use Policies and Strategies:

The Town intends to maintain the community's rural character by encouraging orderly development in appropriate areas of town, while protecting open space, forest, agricultural land, and critical natural resources.

Based on 2014 census estimates, Plymouth population since 2009 has declined 0.9 percent.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee has concluded that the Town of Plymouth is exempt from identifying growth areas in its Future Land Use Plan based on the Criteria for Growth Area Exemptions due to minimal or no growth, as follows:

(1) Residential

The population of Plymouth was 1343 in 2007 and the current population is 1388. This is an increase of only 3.3% which is well below the threshold of 5% listed in the criteria. Since 2007, Plymouth has had 27 new housing starts. Again, this is well below the criteria threshold of 50.

(2) Commercial/ Institutional

No change in the last ten years.

(3) Industrial

No change in the last ten years.

The Maine State Economist's population projections for Plymouth projections support Plymouth's status as a minimal or no-growth community, as defined in the Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rules.

Therefore, the Plymouth Comprehensive Plan Committee has developed the Plymouth Plan on the basis of a Growth Area Exemption.

Therefore, the Town will not be identifying future growth areas at this time, but will continue to monitor the anticipated growth trends and prepare accordingly.

Public Participation

The Plymouth Comprehensive Plan was performed by relying on input from residents through a series of public outreach activities to assure that the vision and future planning were shaped by a broad cross-section of Plymouth's population. Leading the public participation effort was an eleven (11) member Comprehensive Planning Committee. The committee met regularly to update the Comprehensive Plan; the process included an aggressive approach for engaging residents in the public participation activities to have their voices heard.

A community-wide survey was developed with the assistance of Eastern Maine Development Corporation to ask a series of questions to determine:

- Satisfaction with the quality of life/living in Plymouth Maine
- Benefits of living in Plymouth (i.e., cost of living, caring community, access to medical and social services, education, etc.)
- Disadvantages for living in Plymouth (i.e., property taxes, lack of housing, low population growth, quality of streets and roads, etc.)
- Assessment of the quality of life (better, same, worse)
- Satisfaction with economic growth
- Identification of preferences for economic development and community improvements
- Ranking (satisfied or dissatisfied) of services and community characteristics)
- Preferences for communications regarding community meetings or news

In addition to these questions, the survey encouraged participants to share additional comments. The survey was mailed to approximately 800 individual households with prepaid postage return envelopes, and an electronic version was also posted on the Plymouth's town web site. In all 295 responded which represents 35% of the total households.

The priorities, preferences, and challenges identified through the public participation opportunities are reflected in the Comprehensive Plan and served to frame Plymouth's vision for the future. The Town intends on holding a meeting and adopting the plan after the state reviews and finds the plan complete and consistent with Maine's Growth Management Act.

Regional coordination:

Plymouth currently partners with neighboring communities which is discussed in multiple chapters throughout the comprehensive plan. This collaboration has allowed Plymouth to share costs while maintaining public services. The primary areas of service include transportation, public education, law enforcement, and housing. Additionally, Plymouth continues to coordinate with neighboring communities to provide emergency services, food banks, land preservation standards, and trail system maintenance agreements for outdoor recreation. The town will continue to meet with neighboring communities to discuss current service agreements, coordinate land use designations, and learn about regulatory strategies. Plymouth falls under the jurisdiction of Eastern Maine's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). This regional development plan is reviewed by the Economic Development Administration, and maintained by Eastern Maine Development Corporation. Key portions of this plan include increasing entrepreneurs' access to capital, while further promoting the importance of education to meet the demands of a 21st century economy. Plymouth intends to use EMDC as a resource when opportunities to share costs with neighboring communities exist. The town also expects to consult with EMDC when implementing parts of the comprehensive plans require federal and state funding.

Plymouth is a small community with declining population and limited financial resources. The town recognizes the importance continuing to work with our community neighbors and economic development partners. Plymouth will continue to look for community partnerships in:

- ✓ Recycle additional materials
- ✓ Keep ponds open and clean
- ✓ Expand trail systems for walking, snowmobiles, cross country
- ✓ Animal control services
- ✓ Historical preservation
- ✓ Volunteer Fire Department
- ✓ Road side garbage pickup
- ✓ Protect ground water
- ✓ Public and health safety
- ✓ Elderly housing

These are just some examples where collaboration will be a priority.