

The University of Maine DigitalCommons@UMaine

Maine Town Documents

Maine Government Documents

2005

Town of Wells, Maine, Comprehensive Plan Update

Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/towndocs>

Repository Citation

Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission, "Town of Wells, Maine, Comprehensive Plan Update" (2005). *Maine Town Documents*. 2491.

<https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/towndocs/2491>

This Plan is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Town Documents by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

Town of Wells, Maine Comprehensive Plan Update

Submitted To:

Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force
Wells, Maine

Submitted by:

Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission
21 Bradeen Street, Suite 304
Springvale, Maine 04083

February 24, 2005

In Cooperation with:

Town of Wells Planning Department

Table of Contents

Part 1	Introduction	1
	Comprehensive Plan Purpose and Use	1
	Comprehensive Plan Organization	1
	Comprehensive Plan Adoption	2
	Comprehensive Planning Process	2
Part 2	Policies and Implementation Strategies	5
	Chapter 1 The Vision for Wells	5
	Chapter 2 Population Policies and Strategies	7
	Chapter 3 Natural Resources Policies and Strategies	9
	Chapter 4 Marine Resources Policies and Strategies	15
	Chapter 5 Historic and Cultural Resources Policies and Strategies	18
	Chapter 6 Land Use Policies and Strategies	20
	Chapter 7 Town Character and Appearance Policies and Strategies	38
	Chapter 8 Transportation and Circulation Policies and Strategies	44
	Chapter 9 Economic Development Policies and Strategies	49
	Chapter 10 Housing Policies and Strategies	52
	Chapter 11 Public Facilities Policies and Strategies	55
	Chapter 12 Open Space Policies and Strategies	58
	Chapter 13 Public Utilities Policies and Strategies	61
	Chapter 14 Fiscal Capacity Policies and Strategies	64
	Chapter 15 Flood Hazard Mitigation Policies and Strategies	65
	Chapter 16 Planning and Management Policies and Strategies	73
	Chapter 17 Regional Coordination Policies and Strategies	76
Part 3	Implementation Program	78
	Regulatory Programs	79
	Land Use, Development and Resource Protection Implementation Program	79
	Residential Growth Management Implementation Program	80
	Non-Regulatory Programs	80
	Capital Improvement Implementation Program	80
	Open Space/Land Acquisition and Protection Implementation Program	80
	Planning and Management Implementation Program	82
	Regional/Intergovernmental Cooperation Implementation Program	84
	Historic Preservation Implementation Program	85
	Town Character and Appearance Implementation Program	86
	Transportation and Circulation Implementation Program	86
	Economic Development Implementation Program	88
	Housing Implementation Program	89
	Public Facilities and Services Implementation Program	90
	Public Utilities Implementation Program	91
	Flood Hazard Mitigation Implementation Program	93

Part 4 Capital Investment Strategy 97

Part 5 Appendices 106

A – Inventory and Analysis

1. Economics and Demographics
 - A. Population
 - B. Local Economy
2. Water Resources
3. Critical Natural Resources
 - A. Topography, Slope and Soils
 - B. Wetlands
 - C. Significant Wildlife & Fisheries Habitats
 - D. Scenic and Coastal Areas
 - E. Flood Hazards
4. Marine Resources
5. Transportation and Circulation
6. Housing
7. Historic and Archaeological Resources
8. Land Use
 - A. Forestry and Agricultural Land
 - B. Recent Development Patterns
 - C. Current Land Uses
9. Public Facilities and Utilities
 - A. Public Facilities
 - B. Public Utilities
10. Fiscal Capacity

B – Residential Buildout Analysis (as in April 2002 Comprehensive Plan)

C – Conservation Commission Recommended Land Use Classification System for Town Owned Land (as in April 2002 Comprehensive Plan)

D – Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District Memo (dated 11/17/2000, as in April 2002 Comprehensive Plan)

MAPS

- Map 1 – Base Map for Comprehensive Plan
- Map 2 – Existing Land Use, as of April 1, 2004
- Map 3 – Existing Zoning
- Map 4 – Natural Areas & Wildlife Habitats
- Map 5 – Topography & Drainage Divides
- Map 6 – Generalized Soil Types
- Map 7 – 100-Year Floodplains, FEMA
- Map 8 – Residential Growth Permit Locations 1992-2003
- Map 9 – Wetlands (National Wetlands Inv.)
- Map 10 – Areas of High Potential for Wildlife Habitat (Gulf of Maine Project)
- Map 11 – Lands in Conservation Ownership or Current Use Taxation Programs
- Map 12 – Water & Sewer Utility Service Areas
- Map 13 – Branch Brook Aquifer, Contaminant Travel Time Modeling
- Map 14 – Fire Station Coverage Analysis
- Map 15 – Future Land Use Plan: Growth, Transitional, Rural, and Critical Rural Areas
- Map 16 – Targeted Residential Growth Areas

Part 1 -- Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Wells is a publicly adopted document that states what the citizens of Wells want to achieve for their community and how they intend to achieve it. What the citizens want to achieve are known as “policies” and how they intend to achieve it are known as “implementation programs”.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PURPOSE AND USE

The Comprehensive Plan’s purpose is to document the Town’s commitment to achieve a vision. The Comprehensive Plan reflects a long-range (e.g., ten year) view of future issues and opportunities. Issues are identified, projected and options selected to set a course of action. These decisions are the basis for policies and implementation programs.

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

In addition, the Comprehensive Plan’s purpose is to implement Maine State Planning Law and related state and regional development policies.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ORGANIZATION

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

Part 1: Introduction

This part describes the purpose, use, planning process and plan adoption.

Part 2: Policies and Implementation Strategies

This part address key decision issues facing the Town (e.g., population growth, land use, transportation, community appearance, economic development, housing, etc.).

Part 3: Implementation Program

This program describes the different types and purposes of actions available to achieve the policies.

Part 4: Appendix

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

The Comprehensive Plan is a living document. As Town issues and opportunities change and decisions need to be made, the Plan must be reviewed and updated to reflect current policies and implementation programs. Therefore, comments and suggestions about the Comprehensive Plan are always welcome.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADOPTION

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

The plan adopted in 2002 was found by the Maine State Planning Office to be inconsistent with state Growth Management law. In response to these inconsistencies, the Town of Wells formed a Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force in 2003. This plan represents work completed by this Task Force in 2003 through 2005. It builds upon, incorporates, consolidates, reformats and updates prior Comprehensive Plan policies and implementation programs.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

The Comprehensive Planning process is an open process that encourages citizen participation.

State Planning Requirements

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

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

1. The preparation and adoption of a comprehensive plan by the Town. This plan must comply with State requirements and must be reviewed by State and regional agencies prior to its final adoption.
2. The preparation and adoption of an implementation program that is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and carries out the goals and policies set forth in the Plan. State and regional agencies must also review this program.

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

Town of Wells Town Planning Program

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

Phase I - Issue /Opportunity Research and Analysis

Phase II - Alternative Plan Evaluation and Selection

Phase III - Comprehensive Plan or Amendments Adoption

Phase IV - Implementation Development Plans, Projects and Programs

Phase V - Annual and Five-Year Capital Budgeting

Phase VI - Monitoring and Evaluation

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

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

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

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

Subdivision Plans – Immediate, specific plan for the legal division and development of a specific parcel of land. Subdivision Plans require detailed information about the street layout, lot size, grading, drainage, impact on water quality, and other information as described in the

Town Subdivision Ordinance. These plans are reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, any applicable Development Plans or Programs, Town Ordinances and applicable State and Federal regulations. The Planning Board may approve subdivision Plans after a public hearing. Subdivision Plans are prepared and amended as needed.

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

Comprehensive Plan Update Process

As stated above, this update of the Comprehensive Plan is the result of the Town of Wells' reaction to State Planning Office inconsistencies identified in the 2002 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force worked on this version of the plan in 2003 and 2004. The Task Force is comprised of citizens, selectmen and Town staff. The Task Force completed its work under the guidance of the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission, the Town's planning contractor.

Part 2 – Policies and Implementation Strategies

Chapter 1 The Vision for Wells

The Comprehensive Plan’s Vision for Wells describes the overall features of what the citizens of Wells want their Town to be like. The Vision defines the overall character of the Town in terms of its natural, social and built environment.

THE VISION FOR WELLS

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

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

Setting standards will enable Wells to:

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

Vision Benefits

There are several benefits from this vision for Wells including:

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

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

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

2. Improved Central Area

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

3. Protecting Rural Areas and Neighborhoods

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

4. Beach Areas with Neighborhoods and Village Centers

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

5. Open Space and Natural Ecologically Critical Areas

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

6. Transportation Center (Maine Turnpike Exit 19 Area)

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

Chapter 2 – Population Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Population Policies and Strategies include goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to the amount and timing of population growth. The Land Use Policies and Strategies address the location of population growth.

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

Goals

State Goal:

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

Regional Goal:

(No goal specific to population.)

Wells Goals:

1. Manage the rate of residential and non-residential growth in a manner that maintains the Town's rural, small-town character and is consistent with the Town's ability to accommodate it.
2. Provide opportunity for a variety of individuals to live in Wells.

Policies

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

1. Ensure that residential growth in rural areas is accommodated in suitable locations that are properly zoned, have appropriate environmental conditions and allow for provision of proper access and public services exclusive of water and sewer.
2. Provide opportunity for higher density residential development in areas that have appropriate community facilities and services, including public water and sewer.
3. Continue to monitor and manage the rate of residential growth to ensure that such growth does not unduly strain public facilities and services and not damage the environment.

Standards

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

1. Limit population growth to 132 dwelling units per year set forth in the existing Wells Residential Growth and Land Use ordinances.
2. Establish different growth limits for areas identified as growth and non-growth areas in the Future Land Use Plan (see Chapter 6).

Implementation Strategies

1. Revise the zoning districts in Rural Areas and requirements for these districts as identified and described in the Land Use policies in Chapter 6 of this Plan.
2. Adopt the proposed zoning district changes and requirements for the higher density Growth Areas that are identified and described in the chapter on Land Use policies.
3. Amend the Residential Growth Management Program to support the growth and non-growth designations in the Future Land Use Plan (see Chapter 6).
4. Establish a standing Growth Management Committee to review the growth management ordinance on an ongoing basis and make recommendations to the Selectmen. The Committee shall consider regional growth trends, similar ordinances in surrounding communities and the long-term capacity of Wells' municipal facilities and services.

Chapter 3 - Natural Resources Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Natural Resources Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to the protection, conservation and development of Wells' natural resources.

Natural resources contribute to defining a community's unique character. Wells' natural resources provide residents with a rich quality of life and many recreational opportunities. Natural resources are also an important consideration in estimating the Town's capacity for growth and development potential. Natural resources can provide both opportunities and constraints for growth. For example, steep slopes and wetlands are inappropriate for development while better drained, flatter areas are generally considered more suitable for development. The natural resource base of Wells is an important factor in determining local land use decisions. See Appendix A for an analysis of Wells' natural resources.

Goals

State Goal:

1. Protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers, and coastal areas. (Growth Management Act)
2. Protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas. (Growth Management Act)

Regional Goal:

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

Wells Goals:

1. Assure the Town's natural features, including the marshes and wetlands, beaches, aquifers, critical wildlife habitats, and floodplains, that are truly environmentally sensitive areas and create a truly outstanding, but fragile, environment are protected from damage and preserved for future generation.
2. Enhance the Town's programs for protecting sensitive, natural resources through regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms.
3. Support programs for acquiring key land areas of environmental concern to provide for the protection of these resources, while compensating the property owner.
4. Work cooperatively with federal and state environmental regulators to enforce regulations that protect the Town and region's natural resources.

5. Develop land use controls that encourage these areas to be protected and permanently set aside as land development occurs.
6. Protect the Branch Brook aquifer from potential sources of contamination by controlling land use in this area and maintaining the availability and quality of other existing and potential water supplies.
7. Allow the removal of mineral resources such as sand and gravel in a manner which minimizes the impact on these areas and surrounding neighborhoods, provides for the reclamation of these sites, and protects the groundwater from contamination.
8. Protect, manage and support natural resource based enterprises such as agriculture, forestry and mineral extraction.
9. Place high value on the protection and long-term management of and education about the Town's ecological systems including soils, surface and ground water, wetlands, beaches, natural vegetation and wildlife. The natural environment should be used as a guide to manage future growth recognizing that Wells' natural systems provide opportunities and constraints for both conservation and development.
10. Assure ocean beaches continue to be a community resource.

Policies

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

General

1. Encourage the use of environmentally sensitive areas and critical habitats in a manner that does not jeopardize the environmental value of their resource.
2. Allow the removal of mineral resources such as sand and gravel in a manner that minimizes the impact on these areas and surrounding neighborhoods, provides for the reclamation of these sites, and protects the groundwater from contamination.

Beaches

1. Assure public access to the beaches for both residents and tourists while protecting the livability of the beach neighborhoods.
2. Manage the beaches in cooperation with property owners to control overuse, provide necessary facilities, and promote a wholesome family environment.
3. Maintain and protect the physical quality of the beach systems through activities such as cleaning, stabilization, and sand replenishment.
4. Improve pedestrian, bicycle and local transit access to the beaches.

5. Create transportation links (e.g. ferry, bridges, etc) between the Harbor, Wells Beach and Drakes Island.

Groundwater

1. Protect the quality of the groundwater in the Branch Brook Aquifer and in the Town's other sand and gravel aquifer areas that can be used for high volumes of domestic use by implementing and enforcing regulations that control the use, handling and storage of hazardous materials.
2. Protect the quality of the groundwater in areas not served by public water and sewer by ensuring existing nitrate standards set by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection are enforced and ensuring proper inspections of all septic system installations.

Surface Waters

1. Protect surface water quality by aggressively managing point and non-point source pollution including stormwater discharge.
2. Cooperate with surrounding communities and environmental non-profit groups to minimize the potential for surface water pollution by inappropriate uses or activities.

Wetlands

1. Protect and maintain the valuable functions of tidal and freshwater wetlands by minimizing the impact of development and allowing appropriate uses such as low impact recreation, wildlife habitat and limited, controlled timber harvest.
2. Ensure protection of high value wetlands including vernal pools, through regulatory and non-regulatory implementation programs and place high value on these resources when designating growth and rural areas in Wells.

Soils

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

Wildlife and Fisheries

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

Floodplains

1. Manage floodplain areas to ensure the safety and welfare of those individuals with properties in such areas.
2. Maintain and update comprehensive community flood hazard management policies and strategies. (See Chapter 15 and the Appendix).

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

Education

1. Work with schools to promote education of environmental sciences and ecology.

Standards

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

1. Existing Land Use and Subdivision Ordinances.

Implementation Strategies

Beaches

1. Appoint a Committee to recommend specific implementation programs to assure public access to beaches, manage beach use, protect the physical quality and create transportation links.
2. Establish a graphic inventory of all sand dunes on the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) and update as new data becomes available. Ensure that any landowner with property on a sand dune obtain any necessary State permits prior to obtaining any local permits.

Groundwater

1. Revise the Aquifer Protection District of the Land Use Ordinance to incorporate a two-tiered zone for the Branch Brook Aquifer based on maps prepared by the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District (KKWWD) and adopt use and quality standards as identified in the Aquifer Protection section of the Land Use Policies and Strategies.
2. Work with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.
3. Review the Aquifer Protection provisions of the Town's Land Use Ordinance to determine whether or not there is sufficient protection of the groundwater in the Town's sand and gravel aquifer areas. Where appropriate implement and enforce regulations that control the use, handling and storage of hazardous materials in these areas.
4. Establish a program to ensure there is proper inspection of all septic system installations and monitor the performance of septic systems in/or adjacent to Resource Protection and Conservation Areas.
5. Maintain the current buffer around surface water bodies and wetlands in the Land Use Ordinance to prohibit septic systems and other uses with the potential to contaminate both the groundwater and the groundwater/surface water interface.

Surface Waters

1. Continually integrate the State of Maine Guidelines for Municipal Shoreland Protection, as may from time-to-time be revised, into the local land use regulations.
2. Revise local subdivision and site plan review regulations, where necessary, to require stormwater management, erosion and sediment control and landscaping, including a reference to a suitable guidance document that requires currently accepted Best Management Practices such as the *Maine Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook for Construction: Best Management Practices* by the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District, 1991 or *Better Site Design: A Handbook for Changing Rules in Your Community* by the Center for Watershed Protection, 1998.
3. Continue local subdivision and site plan review regulations to provide for municipal inspection and enforcement of:
 - Erosion and sediment control plans.
 - Post-construction maintenance and operation plans, particularly for major developments or developments deemed by the Planning Board to have potential negative impacts to valuable natural resource or Resource Protection Areas.
4. Continue the cooperative relationship with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to expand the water quality monitoring program with annual monitoring results and analysis made available to the Town.
5. Establish a process with adjacent communities to ensure the maintenance of water quality standards for surface waters that occur in more than one community such as Branch Brook and the Merriland River.
6. Ensure that the water quality of Ell Pond is not degraded by working with the Town of Sanford to implement a consistent set of standards for water quality protection.
7. Amend Town ordinances to require a timber-cutting plan and permit.

Wetlands

1. Establish a committee to review and assess the quality of current wetland management within Wells and, if deemed appropriate, establish guidelines for a local wetland regulation. If appropriate, base the regulation upon a classification system that incorporates hydrology, vegetation and wildlife and a definition that is consistent with current state and federal wetland regulatory programs. Report findings to the Board of Selectmen within six months of establishing such committee. Wetland guidelines should ensure that any definition be consistent with current state and federal wetland regulatory programs.
2. Establish a program to identify, prioritize and protect high value freshwater wetlands and land containing vernal pools. Protection should occur through regulation, education and cooperation, purchase or conservation.

Wildlife and Fisheries

1. Identify and protect through the timber harvesting plan and permit, site plan and subdivision approval process, those areas of land designated by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) as “significant wildlife habitat. These areas should be revised based on MDEP updates and revisions of these habitat areas and performance standards.
2. Retain the currently designated buffers along rivers and streams in the Town’s Land Use Ordinance to maintain the quality of these areas for wildlife and fishery habitat.
3. Within areas of Wells designated as Rural Use, seek to maintain large parcels of unfragmented lands and to ensure that wildlife habitats are connected by travel corridors through both regulatory and non-regulatory means.
4. Require all applications for subdivision, site plan review and timber harvesting to investigate and map the presence of any significant wildlife habitat and habitat for state rare or endangered species that may not have been previously mapped, such as vernal pool areas of the Tatnic Hills that provide habitat for Blandings and spotted turtles and as established by the State of Maine on the site. Obtain necessary state approvals as a condition of subdivision plan and /or site plan approval.
5. Work cooperatively with Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage and protect high value habitat and areas for significant habitat and rare and endangered species.
6. Work with landowners with high value habitats on their property to protect these areas through education and cooperation, conservation and easements or purchase through a land holding entity.

Forest Resources

1. Amend Town ordinances to ensure a timber-cutting permit is obtained prior to cutting.

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

1. Continue to manage the use and development of the Town’s inland flood hazard areas in accordance with state and federal standards.
2. Update current flood hazard standards and maps to be consistent with federal guidelines and the recommendations of the Flood Hazard Mitigation Policies and Strategies.

Chapter 4 - Marine Resources Policies and Strategies

Introduction

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

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

Goals

State Goal:

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

Relevant State Coastal Policies:

1. Promote the maintenance, development, and re-vitalization of the State's ports and harbors for fishing, transportation, and recreation. (Coastal Management Policy)
2. Enhance the economic value of the State's renewable marine resources. (Coastal Management Policy)
3. Support shoreline management that gives preference to water-dependent uses over other uses, that promotes public access to the shoreline and that considers the cumulative effects of development on coastal resources. (Coastal Management Policy)

Regional Goal: (None specific to marine resources.)

Wells Goals:

1. Continue to assure public access to the beaches and Harbor in Wells while managing and maintaining these resources in the best interests of the community and adjacent landowners.
2. Work cooperatively with the State to manage and regulate the use of critical sand dune areas.
3. Assure the Wells Harbor remains a viable resource since the harbor plays an important role as both an economic and recreational resource for the Town.

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

Policies

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

1. Continue to assure the quality of the living environment in beach neighborhoods by managing the activities of beach goers, enforcing private property rights and controlling access and parking.
2. Manage the beaches in cooperation with private landowners to ensure this resource can be used in a manner that allows for maximum use by the beach goers while minimizing the impact to private property owners and protecting the natural plant and wildlife habitats that enhance the value of the beach.
3. Protect the plant and wildlife habitat associated with the beach/dune and estuarine systems to ensure survival of the state's endangered and threatened species.
4. Support the dredging of the harbor to maintain it as a suitable mooring area while minimizing the negative impacts of dredging on recreational fishing and shellfishing opportunities.
5. Control parking and support facilities in the harbor and beach areas to allow continued use of the area for commercial and recreational boating and marine uses.

Standards

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

1. Existing Land Use ordinance.

Implementation Strategies

1. Update the local Harbor Management Plan that addresses harbor location and use issues, jetty issues, marine resource protection, adjacent land use and public access. The updated plan should be submitted to the Maine State Planning Office for approval and become a part of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Maintain the graphic inventory of all sand dunes on the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) and update, as new data becomes available. Ensure that any landowner with property on sand dunes obtain any necessary state permits prior to obtaining any local permits.
3. Continue to work with appropriate state agencies and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to manage point and non-point source pollution into the harbor and estuary to ensure appropriate water quality levels for shellfish harvesting and other marine recreation activities.

4. Maintain public access to the beaches, harbor and waterfront of Wells.
5. Continue to maintain Wells Harbor as an active harbor that provides access, service and mooring facilities for both commercial, marine-related vessels and recreational boats.
6. Review and implement the Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan.
7. Continue to work with the Department of Marine Resources and the DEP to ensure the viability of the recreational shellfish-harvesting program and prohibit any commercial harvesting.

Chapter 5 - Historic and Cultural Resources Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Historic and Cultural Resources Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to Wells' historic and cultural assets.

Goals

State Goal:

Preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources. (Growth Management Act)

Regional Goal:

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

Wells Goals:

1. Identify, map and protect significant historical and archaeological resources.
2. Preserve, protect and maintain the quality of Wells' historical, cultural and archaeological resources.
3. Educate Town citizens and visitors about Wells' historic and archaeological resources not just as individual buildings or sites, but as resources in a geographic, social and economic context.

Policies

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

1. Preserve and promote the historical character of Wells including historic buildings, sites and landscapes as well as roadways and natural features of historic significance.
2. Identify, document and protect the Town's archaeological and pre-historical resources.
3. Ensure that development in the Route One corridor and the central area of Wells occurs in a manner that is consistent with the historical character of the community.
4. Provide educational opportunities for residents and visitors that "tell the story" of Wells history.
5. Encourage owners of historic properties to apply for National Register status.
6. Ensure that new development respects the Town's historic and archaeological resources.

Standards

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

1. Existing Town Ordinances.

Implementation Strategies

1. Seek Local Government Certification with the State Historic Preservation Office in order to be eligible for matching grants to assist the work of the Wells Historic Preservation Commission.
2. Continue to identify and document historic and archaeological resources for purposes of building a written and photographic record that can be used to maintain and protect these valuable community resources.
3. Identify scenic historic landscape resource areas including agricultural lands and fields, rock walls, etc.
4. Manage the "Gateways" or major roadway entrances into the Town of Wells to protect their historic community character and ensure that any new development is consistent with this character.
5. Continue and enhance the education and outreach program for both the residents and visitors to Wells about the Town's historic and archaeological resources. Annual historic walks, walking tours and education brochures are examples.
6. Work with public and private groups to establish a permanent heritage trail that would include map and permanent markers for specific historic properties.
7. Encourage more property owners to place their properties on the National Register of Historic Places.
8. Strengthen requirements in the Land Use Ordinance regarding proximity to and impacts on historic and archaeological resources.

Chapter 6 - Land Use Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies to guide the location, intensity and quality of land use in Wells over the next ten years.

Goals

State Goal:

1. Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl. (Growth Management Act)
2. Safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources. (Growth Management Act)

Regional Goal:

(None specific to land use patterns.)

Wells Goals:

1. Wells has a balanced pattern of land use that respects its diverse natural, cultural and historic resources.
2. Encourage growth that is respectful of the Town's village, rural and beach/waterfront areas.
3. Impact of new growth on environmental, open space and fiscal resources is minimized.
4. Growth does not exceed the capacity of municipal facilities and services.
5. The identities of the Town and its neighborhoods are maintained and enhanced.

Policies

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

1. Promote a general pattern of development that maintains and enhances the land use and living environments of the Town including the high density beach/waterfront area, the Route 1 mixed-use corridor, the suburban style neighborhoods and the farm and forest rural areas. To accomplish this policy the Town will:
 - a. Identify areas for growth that would include residential areas and areas where public infrastructure can service a high density of development;
 - b. Restrict development in critical rural areas;
 - c. Encourage commercial and industrial uses in appropriate locations;

- d. Encourage and preserve tourism-related industry east of Route 1;
 - e. Preserve beach/waterfront residential neighborhoods
2. Protect and enhance Wells' small-town rural character by ensuring that new development is consistent with the character of the Town, promotes amenities that reinforce the Town's character, protects the scenic value of the Town's beaches, marshes, rivers and rural roads, and protects historic areas of the Town.
 3. Consider a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms to accommodate growth while protecting the Town's rural character.
 4. Monitor and manage the impacts of residential growth to ensure that such growth does not unduly strain public facilities and services. This includes studying alternative methods of managing growth and financing public improvements required by new growth, such as: a differential growth cap, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Impact Fees and other innovative planning tools.
 5. Encourage higher standards for infrastructure development in the Town's commercial and municipal center in the Route 1/109 area.
 6. Direct growth into areas designated in the Future Land Use Plan as growth or transitional areas.
 7. Manage residential development outside of village areas to assure it is consistent with the character of Wells by:
 - a. Adopting and revising land use regulations that recognize the capacity of natural and man-made systems within the Town;
 - b. Restricting development in areas where public facilities such as water, sewer, and roads are not available or are not adequate to service the development unless the services are upgraded; and
 - c. Requiring provision of open space and recreational lands as part of new, large subdivisions that are commensurate with the size of the development and that optimize opportunities to connect with townwide and regional open space and recreational resources.
 8. Maintain and promote small-scale commercial activities and uses along the Route 1 Corridor assuring that expansion of existing commercial uses or development of new commercial enterprises adhere to the following guidelines (Per Corridor Plan adopted by the Town in April 2000):
 - a. Ensuring the scale and nature of the development is compatible with adjacent uses.
 - b. Encouraging signs that are consistent with the scale of the development and do not hinder views to the waterfront.
 - c. Instituting appropriate access management techniques to maintain a safe roadway system by minimizing curb cuts on major transportation routes.
 - d. Ensuring that US Route One remains with two travel lanes by promoting transportation alternatives and other traffic routes.

- e. Creating a more pedestrian friendly environment through the use of raised sidewalks separated from the travel way, lighting and landscaping.
9. Direct business and industrial growth and expansion to locations that minimize impact to the Town's natural and historical environment and adjacent neighborhoods by adopting and implementing guidelines for landscaping, buffering, building design, lighting and parking.
10. Identify specific areas that could be zoned or re-zoned to accommodate light industrial or business development based upon the suitability of the area and access to arterial roadways.
11. Assure the long-term protection of land that is in forestry or agriculture through both regulatory and non-regulatory means.
12. Continue to protect, manage and enhance the Town's open space and resource conservation areas.
13. Establish new and implement existing master plans for Town-owned lands to determine their most appropriate long-term uses.
14. Examine feasibility of acquiring land for a potential future Maine Turnpike interchange in the Moody/Tatnic Road area.
15. Designate distinct "critical rural," "rural" and "growth" areas based on the guidelines of Maine's Growth Management Act.

Critical Rural Areas

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

Rural Areas

Rural areas include areas of the community that:

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

Growth Areas

Growth areas include areas in one of three categories:

1. Developed Areas – Areas that are essentially built out and will only experience incremental or infill growth in the foreseeable future.
2. Existing Growth Areas - Areas already designated as residential, commercial or industrial zones on the existing zoning map that have some capacity for future growth.
3. Transitional Areas – Areas that are not part of established residential, commercial or industrial areas on the existing zoning map that:

- a. Are located in proximity to existing residential or commercial areas of Wells;
- b. Are physically suitable for development or redevelopment;
- c. Contain sufficient area to accommodate planned growth and development; and
- d. Enable a compact, clustered, rather than sprawling, pattern of development.

Definition of Land Use Districts by Type

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

Non-Growth Areas		Growth Areas		
Critical Rural Areas	Rural Areas	Developed Areas	Existing Growth Areas	Transitional Areas
CR 1 – Fenderson Wildlife Commons	R1 – Rural Area Previously Defined	BB – Beach Business	RA – Residential A	T1 – Moody
CR 2 – The Heath/West Brook Corridor	R2 – Chapel Road Rural Extension	RB – Residential Beach	RC – Residential/Commercial	T2 – Community College
CR 3 – Tatnic Hills/Mt. Agamenticus Area	DR – Developed Rural	RD – Residential Drakes Island	H – Harbor	T3 – Burnt Mill
CR 4A – Branch Brook Aquifer Travel Time <200 days			GB – General Business	T4 – Hobbs Farm
CR 4B – Branch Brook Aquifer Recharge Area			LI – Light Industrial	T5 – Crediford Limited Commercial
CR 5A – Webhannet River Corridor			QM – Quarry Manufacturing	T6 – Limited Industrial
CR 5B – Merriland River Corridor			TC – Transportation Center	
CR 5C – Ogunquit River Corridor				
CR 5D – Lower Branch Brook Corridor (not in Recharge Area)				
CR 6 – Existing Resource Protection Districts				

Tools to Define Rural and Critical Rural Areas

The Town of Wells wants to protect its rural and critical rural areas in ways that respect the rights of property owners. As such, the base minimum lot size of 100,000 square feet (2.30 acres) will remain intact throughout the Town's rural areas. Instead of increasing the base lot size, there are four mechanisms being suggested to control the character of growth in the rural areas of Wells:

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

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

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

Critical Rural Areas

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

Critical Rural 1 – Fenderson Wildlife Commons

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

Land Use Standards

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

Critical Rural 2 – The Heath/West Brook Corridor

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

Land Use Standards

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

Critical Rural 3 – Tatnic Hills/Mt. Agamenticus

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

Land Use Standards

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

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

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

Land Use Standards

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

Critical Rural 4B – Branch Brook Aquifer Recharge Area

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

Land Use Standards

- Cluster developments are prohibited
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%
- Establish controls over the use, handling and storage of chemical or petroleum products
- Prohibit fuel sales
- Prohibit animal husbandry or agricultural uses that produce animal wastes

Critical Rural 5A – Webhannet River Corridor

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

Land Use Standards

- Cluster developments are prohibited
- 250 foot building setback (200' under current zoning)
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%

Critical Rural 5B – Merriland River Corridor

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

Land Use Standards

- Cluster developments are prohibited
- 250 foot building setback (200' under current zoning)
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%

Critical Rural 5C – Ogunquit River Corridor

Geographical Description – A corridor along the Ogunquit River from the estuary to the South Berwick town line.

Land Use Standards

- Cluster developments are prohibited
- 250 foot building setback (200' under current zoning)
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%

Critical Rural 5D – Lower Branch Brook Corridor (not in Recharge Area)

Geographical Description – A corridor along Branch Brook beginning below the Aquifer Recharge Area (at about where Route 1 crosses Branch Brook), running to the estuary.

Land Use Standards

- Cluster developments are prohibited
- 250 foot building setback (200' under current zoning)
- Wetland areas deducted: 100%
- Maximum lot coverage: 10%

Critical Rural 6 – Existing Resource Protection Districts

Geographical Description – The existing RP district areas in Wells. Many of these areas fall within the borders of the newly defined Critical Rural areas but others, especially the Merriland, Webhannet and Ogunquit River estuaries are outside the Critical Rural areas.

Land Use Standards

- Development is already severely restricted using present standards

Rural Areas

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

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

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

Developed Growth Areas

The developed areas of Wells consist of its coastal residential and business areas. These areas correspond with the current boundaries of the Residential Beach (RB), Residential Drakes Island (RD) and Beach Business (BB) zoning districts. Although these areas are identified as growth areas, the supply of undeveloped land is extremely small, thus limiting the possibility of future growth. The existing dimensional and use standards for these three districts are recommended to remain the same.

Existing Growth Areas

Existing Growth Areas correspond with established, non-rural zoning districts in Wells that have capacity for future growth. No changes are recommended for the standards of these districts. There are seven existing zoning districts that fall within the Existing Growth Area definition:

1. Residential A (RA)
 2. Residential/Commercial (RC)
 3. Harbor Commercial (Harbor)
 4. General Business (GB)
 5. Light Industrial (LI)
 6. Quarry Manufacturing (QM)
 7. Transportation Center (TC)
- Existing dimensional and use standards for all of these districts are recommended to remain intact. In the two mixed-use areas (RC and GB), clustering will be encouraged, allowing residential development to occur on lots as small as 10,000 square feet.

Transportation Center District

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

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

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

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

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

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

This is a standalone zoning district. With a new, straight-line western zoning district boundary as described above, the present Rural district zoning would remain unchanged and a small portion of the existing Residential Commercial district would become Transportation Center district. The existing Mobile Home Park Overlay is envisioned to remain as it is at present and would simply be an overlay of the new Transportation Center district instead of Residential Commercial.

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

Land Use Guidelines. Development of the transportation center will benefit from more dense and more intensive development, but the regulations should still provide for open areas and landscaping. The plan envisions a density of development and lot coverages similar to (and no greater than) those in the existing General Business District regulations for properties served by public sewer [that is 20,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size and 65% lot coverage]. The district should promote car parking to the rear of developments and provide for buffering of car parking with vegetative and/or non-vegetative landscaping. Building setback distances from Route 9/109 should be limited so as to provide for construction of parking and ancillary facilities to the rear (away from the traveled way) of new buildings. Forty feet is what was recommended in the April 2002 plan. Setbacks from the internal access road can be less than along Sanford Road due to the size of the district, lower speeds of travel, and so as to generate a more pedestrian scale. Landscaping and sidewalks within the front setback should be required and also within the side or rear setback areas if those areas abut the access road.

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

Promoting access to and from commercial developments within the transportation center makes sense in terms of “access management”. Obviously, that will be the only practical means of access for development that does not have frontage on Route 9/109. Further, for lots that front on Route 109, utilizing the access road will not only facilitate the type of development sought by the town but also provide a safer and more effective means of controlling traffic via the existing traffic signal. Without long-term rights to access that road, promoting development that must use that road will be necessarily hindered. Coordination with the Turnpike Authority will be necessary to accomplish it.

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

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

Transitional Areas

Transitional areas are locations that are presently zoned for rural uses and densities that the Future Land Use Plan suggests become areas that are redesignated to accommodate future

residential, commercial or industrial uses (as appropriate for each area). Recommended changes in these areas concern minimum lot size, lot coverage and other dimensional standards, as well as allowable uses.

There are six suggested Transitional Areas described below.

Transitional Area 1 – Moody

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

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

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

Transitional Area 2 – Community College

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

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

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

Transitional Area 3 – Burnt Mill

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

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

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

Transitional Area 4 – Hobbs Farm

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

Land Use Standards – This area is already experiencing residential growth and is expected to see additional development in the future. However, it is located west of the Turnpike in a semi-rural area. Therefore, the type of growth desired for this area is of a large-lot variety. No changes to dimensional or use standards are recommended—the transitional area designation is simply a means of recognizing how this area is undergoing change.

Transitional Area 5 – Crediford Limited Commercial

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

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

- Allow a mix of residential, business and civic uses
- Enact strong access management standards to limit the number of curb cuts on Crediford Road (Route 9A).
- Restrict impacts of lighting in this area on the Wells Heath
- Require that parking facilities are designed in ways that limits their stormwater runoff and that minimizes visual impacts

- *Assuming the use of wells and septic tanks:*
 - Increase maximum lot coverage from 20% to 30%
 - Maintain existing minimum lot size of 100,000 square feet
- *If public water and sewer services are available:*
 - Increase maximum lot coverage from 20% to 40%
 - Reduce minimum lot size to 40,000 square feet

Transitional Area 6 –Limited Industrial

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

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

- Allow limited light industrial uses that produce only minor environmental impacts
- Prohibit all residential uses
- Prohibit the drilling of subsurface wells for drinking water
- Ensure proper buffering from adjacent residential properties

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGING GROWTH

The Function of the Existing Residential Growth Ordinance

For the past 25 years, the Town of Wells has had in place a residential growth ordinance that has set a limit for the amount of new housing units that may be built in any one year. Section 10 of the Inventory outlined the rationale for the Town of Wells' growth ordinance. The primary purpose of slowing the rate of growth in the Town has historically been to maintain a predictable level of growth. The effect of predictability is that the Town has been able to continue to keep up with the additional public capital and operating costs brought on by new residential development.

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

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

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

- With a two year waiting list for growth permits, demand exists for 264 units to be built right now (132 per year);
- An additional 131 lots have recently been exempted from the growth cap and may be built right away;
- Another 277 new lots are in the pipeline (with up to 100 more expected in the immediate future);
- Therefore, it can be reasonably estimated that there is an immediate demand to build as many as 772 housing units in the Town of Wells.

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

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

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

A New System is Needed

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

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

Recommendation: Appoint a Growth Management Committee to Oversee the Transition to a New System

The Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force has considered a variety of options regarding the management of residential growth in Wells in the context of the Comprehensive Plan Update. It is clear to the members of the Task Force that this issue will require more intensive study than what can be adequately addressed in a Comprehensive Plan. Thus, the Task Force recommends that, as an immediate implementation action, the Board of Selectmen appoint a special Growth Management Committee.

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

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

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

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

Standards

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

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

Implementation Strategies

1. Amend the Wells Land Use Ordinance consistent with the Land Use Policies, desired uses and land use guidelines.
2. Establish a program to identify, select and prioritize appropriate lands in critical rural areas for open space protection and possible acquisition.
3. Work with the Wells Conservation Commission, State and Federal entities and private land trust and conservation organizations to assemble a database of parcels suitable for protection based upon guidance policies established by the Conservation Commission.
4. Maintain, and enhance where possible, the scenic views and corridors along the easterly side of Route One that incorporate coastal waters and marshes.
5. Work with owners of agriculture and forestry lands so they are aware of, and kept up-to-date with, Maine "current use" programs and encourage the donation or sale of land or conservation easements to the Town or conservation organizations.
6. Manage the development of public infrastructure and facilities in a manner that limits development pressure in rural and critical rural areas
7. Appoint a Growth Management Committee to develop alternative strategies to the existing Residential Growth Management Ordinance (growth cap) within a three-year period from

the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee will examine the potential of growth management strategies such as: a differential growth cap, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Impact Fees and other innovative planning tools.

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

Chapter 7 – Town Character and Appearance Policies and Strategies

Introduction

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

Goals

State Goal:

1. Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing sprawling development. (Growth Management Act).
2. Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well being.
3. Preserve the state's historic and archeological resources.

Regional Goal:

(No goal specified)

Wells Goals:

1. Maintain the small town character, rural feeling created by both the physical and social environment.
2. Retain open space and natural areas throughout the community.
3. Assure that new development is in character with traditional New England architecture and is of a scale and intensity that is compatible with the existing character of Wells.
4. Promote those amenities which foster small town neighborliness such as local businesses, places for people to meet, sidewalks, tree-lined roads and security.
5. Protect the scenic quality of the Town along the beaches, marshes, rivers, main roads, and in areas with outstanding scenic beauty.
6. Enhance citizens' awareness of the land and its resources as part of the community of Wells.

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

Policies

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

General

1. Preserve the Town of Wells’ historic, traditional New England seacoast and rural community character and appearance. The character and appearance that evolves from the variety of traditional New England Colonial and Victorian architectural styled wood homes, buildings, barns or barn-like buildings that give Wells, Maine its unique character (herein referred to as the “Traditional New England Style” or “Wells Maine Style”), and the coastal and rural upland forested landscape.
2. Encourage the use of cluster design in new subdivisions in appropriate areas to link neighborhoods and the central area via pedestrian /bicycle paths, promote off road movement, preserve open spaces and to prevent fragmentation of wildlife habitats.
3. Preserve scenic vistas especially toward the seacoast from Route 1 and along scenic corridors especially along Routes 1, 9, 109, and roads in rural areas.
4. Pursue locating existing overhead utilities underground especially in the central area and along Route One and elsewhere where feasible.

Business Development – Business Areas

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

Business Advertising and Signs

1. Promote a Town-wide business marketing and signage program in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce and local business owners and the Amtrak marketing program to attract more business and improve advertising while reducing signage.
2. Provide for on-site local highway oriented signs for business identification. Work with the Chamber of Commerce and local business owners to minimize on-site signs wherever possible; particularly along commercial corridors. Reducing redundant signs on buildings and in on-site free standing locations will make the business and scenic environment better for business, better for public safety and save an unnecessary business expense.
3. Encourage signage that reflects the Traditional New England Style.
4. Encourage highway oriented sign messages to be brief, clear, and simple so that driving safety is enhanced.

5. Develop a policy to limit State Department of Transportation off-site signs to only businesses not located on State numbered highways and to only the blue and white business identification signs.

Landscape Architecture – Business Areas and Scenic Corridors

1. Landscaping will reinforce the “rural farm / upland forest or seacoast appearance” that exists in Wells, Maine, e.g. the Traditional New England Style. Landscaping plans should use the native white pines, other conifers, deciduous trees (birch, maples, etc.); shrubs and ground cover vegetation in informal, rural farm and forest-like designs and patterns. This particularly applies along rural scenic corridors (e.g., Route 109 and 9) west of the Turnpike.
2. Along the commercial corridors east of the Maine Turnpike (Routes 1 and 9/109), maple or other trees that create spectacular fall color for citizens and tourists enjoyment will be planted as street trees and on-site in informal patterns.
3. Along rural scenic corridors (Route 9 and 109 west of the Maine Turnpike), existing native trees and other plant material will be preserved or enhanced with similar plant materials. Building set backs and buffers will preserve existing landscaping, and building site clearing should be minimized. Parking shall be located to the rear of buildings or screened from the public way by natural landscaping materials including trees, shrubs, earth berms, and rocks.
4. On other streets, street trees will be planted consistent with a Development Plan for Landscaping and Street Trees.
5. In all Town areas, where possible, rock walls will be preserved and constructed to reflect the Traditional New England Style rural character.
6. From the intersection of Routes 109 and 9 east, and along Route 1, where possible:
 - a. Public sidewalks will use “New England Cobble” pavers or other material that reflects a native rock or similar paving appearance.
 - b. Street curbs will be constructed of granite.
7. Native Maine granite and other rock is encouraged in building construction, walls, planters, etc. too.
8. All onsite utilities will be located underground.
9. All overhead utility lines along Route 1, 9/109 in the defined Town Center Area will be located underground where feasible.

Rural Areas and Neighborhoods

1. Protect and enhance the character and appearance of rural areas. When rural lands are subdivided, they shall use the cluster design concept.
2. New business development including multi-family housing with three or more units shall reflect the Traditional New England Style in architecture, signs, streetlights and other “built” features. These areas will be designed so they are linked to other neighborhoods and to the Town Center by pedestrian and bicycle ways, open spaces, and scenic local and collector streets.
3. Rural farm houses, barns or barn-like buildings existing as of 1915 will be protected via an incentive program.

Beach Areas and Neighborhoods

1. Protect and enhance the character and appearance of beach areas and neighborhoods as residential areas with a neighborhood village center, less vehicular traffic, more public access and natural ecologically critical areas – open space areas for recreation and natural wildlife habitat.
2. New business development including multi-family housing with three or more units shall reflect the Traditional New England Style in architecture, signs, street lights and other “built” features.

Scenic Rural Corridors

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

Route One Corridor - Post Road Antiques and Arts Corridor

1. Promote Route One as “Post Road Antique and Arts Corridor” and increase its commercial business and scenic appeal by reinforcing the traditional New England Style character and appearance. It will be aimed to increase business and economic development, increase safety, increase appeal and increase value. It will:
 - a. Encourage existing businesses and new businesses focusing on marketing antiques, art and other products and services serving residents and visitors (e.g. motels, restaurants, and other existing uses);
 - b. Encourage a unified building appearance featuring the Traditional New England Style.
 - c. Promote increased pedestrian traffic via new sidewalks and walkways between stores
 - d. Encourage increased landscaping including maple street trees for fall color and pines for year round evergreen foliage,
 - e. Promote new benches and street lights reflecting the Traditional New England Style.
 - f. Encourage signs that are low, use brief simple messages and are consistent with the Traditional New England Style.
 - g. Promote an improved and expanded Wells trolley service.

- h. Encourage less traffic; coordinated parking; and traffic turn-a-rounds to keep business in Wells.
- i. Promote Town “entrances” at the north and south ends of the Post Road featuring distinctive landscaping.
- j. Promote underground utilities where feasible over the long term.

Wells Transportation Center

1. Continue to encourage the development/redevelopment of this area to serve travelers (tourists, residents, and others) at this transportation gateway to the Wells community. Promote traditional New England style architecture and building appearance through flexible design standards incorporating a mix of design and façade methods

Route 109 east of the Turnpike

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

Town Signs and Entrances

1. Encourage the development of a standard design for Town Entrance signs that reflects the Traditional New England Style.
2. Support the installation of Town Entrance signs at strategic locations.

Standards

1. To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells’ standards to guide development:
 - a. Existing standards in the Land Use ordinance.
 - b. Set new standards for business buildings, landscaping, signs, lighting and other elements that shape Town character and appearance to reflect the traditional New England, Maine Wells Style.

Implementation Strategies

1. Adopt Town Character and Appearance standards that can be used to evaluate site plan, sign and subdivision applications and Town Development Plans required to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Initiate a street tree planting program for Routes 1 and 9/109
3. Initiate a street curb and sidewalk improvement program.
4. Initiate a study to determine the feasibility of an underground utilities program for Routes 1 (Post Road Antiques and Arts Corridor) and 9/109 east of the Turnpike in conjunction

with Central Maine Power, Verizon, the cable company, and the Maine Department of Transportation.

5. Adopt a Development Plan for the Post Road Antique and Arts (Route 1) Corridor.
6. Adopt a Development Plan for Route 109 east of the Turnpike.
7. Continue to implement the Development Plan for the Wells Transportation Center.
8. Adopt a standard design for Town Entrance signs that reflect the Traditional New England- Style.
9. Adopt a standard design for Wells' historical markers.
10. Adopt an ordinance to prohibit the placement of merchandise in building setbacks.

Chapter 8 – Transportation and Circulation Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Transportation and Circulation Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to the transportation system in Wells.

Goals

State Goal:

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

Regional Goal:

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

Wells Goals:

1. Promote a safe and sustainable transportation system that is consistent with the character of the neighborhood through which it passes.
2. Encourage and enhance alternative modes of travel including pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
3. Improve and enhance the transportation network through the coordination of state, regional and local planning.
4. Promote the management of the roadway network to better manage congested areas such as the Route 1 Corridor.
5. Promote the Route 1 Corridor in the Wells Corner and Moody areas and the Route 109 Corridor in the Town Hall and High Pine areas as "Main Streets" within the Town of Wells.
6. Encourage public/private cooperation in financing necessary improvements to the transportation system.
7. Encourage the selective improvement of Route One to eliminate safety and operational problems while preserving its role as the spine of the community as opposed to a major regional traffic artery.

Policies

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

1. In cooperation with Maine Department of Transportation (DOT), ensure that planned transportation improvements and enhancements are appropriate for the particular area and complement the effected neighborhood.
2. When practical, incorporate pedestrian sidewalks, walkways and bicycle lanes into transportation project designs when local or state roadway improvements are being implemented.
3. Ensure that state, regional and local transportation planning officials are aware of the Town's transportation deficiencies and needs by:
 - a. Participating in the Region 6 Regional Needs Assessment process.
 - b. Documenting the need for specific improvements.
 - c. Establishing priorities for transportation improvements.
 - d. Identifying the projects in the Town's Capital Improvement Program.
 - e. Continuing to participate in the US Route 1 Corridor Study with MDOT.
 - f. Continuing to participate in the Route 109 corridor study with the Town of Sanford.
4. Encourage local businesses, transportation users and civic organizations to financially participate in the cost of transportation enhancement and improvements.
5. Ensure that the Wells Transportation Center is truly an inter-modal passenger transportation center by encouraging passenger rail, commuters, tourists, taxis, limousines, trolley service, walkers and bicyclists to use the facility.
6. Ensure that the central area (Route 1/109 intersection and vicinity) provides opportunities for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails and bicycle paths.
7. Recognize the important impact that transportation decisions have on the Town's land use patterns, ensure that future transportation improvements are consistent with the Town's land use policies and give special consideration to maintaining the character of established neighborhoods and historic villages.
8. Encourage safe and appropriate access management techniques for both US Route 1 and Maine Route 109.
9. New development and redevelopment along Route One and other major roads shall occur in a manner, which minimizes the cumulative impacts on the road network while providing safe access to these parcels.
10. Strive to reduce the seasonal congestion on state and local roadways by:
 - a. Identifying off-street parking opportunities adjacent to Route 1, and
 - b. Encouraging residents and tourists to use off street parking coordinated with the trolley system, the park and ride facility and rideshare programs.

- c. Creating incentives for the development of local public and private transportation systems that reduce the need to use an automobile locally.
11. Continue to investigate suitable methods for traffic calming, particularly in the summer months, in the more densely developed areas east of US Route 1.
12. Encourage the planning and implementation of pedestrian and bikeway facilities in as much of Wells as is practical.
13. Consider alternatives to ease the traffic congestion on Route 1.
 - a) Mile Road/College Drive extension
 - b) Turnpike entrance between Moody and Ogunquit.
 - c) Connector road between Moody and Exit 19 area
14. Encourage a reduction in traffic speed on Route 1, Route 109, and Chapel Road.
15. Ensure that any road accepted by the Town as a public roadway meets the Town standards and specifications for public roads.
16. Explore the creation of transportation links (e.g., ferry, bridges, etc.) between the Harbor, and Wells Beach.

Standards

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

1. See existing Town Streets and Sidewalks, Land Use and Subdivision Ordinances.
2. Amend standards to provide sufficient or additional right-of-way for raised sidewalks, bicycle paths and landscaping.

Implementation Strategies

Cooperation with the Maine DOT

1. Continue to participate in the US Route 1 Corridor Study. US Route 1 is the backbone of the Town's Transportation network and the Town needs to ensure that the study addresses such issues as access management, capacity, mobility, safety, signage and provision for pedestrians and bicyclists.
2. Work closely with the MDOT on the Route 109 Improvement Program between Exit 19 and the High Pine area through design and construction. The Town recently completed the Route 109/9 Corridor Study that specifically recommended that this portion of the Corridor maintain its rural character. It will be necessary to cooperate with MDOT to ensure that the final plans are consistent with the goals and recommendations this corridor study.

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

Regional Transportation Planning

1. Participate in the MDOT Regional Needs Assessment process in order to coordinate local transportation planning with the regional and State effort and to become aware of funding and program opportunities.
2. Continue to work with the Maine Turnpike Authority in the negotiation for a major bus company to provide Boston to Portland bus service with a stop at the Transportation Center and for bus service from the Center to link surrounding communities.
3. Continue to work with the Town of Sanford on the Route 109 corridor study and implement its recommendations when complete.

Roadway Improvement Program

1. Prepare and fund a roadway improvement program with priorities for inclusion in the Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This process will provide formal notice to all concerned regarding the Town's intention for future roadway improvements.
2. Continue to study alternative routes to ease congestion on Route 1 such as the turnpike exit between Wells and Moody.
3. Build the connection between College Drive and Mile Road.
4. Continue the firm policy ensuring that all roads accepted as public Town roads be built and constructed to the Town's roadway standards.
5. Consider establishing an impact fee for all roads accepted as public town roads appropriate for the impact of the development on Town services.
6. Do not accept new Town roads in critical rural areas.

Alternative and Multi-modal Transportation

1. Continue to participate in the Coastal Explorer planning process to evaluate and improve trolley service to adequately meet the needs of the community and the region.
2. Provide screened off street parking adjacent to Routes 1 and 109.
3. Encourage residents and tourists to use the trolley system in conjunction with the off street parking areas, the park n' ride facility and rideshare programs.
4. Consider the use of private mass transit.

5. Establish a committee to prepare a Development Plan for Bicycle Ways and Trails based on existing regional and local data and plans and also consider their relationship to sidewalks and other pedestrian ways. Said pedestrian /bicycle paths will be for non-motorized vehicles, i.e., no ATV, 4 wheelers, minibikes, etc.)
6. Have the Committee review local or state roadway improvements and where possible connect existing trails in Town and eventually connect with the Eastern Trail.
7. Continue to investigate and implement seasonal traffic calming measures in high density residential and commercial areas, especially adjacent to and east of, US Route.
8. As part of this planning, identify appropriate locations for pedestrian sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage to enhance pedestrian safety and traffic calming.

Wells Transportation Center

1. Encourage users of alternate transportation modes to use the Wells Transportation Center.
2. Plan for the expansion of the rideshare/vanpool facilities as the usage increases.
3. Work to implement a pedestrian connection along Route 109 to the central area of Wells.
4. Effectively utilize the new internal Transportation Center access road and the existing traffic signal at Route 109.

Route 109 Corridor (East of Exit 19)

1. As the central area of Town develops, plan for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails and bicycle paths.
2. Develop a comprehensive sidewalk and streetscape program.

Chapter 9 – Economic Development Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Economic Development Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to economic development in Wells.

Goals

State Goal:

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

Regional Goal:

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

Wells Goals:

1. Improve Wells' economic climate by promoting investment, revenue generation, and year round, good quality job opportunities by encouraging the development of diverse small businesses and industries that are consistent with the community's small town character.
2. Provide suitable areas for low-impact businesses that have access to major transportation resources such as the Maine Turnpike.
3. Encourage small-scale, neighborhood commercial enterprises in appropriate areas west of the Route 1 corridor.
4. Foster home occupations and cottage industries that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
5. Enhance and encourage tourist-related activities and development that are consistent with the character and scale of the community and the image of Wells as a family resort area, especially in the Route 1 Corridor/Beach Business Area. However, restrict the development of commercial tourist "attractions" designed to appeal primarily to the transient tourist or "non-family" travelers, such as nightclubs, bars, amusement parks, and water slides.
6. Protect natural resource-based business and industry while minimizing both environmental degradation and impact to adjacent property owners.

Policies

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

1. Promote Wells and its resources to companies who would be compatible with the Town's existing small-town environment.
2. Provide opportunities for land and access to encourage development of new business or expansion of existing businesses.
3. Foster the establishment and expansion of small-scale local businesses that serve the tourist dependent economy in the Route 1 Corridor and Beach Business areas.
4. Provide necessary infrastructure improvements such as off street municipal parking and public restrooms in the central area, Route 1 Corridor and Beach areas.
5. Provide specific recommendations through outreach and educational programs to businesses and property owners along the Route 1 Corridor as to how the corridor can become more visually attractive.
6. Promote and market Route 1 as the Post Road Antiques and Arts Corridor and increase its commercial and scenic appeal consistent with the Land Use, Transportation and Town Character and Appearance and other related Plan policies and implementation strategies.
7. Continue to support the viability of forestry, agriculture and extractive industries by discouraging residential and commercial development in areas surrounding these uses.

Standards

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

1. (To be developed in future update.)

Implementation Strategies

1. Establish a non-profit economic development corporation whose responsibility would be to market Wells and its resources to companies who would be compatible with the Town's existing small-town character, scale and market.
2. Identify areas in Town that would be suitable for future wholesale commercial, research and development or low-impact businesses such as Transitional Area 5 (the Crediford Road area). These areas should have good access to the local and regional highway network and be consistent with the Land Use goals and policies.
3. Identify and attract companies that would be suitable for Wells and would also complement the existing business environment. Such businesses could take advantage of Wells' environmental resources as tourist attractions and could include bicycle/kayak

touring, small restaurants, personal service establishments, business service and repair, and arts and crafts-type shops.

4. Retain and expand existing businesses by facilitating technical assistance and training through State sponsored economic development programs as well as business planning and management workshops.
5. Participate in the Southern Maine Regional Economic Development District (SMEDD) for technical and financial assistance.
6. Foster the development of home occupations and cottage industries that are consistent with Wells' rural, small-town character. Review land use regulations and revise, if necessary, standards for home occupations that provides opportunity for small business yet minimizes impact on adjacent uses or the environment.
7. Establish a committee to explore ecologically oriented tourist opportunities. Said committee should include representatives from business and natural resource oriented organizations such as the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, Laudholm Trust, Nature Conservancy, Great Works Regional Land Trust, and the Rachael Carson National Wildlife Refuge and the Mount Agamenticus Regional Trust.
8. Continue to support the farmers' market community.
9. Limit residential and commercial development in areas surrounding existing resource-based industries (see Critical Rural Area standards in Chapter 6).

Chapter 10 – Housing Policies and Strategies

Introduction

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

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

Goals

State Goal:

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

Regional Goal:

To encourage a diversity of affordable housing throughout the region.

Wells Goals:

1. The Town attempts to close its current affordability gap and works to ensure that at least 15 percent of its future is affordable for low and moderate-income households, including both families with children and the elderly.
2. Ensure that the quality of new residential development provides a good living environment for all residents.
3. Promote the development of a range of housing to meet the needs of all residents.
4. Allow mobile homes in areas that are zoned for single-family housing and in parks that are consistent with state laws and requirements.

Policies

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

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

2. Continue to allow housing for the elderly in growth and transitional areas and explore allowing higher densities than other types of housing through a density bonus program where the facility can be served by public sewer.
3. Continue land use regulations allowing the construction of eldercare facilities such as congregate housing and assisted living facilities at appropriate densities provided that the character of these facilities is appropriate to Wells.
4. Consider a variety of techniques to ensure that there is a range of housing that is affordable to low and moderate-income households.
5. Continue to exempt affordable family and senior housing in growth areas from the Town's Residential Growth Ordinance.
6. Encourage both non-profit and for-profit developers of affordable and special needs housing to pursue developments in Wells.

Standards

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

1. Amend Land Use Ordinance as needed.
2. Amend Residential Growth Ordinance as needed.
3. Partnerships with non-profit and for-profit developers of affordable and special needs housing.

Implementation Strategies

1. Adopt the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) definitions of affordability for York County and update affordability targets as new MSHA data are available.
2. Continue to allow housing for the senior population in growth and transitional areas and allow higher densities for this age group than other types of housing through a density bonus program (with the bonus not to exceed clustering standards) where the facility can be served by public sewer and water.
3. Establish incentives such as those currently allowed for congregate housing to encourage the development of senior housing as long as the development is consistent with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.
4. Revise the mobile home regulations to ensure that they meet the State law for mobile home parks and mobile home park expansion. Such regulations must provide standards to minimize the impact on the Town's services, natural and cultural environment and be respectful of adjoining neighborhoods.

5. Review the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to ensure that housing density is consistent with the Land Use Plan, is directed to Growth Areas of the community and is consistent with the capacity of municipal services to ensure new or redeveloped sites. See also Policies and Recommendations for Land Use.
6. Review town land use ordinances to determine if these regulations can be revised to encourage more affordable housing.
7. Work with other communities to create a regional non-profit housing organization to foster affordable housing programs for low-and moderate-income families. Such a group could:
 - a. Ensure that local land use regulations do not present a barrier to the development of affordable housing.
 - b. Work cooperatively with nonprofit organizations and private developers to provide opportunities for affordable housing.
 - c. Seek loans and grants from the State of Maine;
 - d. Work with area banks through the Community Reinvestment Act.
 - e. Consider the use of Town-owned land for affordable housing programs.
8. Adopt or revise provisions in the land use and building codes to provide greater opportunities for the rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income properties.
9. Provide opportunities for multiple uses of buildings, including housing, in commercial areas of the community.
10. Ensure that any revisions to the Growth Management Ordinance retain or expand the exemptions for affordable family and senior housing.
11. Work with York County Community College and the development community to pursue a student housing development in the vicinity of the college.

Chapter 11 – Public Facilities and Services Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Public Facilities and Services Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards, and implementation strategies related to the public facilities and services in Wells including fire, police, schools, parks and open space.

Goals

State Goal:

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

Regional Goal:

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

Wells Goals:

1. Promote a pattern of growth and development that allows for a cost effective delivery of services, that is consistent with the needs and fiscal capacity of the Town.
2. Continue to ensure that police, fire and rescue services are adequate to meet the public health and safety needs of the residents of Wells.
3. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program that is based upon the policies and actions of this Comprehensive Plan Update.
4. Strive to provide high quality educational facilities and programs that meet the needs of students.
5. Encourage educational programs for all ages that incorporate a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local business.
6. Ensure adequate planning to mitigate civil emergencies.
7. Assure the Wells Harbor remains a viable resource since the Harbor plays an important role as both an economic and recreational resource for the Town

Policies

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

1. Promote a pattern of growth and development that discourages sprawl, is consistent with the policies on land use, and allows for cost effective delivery of services consistent with the needs of Wells.
2. Maintain and enhance the Town's public facilities and services to provide for the health and safety of the Town's residents.
3. Encourage public/private cooperation in planning for, and financing, improvements to the Town's public facilities.
4. Ensure that all students have the opportunities to receive the best possible and affordable education so they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to make a positive contribution to the community.
5. Promote sustainable resource use by all Town departments.
6. Encourage the multiple use of community facilities to the greatest extent possible.
7. Support the dredging of the harbor to maintain it as a suitable mooring area.
8. Develop expanded parking and support facilities to allow additional use of the area for commercial and recreational boating and marine uses.

Standards

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

1. Fire ponds shall be developed within one quarter mile of new development. If not possible, require developers to contribute to a fire protection development fund.
2. A Five-Year Capital Investment Planning process will be implemented.

Implementation Strategies

Municipal Offices

1. Monitor the space needs of Town Hall and consider future expansion as the need arises to ensure high quality and efficient level of service.
2. Continue to review the needs of all community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: fire substations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.
3. Continue to monitor all Town-owned properties and resources to ensure that there is a rational basis for capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.

4. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that is based upon the policies and actions from this Comprehensive Plan and an appropriate system of priorities.
5. Encourage educational programs that use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.
6. Establish a monthly inter-department/inter-board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and Town committees and commissions.
7. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.
8. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.

Fire Protection

1. Continue the program of installing dry hydrants.
2. Adopt a specific development plan for fire protection addressing issues such as volunteer fire fighting resources, fire ponds, dry hydrants and response times. Said plan shall become part of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Adopt an ordinance to require either the installation of fire ponds or payment by a developer into a fire protection fund where the development is not on Town water and installation of fire dry hydrant or pond to serve the development is not feasible.

Parks

1. Adopt a specific development plan for parks and recreation facilities addressing issues such as maintenance of current facilities and acquisition of new facilities to meet Town needs. Said plan shall become part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Public Lands

1. Continue to plan and manage publicly owned lands to meet Town needs consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and where possible maximize their asset and environmental resource value.
2. Employ the Town's land ranking classification system for existing and future Town owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.

Chapter 12 – Open Space Policies and Strategies

Introduction

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

Goals

State Goal:

1. Safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development that threatens those resources. (Growth Management Act)
2. Promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters. (Growth Management Act)

Regional Goal:

(None specified)

Wells Goals:

1. Work actively to retain the rural character of Wells as defined, in large measure, by its open land, marshes, fields, farms, and woodlands.
2. Conserve ample open space, to protect, preserve and maintain our natural resources including the ecological integrity of native plant and wildlife species.
3. Promote and expand neighborhood conservation areas and parks throughout the Town such as Fenderson Wildlife Commons to protect public access for traditional outdoor recreation and to protect critical wildlife habitat.
4. Promote environmental education opportunities and produce public information materials related to Wells' natural history and the benefits of protecting open space areas.
5. Minimize conflicts between natural-resource based industries and outdoor recreation uses.

Policies

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

1. Identify key land areas that contribute to Wells' rural character and work with the landowners to preserve the qualities of these areas through support of creative uses and exploring conservation options.

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

Standards

(To be developed in future update)

Implementation Strategies

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

3. Expand funding of the Town's Land Bank Fund to provide for adequate public open space in the Town of Wells.
4. Charge the Conservation Commission to work with land owners and other reservation groups such as the KKW Water District, Great Works Regional Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, and the State and Federal Government to leverage existing funding for open space in areas of mutual concern such as Fenderson Wildlife Commons, the Great Heath and the Tatnic Region.
5. Enable the Conservation Commission to review and comment on public or private plans involving open space areas identified via natural resource data, as high value wildlife habitat, before the Town's reviewing authority makes any decision on the plan.
6. Enable the Conservation Commission to continue to review foreclosed properties and other land proposed for public auction to determine its suitability for retention as conservation land.
7. Work with landowners with high value habitat to protect these areas using tools such as acquisition, education, collaborative management, as well as economic incentives such as Tree Growth, Open Space and Critical Habitat Programs.
8. Produce public education and outreach materials that inform the public about their conservation options and the natural history of Wells.
9. Use Fenderson and other Wildlife Commons for environmental education opportunities for the students of the Wells/Ogunquit School District and the public.
10. Use up-to-date State Inland Fisheries and Wildlife maps of wetlands and Threatened and Endangered species (See Appendix) as well as open space priorities as identified by the Wells Conservation Commission, when evaluating subdivision applications. In the event the proposed subdivision is in an area where such resources exist, the Conservation Commission will make recommendations for the building and open space locations.
11. Work with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.
12. Establish a Committee to review and assess the quality of current wetland management within Wells and, if deemed appropriate, establish guidelines for a local wetland regulation.
13. Establish a program to identify and prioritize and protect high value freshwater wetlands including vernal pools.

Chapter 13 - Public Utilities Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Public Utilities Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to the public utilities systems in Wells including water, sewer, telephone/data, cable, electricity and gas.

Goals

State Goal:

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

Regional Goal:

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

Wells Goals:

1. Strictly protect the Wells portion of the Branch Brook Aquifer and Watershed.
2. Work cooperatively with the water and sewer districts to provide appropriate levels of service to meet current needs, as well as future needs, in the Town's growth areas.
3. Work cooperatively with the water and sewer districts to restrict and minimize extension of water and sewer service into those areas of Wells that are designated as low growth or rural areas.
4. Work cooperatively with providers of utilities such as telephone/data, cable, gas and electricity to ensure the type, location, size, scope, quality and accessibility are consistent with the growth, land use, design, community character and other policies of this Plan to meet the needs of the community.

Policies

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

1. Ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, the water and sewer service area boundaries, both existing and projected, conform to the Town's growth area boundaries in this Plan.
2. Continue to support the use of impact fees by the water and sanitary districts to fund enlargement and expansion of their systems.
3. Retain, and where appropriate, reconfigure the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District as a strategic means for protecting the Water Company's public water supply.

4. Continue to cooperate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk on the most appropriate methods for protection of the Branch Brook Watershed and aquifer.
5. Work cooperatively with the water, sewer, gas, electric, telephone, cable and other utility companies in the planning and development of facilities to ensure that residents are properly serviced and that they are aware of the growth area designations as well as other land use policies of this Plan.
6. Maintain a high level of quality of the Town's ground and surface waters through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources.
7. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste.
8. Ensure that the location and installation of utilities are consistent with Town appearance and character goals and policies.

Standards

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

1. (To be developed in future update.)

Implementation Strategies

1. Establish an ongoing dialogue with the water and sewer utility districts to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations and other land use policies of this Plan.
2. Reconfigure the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District to protect the Town's water supply.
3. Cooperate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to adopt policies and programs to protect the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.
4. Continue to review the Town's land use regulations to ensure the quality of the ground and surface waters are protected through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources.
5. Prepare a specific Development Plan for drainage.
6. Work with appropriate utility companies to program public utility improvements based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation programs and an appropriate system of priorities.
7. Approve new developments that rely on public water only when the applicant can prove adequate water supply for fire protection is available.

8. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste.
9. Continue to work with wireless, cable and data utility system providers to ensure state of the art facilities are available for residents and economic development.
10. Explore the feasibility of implementing a program to locate overhead utility wires along key roads, (e.g. Route 1, 9/109, 9 and 109) underground over time.

Chapter 14 – Fiscal Capacity Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Fiscal Capacity Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to the Town's fiscal capacity to accommodate growth while providing the necessary facilities and services required by the community.

Goals

State Goal:

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

Regional Goal:

(No goals specified)

Wells Goal:

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

Policies

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

1. Use an annual formal capital improvement planning process that considers the Town's capital requirements as well as coordinates with other districts such as the school, water and sewer districts.
2. Seek alternative means to supplement Town revenues and reduce dependence on the property tax for its annual operating and capital budgets.

Standards

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

1. (To be developed in future update.)

Implementation Strategies

1. Appoint a committee to identify alternative sources of revenue other than property taxes.
2. Evaluate the use of impact fees for new development.

Chapter 15 – Flood Hazard Mitigation Policies and Strategies

Introduction

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

Purpose and Background

The Town of Wells, Maine prepared this Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan (hereafter referred to as the Plan) because the Town historically has experienced flood-related damage. The following factors contributed to that decision:

- History of coastal flooding and beach erosion in Wells;
- Number of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies and claims;
- Number of repetitive flood losses in Wells.

Assistance from the Floodplain Mitigation Assistance Program (FMAP) enabled the Town to complete the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan. This Plan is an integral part of the Town of Wells' Comprehensive Plan.

Flooding

As mentioned, this Plan has been prepared for the Town due to the recurring flooding events throughout the community as well as the number of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) insurance claims. In September of 1936, February of 1978, August of 1991 (Hurricane Bob) and October of 1991 (No Name Storm), the Town of Wells experienced serious flooding and sustained damage along Atlantic and Ocean Avenues, Webhannet Drive and along the Webhannet River and the Merriland River and other rivers and streams. The affects of the a 100-year flood - the October 30 – 31, 1991 No Name storm included flooding on Drake's Island, Moody Beach and Ocean Avenue. The storm flooded both sides of Ocean and Atlantic Avenues, damaging approximately 450 homes. The storm caused inland damage along the Bragdon Road and Branch Road/Mildram Road areas. Businesses, residential units, streets, bridges, other structures and public facilities suffered damage. The Town considers this Plan to be a critical tool in minimizing future flood damage.

Flood Hazard Mitigation

Hazard mitigation means any action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from natural hazards. Hazard mitigation is not a one-time event, but rather an on-going process designed to identify hazards and to propose ways to reduce or eliminate dangers and risks associated with the hazards.

Nationally, the U.S. Government, including the U.S. Congress, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the NFIP are concerned with the extensive amount of damage caused by both coastal and riverine flooding and the consequent amount of federal disaster assistance. As a result, the federal government has encouraged states and

municipalities to prepare a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan to identify ways to reduce the risk from flooding and perhaps eliminate flood hazards. In some communities where flooding conditions are significant, disaster assistance in the future may not be available unless a community prepares and follows a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan. Such a plan provides the community with a pathway to receive federal assistance for implementation activities designed around specific mitigation projects.

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

Flood hazard mitigation techniques can vary, but may include:

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

Plan Benefits and Implementation

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

Formal adoption and implementation of the Plan enables the Town of Wells to secure additional credit points in the NFIP sponsored Community Rating System (CRS). The Town currently participates in the CRS. The CRS recognizes the community's efforts that go beyond the minimum NFIP requirements of flood plain management by reducing the flood insurance premiums for property owners located in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). The discounts provide an incentive for the Town and the property owners to become involved in new flood mitigation activities and flood plain planning and preparedness activities.

Preparation and implementation of the Plan increases the Town of Wells' opportunities for additional federal assistance including FEMA's pre-disaster Flood Mitigation Assistance Program and its post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The Maine Emergency Management Agency provides a priority in its grant programs to communities who have prepared a comprehensive and well designed Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan. Pre-planning

activities enable the post-disaster and recovery efforts to operate in a smooth and efficient manner. In addition to building support for implementation activities, the Plan advances the community outreach and public education component of the flood mitigation effort.

Plan Scope

The scope of this Plan includes the entire land area contained within the boundaries of the Town of Wells, Maine. The Plan pays special attention to the Little River, Ogunquit River, Webhannet River, Merriland River, Wells Bay and the coastal areas of Wells. The effective Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and the accompanying Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), prepared for the Town of Wells by the Federal Emergency Management Agency was very helpful in the preparation of the Plan. While this Plan addresses flooding concerns in Wells, Maine, the Town recognizes the benefits of coordinating floodplain management activities with its neighboring communities.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

The Comprehensive Plan's Flood Hazard Mitigation Policies and Implementation Strategies describe the goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to mitigating flood hazards in Wells.

Goals

State Goal:

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

Wells Goals:

1. Identify and protect existing populations, buildings and facilities, which are at risk due to potential flooding conditions.
2. Reduce the potential damage to both private and public property due to flooding conditions.
3. Identify specific land use policies, projects and programs that will mitigate and reduce future flood related damages.
4. Recommend specific actions the Town should take to mitigate and reduce damages caused by coastal and riverine flooding.
5. Qualify the Town of Wells for federal flood mitigation grant assistance, which can assist in the Plan's implementation.
6. Involve local officials, affected property owners and the general public in the Plan's preparation so that broad acceptance is achieved.

7. Conduct a public education and outreach program to inform the public about the risks associated with development in the floodplain.
8. Protect and preserve the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains.

Policies

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

1. Ensure that an accurate inventory of the properties located in the Special Flood Hazard Area is completed and maintained.
2. Review the Town's local land use regulations on a regular basis to ensure they are consistent with the latest National Flood Insurance Program and any other requirements and reduce hazardous flood plain risks.
3. Provide incentives for property owners in the flood plain area to properly floodproof their properties and to make their properties more flood damage resistant.
4. Ensure that improvements to existing public investments are built to minimize potential damage from flooding situations through proper stormwater management and floodplain management practices.
5. Identify flood hazard mitigation projects in consultation with local, state and federal officials, property owners and the community at large.
6. Identify and seek assistance from federal, state and local sources for flood hazard mitigation projects.
7. Educate property owners in the flood plain and the community at large about the risks of building in the flood plain area and techniques to reduce the risks.
8. Examine the potential for financial incentives to landowners in the flood plain area through state or federal programs for maintaining their property in open space.
9. Discourage new public and private investment in the floodplain area that would encourage growth.

Standards

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

1. See existing Wells Floodplain Management ordinance.

Implementation Strategies

Planning

Establish a Flood Hazard Mitigation Committee to ensure the Plan remains current. Review this Plan once a year and update it every three years.

Prevention

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

Land Use Planning Activities

1. Identify local and state policies, programs and practices that directly or indirectly promote growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and increase the potential for coastal damage due to flooding conditions. Once these policies and programs have been updated, recommend policy and regulatory changes that will discourage growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area.
2. Work with local, state and federal conservation organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify and acquire parcels in the Special Flood Hazard Area that have the potential to reduce the risk from flooding.
3. Consider the inclusion of a floodplain management criteria as the Town formulates its open space strategy for management and acquisition of open space lands.
4. Amend the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance (Chapter 115) to be consistent with State requirements after the Town has accepted the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM).
5. Review the findings and conclusions of the Wells Bay Planning Committee to determine what recommendations should be included in the Town's floodplain management program and public education activities.

Stormwater management and drainage improvements

1. Conduct an inventory of all culverts and bridges to determine their adequacy to handle the 100-year flood event i.e., determine their capability to provide for the efficient runoff of peak stormwater discharge and to prevent localized flooding conditions.
2. Seek the assistance and cooperation of landowners to gain access to drainage ways so debris can be removed to improve drainage. Because the existing drainage ways have become plugged over time and there is a 1 to 1 ½ feet change in elevation, some coastal areas experience minor and, on occasion, moderate flood conditions. This should restore to some degree the drainage system function.

3. Initiate a regular program to clean out and maintain existing catch basins on public lands or rights-of-way so that they can retain an adequate amount of water during periods of peak discharge.
4. Ensure that all proposed developments have an acceptable stormwater retention plan and drainage plan as part of the subdivision and site plan review process.
5. Adopt regulations for stormwater management.

Property Protection

1. Property protection activities include relocation, acquisition, demolition, building elevation, floodretrofitting, retrofitting and insurance. The Town should consider focusing its initial efforts on the seven repetitive loss properties.
2. Conduct a flood hazard audit and analysis of the seven repetitive loss properties located on Atlantic and Ocean Avenues and Webhannet Drive to determine how the risks can be reduced.
3. Ensure that all critical public facilities such as the Wells Sanitary Sewer District facilities and the KKW's water system plant are properly floodproofed to prevent the infiltration of floodwaters. These facilities should be adequately insured against the risk of flood damage.
4. Identify residential and commercial properties in the Special Flood Hazard Area that would be appropriate candidates for structural improvements such as elevation and retrofitting to reduce the risk of flood damage.
5. Work with property owners within the floodplain to identify loan programs for floodproofing or other appropriate mitigation activities for structures located within the Special Flood Hazard Area.
6. Initiate a pilot mitigation program to provide additional incentives for residential and commercial buildings located in the flood hazard area. For example, if a sufficient number of projects were generated in a localized area, a local contractor may be able to offer a discount to property owners who wish to elevate or retrofit their structures.

Natural Resource Protection

(Natural resource protection includes dune stabilization, beach nourishment, wetland protection, and erosion and sediment control measures and best management practices.)

1. Seek engineering assistance to review the Town's practice of relocating sand to the eroded beach area at the beginning of Laudholm Beach at the northeastern part of Drake's Island.

Emergency Services

(Emergency services include flood warning, flood response, critical facilities and public health and safety maintenance.)

1. Review and update the Town's local Emergency Response Plan. Since the Plan was first prepared, changes in land use have occurred with new commercial and industrial development, and in the emergency planning context, such as the flood warning notification system, the updated evacuation plans and the Emergency Alert System (EAS). An updated Emergency Response Plan should reflect these changes.
2. Conduct a tabletop flood response drill once a year to test the notification and communication procedures, the responders' knowledge of their procedures and the extent of local resources such as sandbags, barricades, generators and shelters.
3. Complete evacuation route signage.
4. Provide additional support to the Town's Emergency Management Director in the form of a computer and part time administrative assistance.

Structural Projects

(Structural projects include seawalls, floodwalls and beach nourishment.)

1. Continue to repair and improve the seawall footing along Webhannet Drive by placing sheet pile facade in from the existing seawall. This project provides protection from storm and flood damage to properties along Webhannet Drive. The project should continue for approximately 1,500 feet at an estimated cost of \$1,600,000. This project should be completed over a 5 to 7 year period
2. Monitor the results of the recently completed beach nourishment program so that minor alterations can be made, as needed.

Public Information

(As one of the initial members in the Community Rating System (CRS) program, Wells has been active in various public information and education programs associated with an effective floodplain management program.)

1. Initiate public information activities including providing:
 - a. FIRM map information;
 - b. Technical assistance on the floodplain regulations and flood mitigation activities;
 - c. Information at the library;
 - d. Outreach projects;
 - e. Real estate disclosure
 - f. Environmental education and
 - g. Coordination with adjacent communities.

2. Prepare a public information brochure that describes in detail the comprehensive nature of the Town's floodplain management program.
3. Establish a committee of concerned flood hazard property owners who are advocates of the Town's floodplain management efforts. Use the committee as a sounding board for new ideas and initiatives regarding an effective floodplain management program.
4. Use the community cable access program to publicize the Town's floodplain management programs.

Chapter 16 – Planning and Management Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Planning and Management Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to Town planning and management.

Goals

State Goal:

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

Regional Goal:

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

Wells Goals:

1. Promote a pattern of growth and development that allows for cost effective delivery of services that is consistent with the needs and fiscal capacity of the Town.
2. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program based upon the policies and actions of the Comprehensive Plan and its updates.
3. Ensure adequate planning to mitigate civil emergencies.
4. Continue to upgrade the professional and voluntary planning and management capability of the Town to plan for the future and regulate the quality of new development.
5. Maintain inter-community communications among the Town departments, Town committees and commissions and other levels of government.

Policies

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

1. Promote a pattern of growth and development that discourages sprawl and is consistent with the policies on land use, that allows for cost effective delivery of services consistent with the needs of Wells.
2. Maintain and enhance the Town facilities and services to provide for the health and safety of the Town's residents.
3. Encourage public/private cooperation in planning for, and financing, improvements to the Town's public facilities.

4. Ensure all students have the opportunities to receive the best possible and affordable education so they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to make a positive contribution to the community.
5. Promote sustainable resource use by all Town departments.
6. Maintain inter-community communications among the Town departments, town committees and commissions and other levels of government.
7. Provide adequate, high quality staff support to the Town's various boards and commissions.
8. Support the enforcement of the Town's land use regulations in a fair and equitable manner.
9. Develop a program for working with the School District on planning for future school needs.
10. Encourage educational programs about Town planning and management for volunteers of all ages involved that incorporate a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local business.

Standards

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

1. (To be developed in future update.)

Implementation Strategies

1. Maintain a coordinated, accurate system for data management that allows for efficient transfer of uniform data and information from one department to another including geographic information.
2. Monitor the space needs of Town Hall and consider a future plan for efficient use or expansion or reconfiguration of Town facilities as the need arises to ensure high quality and efficient level of service.
3. Continue to review the needs of all other community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: fire substations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.
4. Continue to monitor all town-owned properties and resources to ensure that there is a program for ongoing capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.

5. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that is based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation strategies and an appropriate system of priorities.
6. Develop and implement Town planning and management educational programs for volunteers of all ages involved in the business of the community which use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.
7. Establish a monthly inter-department/inter-board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and town committees and commissions.
8. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.
9. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.
10. Establish a continuing program for re-evaluating the policies and implementing the programs established by the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 17 – Regional Coordination Policies and Strategies

The Comprehensive Plan's Regional Coordination Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to regional coordination.

Goals

State Goal:

Cooperate with local, regional and federal agencies to continually improve planning and management.

Regional Goal:

Cooperate with local, State, regional, Federal, and other agencies to continually improve planning and management.

Wells Goals:

Coordinate with Federal, State regional and local agencies to continually improve planning and management of Wells and meet civic needs.

Policies

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

1. Work with appropriate Federal, State agencies to implement the goals, policies, and implementation strategies related to the land use, transportation, natural resources, marine resources and other issues addressed in this Comprehensive Plan.

Implementation Strategies

1. Continue the cooperative relationship with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to expand the water quality monitoring program.
2. Work with adjacent communities to maintain water quality standards for surface waters that occur in more than one community. Specifically, work with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to undertake policies and programs for the protection of the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.
3. Ensure that the water quality of Ell Pond is not degraded by working with the Town of Sanford to implement a consistent set of standards for water quality protection.
4. Work cooperatively with the Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Department and other local, State and Federal agencies to manage and protect high value habitat and areas for significant habitat and rare and endangered species.

5. Continue to work with the Department of Marine Resources, the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to ensure the viability of the recreational shellfish harvesting program and prohibit any commercial harvesting.
6. Actively participate with the Maine Department of Transportation on any project in Town including the US Route 1 Corridor Study and on the Route 109 Improvement Program between Exit 19 and the High Pine area.
7. Work cooperatively with the MDOT to ensure that there is proper planning and implementation of any project in Town.
8. Participate in the MDOT Regional Needs Assessment process in order to coordinate local transportation planning with the regional and State effort and to become aware of funding and program opportunities.
9. Work cooperatively with the Maine Turnpike Authority for a major bus company to provide Boston to Portland bus service with stops in Wells.
10. Establish an ongoing dialogue with all utility providers to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations as well as other policies of this Plan.
11. Work cooperatively with other Towns to help implement the regional Eastern Trail system.
12. Work cooperatively with the Maine Department of Transportation for a new Turnpike interchange between Wells and Ogunquit to ease traffic congestion on Route 1.
13. Continue to work with the Town of Sanford on the Route 109 corridor study and implement its recommendations when complete.

Part 3 – Implementation Program

The Comprehensive Plan’s Implementation Program describes how the goals, policies and standards will be implemented; when they will be implemented and who is responsible. The Implementation Program consolidates the implementation strategies for each policy found in Part 2. The Implementation Program is organized into the following categories:

Regulatory Implementation Programs

- a. Land Use and Development Implementation (Zoning and Subdivision)
- b. Residential Growth Management

Non-Regulatory Implementation Programs

- a. Capital Improvement
- b. Open Space/Land Acquisition and Protection
- c. Planning and Management
- d. Regional/Intergovernmental Cooperation
- e. Historic Preservation
- f. Town Character and Appearance
- g. Transportation and Circulation
- h. Economic Development
- i. Housing
- j. Public Facilities and Services
- k. Public Utilities
- l. Flood Hazard Mitigation

In addition a responsible party is assigned to each action and a priority is given to each action—*Immediate* is to occur within the next 1-2 years; *short term* is to occur in the next 2 to 4 years and *long term* is to occur within the next 4-10 years.

REGULATORY PROGRAMS

Land Use, Development and Resource Protection Implementation Program

Action	Responsibility	Priority
1. Appoint a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) to initiate and monitor Plan implementation.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
2. Revise the zoning districts and requirements for those districts identified and described in the Land Use Section.	CPIC with Planning Board	Immediate-Short
3. Revise the official zoning map to incorporate critical rural and transitional zones put forth in the Future Land Use Plan.	CPIC with Planning Board	Immediate
4. Revise the cluster ordinance in the Land Use Ordinance based on the Comprehensive Plan's Policies.	CPIC with Planning Board	Immediate
5. Establish a program to ensure there is proper inspection of all septic system installations and a program to monitor septic system performance in/or adjacent to the Branch Brook Critical Rural areas.	CPIC	Short
6. Maintain the current buffer around surface water bodies and wetlands in the Land Use Ordinance to prohibit septic systems and other uses with the potential to contaminate both the groundwater and the groundwater/ surface water interface.	CPIC with Planning Board	Short
7. Continually integrate the State of Maine Guidelines for Municipal Shoreland Protection, as may from time-to-time be revised, into the local land use regulations.	CPIC with Planning Board	On-going
8. Revise local subdivision and site plan review regulations to require stormwater management, erosion and sediment control and landscaping plans including a reference to a suitable guidance document that requires currently accepted Best Management Practices.	CPIC with Planning Board	Immediate
9. Require all applications for subdivision and site plan review investigate and map the presence of any significant wildlife habitat and habitat for state rare or endangered species that may not have been previously mapped.	CPIC with Planning Board	Short
10. Amend the land use code and subdivision regulation to require a timber-cutting permit prior to construction of any large-scale activity.	CPIC with Planning Board	Immediate
11. Retain the currently designated buffers along rivers and streams in the Town's Land Use Ordinance to maintain the quality of these areas for wildlife and fishery habitat.	Citizens	On-going
12. Implement the Flood Mitigation Policies and Implementation Strategies.	CPIC	Short

13. Adopt Town Character and Appearance standards to implement adopted Policies.	CPIC	Short
14. Adopt an ordinance to prohibit the placement of merchandise in building setbacks.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate

Residential Growth Management Implementation Program

1. Appoint a Growth Management Committee to develop alternative strategies to the existing Residential Growth Management Ordinance (growth cap) within a three-year period from the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee will examine the potential of growth management strategies such as: a differential growth cap, Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Impact Fees and other innovative planning tools.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
2. Temporarily maintain the existing Residential Growth Ordinance for a period of no more than three years while the Growth Management Committee works to implement an alternative system to replace it.	Growth Management Committee	Short

NON-REGULATORY PROGRAMS

Capital Improvement Implementation Program

1. Program public facility improvements through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies, implementation programs and an appropriate system of priorities.	Capital Improvement Program Committee	Immediate-Ongoing
--	---------------------------------------	-------------------

Open Space/Land Acquisition and Protection Implementation Program

1. Work with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
2. Establish a Committee to review and assess the quality of current wetland management within Wells and, if deemed appropriate, establish guidelines for a local wetland regulation.	Board of Selectmen	Short
3. Establish a program to identify, prioritize and protect high value freshwater wetlands including those containing vernal pools.	Conservation Commission	Short
4. Within areas of Wells designated as Rural Use, seek to maintain large parcels of land and to ensure that wildlife habitats are connected by travel corridors through both regulatory and non-regulatory means.	CPIC with Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Conservation Commission.	Immediate
5. Charge the Conservation Commission or establish an open lands protection committee to identify and	Board of Selectmen	Immediate

prioritize high value open lands for protection and management including wetlands, wildlife habitat, forestry and agriculture.		
6. Establish a program to work with landowners with high value habitats to protect these areas.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
7. Appoint a Committee to recommend specific implementation programs to assure public access to beaches, manage beach use, protect the physical quality and create transportation links.	Board of Selectmen	Short
8. Establish a graphic inventory of all sand dunes on the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) and update as new data becomes available. Ensure that any landowner with property on a sand dune obtain any necessary state permits prior to obtaining any local permits.	Office of Planning and Development	Short
9. Continue to support the Conservation Commission's use of the Town of Wells' Land Ranking System to identify and prioritize lands with significant wetlands, groundwater sources, scenic view sheds, wildlife habitat, agriculture and forestry uses, outdoor recreation, and other values; and to make recommendations for their protection through the development of an open space plan. The plan will contain input from community recommendations to identify large land tracts throughout the Town within which a conservation area of significant size could be located.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
10. Employ the classification system for existing and future Town owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.	Planning Board and Conservation Commission	Immediate
11. Expand funding of the Town's Land Bank Fund to provide for adequate public open space in the Town of Wells.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
12. Charge the Conservation Commission to work with land owners and other reservation groups, such as the KKW Water District, Great Works Regional Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, the Rachael Carson National Wildlife Refuge, and the State and Federal Government to leverage existing for open space in areas of mutual concern such as Branch Brook Area, Fenderson Wildlife Commons, the Tatnic Region and the Great Heath.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
13. Encourage prospective developers to preserve key open space parcels	Planning Board, Conservation Commission	Immediate-Ongoing

Planning and Management Implementation Program

Plans and Policies Preparation		
1. Prepare a local Development Plan for Harbor Management that addresses harbor use issues, marine resource protection, adjacent land use and public access.	Harbor Committee	Short
2. Review and implement the Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan.	Board of Selectmen	Short
3. Initiate a study to determine the feasibility of an underground utilities program for Routes 1 (Post Antiques and Arts Corridor) and 9/109 and coordinate with future major construction.	Board of Selectmen	Short
4. Encourage educational programs to use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.	CPIC	Immediate
5. Continue to review the Town's Land Use Ordinance to ensure that the quality of the ground and surface waters are protected.	CPIC	Immediate-Ongoing
6. Prepare and adopt Development Plans for the Wells Post Road Antiques and Arts Corridor (Route 1); Route 9/109; and the Wells Transportation Center.	CPIC with Planning Board	Short-Long
7. Establish a graphic inventory of all sand dunes on the Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) and update as new data becomes available. Ensure that any landowner with property on a sand dune obtain any necessary State permits prior to obtaining any local permits.	CPIC with Planning Staff	Long
8. Update the local harbor management plan that addresses harbor location and use issues, jetty issues, marine resource protection, adjacent land use and public access. The updated plan should be submitted to the Maine State Planning Office for approval and become a part of the Comprehensive Plan.	CPIC with Harbor Committee	Intermediate
9. Enable the Conservation Commission to review and comment on public or private plans involving open space areas identified via natural resource data, as high value wildlife habitat, before the Town's reviewing authority makes any decision on the plan.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
10. Enable the Conservation Commission to continue to review foreclosed properties and other land proposed for public auction to determine its suitability for retention as conservation land.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
11. Work with landowners with high value habitat to protect these areas using tools such as acquisition, education, collaborative management, as well as economic incentives such as Tree Growth, Open Space and Critical Habitat Programs.	Conservation Commission	On-going

12. Produce public education and outreach materials that inform the public about their conservation options and the natural history of Wells.	Conservation Commission	Immediate-Ongoing
13. Use Fenderson Wildlife Commons and other locations for environmental education opportunities for the students of the Wells/Ogunquit Community School District and the public.	Conservation Commission with School District	On-going
14. Use up-to-date State Inland Fisheries and Wildlife maps of wetlands and Threatened and Endangered species (See Appendix) as well as open space priorities as identified by the Wells Conservation Commission, when evaluating subdivision applications. In the event the proposed subdivision is in an area where such resources exist, the Conservation Commission will make recommendations for the building and open space locations.	Planning Board with Conservation Commission	On-going
15. Work with the KKWWD to acquire key parcels of land with high value for ground water protection through fee simple acquisition or conservation easement.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
16. Establish a Committee to review and assess the quality of current wetland management within Wells and, if deemed appropriate, establish guidelines for a local wetland regulation.	Board of Selectmen	Short
17. Establish a program to identify and prioritize and protect high value freshwater wetlands including vernal pools.	CPIC	Short
18. Evaluate the use of impact fees for new development.	Growth Management Committee	Short
General Planning and Management		
1. Maintain a coordinated, accurate system for data management that allows for efficient transfer of uniform data and information from one department to another including geographic information.	Board of Selectmen with Town Manager	On-going
2. Continue to review the needs of all other community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: fire substations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.	Board of Selectmen with Town Manager	Immediate-Ongoing
3. Continue to monitor all town-owned properties and resources to ensure that there is a program for ongoing capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board, Capital Improvement Program Committee and Conservation Commission.	Immediate-Ongoing
4. Program public facility improvements through a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that is based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation strategies and an appropriate system of priorities.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board and CIP Committee.	Immediate-Ongoing

5. Develop and implement Town planning and management educational programs for volunteers of all ages involved in the business of the community which use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.	Planning Board with Office of Planning and Development	Short
6. Establish a monthly inter-department/inter-board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and town committees and commissions.	Town Manager	Short
7. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.	Board of Selectmen with Town Manager	Immediate
8. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.	Town Manager	Immediate
9. Establish a continuing program for re-evaluating the policies and implementing the programs established by the Comprehensive Plan.	CPIC with Board of Selectmen	Short-Ongoing

Regional/Intergovernmental Cooperation Implementation Program

1. Continue the cooperative relationship with the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to expand the water quality monitoring program with annual monitoring results and analysis made available to the Town.	Shellfish Commission	Immediate
2. Work with adjacent communities to maintain water quality standards for surface waters that occur in more than one community. Specifically, work with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to undertake policies and programs for the protection of the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer and Merriland River.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
3. Ensure that the water quality of Ell Pond is not degraded by working with the Town of Sanford to implement a consistent set of standards for water quality protection.	Board of Selectmen	Short
4 Continue to work with appropriate state agencies and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve to manage point and non-point source pollution into the harbor and estuary to ensure appropriate water quality levels for shell fish harvesting and other marine recreation activities	Board of Selectmen	On-going
5. Work cooperatively with the Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage and protect high value habitat and areas for significant habitat and rare and endangered species.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate

6. Continue to work with the Department of Marine Resources and the DEP to ensure the viability of the recreational shellfish harvesting program and prohibit any commercial harvesting.	Shellfish Commission	Immediate
7. Actively participate with the MDOT in the US Route 1 Corridor Study and on the Route 109 Improvement Program between Exit 19 and the High Pine area.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
8. Work cooperatively with the MDOT to ensure that there is proper planning and implementation of projects in Town.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate-Short
9. Participate in the MDOT Regional Needs Assessment process in order to coordinate local transportation planning with the regional and State effort and to become aware of funding and program opportunities.	Selectmen	Immediate
10. Continue to work with the Maine Turnpike Authority in the negotiation for a major bus company to provide Boston to Portland bus service with a stop at the Transportation Center and for bus service from the Center to link surrounding communities. Transportation Center and for bus service from the Center to link surrounding communities.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
11. Establish an ongoing dialogue with the water and sewer utility districts to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations as well as other land use policies of this Plan.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
12. Work cooperatively with the Maine Department of Transportation for a new Turnpike interchange between Wells and Ogunquit to ease traffic congestion on Route 1.	Board of Selectmen	Short
13. Continue to work with the Town of Sanford on the Route 109 corridor study and implement its recommendations when complete.	Town Manager and Planning staff	Immediate-Ongoing
14. Continue to participate in the Coastal Explorer planning process to evaluate and improve trolley service to adequately meet the needs of the community and the region.	Town Manager and Planning staff	Immediate-Ongoing

Historic Preservation Implementation Program

1. Seek Local Government Certification with the State Historic Preservation Office to be eligible for matching grants to assist the work of the Wells Historic Preservation Commission.	Historic Preservation Commission with Historical Society	Immediate
2. Continue to support the identification and documentation of historic and archaeological resources for purposes of building a written and photographic record that can be used to maintain and protect these valuable community resources.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing

3. Identify scenic historic landscapes resources areas including agricultural lands and fields, rock walls, etc	Historic Preservation Commission	Immediate-Short
4. Manage the “Gateways” or major roadway entrances into the Town of Wells to protect their historic community character and ensure that any new development be consistent with this character.	Historic Preservation Commission	Short
5. Continue and enhance the education and outreach program for both the residents and visitors to Wells about the Town’s historic and archaeological resources.	Historic Preservation Commission	Ongoing
6. Work with public and private groups to establish a permanent heritage trail that would include a map and permanent markers for specific historic properties	Historic Preservation Commission	Short
7. Encourage more property owners to place their properties on the National Register of Historic Places.	Historic Preservation Commission	Immediate-Ongoing
8. Strengthen requirements in the Land Use Ordinance regarding proximity to and impacts on historic and archaeological resources.	CPIC with Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Board	Short

Town Character and Appearance Implementation Program

1. Initiate a street tree planting programs for Routes 1 and 9/109.	Board of Selectmen with Beautification Committee and Chamber of Commerce, Garden Club	Short
2. Establish a program to preserve scenic views along the Route 1 Corridor and other specific locations as identified by the Scenic Resources Committee.	CPIC	Immediate
3. Identify scenic landscape resource areas including agricultural lands and fields, rock walls, etc	CPIC with Scenic Resources Committee	Immediate-Ongoing
4. Install Town Entrance signs that reflect the traditional New England Traditional New England-Wells Maine Style. See also the recommendation in the Historic Preservation Program.	Board of Selectmen	Short
5. Initiate a street curb and sidewalk improvement program.	CPIC with Capital Improvement Program and Sidewalk Committees	Immediate-Ongoing

Transportation and Circulation Implementation Program

1. Study alternative transportation options to ease congestion on Route 1	Board of Selectmen	Short
2. Reduce the seasonal congestion by providing off street parking adjacent to Route 1 and encouraging residents/ tourists to use the trolley system, the park and ride facility and rideshare programs.	Board of Selectmen	Short

3. Continue to investigate and implement seasonal traffic calming measures in high-density residential and commercial areas, especially adjacent to and east of Route 1.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate- Ongoing
4. Encourage users of alternative transportation modes to use the Wells Transportation Center.	Board of Selectmen	Short
5. Implement the recommendations of the <i>Route 109/9 Corridor Plan</i> .	CPIC	Immediate-Short
6. Prepare Development Plans for Streets, Sidewalks and Bikeways.	CPIC	Immediate-Short
7. Prepare and fund a roadway improvement program with priorities for inclusion in the Town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This process will provide formal notice to all concerned regarding the Town's intention for future roadway improvements.	CPIC with Board of Selectmen	Short
8. Continue to study alternative routes to ease congestion on Route 1 such as the turnpike exit between Wells and Moody.	CPIC	Short-Ongoing
9. Build the connection between College Drive and Mile Road.	Board of Selectmen	Short
10. Continue the firm policy ensuring that all roads accepted as public Town roads be built and constructed to the Town's roadway standards.	Road Commissioner	On-going
11. Consider establishing an impact fee for all roads accepted as public town roads appropriate for the impact of the development on Town services.	Board of Selectmen, Growth Management Committee	Short
12. Establish a committee to evaluate and improve the trolley service to adequately meet the needs of the community.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
13. Provide screened off street parking adjacent to Routes 1 and 109.	Board of Selectmen	Short
14. Encourage residents and tourists to use the trolley system in conjunction with the off street parking areas, the park and ride facility and rideshare programs.	Board of Selectmen	Short
15. Consider the use of private mass transit	Board of Selectmen	Long
16. Establish a committee to prepare a Development Plan for Bicycle Ways and Trails based on existing regional and local data and plans and also consider their relationship to sidewalks and other pedestrian ways. Said pedestrian /bicycle paths will be for non-motorized vehicles, i.e., no ATV, 4 wheelers, minibikes, etc.)	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
17. Have the Bicycle Ways and Trails Committee review local or state roadway improvements and where possible connect existing trails in Town and eventually connect with the Eastern Trail.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
18. Continue to investigate and implement seasonal traffic calming measures in high density residential and commercial areas, especially adjacent to and east	Board of Selectmen	Short

of, US Route. Also, identify appropriate locations for pedestrian sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage to enhance pedestrian safety and traffic calming.		
19. Plan for the expansion of the rideshare/vanpool facilities as the usage increases.	CPIC	Long
20. As the central area of Town develops, plan for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails and bicycle paths.	CPIC	Long
21. Develop a comprehensive sidewalk and streetscape program for Route 109 east of the Turnpike.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
23. Effectively utilize the new internal Transportation Center access road and the existing traffic signal at Route 109.	Planning Board	Immediate-Ongoing

Economic Development Implementation Program

1 Establish a non-profit economic development corporation (EDC) whose responsibility would be to market Wells and its resources to companies who would be compatible with the Town's existing small-town character, scale and market	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
2. Identify areas in Town that would be suitable for future wholesale commercial, research and development or low-impact businesses such as the Crediford Road Area. These areas should have good access to the local and regional highway network and be consistent with the Land Use goals and policies.	CPIC with Planning Board and EDC	Short
3. Identify and attract companies that would be suitable for Wells.	EDC	Short
4. Identify and attract companies that would be suitable for Wells and would also complement the existing business environment. Such businesses could take advantage of Wells' environmental resources as tourist attractions and could include bicycle/kayak touring, small restaurants, personal service establishments, business service and repair, and arts and crafts-type shops.	EDC	Short
5. Establish a revolving loan fund coordinated with the local Chamber of Commerce and fund through local financial institutions to encourage small business development.	EDC	Long
6. Retain and expand existing businesses by facilitating technical assistance and training through State sponsored economic development programs as well as business planning and management workshop.	EDC	Short
7. Participate in the Southern Maine Regional Economic Development Program for technical assistance.	EDC	Immediate
8. Foster the development of home occupations and	EDC	Short

cottage industries that are consistent with Wells' rural, small-town character. Review land use regulations and revise, if necessary, standards for home occupations that provides opportunity for small business yet minimizes impact on adjacent uses or the environment.		
9. Establish a committee to explore ecologically oriented tourist opportunities. Said committee should include representatives from business and natural resource oriented organizations such as the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, Laudholm Trust, Nature Conservancy, Great Works Regional Land Trust, and the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge and the Mount Agamenticus Regional Trust.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
10. Continue to maintain Wells Harbor as an active harbor that provides access, service and mooring facilities for both commercial, marine-related vessels and recreational boats.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
11. Continue to support the farmers' market community.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing

Housing Implementation Program

1. Adopt the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) definitions of affordability for York County and update affordability targets as new MSHA data are available	CPIC	Immediate, ongoing
2. Continue to allow housing for the senior population in growth and transitional areas and allow higher densities for this age group than other types of housing through a density bonus program where the facility can be served by public sewer and water.	CPIC	Immediate
3. Establish incentives such as those currently allowed for congregate housing to encourage the development of senior housing as long as the development is consistent with the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan	Planning Board	Short
4. Revise the mobile home regulations to ensure that they meet the State law for mobile home parks and mobile home park expansion. Such regulations must provide standards to minimize the impact on the Town's services, natural and cultural environment and be respectful of adjoining neighborhoods.	Planning Board	Immediate
5. Review the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to ensure that housing density is consistent with the Land Use Plan, is directed to Growth Areas of the community and is consistent with the capacity of municipal services to ensure new or redeveloped sites. See also Policies and	Planning Board	Immediate

Recommendations for Land Use.		
6. Review town land use ordinances to determine if these regulations can be revised to encourage more affordable housing.	CPIC	Immediate
7. Work with other communities to create a regional non-profit housing organization to foster affordable housing programs for low-and moderate-income families. Such a group could: a. Ensure that local land use regulations do not present a barrier to the development of affordable housing. b. Work cooperatively with nonprofit organizations and private developers to provide opportunities for affordable housing. c. Seek loans and grants from the State of Maine; d. Work with area banks through the Community Reinvestment Act. e. Consider the use of Town-owned land for affordable housing programs.	Board of Selectmen	Short
8. Adopt or revise provisions in the land use and building codes to provide greater opportunities for the rehabilitation of low- and moderate-income properties.	Planning Board	Short
9. Provide opportunities for multiple uses of buildings, including housing, in commercial areas of the community.	Planning Board	Short
10. Ensure that any revisions to the Growth Management Ordinance retain or expand the exemptions for affordable family and senior housing.	Growth Management Committee	Short
11. Work with York County Community College and the development community to pursue a student housing development in the vicinity of the college.	Board of Selectmen	Short

Public Facilities and Services Implementation Program

General		
1. Monitor the space needs of Town Hall and consider future expansion as he need arises to ensure high quality and efficient level of service.	Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
2. Continue to review the needs of all community facilities to determine the need for replacement or additions including, but not limited to: fire substations, police station, highway department and recreational facilities.	Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
3. Continue to monitor all Town-owned properties and resources to ensure there is a rational basis for capital maintenance, repairs and acquisition.	Selectmen, Town Manager	Immediate-Ongoing
4. Program public facility improvements through a	Selectmen with	Immediate-Ongoing

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) based upon the policies and actions from this Comprehensive Plan and an appropriate system of priorities.	Capital Improvement Program Committee	
5. Encourage educational programs that use a variety of community resources including conservation lands, historic resources, community facilities and local businesses.	CPIC with School District	Long
6. Establish a monthly inter-department/inter-board newsletter to communicate appropriate information among the Town departments and Town committees and commissions.	Board of Selectmen	Short
7. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
8. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
9. Work directly with the businesses and community groups of Wells to determine areas where cost sharing for municipal facilities and services may be appropriate.	Town Manager	On-going
Fire Protection		
1. Continue the program of installing dry hydrants.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
2. Adopt a specific development plan for fire protection addressing issues such as volunteer fire fighting resources, fire ponds, dry hydrants and response times. Said plan shall become part of the Comprehensive Plan.	Board of Selectmen	Short
3. Adopt an ordinance to require either the installation of fire ponds or payment by a developer into a fire protection fund where the development is not on Town water and installation of fire dry hydrant or pond to serve the development is not feasible.	Board of Selectmen	Immediate
Parks		
1. Adopt a specific development plan for parks and recreation facilities addressing issues such as maintenance of current facilities and acquisition of new facilities to meet Town needs. Said plan shall become part of the Comprehensive Plan.	Board of Selectmen	Short
Public Lands		
1. Continue to plan and manage publicly owned lands to meet Town needs consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and where possible maximize their asset and environmental resource value.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board and Conservation Commission	On-going
2. Employ the Town's land ranking classification system for existing and future Town owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.	Planning Board and Conservation Commission	On-going

Public Utilities Implementation Program

1. Continue the program of installing dry hydrants.	Planning Board	Immediate
2. Conserve the Town's financial and environmental resources through group purchasing and waste reduction and recycling.	Selectmen, Town Manager	Short
3. Program public utility improvements that are based upon the policies and actions from this Comprehensive Plan and an appropriate system of priorities	Planning Board, Selectmen	Immediate-Ongoing
4. Approve new developments that rely on public water only when the applicant can prove that adequate water supply for fire protection is available.	Planning Board	Immediate-Ongoing
5. Establish an ongoing dialogue with the water and sewer utility districts to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations and other land use policies of this Plan.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board	On-going
6. Reconfigure the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District to protect the Town's water supply.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board	Short
7. Cooperate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to adopt policies and programs to protect the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
8. Continue to review the Town's land use regulations to ensure the quality of the ground and surface waters are protected through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources.	Board of Selectmen with Planning Board	On-going
9. Prepare a specific Development Plan for drainage.	Board of Selectmen	Short
10. Work with appropriate utility companies to program public utility improvements based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation programs and an appropriate system of priorities.	Board of Selectmen with CPIC	On-going
11. Approve new developments that rely on public water only when the applicant can prove adequate water supply for fire protection is available.	Planning Board	On-going
12. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
13. Continue to work with wireless, cable and data utility system providers to ensure state of the art facilities are available for residents and economic development.	Board of Selectmen	On-going
14. Explore the feasibility of implementing a program to locate overhead utility wires along key roads, (e.g. Route 1, 9/109, 9 and 109) underground over time.	CPIC	Short

Flood Hazard Mitigation Implementation Program

<p>Planning 1. Establish a Flood Hazard Mitigation Committee to ensure the Plan remains current. Review this Plan once a year and update it every three years.</p>	Board of Selectmen	
<p>Prevention (Prevention activities include planning and zoning, open space preservation, floodplain development regulations, stormwater management, drainage improvements and pre-disaster mitigation activities.)</p>		
<p>Land Use Planning Activities 1. Identify local and state policies, programs and practices that directly or indirectly promote growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area and increase the potential for coastal damage due to flooding conditions. Once these policies and programs have been updated, recommend policy and regulatory changes that will discourage growth and development in the Special Flood Hazard Area.</p>	FHMC	Short
<p>2. Work with local, state and federal conservation organizations such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify and acquire parcels in the Special Flood Hazard Area that have the potential to reduce the risk from flooding.</p>	FHMC	Short
<p>3. Consider the inclusion of a floodplain management criteria as the Town formulates its open space strategy for management and acquisition of open space lands.</p>	Conservation Commission	Short
<p>4. Amend the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance (Chapter 115) to be consistent with State requirements after the Town has accepted the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM).</p>	Board of Selectmen	Short
<p>5. Review the findings and conclusions of the Wells Bay Planning Committee to determine what recommendations should be included in the Town's floodplain management program and public education activities.</p>	CPIC	Short
<p>Stormwater management and drainage improvements 1. Conduct an inventory of all culverts and bridges to determine their adequacy to handle the 100-year flood event i.e., determine their capability to provide for the efficient runoff of peak stormwater discharge and to prevent localized flooding conditions.</p>	Town Manager	Short
<p>2. Seek the assistance and cooperation of landowners to gain access to drainage ways so debris can be removed to improve drainage. Because the existing drainage ways have become plugged over time and</p>	Board of Selectmen	Short

there is a 1 to 1 ½ feet change in elevation, some coastal areas experience minor and, on occasion, moderate flood conditions. This should restore to some degree the drainage system function.		
3. Initiate a regular program to clean out and maintain existing catch basins on public lands or rights-of-way so that they can retain an adequate amount of water during periods of peak discharge.	Town Manager	Short
4. Ensure that all proposed developments have an acceptable stormwater retention plan and drainage plan as part of the subdivision and site plan review process.	Planning Board	On-going
5. Adopt regulations for stormwater management.	Board of Selectmen	Short
Property Protection (Property protection activities include relocation, acquisition, demolition, building elevation, flood retrofitting, retrofitting and insurance. The Town should consider focusing its initial efforts on the seven repetitive loss properties.)		
1. Conduct a flood hazard audit and analysis of the seven repetitive loss properties located on Atlantic and Ocean Avenues and Webhannet Drive to determine how the risks can be reduced.	FHMC	Immediate
2. Ensure that all critical public facilities such as the Wells Sanitary Sewer District facilities and the KKW's water system plant are properly floodproofed to prevent the infiltration of floodwaters. These facilities should be adequately insured against the risk of flood damage.	Board of Selectmen	Short
3. Identify residential and commercial properties in the Special Flood Hazard Area that would be appropriate candidates for structural improvements such as elevation and retrofitting to reduce the risk of flood damage.	FHMC	Short
4. Work with property owners within the floodplain to identify loan programs for floodproofing or other appropriate mitigation activities for structures located within the Special Flood Hazard Area.	FHMC	Short
5. Initiate a pilot mitigation program to provide additional incentives for residential and commercial buildings located in the flood hazard area. For example, if a sufficient number of projects were generated in a localized area, a local contractor may be able to offer a discount to property owners who wish to elevate or retrofit their structures.	FHMC	Short

<p>Natural Resource Protection (Natural resource protection includes dune stabilization, beach nourishment, wetland protection, and erosion and sediment control measures and best management practices.)</p> <p>1. Seek engineering assistance to review the Town’s practice of relocating sand to the eroded beach area at the beginning of Laudholm Beach at the northeastern part of Drake’s Island.</p>	Board of Selectmen	Short
<p>Emergency Services (Emergency services include flood warning, flood response, critical facilities and public health and safety maintenance.)</p> <p>1. Review and update the Town’s local Emergency Response Plan. Since the Plan was first prepared, changes in land use have occurred with new commercial and industrial development, and in the emergency planning context, such as the flood warning notification system, the updated evacuation plans and the Emergency Alert System (EAS). An updated Emergency Response Plan should reflect these changes.</p>	FHMC	Immediate
<p>2. Conduct a tabletop flood response drill once a year to test the notification and communication procedures, the responders’ knowledge of their procedures and the extent of local resources such as sandbags, barricades, generators and shelters.</p>	FHMC	Short
<p>3. Provide additional support to the Town’s Emergency Management Director in the form of a computer and part time administrative assistance.</p>	Board of Selectmen	Short
<p>Structural Projects (Structural projects include seawalls, floodwalls and beach nourishment.)</p> <p>1. Continue to repair and improve the seawall footing along Webhannet Drive by placing sheet pile facade in from the existing seawall. This project provides protection from storm and flood damage to properties along Webhannet Drive. The project should continue for approximately 1,500 feet at an estimated cost of \$1,600,000. This project should be completed over a 5 to 7 year period</p>	Board of Selectmen	Short
<p>2. Monitor the results of the recently completed beach nourishment program so that minor alterations can be made, as needed.</p>	Conservation Commission	Short
<p>Public Information (As one of the initial members in the Community Rating System (CRS) program, Wells has been active in various public information and education programs</p>	FHMC	Short

<p>associated with an effective floodplain management program.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate public information activities including providing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. FIRM map information; b. Technical assistance on the floodplain regulations and flood mitigation activities; c. Information at the library; d. Outreach projects; e. Real estate disclosure f. Environmental education and g. Coordination with adjacent communities. 		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Prepare a public information brochure that describes in detail the comprehensive nature of the Town's floodplain management program. 	FHMC	Short
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Establish a committee of concerned flood hazard property owners who are advocates of the Town's floodplain management efforts. Use the committee as a sounding board for new ideas and initiatives regarding an effective floodplain management program. 	Board of Selectmen	Short
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Use the community cable access program to publicize the Town's floodplain management programs. 	FHMC	Immediate

Part 4 – Capital Investment Strategy

Introduction

A “Capital Investment Strategy” highlights the capital investments needed to manage growth in Wells. It is not a formal capital improvements program (CIP), but it will serve as a guide to future capital expenditures that relate to the Town’s growth. It is to be updated annually and contains in its appendix a Five Year CIP.

In addition to the major investments identified in this section, the Town also faces other smaller, ongoing capital expenditures. For example, it must continually replace and maintain vehicles and equipment or address other existing deficiencies that are unrelated to growth. This chapter does not address those “as needed” items and instead only deals only with items needed to accommodate growth or to meet the policies of this Comprehensive Plan.

Two major capital items -- public water and public sewer – are the responsibilities of separate, independent districts. The Town’s capital investments therefore are free of these items except to the extent that the Town itself wishes to initiate the extension of one of the systems for its own purpose (such as to support economic development). However, as stated elsewhere in this Plan, coordination between the Town and the utilities is important to the success of the Plan. The Town is fortunate to have a good working relationship with both the Wells Sanitary District and the KK&W Water District.

The Wells / Ogunquit Community School District (CSD) was formed in 1980 through the vote of both communities as a part of the State Legislature action to allow Ogunquit to separate from the Town of Wells. The ownership of the school facilities was turned over to the CSD at that time. New facilities are bonded through a vote of the two towns and debt retirement is the responsibility of the Towns of Wells and Ogunquit through the CSD statutory funding formula. In recent referendum in 2001, the voters agreed to bond up to \$19.5 million for the construction of a new elementary school and renovations to the Junior High School. In that same referendum, the voters of Wells donated public lands purchased in the 1990’s for future siting of municipal facilities next to Town Hall to the CSD for the purpose of constructing the new Elementary School.

It also should be noted that a capital investment item, as opposed to capital expenditure that typically would be found in an operating budget, usually involves a large expenditure paid for over time or with the help of outside funds. Financing over time does not necessarily mean borrowing. It may involve a reserve fund or a tool such as tax increment financing. But, frequently, the best way to finance a capital investment is through borrowing. Section 10 of the Inventory reviewed the Town’s fiscal capacity and outstanding capital debt. It documented that Wells’ debt level as of 2003 was \$26.88 million, including its share of school debts. Of this amount, \$1.24 million is the Town’s own debt and \$25.64 million is from the CSD. This level is well within the limits of measures of credit worthiness for a town of its size, and the payout schedule is rapid.

Each of the capital investments derived from the Comprehensive Plan is rated by priority. The rating system is:

- **Urgent: First priority.** The improvement is required to address an immediate public health or safety problem, to comply with a governmental regulation or mandate, or to complete an important, unfinished project. Failure to address the problem or mandate would hinder the Town's ability to accommodate expected growth.
- **Necessary: Second priority.** The project is not needed to solve an immediate public health or safety problem but should be undertaken in the near future.
- **Growth Dependent: Third priority.** The project gives the Town the ability to accommodate expected growth and would enhance the community's quality of life, but the improvement can wait until other more pressing projects are finished and additional funds are available.
- **Desirable, further study required: Fourth priority.** The project would allow for ideal operations given the projected growth, but can be deferred without detriment to delivering the basic services.

Capital Investments

This section outlines the capital investment needs by department for the Town of Wells. All cost figures expressed here only account for cost of buildings and facilities and do not include any potential land costs.

1. General Administration

As documented in Section 9 (Public Facilities and Utilities) of the Inventory, Wells Town Hall is overcrowded and no longer meets the needs of the Town's growing population. After several unsuccessful attempts to expand Town Hall over the past ten years, the 2004 Town Meeting finally approved funds to expand the building to accommodate more office space for the Town's Code Enforcement and Planning staff and to improve the building's accessibility.

These improvements will help to meet current deficiencies, but they will not be sufficient to serve the Town's needs for office and meeting space for the next 10 years. Additional Town Hall space will be needed, either at the location of the existing facility or at a satellite location. The estimated cost of expanding Town Hall is \$4 million.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

2. Public Safety

Police Department: The Police Department has been in the same location since 1986 and its space and equipment needs have now been maximized at its present location. Space needs of the Police Department will need to be considered in the near future.

A particular concern is the location of the current facility in the Route 1 corridor. Considering that much of Wells' growth is occurring further from the coast, there may need to be a greater police presence in the Town's inland area. To meet the Town's needs, a new Police Station needs to be built and an additional substation may be needed as well. The estimated cost of a new main station would be \$2.5 million, and the cost of a substation would be \$500,000.

Priority Rating: Growth Dependent

Fire Department: The Wells Fire Department operates three stations at this time, the main station at Wells Corner and two substations at Wells Branch and Highpine. The two substations are both outdated and were identified in the Inventory as not being the ideal locations to serve the Town's growing population, particularly in its southern and western sections. It is recommended that these two facilities be replaced with two new substations: a northern one in the Sanford/Meetinghouse Road area and a southern one in the Littlefield/Bear's Den Road area. Each of these stations is estimated to cost \$1 million, for a total investment need of \$2 million.

In addition to these new stations, an addition to the main station at Wells Corner is needed as well. This addition would allow the main station to raise its level of service in the coastal areas of the Town. Its estimated cost is \$750,000.

Priority Ratings:

New substations: Growth Dependent

Addition to Wells Corner station: Necessary

3. Public Works

Garage: The existing public works garage on Route 9 (North Berwick Road) is 50 years old, outdated, and lacks some of the basic equipment for efficiency and safety, such as adequate ventilation and proper overhead doors. A lean-to facility houses much of the equipment along with a donated round metal garage building. The fueling depot is not in compliance with DEP Underground Tank regulations and an above ground storage facility is being investigated. The estimated cost for a new garage is \$3.5 million.

Priority Rating: Urgent

Sand and salt shed: To meet a State mandate, the Town must build a sand and salt storage shed facility. The MDOT Salt Shed Priority program rates Wells a "2" with 1 the highest need. A salt shed reserve fund has been established with the Town appropriating funds to engineer and design it. The new shed will be able to store 5,000 cubic yards of sand/salt mix. Its location is on the Highway Department site. The estimated cost of this facility is \$1.4 million.

Priority Rating: Necessary

Solid waste disposal: Disposal of domestic solid waste is managed through MERC from the Wells Transfer Facility off the Willy Hill Road. The facility was constructed on the parcel containing the Town's Landfill that was officially closed in 1986 and DEP Closure in 1996. The Transfer Station has been added onto in 2000 to include a recycling building. The Landfill requires water quality monitoring annually. The Transfer Station operation has become dependant on a Solid Waste and Material Broker for all materials other than solid waste. The Town contracts for hauling services of its waste trailers to MERC. These very expensive trailers wear out fairly quickly and are thus considered capital equipment. Replacing them all would cost \$100,000.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

4. Flood Hazard Mitigation

The Highway Department has identified 7 flood problem areas in Wells:

- Mile Road
- Eldridge Road
- Furbish Road at Stevens Brook
- Post Road at the Merriland River
- Tatnic Road
- Ocean Avenue
- Branch Road at the Merriland River.

Problems include flooding, the undermining of roadways, and erosion. Specific improvements have not been identified, but generally they involve working with federal and state agencies to determine proper solutions. The Town's adopted Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan contains additional details.

To address these problems, the Town needs to make a number of capital investments. These are described below.

Stormwater management and drainage improvements: The seven flood problem areas identified above are in need of stormwater/drainage improvements to reduce their flood risks. In order to make these improvements, the Town needs to first inventory all culverts and bridges in these areas to determine their adequacy to handle the 100-year flood event and then improve these culverts and bridges. The estimated cost of these improvements is \$500,000.

Priority Rating: Urgent

Property Protection: The Town adopted a Flood Hazard Mitigation plan in 2001. One of the Plan's key recommendations was to take action to protect properties in Wells that are known to suffer repetitive losses from flooding, so as to avoid future losses. These protection activities

may include relocation, acquisition, demolition, building elevation, floodproofing, retrofitting and insurance. There are seven such properties that have been identified in the Town, located on Atlantic Avenue, Ocean Avenue and Webhannet Drive. A flood hazard audit and analysis of these properties needs to be undertaken to determine how the risks can be reduced. Following this analysis, investments in property protection will be needed. As with the stormwater/drainage category, the costs of these improvements are not yet known.

Priority Rating: Necessary

Structural Projects: The Webhannet Drive seawall has been found to be in need of major repairs. The particular improvements needed involve the seawall footings, which need to be protected by placing sheet pile facades in from the existing seawall. This project will provide protection from storm and flood damage to properties along Webhannet Drive. The project should continue for approximately 1,500 feet at an estimated cost of \$1.6 million.

Priority Rating: Urgent

5. Transportation

Road reconstruction: Many arterial and collector roads in Wells need to be reconstructed. Funding for this work is appropriated annually. Cost of this type of work for each road ranges from \$50,000 to \$125,000. Roads that should be undertaken for reconstruction are:

- Route 9B (Littlefield Road)
- Bragdon Road
- Tatnic Road
- Swamp John Road
- Quarry Road
- Drakes Island Road
- Coles Hill Road
- Burnt Mill Road

Assuming an average cost of \$75,000 for each of these projects, the total anticipated cost to the Town of these eight projects would be \$600,000.

Priority Rating: Necessary

Route 1 improvements: A number of improvements related to access management and mobility in the Route 1 corridor are needed to serve Wells and the surrounding region. Specific projects identified include:

- Re-pavement from the Intersection of Route 109 to Route 9 (Port Road).
- Route 109 and 1 Intersection Improvements
- Moody area cumulative growth impact on traffic study
- Regional coastal explorer bus service
- Greater investment in Chamber Trolley System
- New Turnpike Interchange in Moody/Ogunquit area and related local improvements

- Improvement to the intersections of Chapel and Route 109 and Chapel and Route 1.

The costs of these individual projects are not yet known and substantial percentages of each are expected to be covered by Maine DOT and private sector interests.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

Sidewalk Master Plan: Various sidewalk improvements have been recommended in the Sidewalk Master Plan in the Wells Corner area. The immediate project that requires Town investment is for a new raised sidewalk from Harbor Road to the Wells Congregational Church. The estimated cost to the Town of this improvement is \$450,000.

Priority Rating: Necessary

6. Harbor and Marine Resources

Wells Harbor Pier: Following recent improvements to buildings at the harbor, it was discovered that the pier holding the Harbormaster facility is sagging and cannot hold the weight of the building. The building structurally is settling and developing noticeable sags. The Town has begun to explore moving the facility off the pier and building a new office and storage complex off the shellfish hatchery building and locating a portable bait locker (refrigerated trailer) on the opposite side of the parking lot. The pier would then be repaired and it would open it up for further tourist use. The estimated cost of this improvement is \$50,000.

Priority Rating: Urgent

Harbor Dredging: The Town, with the Army Corps of Engineers have submitted to the State of Maine an application to allow it to undertake maintenance dredges to the outer harbor area over a period of 10 years. The Town will be eligible for a full dredge of the harbor in 2007 if the monitoring reports indicate that the prior full dredge did not cause environmental harm to the marsh area surrounding the harbor. Support for this is crucial for a viable and stable harbor. The estimated cost of the Town's matching share of the full dredge would be \$650,000.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

7. Recreation and Historic Preservation

Public Restroom: The Town has developed a reserve fund to establish a public restroom facility in the Routes 1 and 109 area. Talks are ongoing with the owner of the Wells Shopping Center to establish a facility in that location. The estimated cost of providing this facility is \$65,000.

Priority Rating: Necessary

Marsh Walk: Public interest is strong for some type of coastal walkway along the Webhannet River. However, abutting property owners have resisted the development of such a facility, and community issues would need to be resolved before pursuing the Marsh Walk. The estimated cost of this project is \$750,000.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

Field House: In response to demand for additional programs and services, the Recreation Department developed a master plan for its facilities on Route 9A. The key finding of this plan was that a field house facility, including a gymnasium, multipurpose rooms and locker/restroom facilities, was needed. This has been and continues to be a major need of the Recreation Department. The estimated cost of this facility is \$2 million.

Priority Rating: Growth Dependent

Eastern Trail Development: A significant portion of the Eastern Trail, a planned regional trail, is designated for Wells. An abandoned rail bed that is currently used for a gas pipeline is slated for Wells' portion of this off-road trail stretching from Kittery to South Portland. The estimated cost to develop the Wells segment of the Eastern Trail is not known at this time.

Priority Rating: Desirable

Route 1/Elementary School Path: A need has been identified for a walking path connecting Route 1 to the new Wells Elementary School on Route 109 to help pedestrian access for children. This trail could be built on property owned by the Wells-Ogunquit CSD. Its estimated cost is \$40,000.

Priority Rating: Desirable

Colonial Road Walking Trails: Many abandoned Colonial roads that are still in existence as public rights-of-way in Wells may be suitable for the development of walking trails. Doing so would require additional study and costs are unknown at this time.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

Land Bank: The Town of Wells already has some funding for an Open Space Reserve Fund as part of a land bank. Further funding for acquisition and recreational development may be needed in the future, though there is no exact amount set at this time.

Priority Rating: Desirable, further study required

8. Library

The Wells Public Library has been in existence for approximately 23 years with a building starting out at 5,000 square feet with an addition in 1991 of an additional 6,000 square feet.

Today the library is the largest municipal building with 11,000 square feet of heavily used space. Strategic Planning is underway to consider another addition and to landscape the front, side and rear of the library. The beautification programs will assist the town in making this facility a destination location for cultural and educational services. The estimated cost for the addition and the landscaping is \$1.5 million.

Priority Rating: Growth Dependent

Summary of Capital Investment Strategy

The following matrix expresses all of the identified capital investment needs of the Town of Wells and displays their priority levels to the Town. These items and their estimated costs are based on preliminary input from various heads of Town departments.

No.	Item	Est. Cost	Priority Level
General Administration			
1.	Town Hall Expansion	\$4.0M	Desirable, further study required
Public Safety			
2.	New Police Station	\$2.5M	Growth Dependent
3.	Police Substation	\$500K	Growth Dependent
4.	Northern Fire Substation	\$1.0M	Growth Dependent
5.	Southern Fire Substation	\$1.0M	Growth Dependent
6.	Wells Corner Fire Station Addition	\$750K	Necessary
Public Works			
7.	New Public Works Garage	\$3.5M	Urgent
8.	* New Sand and Salt Shed	\$1.4M	Necessary
9.	Solid Waste Disposal Trailers	\$100K	Desirable, further study required
Flood Hazard Mitigation			
10.	Stormwater/Drainage Improvements	\$500K	Urgent
11.	Repetitive Flooding Property Protection	Unknown	Necessary
12.	Webhannet Drive Seawall Repairs	\$1.6M	Urgent
Transportation			
13.	Various Road Reconstructions	\$600K	Necessary
14.	Route 1 Improvements	Unknown	Desirable, further study required
15.	* Raised Sidewalk (Harbor Road to First Congregational Church)	\$450K	Necessary
16.	Wells Harbor Pier Repairs	\$50K	Urgent
17.	Wells Harbor Dredging (Local Match)	\$650K	Desirable, further study required
Recreation and Historic Preservation			
18.	* Public Restroom in Route 1/109 area	\$65K	Necessary
19.	Webhannet Marsh Walk	\$750K	Desirable, further study required
20.	Route 9A Field House	\$2.0M	Growth Dependent
21.	Eastern Trail Development/Maintenance	Unknown	Growth Dependent
22.	Route 1/Elementary School Path	\$40K	Growth Dependent
23.	Colonial Road Walking Paths	Unknown	Desirable, further study required
24.	Land Bank	Unknown	Desirable, further study required
Library			
25.	Library Addition & Landscaping	\$1.5M	Growth Dependent

* - Project partially or completely funded as of October 2004.

Note: This table presents a compilation of potential capital investments that may be needed by the Town of Wells. No projects on this list will be funded without Town Meeting approval.

Part 5 – Appendix

The Comprehensive Plan's Appendix includes research and analysis as background for The Comprehensive Plan.

(SEE SEPARATE APPENDIX DOCUMENT AVAILABLE AT TOWN HALL AND THE TOWN LIBRARY)

**Town of Wells, Maine
Comprehensive Plan Inventory
UPDATE**

For Review and Discussion

Submitted To:

Comprehensive Plan Improvement Task Force
Wells, Maine

Submitted by:

Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission
21 Bradeen Street, Suite 304
Springvale, Maine 04083

September 28, 2004

In Cooperation with

Town of Wells Planning Department

Table of Contents

Inventory and Analysis (Appendix A)

1. Economics and Demographics
 - A. Population
 - B. Local Economy
2. Water Resources
3. Critical Natural Resources
 - A. Topography, Slope and Soils
 - B. Wetlands
 - C. Significant Wildlife & Fisheries Habitats
 - D. Scenic and Coastal Areas
 - E. Flood Hazards
4. Marine Resources
5. Transportation and Circulation
6. Housing
7. Historic and Archaeological Resources
8. Land Use
 - A. Forestry and Agricultural Land
 - B. Recent Development Patterns
 - C. Current Land Uses
9. Public Facilities and Utilities
 - A. Public Facilities
 - B. Public Utilities
10. Fiscal Capacity

Appendix A

Inventory and Analysis

Section 1 – Economics and Demographics

A. POPULATION

Year-Round Population Trends

In 1900 the population of Wells was approximately 2,000. By 1950 it had reached 2,321. In the next 20 years, Wells had almost doubled its population to 4,448. By 1990 the Census reported the population at 7,778 and Census 2000 tabulated 9,400, representing about a 50% increase from 1980-2000. **See Table 1.** Although the population increased by 51% from 1970 to 1980, it slowed to 16% in the 10-year period from 1980 to 1990. During the 1990s the rate of growth increased to 21%. Though this rate of growth was not as high as York, Kennebunk or Ogunquit, it was faster than all of the other neighboring municipalities and York County as a whole.

Table 1

Year Round Population

Wells and Adjacent Communities

			% Change				% Change	
	1970	1980	1970-80	1990	1980-90	2000	1990-2000	
Wells	4,448	6,719	+51	7,778	+16	9,400	+21	
Kennebunk	5,646	6,621	+17	8,004	+21	10,476	+31	
Sanford	15,812	18,020	+14	20,463	+14	20,806	+2	
North Berwick	2,224	2,878	+29	3,793	+32	4,293	+13	
South Berwick	3,488	4,406	+16	5,877	+33	6,671	+14	
York	5,690	8,465	+49	9,818	+16	12,854	+31	
Ogunquit	NA	1,492	NA	974	-35	1,226	+26	
York County	111,596	139,666	+25	164,587	+18	186,742	+13	

Source: US Census, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission

Since 1990, Wells has experienced a significant amount of residential development. Changes in population are driven by two factors, natural change and net migration. Natural change is the difference between the number of births to Wells residents and the number of deaths of Wells residents.

Table 2
Components of Recent Population Change

	Population Change
1990 Household Population	7,778
Building Permits-1990-2000	419
Natural Change (Births- Deaths) -1990-2000	+167
Net Migration 1990-2000	+1,455
Population Growth 1990-2000	1,622
2000 Population	9,400
Source: Maine Dept. of Human Services	

Table 2 shows the natural change and net migration in Wells between 1990 and 2000. Wells experienced a steady natural increase during this period, but that the most significant increase comes from net migration—over 80% of the population increase.

Age of Population

Wells' 2000 population, like the rest of York County is a predominantly middle aged population with 34% of its population between the ages of 35 and 54. **See Table 3.** However, compared to the rest of the county, the Town has a somewhat older population, with 29% of the population aged 55 or over compared to 23% for York County. Almost one in six Wells residents in 2000 was over 65 years of age. Alternatively, Wells has a relatively smaller population in the younger age groups than the rest of the county.

Wells' median age increased from 36.6 in 1990 to 43.3 in 2000 and is almost five years higher than York County, another indicator of its older population. Both Ogunquit and Kennebunk show a similar trend of an aging population. In 2000 Ogunquit's median age was 55.2 while Kennebunk's was 41.3. These communities have fewer younger people, fewer younger households and larger elderly populations. Given this aging trend, Wells will need to consider how to best service this population.

Table 3
Age Distribution Wells & York County Residents—2000

Age	Wells		York County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
< 18 Years	1,972	21.0	46,273	24.8
18 to 24 Years	527	5.6	12,807	6.9
25 to 44 Years	2,479	26.4	56,013	30.0
45 to 64 Years	2,837	30.2	46,220	24.8
65 Years & Older	1,585	16.9	25,429	13.6
Median Age	43.3		38.5	

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Year-Round Population Forecasts

Real estate development and thus population growth are driven by a variety of factors such as national and regional economic and income growth, numbers of jobs, interest rates, the community's attractiveness as a residential community, the availability and cost of housing, and the natural increase of the population.

Over the past 20 years Wells has experienced steady growth in its year round household population, as it reached 9,400 by the year 2000. The Maine State Planning Office projects Wells' population to reach 10,300 by 2005 and 11,600 by 2015. These represent increases of 900 between 2000 and 2005 and 1,300 from 2005 to 2015. The overall population growth rate from 2000 to 2015 would therefore be 23%. **See Table 4.**

Table 4
Projected Population Growth, 2000-2015

	1990 Census	2000 Census	2005	2010	2015
Wells	7,778	9,400	10,298	11,045	11,613
York Co.	164,587	186,742	197,946	206,430	214,609

Source: US Census, Maine State Planning Office

The Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission produced estimates of population for 2004 for Wells, based on actual building permit activity and expected natural change in population from births and deaths. From 2000 to 2003, there were a total of 467 building permits in Wells, an average of 117 per year. SMRPC estimates that, at this level of development, the 2004 population of Wells is 10,290. The SPO projection for 2005 put Wells' population for that year at 10,298. So real population growth has been about one year ahead of projected growth.

SPO Projections for 2015 should therefore be reasonably accurate, though they may be reached a year or two early. Given the uncertainty of future trends, though, it is difficult to make any absolute statements regarding population projections.

Seasonal Population Forecasts

Because of its coastal location and stock of seasonal housing units, the population of Wells during the summer increases significantly. According to the 1980 Census, the Town had approximately 1,750 seasonal homes; 1,526 licensed lodging rooms in motels and hotels; and 1,977 licensed campground sites. By 1990, there were over 1,840 seasonal housing units. The 2000 Census reported 3,461 seasonal housing units, but this number likely includes units that are technically reported by the Town of Wells as being lodging units. Since the 2000 Census reports that only 49% of the vacant units in Wells are single-family units, it appears that the overall number of seasonal dwelling units has not changed much since 1990. At an estimated peak occupancy of 3.5 persons per seasonal unit this would mean about 6,440 additional occupants in these units at the height of the summer season.

The Town of Wells maintains its own database of lodging units. As of 2004, there were 1,300 motel rooms in the Town, 229 hotel rooms and 67 bed & breakfast rooms, for a total of 1,596 motel/hotel rooms. In addition, there are 450 cottage units and 2,822 licensed RV park and campground spaces. Assuming average peak occupancies of 2.0 persons per motel/hotel room, 3.5 persons per cottage and 4.5 persons per campground space, this would mean a peak seasonal population of 3,192 in hotel/motel rooms, 1,575 in cottages and 12,699 in campground spaces. The total peak population in lodging accommodations is therefore estimated to be 17,466.

Adding that number to the 9,400 year-round residents and the 6,440 occupants of seasonal units, **the peak seasonal population of Wells is estimated to be 33,306**. This represents an increase of about 19 percent over the 1994 estimate of 28,000. Given the continued development of seasonal accommodations, particularly of cottages and "condo-tel" units, the number of short-term visitors to the Town will continue to grow. If the peak seasonal population grows at the same rate from 2004 to 2014 as it did from 1994 to 2004, Wells' peak population in 2014 would top 39,000.

Today's seasonal visitors to Wells require a different set of services and activities than those required by the more traditional summer visitor that vacationed for longer periods of time. Wells will therefore continue to experience higher seasonal demand for commercial retail services in the beach district and the Route 1 corridor.

B. LOCAL ECONOMY

The Wells Labor Force

Between 1980 and 1990, the Town experienced a dramatic increase of 52% in its civilian labor force, which is the number of residents of Wells who are employed or are actively seeking employment. The labor force increased from 3,361 persons to 5,106 persons for a total of 1,745 persons during that ten-year period. **See Table 5.** However from 1990 to 1995, the Town experienced a decline in its civilian labor force from 5,106 persons to 4,567 persons, a net loss of 539 or 10.6%. Since the mid-1990, the size of the labor force in Wells has rebounded and stood at more than 5,400 in 2003. Overall, the Town's labor force has expanded by about 1,900 people (62%) since 1980. The growth rate from 1990 to 2003 was far more modest: 6.6%.

For reporting purposes, the Maine Department of Labor includes the Town of Wells in the Biddeford Labor Market Area (LMA). The Biddeford LMA includes the Towns of Arundel, Biddeford, Dayton, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Lyman, Saco, Ogunquit and Wells. In 1990, Wells accounted for 17.5% of the labor force in the Biddeford LMA; in 2003 the percentage of Wells' contribution was just 12.4%. In 1990, the Biddeford LMA's civilian labor force was 29,200 and grew to about 43,600 in 2003, an increase of 14,400 or 49%.

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate	% Biddeford LMA
1980	3,361	3,145	216	6.4%	
1985	4,842	4,739	103	2.1%	19.3%
1990	5,106	4,939	167	3.3%	17.5%
1995	4,567	4,341	226	4.9%	12.5%
2000	5,159	4,999	160	3.1%	12.4%
2003	5,448	5,172	276	5.0%	12.4%
% Change					
1980-03	62%	64%			
% Change					
1980-90	52%	53%			
1990-03	6.6%	4.7%			

Source: Civilian Labor Force Estimates from Maine Department of Labor

The reasons for the decline in the Town's civilian labor force during the 1990s were related to:

- The economic recession of the early 1990s;
- The closure in 1989 of the Pease US Air Force Base in Portsmouth, NH and
- The downsizing of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine.

These external factors were beyond the Town's ability to influence employment decisions in any meaningful manner. By the same token, growth in Wells' labor force since the mid-1990s has been driven largely by regional employment growth in centers like Portsmouth (including the growing private sector employment base at Pease International Tradeport), Biddeford/Saco and Portland.

Employment By Industry Group

Between 1990 and 2000, Wells experienced positive changes in its pattern of employment, adding 978 persons to its base of employed residents (26% gain). While the numbers of residents employed in the manufacturing sector declined significantly in many other York County communities during that period, the number of Wells residents working in this sector actually increased by 118 (15%). See **Table 6**.

The largest areas of employment growth among Wells residents were Services (93% increase), Wholesale Trade (64% increase) and Public Administration (43% increase). Services grew particularly rapidly, as the share of working residents employed in this sector grew from 28% in 1990 to 43% in 2000. There were declines in resident employment of 13% in both the Transportation and Retail sectors.

Industry Group	1990 #		2000 #		Change, 1990-2000	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ag, Forestry, Farm	128	3.3%	30	0.6%	-98	-76.6%
Construction	338	8.8%	335	7.0%	-3	-0.9%
Manufacturing	806	21.0%	924	19.2%	118	14.6%
Transportation	247	6.4%	214	4.4%	-33	-13.3%
Wholesale Trade	85	2.2%	140	2.9%	55	64.7%
Retail	800	20.8%	699	14.5%	-101	-12.6%
FIRE*	259	6.8%	259	5.4%	0	0.0%
Services	1,080	28.1%	2,079	43.1%	999	92.5%
Public Administration	96	2.5%	137	2.8%	41	42.7%
TOTAL	3,839	100%	4,817	100%	978	25.5%

* FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

Table 7 compares the resident employment by industry group of Wells to York County. The percentage of Wells residents employed in the different sectors of the economy corresponds fairly closely to residents in the Southern Maine region and York County as a whole.

Industry Group	Wells		York Co	
	#	%	#	%
Ag, Forestry, Fishing	30	0.6%	993	1.0%
Construction	335	7.0%	7,097	7.5%
Manufacturing	924	19.2%	17,670	18.6%
Wholesale Trade	140	2.9%	3,796	4.0%
Retail Trade	699	14.5%	12,085	12.7%
Transpo/Util	214	4.4%	3,982	4.2%
Information	88	1.8%	1,980	2.1%
FIRE*	259	5.4%	6,327	6.7%
Prof/Admin Serv	332	6.9%	6,491	6.8%
Educ/Health/Soc Serv	974	20.2%	19,598	20.6%
Arts/Rec Serv	480	10.0%	7,515	7.9%
Other Serv.	205	4.3%	4,252	4.5%
Public Administration	137	2.5%	3,230	3.4%
TOTAL	4,817	100%	95,016	100%

* FIRE stands for Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

Source: 2000 US Census

For further comparisons, Table 8 examines the resident employment by occupation breakdown in Wells to that of York County.

Occupation	Wells		York County	
	#	%	#	%
Mgmt/Professional	1,740	36	29,435	31
Service	576	12	13,664	14
Sales/Office	1,319	27	24,906	26
Farm, Forestry, Fish	28	1	639	1
Constr/Maint	461	10	10,486	11
Product/Transpo	693	14	15,886	17
TOTAL	4,817	100	95,016	100

Source: 2000 Census

Compared to York County, Wells has a higher percentage of residents (36%) engaged in Management and Professional occupations than the 31% for York County. Wells has less of an orientation (14) towards residents working in Manufacturing and Transportation occupations than does York County (17%).

Commuting Patterns

In 1990, the US Census reported that 26.0% of the employed Wells residents worked in the Town of Wells while in 1990 the percentage was 37.4%. This represented a decrease of 213 residents living and working in Town. **See Table 9.** It is discouraging for a number of reasons (increased automobile use, loss of sense of community, jobs-housing spatial mismatch) to observe that fewer residents are working in Town despite strong labor force growth.

As of 2000, the majority of Wells' workforce (53%) commutes outside the Biddeford LMA to go to work. Six of the 10 leading commuting destinations for Wells residents, other than Wells itself, are outside the labor market area. More than 100 Wells residents commute to each of these six locations, which are: Kittery, Sanford, York, Portland, Portsmouth and North Berwick.

TABLE 9				
Commuting Patterns Employed Wells Residents 1990-2000				
Place of Work	1990 #	%	2000 #	%
Wells	1,435	37.4%	1,222	26.0%
Balance of Biddeford LMA	348	10.6%	974	20.8%
Other	1,751	45.6%	2,490	53.1%
TOTAL	3,839	100%	4,686	100%

Source: 2000 Census

The Economic Base of Wells

As mentioned in the Introduction, in the early days of the Town's history, natural resource based industries played a large role in the Town's economic base. However, the summer recreation tourism business has played a very strong and significant role for the last 100 years. For a relatively small Maine coastal community, the Town does possess an impressive list of businesses. The largest business is Spencer Press which employs 550 persons. Table 10 lists the other local significant businesses.

TABLE 10		
Major Employers in Wells, Maine – 2003		
COMPANY	Industry	# of Employees
Spencer Press, Inc.	Color web lithography	550
Shaw's Distribution Center	Food sales	400
Hannaford	Food store	210
York County Comm Coll	Community college	137
Lord's Harborside	Restaurant	100
United Parcel Service	Distribution Center	88
Ogunquit River Plantation	Resort Hotel	85
Pike Industries, Inc.	Quarry stone	56

Source: Town of Wells Assessor

In addition to the businesses listed in Table 10, Wells has a number of smaller, unique specialty businesses such as Borealis Breads (10 employees), My Hang Up and Clothworks of Maine. These types of businesses are often attracted to a smaller tourist type community and demonstrate how the tourism economy can assist the general business economy. They can be a magnet for other specialty businesses that also might want to locate in a coastal tourist community. Wells also has a high concentration of antique stores, mostly along Route 1, making it a regional destination for antiquers.

Because of access to the State's major road network, residents of Wells can easily commute to the greater Portland area, all sections of southern Maine, New Hampshire and even Massachusetts. As such, many residents of Wells travel substantial distances to go to work each day.

Retail Sales

Retail sales are tracked in Maine at the Economic Summary Area (ESA) level. Wells is part of the Kittery ESA, along with Kittery, York, Eliot and South Berwick. During the five-year period from 1988 to 1999, the total taxable sales in the Kittery ESA increased by \$24 million or about 5%. See **Table 11**.

The dominant category is restaurants and lodging facilities, which accounted for 40% of all taxable sales in the ESA as of 2003 and likely even more in Wells. The next most prominent retail sales category is General Merchandise. This category has suffered substantial losses in recent years as the Kittery Outlets area has lost several key retailers and substantial big-box expansion have occurred in Portsmouth, Portland and Biddeford, drawing spending away from the Kittery area.

Year	Total Taxable Sales	Total Consumer Sales	General Merch	Other Retail	Restaurant & Lodging	Rest/Lodge as % of Total
1999	\$512,301	\$525,386	\$151,944	\$88,629	\$191,390	37%
2000	525,942	538,012	143,148	94,804	197,321	37%
2001	521,256	532,541	130,944	94,757	201,766	39%
2002	538,896	549,565	125,799	96,085	216,453	40%
2003	536,685	550,013	121,049	95,794	214,313	40%
Change						
#	\$24,384	\$24,627	-\$30,895	\$7,165	\$22,923	
%	4.8%	4.7%	-20.3%	8.1%	11.9%	

Source: Maine State Planning Office, Maine Revenue Services

In 1990, the Town of Wells accounted for 20.7% of the total consumer sales in the Kittery ESA District. That percentage declined by almost 2 percentage points during the 1990 to 2000 timeframe. See **Table 12**. For comparison purposes, the Town of Kittery accounts for approximately 46% of the sales in the ESA.

TABLE 12
TAXABLE TOTAL CONSUMER SALES: 1990, 1995 AND 2000

Year	(in 000s of dollars)		
	Wells	Kittery ESA	Wells % of ESA Sales
1990	\$66,194	\$319,127	20.7%
1995	\$79,827	\$411,596	19.4%
2000	\$100,695	\$538,012	18.7%

Source: Maine State Planning Office, Maine Revenue Services, Report # F2R2171

Analysis

The inventory of Wells' demographics and local economy characteristics suggests the following implications for the long-range planning of the community.

ECONOMICS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

1. The household population of Wells increased steadily over the past ten years, while the surrounding region has generally been growing at a faster rate. As a result of the continuing increase in demand for residential development, the Town needs to develop strategies to properly accommodate the recent and projected levels of housing demand.
2. Wells' population has aged significantly since 1990 and is expected to continue to get older. The Town needs to continue to assess the most appropriate policies for providing services to residents of all ages.
3. Although Wells' population in households is increasing, its average household size is decreasing. There will continue to be demand for new housing units at a pace that exceeds the rate of population growth.
4. Wells seasonal population has grown substantially in the recent past and development of new seasonal and lodging units will likely continue. The Town will need to establish policies and strategies to accommodate future demand in a manner consistent with its small town vision.

LOCAL ECONOMY

1. The Town can play an effective role in economic development by identifying and establishing, either through public or private ownership, additional land for industrial and manufacturing purposes. The Town should identify both large (over 50 employees) and small companies that would complement the existing business community.
2. To that end, the Town should consider the reactivation of an Economic Development Corporation (or Committee) whose responsibility would be to market Wells and its resources (overall community character, work force, location) to companies that would be compatible with the existing Wells environment. In general, the targeted companies should promote the concept of

economic sustainability; that is a company should not adversely impact the Town's resource base by consuming too many local resources (water supply, sewerage capacity, labor supply) too quickly so as to be a detriment. The local group would "pre-qualify" companies it considers appropriate for Wells.

3. The Town should maintain its image and position as a family type recreation and tourist community that caters to families. In order to continue to promote the concept of a high quality recreational community, the Town should restrict development of commercial "tourist attractions" which appeal to the transient tourist or "non-family" travelers. Wells' outstanding natural environment and proximity to cultural and recreational resources also position it well to attract more cultural and heritage tourism activity as well.
4. While the Town engages in the first three items, it should also help existing businesses to maintain and/or expand their operations in Wells since they provide the Town with the greatest opportunity for continued employment and tax growth. These local companies can refer others to Wells and provide "testimonials" for prospects considering the Town.
5. The Town should be actively involved in the programs of the Southern Maine Economic Development District (SMEDD) as they are a source of valuable information, funding and technical assistance regarding economic development activities.

Section 2 – Water Resources

Watersheds

Wells is divided into four major watersheds, the Little River, The Webhannet, the Ogunquit and the Works. The Little River Watershed is made up of two sub-basins, the Branch Brook Watershed and the Merriland River Watershed. Similarly, the Ogunquit Watershed contains two sub-basins, the Ogunquit River Watershed and the Stevens Brook Watershed.

Watersheds and the watercourses within them represent the natural drainage pattern that carries precipitation from the land to the Atlantic Ocean. This natural drainage system can be affected adversely by the following:

- reduction in the ability to accommodate stormwater through filling, channelization or siltation; or
- creating higher than natural stormwater flows as the result of increased impervious surfaces.

The 1990 Comprehensive Plan fully describes the characteristics of each watershed. Below is an updated summary.

Little River Watershed

This watershed includes both the Branch Brook Basin and the Merriland River Basin, which drain the northern portion of Wells. The Branch Brook serves as the main water supply for the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District. Over the past 10-15 years there has been residential development in this area. There has also been a golf course approved in the Branch Brook Basin. The Merriland Basin remains in low-density development, although there is continued pressure for additional residential development.

Works Watershed

This watershed drains the west central portion of the Town and is a tributary of the Great Works River in North Berwick. The Heath is the headwater of this watershed. Much of the Town's gravel extraction takes place within this watershed and there continues to be new residential development.

Webhannet Watershed

This coastal watershed drains the east central portion of Wells through Depot Brook, Blacksmith Brook and other smaller tributary watercourses. This watershed includes most of the Town's coastal marshes and is also the most intensively developed including the Route 1, Route 109 and Route 9 Corridors. The Webhannet River originates near Bear's Den Road and continues about three miles to its estuary. There is an approved but unbuilt golf course with frontage on both sides of the river. The DEP has mandated significant protection in the area near the Wells Transportation Center and where the Turnpike crosses the Crediford Brook.

Ogunquit Watershed

This watershed incorporates two sub-basins, the Ogunquit River and Stevens Brook. It drains the southern portion of Wells. Much of the northerly divide is contiguous with Route 9/9B. The eastern

part of the watershed is intensively developed along the Route One Corridor, while the western portion is relatively undeveloped with a scattering of residential uses.

Surface Waters

The streams and rivers identified in the watershed section comprise the major freshwater surface waters in Wells. Hobbs Pond, an impoundment in the Merriland River, is the only sizeable pond solely within the Town. The Hobbs Pond dam is privately owned and the owner would legally be able to remove the dam, though there are no plans to do so. A second pond, Ell Pond, is smaller and straddles the Wells-Sanford town line.

As described in the previous Comprehensive Plan, the State of Maine has established a system of classifying the waters of the state into water quality classes from Class AA (the highest water quality) to Class C (the lowest water quality). Marine waters are classified into three categories from SA (the highest) to SC. Based upon this classification system, each designated water body should meet the standards for each category. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection monitors water quality throughout the state. In its *State of Maine 1994 Water Quality Assessment*, (the most recent available), no streams or ponds in Wells were listed as not attaining the standards of their water quality classification.

In Wells there are no Class AA water bodies. The freshwater sections of the Branch Brook and Merriland River are classified as Class A, meaning they are suitable for drinking water with proper treatment. The remaining streams and rivers are classified as Class B including the Webhannet River, Depot and Blacksmith Brooks, Stevens and Bragdon Brooks, the Ogunquit River and its tributaries including Green Brook and Perkins and West Brooks and their tributaries.

All of Wells marine and estuarine waters are Class SB including the tidal portions of the Webhannet and Ogunquit Rivers and the Blacksmith, Depot, Stevens and Bragdon Brooks.

The State of Maine DEP is responsible for administering the Nonpoint Source (NPS) Priority Watersheds Program that was enacted into law in 1997 (5 MSRA 3331(7)) to develop a comprehensive watershed protection program. As part of this program in 1998 DEP conducted a Unified Watershed Assessment with the NRCS as part of the federal Clean Water Act. This assessment grouped Maine's major watersheds into four categories: Category I—In Need of Restoration; Category II—Currently Meeting Water Quality Goals; Category III—Pristine/Sensitive Aquatic System Conditions administered by federal, state or tribal governments; or Category IV—Having Insufficient Data to Make and Assessment. The Piscataqua River Watershed, which includes the subwatersheds of Wells, has been ranked as a Category 1 Watershed in part because rivers and coastal estuaries are not attaining standards. Specifically for Wells, although water quality standards are in attainment, the Ogunquit and Webhannet Estuaries are threatened. Based upon this designation watershed communities are eligible for funding to develop and implement watershed management programs.

Under the NPS Priority Watersheds program the Ogunquit and Webhannet River estuaries are priority water bodies due to elevated levels of bacteria, low dissolved oxygen, and areas closed to shellfish under certain conditions. In addition Branch Brook is a priority stream because it is public drinking water supply that is threatened. Finally, the Great Works River below the Works River is in non-attainment and has low dissolved oxygen.

Groundwater Aquifers

These areas of deep sand and gravel are geologically referred to as stratified drift deposits that are capable of yielding significant quantities of water. The highest yielding aquifers identified in Wells can produce 10 to 50 gallons per minute, which are rated as good to excellent potential by the Maine Geological Survey. There approximately 4,977 acres of this category or almost 14% of the Town. See attached map.

The most critical aquifer area in Wells is that associated with Branch Brook, the water source for the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District. This area extends from the Sanford town line almost to the Atlantic with an apparent break in the Meetinghouse Road/Route 9A area. This area has regulatory protection through the Aquifer Protection Overlay District in the Town Zoning Ordinance. It is likely that this feature is hydrologically connected to the brook and maintains its year-round flow. Additional aquifer areas in Wells are along Route 9, in the area along Roger Bragdon Road and near the Sanford line in the Quarry Road/Perry Oliver Road area.

Private Wells

As of the end of 2003, there were a total of 2,071 year-round residential accounts with the KKW Water District in the Town of Wells. With about 4,400 year-round households in Wells as of 2004 (see Section 6 for estimate), there are roughly 2,300 permanently occupied homes in the Town that are on private well systems. Since the overwhelming majority of these private wells do not draw their water from sand and gravel aquifers, there is no Town protection of the primary water source for more than half of its households.

Analysis

Wells has many surface water and groundwater resources that need to be managed to ensure the health and safety of Wells' residents. The following observations need to be considered for recommendations and strategies to achieve the Town's goals for water resources.

1. There are several mapped sand and gravel aquifers in Wells. The most important of these are the two aquifer areas associated with Branch Brook, the Town's municipal water supply. The Town should seriously consider if these aquifers need additional protection to preserve the quality and quantity of the groundwater. In addition, consideration should be given to proper management of the remaining aquifers.
2. Through the state's NPS program there are several threatened watersheds and associated rivers. The Town will need to consider strategies to enhance the quality of these surface water resources and to maintain the quality of the remaining surface waters. It will be necessary to minimize non-point pollution to the Town's surface waters. Wells should review the effectiveness of performance standards that control stormwater runoff and erosion in order to protect the Town's freshwater and saltwater resources.
3. Many existing homes and businesses in Wells, including a large share of recent and expected future development, are on private wells that draw water from groundwater sources that are not part of sand and gravel aquifers. The Town needs to look at ways to protect water quality and quantity on these individual systems.

4. The Ogunquit and Webhannet River estuaries have been identified by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection as priority water bodies, due to indicators that show water quality degradation. The Town needs to protect these two threatened estuaries.

Section 3 – Critical Natural Resources

A. TOPOGRAPHY, SLOPE AND SOILS

Topography

Wells is part of the coastal plain of the New England physiographic region, which is characterized by low relief, poorly developed drainage systems and a mantle of glacial materials in the form of till and large quantities of sand and gravel. The Town rises gently and gradually from east to west. Elevations rise from sea level to approximately 140 feet. The Tatnic Hills near the South Berwick border are the highest elevation at approximately 360 feet.

SLOPE

Slope affects the capability of land for development. The slope or steepness of the land is defined by the change of elevation over horizontal distance. For example, a 10 foot rise within 100 feet is a 10% slope. Slopes in the 3% to 8% range are generally considered to offer the fewest restrictions to development. Typically, construction costs of development increase with slope. Slopes of 0-3% may present drainage problems.

Slope is important for planning purposes for several reasons. The increase in slope corresponds to the potential increase for surface runoff and erosion. The soil depth is also thinner as slopes increase, thereby decreasing the capacity of the land to filter septic system effluent in areas that lack public sewer services. The Maine State Plumbing Code does not allow installation of septic systems on slopes greater than 20%.

In Wells, like the other coastal communities in Southern Maine, the slope is generally between 0% and 8%. The few areas with slopes steeper than 15% primarily occur along river and stream corridors or coastal waterfronts. There are approximately 1,046 acres of steep slopes or about 3% of Wells. Although these steep slope areas may present limitations, lack of adequate slope to promote proper drainage is of more concern.

SOILS

The soils in Wells have developed over time from the interaction of climate, vegetation, topography and surficial materials. Since much of the surface materials of Wells are underlain by marine clays and glacial till, many of the soils tend to be moist and/or stony with areas of high water table, shallow ledge or ledge outcroppings. Where there is sand and gravel or stratified drift, the soils tend to be more sandy and gravelly and better drained. Hydric soils (also referred to as wetland soils) tend to be found in low spots associated with surface water features or in areas underlain by silt and clay deposits throughout the Town. Soil types are derived from the *York County Soil Survey* produced by the USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in 1982. The SCS has identified over 36 soil series in Wells. In the last several years, the SCS has become the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Soil Associations

There are six general soil associations in Wells. The general characteristics of each association are described below. It should be noted that the soil associations for Wells describe very broad geographic regions that have similar soil-landscape relationships and should only be used to gain a general idea of the nature of soils and landscapes within the Town. The smallest delineation is typically several hundred acres in size and has only minimal value for making land use decisions at the town wide level.

1. The Adams-Colton Association consists of deep, nearly level to steep, excessively drained soils. Located primarily south of Route 109, especially along sections of Route 9 and the western corner of Town near the Sanford/North Berwick borders.
2. The soils of the Naumberg-Croghan Association have a high water table in the spring and fall, and both have rapid or very rapid permeability. The high water table and rapid permeability make groundwater contamination a major concern. These soils are interspersed throughout Wells with concentrations along Route One, the railroad and the western section of Route 109.
3. The Hermon Lyman Association consist of shallow and deep, gently sloping to very steep, well, drained to somewhat excessively drained soils formed in glacial till. These are scattered in areas west of the Turnpike just north and south of Route 109.
4. The Scantic-Raynham-Buxton Association consists of deep, nearly level to moderately steep and hilly, poorly drained to moderately well drained soils formed in marine and lacustrine (ancient lake) sediments. These areas are west of the Turnpike and associated with areas adjacent to the Merriland River.
5. Lyman-Rock Outcrop-Scantic Association. Lyman soils consists of glacial till that are shallow, gently sloping to very steep, and somewhat excessively drained. Rock outcrop consists of areas of bedrock exposures. The Scantic soils are deep, nearly level and poorly drained. The shallow depth, steep slopes, bedrock exposures, and the poor drainage of of this association limit its suitability for development with on site water supply and sewage disposal. This association tends to be located near the border with South Berwick in the Tatnic Hills area.
6. The Sulphemists-Udipsamments Association consists of deep, level, very poorly drained soils formed in organic deposits and deep, undulating to rolling, excessively drained to moderately well drained soils that are associated with tidal marshes.

Prime Farmland Soils

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines prime farmland as the land that is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce a sustained high yield of crops while using acceptable farming methods. Prime farmland produces high crop yields with the least amount of external input.

Prime farmland is a valuable, limited commodity not only in Wells, but in many southern Maine communities. The characteristics that make these soils suitable for agriculture also make them suitable for development.

Soils rated as prime farmland soils by the Natural Resource Conservation Service of York County in Wells include: Allagash very fine sandy loam, Becket fine sandy loam, Buxton silt loam, Colton gravelly loamy coarse sand, Elmwood fine sandy loam, Madawaska fine sandy loam, Marlow fine sandy loam, Ondawa fine sandy loam, Peru fine sandy loam, Podunk and Winooski soils, Skerry fine sandy loam.

The NRCS of York County also rates farmlands of statewide and local importance that are identified in the 1991 Master Plan. Although potentially important for agriculture, they tend to have more limitations, such as slope or the need to be irrigated or drained in order to be suitable.

Prime farmland soils are found in small concentrations west of Route 9A in Wells Branch and along West Brook near Roger Bragdon Road and extending to the town line with North Berwick and Sanford. This same area has small concentrations of soils of statewide importance. A larger area of the Town has Naumberg soils that can be productive, but require draining and irrigating. These are located in the following areas—between Route 1 and the Turnpike, the Burn Mill area west of the Turnpike, along Branch Brook and near the Sanford town line.

Prime Forestry Soils

The Soil Conservation Service defines prime forest land as having soils which are capable of growing wood at the economic productive growth rate for a given tree species. Soils with a productivity rating of medium, high, or very high are considered prime forestry soils. Management problems such as erosion hazard, equipment limitations, or seedling mortality are not factored in when calculating the productivity of a soil. Productivity is based on the total yield of wood per hectare of mature trees.

All of the soils identified as prime farmland in Wells are also rated as prime forestry soils. The Scio soil group has the highest tree growth productivity rating of all York County soils. Much of the land in Wells consists of prime forestry soils. The exceptions include the peat soils (Biddeford mucky peat, Chocura peat, Scao mucky silt loam, Vassalboro peat and Waskish peat), beaches and very shallow soils.

SOIL SUITABILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT

The characteristics of an individual soil are important in determining its suitability for various types of uses. The soils in Wells have been rated by the SCS for suitability for development and installation of septic systems. One class of soils is highly unsuitable for either activity—hydric soils. All of the information in this section was compiled by a countywide survey and presents an incomplete picture of soil suitability. This information should therefore not be used for site planning purposes. However, it does provide the best available overview of soil suitability in Wells.

Hydric Soils

Hydric soils have very similar characteristics to those wetlands as defined by the Army Corps of Engineers. These include all poorly and very poorly drained soils often associated with marine silts and clays including muck, peat, swamps and marshes. They include such soil types as the Biddeford mucky peat, Chocorua peat, Rumney loam, Scantic silt loam and Vassalboro peat. The water table is at or near the surface 5 to 9 months of the year. Wetland soils are associated with low lying areas in Wells, such as:

- the tidal marshes east of Route One;

- large portions of the area west of 9B running northerly to the railroad;
- a large portion of the area bounded by Route 9, Route 109 and Bragdon Road, including the Heath;
- the area west of the CMP right-of-way south of Route 109 and running to the Sanford town line; and
- along watercourses such as the Little and Webhannet Rivers.

Hydric soils in Wells comprise a large portion of the Town—15,696 acres or 43% of Wells. The large area of hydric soils is a major limiting factor for growth and development in Wells.

Suitability for Low Density Residential Development

The SCS has developed a rating system for low density residential development suitability based upon the capability of each soil type for septic systems, home construction and road/utility construction. The capability ratings are based upon the potential for environmental degradation and the costs for corrective measures and long term maintenance. Suitability is ranked from very high to very low.

In Wells there are no soils in the very high suitability class. There are some small areas in the high category, particularly between Route 109 and the Wire Road in the northwestern part of Wells and south of Branch Brook on either side of the Maine Turnpike. Most of Wells is rated as having medium suitability or very low suitability for low density residential development. The areas with medium rating tend to be non-hydric soils in the northern and central parts of the community. Low ratings occur in the areas between Routes 9 and 9A and the Ogunquit River due primarily to soils with shallow bedrock and areas with steep slopes.

B. WETLANDS

Wetlands are found throughout Wells. Wetlands have the ability to control erosion, store flood waters, recycle nutrients, filter pollutants, and recharge ground water. They provide open space and wildlife habitat. They are some of Maine's most productive areas, providing food and habitat for a wide variety of fish, animal and bird species.

Wetlands are defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Army Corps of Engineers (COE), and the State of Maine as:

Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands usually include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. (EPA, 40CFR 230.3 and COE, 33 DFR 328.3)

Most wetlands can be identified by three characteristics—the presence of: 1) hydrophytic plants, 2) hydric soils, and 3) a very high water table for at least part of the year. Hydric soils are defined by the NRCS as poorly and very poorly drained soils. Wetlands also have water present at or near the surface for one week or more during the growing season. Wetlands perform valuable natural functions and should be considered a severe constraint to development.

Types of Wetlands

There are a number of types of wetlands in Wells. Although there are several wetland classification systems, the State of Maine has identified and mapped wetlands through the National Wetland Inventory, which includes the Town of Wells. Under this system the most common types of wetlands in Wells are:

Palustrine Forested

This category is by far the largest in Wells. These are wooded swamps that generally occur along sluggish streams, on flat uplands, and in shallow lake basins or potholes. Tree species common in Maine's wooded swamps include tamarack, arborvitae, black spruce, balsam fir, red maple, and black ash. The floor of coniferous swamps usually have a thick carpeting of mosses. Deciduous swamps often support duckweeds, smartweeds, and other herbaceous vegetation. These areas tend to be located south of Route 109 between the Maine Turnpike and the Sanford town line.

Palustrine Emergent

Palustrine wetlands are non-tidal marshes characterized as non-woody plants that may be at least temporarily flooded at the base. Bulrushes and sedges are examples of this type of vegetation. Much smaller in area they tend to be adjacent to the palustrine forested wetlands.

Palustrine Scrub Shrub

This wetland type is usually characterized by dense growth of alders, winterberry, highbush blueberry and species of viburnum. Shrub swamps occur primarily along sluggish streams, or as inclusions within forested wetlands. Alder and dogwood predominate in the drier areas; willow, buttonbush, and sweet gale characterize wetter sites. There is a large area in the Heath.

Estuarine Wetlands

This wetland type is dominated by salt marsh and is an extremely productive ecosystem. These marshes are generally flat with often intricate drainage channels and creeks, lined by small cliffs or ridges and dotted with pools and salt pannes. The marshes provide a high quality habitat for many species of birds including migratory raptors, shorebirds, wading birds, gulls, terns and ducks. In Wells these wetlands are located east of Route 1.

In Maine wetlands and other natural resources are regulated under the Natural Resources Protection Act [38 MRSA, Sec. 480-A-S]. This act, which is administered by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP), also regulates activities in or adjacent to surface water bodies, coastal sand dunes, significant wildlife habitat and fragile mountain areas. The level of regulation is based upon the amount of the resource area that may be impacted by any given activity—the more the impact, the higher level of regulatory review and scrutiny. At present, the Town has identified certain large wetland areas as part of its Resource Protection District and defined them in the Land Use Ordinance for purpose of regulation. A more thorough documentation of wetland location, type and value would provide the basis for a more systematic approach to wetland management and protection.

Threats to Wetlands

In addition to their value for flood storage, wildlife habitat and groundwater recharge, wetlands also filter pollutants and sediment from the environment. However, their filtering capacities can be exceeded. Pollution and sediments that discharge into productive wetlands or estuaries can have an adverse impact on habitat and shellfish beds. Since wetlands are often part of a larger ecosystem, if their functional values are impacted, the effect may be felt in other parts of the ecosystem. In Wells, failing septic systems, storm water from impervious surfaces and non-point pollution from roads, parking lots, lawns, and fields pose the greatest threat to wetlands.

C. SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES HABITAT

The availability of high quality habitat for fish and wildlife is essential to maintaining an abundant and diverse population for both ecological and sport purposes. Wells has a number of areas that offer quality habitat for a variety of species. The previous Master Plan identified four types of habitat area including riparian habitat, wetlands and waterfowl wintering habitat, deer wintering areas and non-game habitat. The plan also identified locations for each of these habitat types that are located in **Appendix B**.

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) is responsible for assessing the value of, and monitoring, wildlife habitats in Wells. IF&W has identified areas of special concern because of their importance as wildlife and fish habitat and as recreational resources. The Maine DEP is responsible for regulating activity in or adjacent to areas that contain significant wildlife habitat¹

Significant Wildlife Habitats

The State of Maine has two programs for the direct protection of wildlife habitat—the Natural Resources Protection Act (38 MRSA, Sec. 480-A-S) and Maine Endangered Species Act (MESA, 12 MSRA, Sec. 7751-7758). Wells does not have any upland areas characterized as “Essential” Wildlife Habitat under MESA. Such habitats are considered critical for the survival of Endangered and/or Threatened species.

However, the Town does have Significant Wildlife Habitats, as defined by the Natural Resource Protection Act, including:

- habitats for State or Federally listed Endangered and/or Threatened species;
- high and moderate value deer wintering areas and travel corridors;
- high and moderate value waterfowl and wading bird habitats, including nesting and feeding areas; and
- shorebird nesting, feeding, and staging areas.

These are further described below.

1. *Habitat for State or Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened Species*

These are habitats for Endangered or Threatened Species, other than bald eagle nesting sites and roseate tern nesting areas that are singled out for separate protection as “Essential” Wildlife Habitat”. Such areas include Stevens Brook, Ogunquit River, Ogunquit Beach (Piping Plover and Least Tern), Laudholm Beach/Little River Area (Piping Plover and Least Tern) and the Wells Beach/Drakes Island Beach Plover Nesting Area.

2. *Deer Wintering Areas*

During the winter months deer herds tend to migrate to wintering yards that are typically composed of softwood forests. Deer Wintering Areas in Wells are located in the four following areas of Wells:

- northwest of Bald Hill at the Sanford town line;
 - along the Webhannet River between the railroad and Route 9B west of the Turnpike;
 - The Heath bounded by Bragdon Road, Swamp John Road, Route 9, and Route 109; and
 - in the Coles Hill Road area parallel to the Turnpike.
- Their locations and approximate sizes are shown in the attached map. IF&W has not rated the habitat value of these yards.

3. *Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat*

Waterfowl habitat includes areas used for breeding, migration, and wintering. Nesting habitat includes dense, emergent, herbaceous or shrubby cover for seclusion, concealment, and protection from predation. Wells has two wetland areas classified as “Significant” Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat both of which are located in the waters area of West Brook between the CMP right-of-way and Quarry Road. They are located primarily in palustrine scrub shrub and palustrine emergent wetlands as classified in the National Wetlands Inventory. IF&W has not rated the value of these habitats as moderate.

4. *Shorebird Nesting, Feeding and Staging Areas*

Shorebirds are a closely related group of species including sandpipers, plovers and dowitchers. They depend upon coastal habitats for feeding and resting during long migrations between the Arctic and South America. In Wells there are a number of such sites including:

- Moody/Ogunquit Beaches
- Ox Cart Road Landing
- Laudholm Beach
- Wells Beach
- Wells Beach South near Fisherman’s Cove
- Webhannet River salt marsh pannes (7+ sites)

COASTAL WILDLIFE CONCENTRATION AREAS

IF&W conducts periodic resource inventories for marine wildlife along Maine’s shoreline. These areas offer an abundance of food and protection from weather and predator, often supporting a large number of marine birds and seals. While these areas are not “Significant Wildlife Habitats” per se,

they may contain within their boundaries designated or candidate Essential Habitats and/or Significant Wildlife Habitats.

The abundance and diversity of species using these concentration areas is an indicator of an area's value to wildlife. Areas of significance are ranked into three classes: Class A (very high species abundance or diversity or importance to federal or state listed Endangered or Threatened species); Class B (high species abundance or diversity, species of regional significance); and Class C (moderate species abundance or diversity).

In Wells there are four Class A areas including Little River/Crescent Surf Beach, the Webhannet River, Ogunquit/Moody Beaches and the Ogunquit River. There are three Class B areas—Drake's Island Beach, Fisherman's Cove and Wells Beach. Bibb Rock is the only Class C area.

Other Habitats

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has mapped "Important Fish and Wildlife Habitats in Southern Maine." Forty-three endangered species were included in the study. All are migrating birds or fish. The species included in the mapping have seriously reduced populations on a national, Gulf of Maine watershed, or State of Maine basis. Habitats mapped include areas that historically have been used by a species, as well as areas identified through a comprehensive screening process that have high habitat values for a given species.

Areas of Wells identified on a composite map of high value habitat for the 43 species include significant contiguous acreage and the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. The high value habitat areas are closely associated with wetlands in these areas.

Unique Natural Areas

The Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP), a program of the Maine Department of Conservation, maintains information on the status and location of rare plants and exemplary natural communities in Maine. Because of the rarity and sensitive nature of many of the plants and natural communities the MNAP keeps records on, information on the location of the resources is general in nature. MNAP encourages landowners considering development in areas identified as containing rare plants to check with MNAP for more specific site locations, or to conduct a field survey. In many instances, the plant or community will not be present where the development is contemplated, or the proposed development will not impact habitat and no change of plans will be necessary.

MNAP ranks the rarity of a plant or natural community on a scale of 1 to 5 (based on the frequency of sightings or occurrences), on both a state and global basis with 1 being the most rare. Plants or communities that have obtained status as an endangered or threatened species at either the state or federal level are also noted. The Town of Wells has a number of plants in these categories including the Pale Green Orchis, Sweet Peeper Bush, Small Red Grass, Slender Blue Flag, Northern Blazing Star, Spicebush, Hollow Joe Pyeweed, Saltmarsh False Foxglove, and Dwarf Glasswort. See attached Inland Fisheries and Wildlife map.

All of the plants and natural communities identified above that have varying degrees of rarity in Maine are considered "demonstrably widespread, abundant, and secure globally."

Perkins Cove/Mousam River Heritage Coastal Area

The Maine Coastal Program has identified locations along the coast of Maine that represent significant areas of coastal heritage. In Wells Perkins Cove/Mousam River area extends from Ogunquit River to the Little River. The 1991 Comprehensive Plan documents the scenic, historical and natural phenomena that constitute this heritage area that incorporates large areas of the Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

D. SCENIC AND COASTAL AREAS

Scenic and Coastal Areas are described in two other places in the Inventory:

- Section 4, Marine Resources
- Section 8, Land Use

E. FLOOD HAZARDS

Floodplains are the low, mostly flat areas adjacent to rivers, streams, ponds and the ocean that are periodically covered by rising water or waves during periods of rain, high winds or snowmelt. Coastal flooding is generally attributed to high wind and wave action caused by storm activity. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has produced maps of the 100-year floodplains in Wells. Shown on the maps is the area that has a 1% chance of being flooded during any year. Also plotted are 500-year floodplains and “V” or velocity zones that are subject to ocean flooding.

Improper use, filling, and development within the floodplains creates the potential for property damage, increased flooding, and downstream contamination. Although Wells’s proximity to the ocean reduces downstream impacts from flooding, floodplains should be considered a severe constraint to development. The likelihood of severe property damage is high in floodplains of rivers and ponds with large drainage areas.

Following is a brief description of the location and size of the floodplains or flood hazard areas in Wells as delineated on the FEMA floodplains maps. The FEMA maps show the boundaries of those flood hazard areas that have been identified by detailed study and/or field observation.

Most of the Town’s 100-year floodplain is east of Route 1 associated with the harbor and low lying marsh areas. In addition, there are areas associated with various rivers and streams that discharge into the Atlantic such as the Webhannet and Merriland. There are also two low lying upland areas—the Heath and the headwaters of West Brook near Sanford. There is a narrow Zone V along the Atlantic beach areas.

Also of note is that the Town of Wells has also adopted a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan that should become an integral part of this Comprehensive Plan Update. In addition, the Town will be voting in 2004 on adoption of the York County Hazard Mitigation Plan, an all-hazards regional plan. Recommendations of this plan should be considered in the Wells Comprehensive Plan Update as well.

Analysis

Wells is blessed with an abundance of natural resources of high value. To maintain the ecological integrity of such resources and to ensure the health and safety of Wells residents, these resources need to be managed in a manner that maintains or enhances their natural value.. The following observations need to be considered for recommendations and strategies to achieve the Town's goals for natural resources.

1. Wells is a growing coastal community with poorly drained topography. As a result of this conflicting situation, there has been substantial development in the Town's wetlands, some of which has occurred on large wetlands. Although the Town has a Natural Resource Protection Zone additional regulation should be considered in order to provide appropriate protection of these resources
2. Much of the coastal area and low-lying uplands are susceptible to flooding. Although these areas are in the Resource Protection Zone, the Town needs to reexamine the recommendations of the Flood Hazard Plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update.
3. Wells has an abundance of wildlife and fishery resources in the tidal marshes, beaches/dunes and harbor area. Much of this area is protected through state and federal ownership and management. In addition there are several significant wildlife habitats in the upland area of the community associated with large wetland areas or valuable forest stands-- waterfowl habitat and deer wintering yards. Having contiguous parcels of undeveloped land is critical for maintaining Wells' biological diversity. Some of these areas are zoned resource protection and covered by Shoreland Zoning. The Town should protect the long term viability of other resources that are not currently protected.
4. The Town contains a number of rare plant communities. These are in a number of locations throughout the community. The Town should protect these resources.
5. Data from the York County Soil Survey show that Wells has many areas that are not necessarily suitable for development. There are several large, contiguous areas with limiting factors and there are no high suitability locations within the town. However, the county's data may miss some smaller suitable areas for development and are not detailed enough to be used for site planning purposes.

Section 4 – Marine Resources

Major Marine Resource Areas

The coastal region can be viewed as eight distinct areas with differing characteristics.

1. Laudholm Beach

This area runs from the Little River south towards Drakes Island. The area consists of an undeveloped sand beach which is state property that is incorporated into the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

2. Drakes Island

This area runs southerly from Laudholm Beach to the Webhannet River. The area is a barrier sand dune that has been extensively developed with single-family homes.

3. Wells Beach

This area runs from the Webhannet River to Moody Point. This area is also a barrier sand dune. It has been extensively developed with residential homes. In the Casino Square area, there is substantial commercial use, including motels, restaurants, and retail stores.

4. Moody Point

A rocky headland, this point separates Wells Beach and Moody Beach. It is the only area of shoreline not characterized by sand beaches. Moody Point is extensively developed with residential structures.

5. Moody Beach

Extending from Moody Point to the Ogunquit town line this area is a barrier beach and dune that has been extensively developed with residential structures.

6. Webhannet Estuary

This area is an extensive salt marsh, which lies behind Drakes Island and Wells Beach. The area is undeveloped, and much of it is owned by the federal government as part of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge that is now incorporated into the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

7. Wells Harbor

This area is an upland area on the west side of the Webhannet River with an adjacent mooring basin and dredged channel in the Webhannet to the outlet between Drakes Island and Wells Beach. The upland area consists of a marina, restaurant, boat launch parking areas, and related service and storage areas.

8. Ogunquit River Estuary

This area is an extensive salt marsh lying behind Moody Point and Moody Beach. The area is undeveloped and much of it is owned by the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge and is incorporated into the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan

In 2002, the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission completed a planning study to assess the beach and dune resources of Wells Bay and to determine what measures may be appropriate to manage and protect these resources. This study was part of the State of Maine initiative to improve beach resources statewide. The study produced a regional beach management plan for Wells and Kennebunk that proposed both regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms for beach and dune management. The Towns of Ogunquit and Kennebunkport, which also abut Wells Bay, declined to participate in the study.

The plan put forth five key recommendations:

- Maintain existing beaches in Wells Bay
- Study effects of Wells Harbor jetties and pursue beach nourishment activities as appropriate
- Clarify conflicts between state sand dune rules and local shoreland zoning standards
- Clarify rules regarding movement of sand from accreting areas to eroding areas
- Ensure that existing dune areas are protected during construction activities

Based on these recommendations, the plan called for 12 specific actions by the towns under three major categories (Natural/Geological Resources, Sand Dune Regulation and Economic Impact). These actions are as follows:

Natural/Geological Resources

1. Create GIS database of coastal resources in Wells Bay
2. Develop cooperative management agreement for bird habitat in Kennebunk
3. Increase shellfish habitat
4. Study impact of modifications to Wells Bay jetties
5. Nourish Wells Bay beaches

Sand Dune Regulation

1. Create Wells Bay Advisory Committee
2. Develop consistent standards for shoreland zoning
3. Amend Sand Dune rules to protect resources during construction activity
4. Develop GIS-based program for assessing sand dune permits

Economic Impact

1. Conduct economic impact study of Wells Bay beaches
2. Develop economic indicators for Wells Bay region
3. Develop and administer regional beach management fund

Some of the above actions are being taken at the state level: the Maine Geological Survey continues to map erosion rates for Maine's beaches, Wells Bay beaches have been nourished with dredge material from the harbor, and sand dune rules changes have taken place to address outstanding issues. The sand dune rules changes enacted in 2003 did, in fact, follow the recommendations made in the Wells Bay plan.

However, little progress has been made locally to date. The recommendations of this plan should be considered for inclusion by reference in this Comprehensive Plan.

Water Dependent Uses

The major water dependent use at this time is the marina and mooring area located at Wells Harbor. This is the only marine service facility in Wells, the only boat launch capable of handling commercial vessels, and the only mooring area in Wells for both commercial and pleasure boats.

There are currently 150 moorings in Wells Harbor and all are in use. There is presently a waiting list for moorings with 80 people on it, an indication of the strong demand for recreational boating in Wells. This number is up substantially from a few years ago, due in large part to dredging of the harbor (see below) and to a newly-rebuilt boat ramp.

Of the 150 moorings, 17 are used by commercial vessels and 133 by pleasure boats. In 1990 there were over 35 commercial boats and about 100 pleasure boats, and a third of the commercial boats were used by tuna fishermen. Today, all of the commercial boats are used for lobstering, thus showing how marine industries in Wells are challenged.

There are no significant marine related businesses in Wells except at the marina. There are a number of lobster pounds, including Inness on Route One, Forbes on the Mile Road, Lord's at the Harbor, and Lord's at Wells Beach.

There are no other significant water dependent uses in Wells due to the nature of the area. It is unlikely that there will be water dependent use in Wells Harbor, although the Town and the Department of Marine Resources are working to restore clam beds for recreational shellfish harvesting.

Harbor Facilities

Wells Harbor is the only harbor facility in Wells and is the only area suitable for this use. In 1961, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers carried out a harbor improvement program, which consisted of constructing two jetties at the mouth of the Webhannet River and the dredging of the navigation channel and mooring basin. With these improvements came the development of the current marina facilities and expanded mooring capabilities.

Since the original dredging, the mooring basin and channel experienced shoaling. The controlling depth of the channel deteriorated to only 4 feet to day beacon "5" and 1 foot beyond it. At low tide, much of the mooring basin was exposed. In addition, shoaling was occurring near the entrance to the harbor, and swells were reported to break in this area even in moderate seas. However, after many years of negotiations, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Town have completed maintenance dredging to reestablish the channel and mooring basin. The immediate effect of the dredging is that more than 40 moorings have been replaced and the harbor is again operating at its full capacity.

Wells Harbor offers gas, diesel fuel, ice, and water; and there are dumpster facilities. The marina's marine railway can handle boats up to forty feet. Some engine repairs and service are available. There are no transient moorings, but short-term tie-up is available at the Town floats.

The Wells Harbor Advisory Committee developed plans to upgrade the harbor areas and this led to a new public boat ramp (built by the state) and a plan to rebuild the fish locker that was approved at the 2004 Town Meeting. Development has expanded parking and low intensity recreation uses at the

harbor. These facilities are adequate to meet projected demand for access. The Town does not presently charge for parking at Wells Harbor.

Recreation and Public Access

The major use of the coastal area has been for recreation since the late 1800s. This situation was been complicated by the recent Supreme Court decision with respect to Moody Beach. The decision determined that the beach and intertidal areas in this section of the shoreline are private property with limited rights of public access.

Access to Laudholm Beach is available through the Wells Reserve and State land. At present the Reserve and the state have no plans to further develop the area for improved beach access.

Access to Drakes Island Beach is unrestricted. There are a number of public rights-of-way to the beach and two parking lots.

Access to Wells Beach is also unrestricted. There is public access to the beach at Casino Square and at a number of public rights-of-way. Public parking is available in Casino Square, in a parking lot on Mile Road, and at a large lot at the northern end of Atlantic Avenue. A new private parking facility is being developed on Gold Ribbon Drive to expand available parking.

Public access to Moody Beach is restricted as a result of the recent court decisions. Access for the public is restricted to a number of Town owned rights-of-way. There is a public parking lot near the Wells-Ogunquit town line which serves both communities. The Town is currently pursuing a number of possibilities to secure limited public access to Moody Beach. A community center is located at Moody Beach and is operated by the beach association.

Public access is also provided at Wells Harbor. This area provides the only salt water boating access in the Town. The Town owns this facility, which provides low intensity and passive recreation for both residents and tourists. The Town and Wells National Estuarine Research Center are considering the construction of a clam research center and educational facility at this location.

Shellfishing

The Town of Wells has had an abundance of shellfishing resources, predominately with clams, throughout the Webhannet and Little River Estuaries. The resource was plentiful and opened for harvesting for most of the Town's history with the exception of the late 1970s through the mid 1990s. During that period in the Webhannet River Estuary, the Town went through major sanitary infrastructure installation disrupting the shellfish industry in Wells. In the process of installing sanitary lines, the clam beds were harvested through commercial means leaving the resource destroyed. The Little River estuary has not been legally clamed since the mid 1970s.

During the decade or so that followed, pollution and conditions prohibited the State from opening the shellfish resource in the Webhannet Estuary. During the late 1980s, the Town partnered with the Wells Reserve and the State Department of Marine Resources (DMR) to study, re-seed and re-open sections of the Webhannet Estuary to shellfishing. Town funds were allocated annually to the Town's Shellfish Commission to:

1. Re-seed productive harvesting sections of the estuary;

2. Funds were granted to the Wells Reserve for clam population studies, water quality testing and analysis, and research projects determining pollution sources; and
3. Funds were annually spent on controlling the Green Crab population, a predator of the shellfish.

Teams of volunteers assisted in the water quality testing that resulted in the re-opening of the estuary by the DMR in March 1996 for a controlled seasonal harvesting. At the Town's request to DMR, the Town's Shellfish Ordinance prohibited commercial harvesting. Recreational harvesting was allowed during only certain winter months during the year. Licenses were limited to 250 Wells residents and 50 non-residents. During initial years of the harvesting in the late 1990s, the maximum licenses were sold. In 2004, only 169 licenses were sold during the harvesting period.

The Town's Shellfish Commission meets three times a year and continues to partner with DMR and the Wells Reserve on keeping the Shellfish areas open in the Webhannet Estuary. In 2000, the Shellfish Commission constructed a clam hatchery to raise clam seedlings for planting. Annually, bulk purchases of seedlings are purchased and placed in the hatchery to allow for growth for planting purposes. Planting techniques and locations are determined by the Commission and its partners.

Shellfish Harvesting in Wells, since the shellfish beds have been re-opened in 1996, has been contained to the Webhannet Estuary from Drakes Island Road to the Mile Road. All other areas are closed to harvesting.

Analysis

The inventory of marine resources identifies a number of issues that should be addressed in the policies and implementation section of the Plan:

1. the need to maintain Wells Harbor as a viable marine facility providing moorings, marine services and ocean access for commercial and recreational boaters.
2. the need to continue to improve and maintain the water quality of the estuaries to ensure that marine resources can thrive and provide continued opportunity for recreational harvesting. Improving and maintaining estuarine water quality is a function of controlling nonpoint source pollution of land activities upstream on the numerous rivers and tributaries that flow into the estuaries.
3. the need to maintain and, where appropriate, improve public access to beaches and waterfront resources in Wells in a manner that balances the rights of residents and non-beachfront property owners with the residents of the beach areas.
4. the desirability of providing a "high quality" beach experience for residents and visitors alike, including adequate facilities and parking, while avoiding overuse of this resource and balancing recreation with environmental concerns.
5. the need to continue to implement the Wells Bay Regional Beach Management Plan, with a particular focus on beach nourishment, protection of coastal properties and improving the coastal tourism economy through maintaining a healthy beach system.

Section 5 -- Transportation and Circulation

Introduction

In the Transportation Chapter of the 1990 Comprehensive Plan, there was a discussion of the following issues. These issues remain relevant in 2004.

1. The role of US Route 1 both as an arterial and as the principal local business street in the Town and what level of improvements would be acceptable.
2. Relief from the congestion on US Route 1 and provision of improved north – south movement.
3. Maintenance of the carrying capacity of state and local roadways.
4. Improvement of problem intersections on US Route 1.
5. Additional access to the Maine Turnpike in order to serve vehicles destined for the southern section of Wells and Ogunquit. This would reduce traffic on US Route 1.
6. Opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle travel in all areas of Town.
7. Improved public transportation to serve the eastern and coastal areas.
8. Upgrade of the collector road network in order to address safety and capacity issues.

Since the 1990 Plan was developed, a number of opportunities for alternative transportation modes have expanded or become available. Specifically, the Wells Transportation Center was constructed at the Maine Turnpike Interchange, Amtrak reinstated passenger rail service between Portland and Boston with a stop in Wells at the Transportation Center, park-and-ride capacity was expanded, the Wells Trolley has continued to serve summer travelers, construction of the Eastern Trail (which traverses Wells) began, a Sidewalk Committee was appointed, and a Sidewalk Development Plan produced. Still, the Town recognizes that the state and local road system provide the framework for the bulk of the transportation in, through, and out of Wells.

The Town's roadway system ranges from rural country-type roads to the six-lane Maine Turnpike, which serves as Maine's gateway from the Boston metropolitan area and the eastern United States. The Maine Turnpike is a heavily traveled highway, especially during the ten-week summer tourist season from late June through Labor Day. The local road system experiences similar seasonal demands while the year-round population and travel activity in southern Maine continues to rise.

There are a variety of demands placed on the Town's roadway system, such as regional growth and economic factors that are beyond the control of the Town of Wells and local economic activity and population growth. Historically, the Town's economy was based on natural resource-based industries such as recreation and tourism, fishing, agriculture, silviculture and wood products. Although the economy has shifted and the recreation and tourism sector has become a major component of the local economy, there is still significant transportation demand for the Town roadway system. Wells is now home to several larger companies and institutions such as Spencer Press, Shaw's Distribution Center,

York County Community College and many small specialty and tourist related businesses. Wells can also expect additional traffic demand from relatively small professional and technical businesses. The 2000 Census identified Management/Professional/Related and Sales/Office occupations as comprising over 60% of the workforce in Wells, higher than the York County average.

A larger share of traffic in Wells is due to residents of Wells and other towns that use the Town's roadways to commute to jobs outside of Wells. In 2000, only 26% of the 4,686 Wells commuters worked within the Town's boundaries, meaning that about 3,500 people commute out of Wells each day. Additionally, residents of many nearby communities such as Sanford, North Berwick and South Berwick, must pass through Wells in order to reach the Maine Turnpike.

The Town's attractive and lengthy sandy beaches along with the scenic and recreational value of Wells Bay make the community very inviting for summer tourists with middle level income. The rural nature of the community with its access to major highways makes Wells attractive to year-round residents. As the year-round and seasonal population continues to increase, Wells will need to respond to the changing demands by providing a well-managed and balanced transportation system.

Regional Transportation Planning

A community's transportation and circulation system needs to be considered in a multi-community or regional context since no individual mode could function in a single community. Wells has traditionally participated in the Maine Department of Transportation's (MaineDOT's) Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) process. The role of the RTAC is to solicit and provide MDOT with public input into the statewide planning process. Individual towns are not specifically represented in the RTAC membership, although there is a general municipal representation on the committee. The RTAC does not make project-specific recommendations. In order for the Town of Wells to ensure that state and regional transportation planning officials are aware of the Town's transportation deficiencies and needs, it responds to MaineDOT's biennial project solicitation letter. Every two years, MDOT updates its Six Year Plan. At that time, community requests for state and federally funded transportation projects are made. The RTAC hosts public hearings on the Draft Six-Year Plan and participates in updates to MaineDOT policy objectives.

One example of an effective method to incorporate regional issues in local transportation planning is to participate in a Corridor Committee. In November 2003, the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC) convened a Route 109 Corridor Committee with representatives from the towns of Wells and Sanford and the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT). Early in the process, the need to determine whether or not the road would be able to meet the mobility needs of the anticipated future economic and residential activity in the region was identified. If not, it was recognized that other transportation options will need to be identified since there are a number of significant limits to increasing the capacity of Route 109 by widening, including historical properties, funding constraints, conservation land, and the desire to retain rural character in the residential zones. Also, impacts to existing and future residents of the corridor can be considered in the Corridor Planning process as the two communities promote and plan for commercial and industrial development at the ends of the study area. Another item under discussion at the Corridor Committee level includes the likely increase of heavy vehicle traffic along Route 109 and potentially other routes as a result of the expansion of industrial uses currently encouraged in both Sanford and Wells.

The Corridor Committee is regularly updated on the design of the reconstruction of just over 4 miles of Route 109 between the Maine Turnpike and the High Pine area. Construction is expected to begin in 2005 or 2006. In general, the design will include widening to two 12-foot lanes and 8-foot shoulders, minor adjustments to the horizontal and vertical alignments to improve driving sight distance and meet AASHTO safety standards, and extensive reconstruction of the road base. Two left-turn lanes are also included. The first is a northbound left-turn lane onto Roger Bragdon Road. The design incorporates a bypass lane northbound at Roger Bragdon Road. The second is a southbound left-turn lane onto Lindsey Road. The design incorporates a 10-foot wide passing shoulder at the Lindsey Road intersection.

This roadway continues to have increased traffic volumes. Just east of the Maine Turnpike interchange (Exit 19 – formerly Exit 2), the 2002 Average Annualized Daily Traffic (AADT) was 18,610, an increase of 6,000 vehicles since 1991. Also, there are three high crash locations along Route 109 in Wells: the Route 9/109 intersection; the Route 9A/109 intersection, and the section of Route 109 between Bragdon Road and Meetinghouse Road. The town is very concerned that Route 109 retain its rural character and that any designs be consistent with the *Route 109/9 Corridor Study* completed and adopted as an element to this Comprehensive Plan in January, 2000. That study designates the High Pine area for residential and limited business use and Route 109 north of High Pine to the Sanford Town Line as rural. Between Route 1 and the Turnpike, a Town Center is envisioned.

Access Management

The Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) adopted a set of access management rules in 2002 in response to the enactment of An Act to Ensure Cost Effective and Safe Highways in the State by the Legislature in 2000, which addressed arterial capacity, poor drainage, and the high number of driveway-related crashes. The rules regulate sight distance, corner clearance, spacing, width, setbacks, parking, drainage, and mitigation requirements. In order to obtain a permit from MaineDOT, any new or changed driveway or entrance on state and state-aid highways located *outside urban compact areas* must meet specifications described in the rules.

The rules can be viewed in detail at <http://www.state.me.us/mdot/planning/bureauweb/accesslinks.htm>.

The rules are organized into a four-tier system with regulation of driveways and entrances increasing for roads with higher mobility importance and poorer safety records. The following are the designations for the highway network in Wells:

1. Basic Safety Standards apply to all state and state-aid roads. (non-urban compact portions of Route 9, Route 9A, Route 9B, Route 109, and US Route 1)2. Major Collector and Arterial Standards provide more detailed design standards for entrances onto major collector and arterial roads. Entrances are accesses that serve 50 or trips per day. (non-urban compact portions of Route 9, Route 109, and US Route 1)
3. Mobility corridors connect service centers and/or urban compact areas and carry at least 5000 vehicles per day along at least 50% of the corridor's length. (non-urban compact portions of Route 9 west of Route 109, Route 109 north of Route 9, and US Route 1)
4. Retrograde arterials are mobility corridors where the number of crashes related to a driveway or entrance exceeds the statewide average for arterials with the same posted speed. (non-urban compact portion of Route 9 between Boyd Road and Route 109; non-urban compact portion of Route 109 between Route 9 and El Velvel Circle; and approximately ½-mile of US Route 1 just

south of the Kennebunk Town Line)

The rules *do limit access* to assure safety and preserve mobility on state highways. Since this Comprehensive Plan and the Central Area Development Plan focus growth largely within the urban compact area (where the access management rules do not apply), it does not appear that this conflict between the rules and local growth planning is currently an issue in Wells.

However, the need to strengthen access management along Route 109 has been discussed in detail by the Route 109 Corridor Committee. At the time of this writing, the Committee was discussing the potential for a consistent curb cut permitting process between Route 4 in Sanford and Chapel Road in Wells. Additionally, the Committee was discussing the potential need to preserve right-of-way (ROW) to allow for additional capacity, possibly in the form of service roads in areas where commercial development is anticipated. Also, the committee discussed the opportunity to consistently regulate sign and building design. Developing a Route 109 Mobility Plan and/or adopting a consistent set of access management rules is anticipated.

Central Area Development Plan

The Central Area Development Plan, prepared by Wilbur Smith Associates for the Town, conceptualized a Town Center for Wells. As part of that plan, new streets were recommended to create an interconnected street network to serve the new Center. However, the need to create a Master Plan for the envisioned grid system was noted by MaineDOT in order to identify the impact to the existing highway network.

State and Local Functional Classification

The functional classification system identifies roadways according to the service they provide in the highway network. The system allows the user to understand how individual roads and streets relate to the highway network as a whole. The classification system provides a procedure for the long-term management and development of the state's and local roadway network. For the purpose of highway planning and maintenance, the Maine Department of Transportation has classified highways and roads in Wells for state and federal aid requirements. The Town of Wells has modified the classification to fit its own roadway planning and maintenance programs. In general, the two systems are consistent with each other. Of the approximately 136.2 miles of public roads in the Town of Wells, approximately 90 miles are local roads.

Arterials

Arterial highways, as designated by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT), are intended to provide a high degree of mobility by being able to handle large volumes of traffic and to serve individuals and commercial operations for longer trips. Arterials connect major economic activity centers such as southern York County with the greater Portland area. Arterials are capable of handling between 10,000 and 30,000 vehicles per day.

MDOT has further subdivided arterials into:

- Principal arterial - interstate highways
- Other freeways and expressways

- Other principal arterial
- Minor arterial

Collectors

Collector roads link the arterial highways with local roads and roadways serving residential neighborhoods. Collector roadways are so located as to conveniently manage local roads traffic and typically have two travel lanes and six to eight foot shoulders with the capacity to handle 8,000 to 10,000 vehicles per day.

Local Roads

Local roads are designed to provide direct access to abutting properties, usually residential or low-impact commercial. They are relatively short and discontinuous in order to limit the traffic volume. Local roads have two travel lanes and may have a parking lane. Traffic volumes are low, normally under a 1,000 vehicles per day.

MAINE DOT FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

The functional classification system extends only to those roadways that have state and/or federal designation as a collector level or higher. Wells' current roadway network consists of the following MDOT functional classification designations:

Arterials

- Principal Arterials – I – 95 (Maine Turnpike)
- Other Freeways and Expressways – none
- Other Principal Arterials – Maine Route 109
- Minor Arterials – US Route 1; Maine Routes 4 and 9; Maine Route 109/9 (between I – 95 and US Route 1)

Collectors

- Major Collectors – Maine Route 9A (from Maine Route 109 to the Kennebunk Town Line; Maine Route 9B (from Maine Route 9 to Route 1)
- Minor Collectors – Bragdon Road

WELLS FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Using traffic volumes and local knowledge of roadway function, the Wells Public Works Department has developed a five-tier approach for the classification of roadways for which it is responsible. See Table 13. While some of these roadways are state highways, they fall in the urban compact area and consequently, the Town is responsible for their maintenance.

Table 13
Town of Wells
Road Classification System

Level	Type of usage	Example
1	State arterials	US Route 1; Portions of Routes 9, 109, 9B
2	Town arterials	Mile Road
3	Collectors	Bourne Ave., Atlantic Ave.
4	Local	Furbush Road
5	Private	

Source: Town of Wells Streets & Sidewalks Ordinance (Chapter 201 of Town Code)

The Town's street ordinance has defined a specific type of roads serving developments: boulevards. The adopted definition of boulevard is: "A local street consisting of at least two approximately parallel travel lanes (at least one in each direction) and lanes connecting the travel lanes, separated by a landscaped median strip at least ten feet wide, providing access to lots in a residential subdivision." As of 2004, there has only been one such boulevard constructed in Wells, and the Town has considered amending or doing away with this road category.

Roadway Maintenance Policy

The Town's Public Works Department has completed a Road Surface Management Program using a model prepared by the Maine Department of Transportation in cooperation with the University of Maine. This document provides guidance to local officials and is a useful tool in establishing priorities for road reconstruction, rehabilitation and resurfacing. Funds have not always been available to implement the Road Surface Management Program.

Traffic Volumes

The Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) conducts traffic counts on a periodic basis. Historically, traffic patterns and the resulting volumes have peaks (i.e. morning / afternoon commutes and weekends) and valleys (mid-day and late evening / early morning). Maine DOT has converted the traffic data into Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) counts, which provide a uniform basis for the evaluation of traffic volumes.

Because of its strategic location as a desirable summer beach resort, state highways and local roadways in Wells carry a significant amount of traffic. The Maine Turnpike, also referred to as I – 95, is the heaviest traveled road in Town with a 1997 AADT of 32,000 vehicles. In 1997, the AADT along US Route 1 ranged between 10,000 and 18,000 vehicles. The maximum recorded AADT of 18,000 vehicles was south of Mile Road; these travelers were destined for Atlantic Avenue and Wells Beach. Traffic along US Route 1 is concentrated between Furbush Road and the intersection of Maine Route 9 / 109. Because of the averaging of the traffic data, the state and local roadway network carries significantly more traffic in summer and less in the late fall, winter and early spring

The following is a sampling of traffic volumes from 10 traffic-recording locations.

Table 14
Town of Wells - Traffic Volumes
Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)

Wells Station	Location	1992	1995	2000
010	US Route 1 South of Mile Road	14,680	18,080	17,880
016	US Route 1 North of Furbush Rd		13,680	15,760
007	US Route 1 South of Route 9/109	14,310		14,630
001	US Route 1 Southwest of Route 9	10,720		12,540
608	Route 9/109 Southeast of Route 9	12,660	13,280	15,200
608	Route 9 Southwest of Route 9/109	4,940	5,320	6,320
014	Route 9B West of US Route 1	3,810	3,220	4,040
612	Route 109 Southeast of Wire Rd	5,820	6,860	7,850
010	Mile Road East of US Route 1		8,770	6,770
611	Meeting House Road West of Route 9A		500	670

Source: 1997 & 2001 Maine Transportation Count Books, MaineDOT

Of the ten locations sampled above, seven stations experienced a 15% increase or greater:

- US Route 1 South of Mile Road - 22% increase from 1992 to 2000;
- US Route 1 North of Furbush Road – 15% increase from 1995 to 2000;
- US Route 1 Southwest of Route 9 – 17% increase from 1992 to 2000;
- Route 9/109 Southeast of Route 9 - 20% increase from 1992 to 2000;
- Route 9 Southwest of Route 9/109 – 28% increase from 1992 to 2000;
- Route 109 Southeast of Wire Road – 35% increase from 1992 to 1997; and
- Meetinghouse Road West of Route 9A – 34% increase from 1995 to 2000.

Vehicle Crashes

The Maine Department of Transportation's *High Crash Location Listing* for the years 2000-2002 identified nine high crash locations in the Town of Wells. To be designated a high crash location, the intersection or road segment must experience a least eight accidents within a three year period and have a critical rating factor (CRF) of greater than 1.00. The CRF is the actual crash rate divided by the expected crash rate. A CRF greater than 1.00 indicates that the road segment or intersection has more vehicle crashes than would be expected. Table 15 provides the crash data for these nine locations in Wells.

Table 15
Town of Wells
High Crash Locations 2000-2002

Location	Total Crashes	Critical Rate Factor	Percentage w/ injuries
US Route 1/Chapel Road	22	2.70	23%
Route 9/Chapel Road	13	1.87	15%
Route 9/ Route 109/Garden St	11	2.00	36%
Route 9A/Route 109	8	2.00	12 %
I-95 North/Ramp D (Off)	9	2.12	11%
US 1, North of Buzzell Rd	13	1.09	15%
US 1, near Route 9/109	15	1.00	27%
Route 109 (Bragdon -Meetinghouse)	8	2.29	25%
I-95 North On-Ramp	15	1.45	40%

Source: Maine DOT, High Crash Location Listing 2000-2002.

These nine locations recorded a total of 114 accidents during the three-year period of 2000-2002. By comparison, the 1990 Comprehensive Plan documented 11 sites as high crash locations, only two of which were the same as cited in Table 2—the intersection of Route 109 and Route 9 and US Route 1 north of Buzzell Road. Of those 11 high accident locations, five were on Route One. Fifty crashes, or 44% of the total number of crashes occurred on US Route 1.

In addition, the Town's Public Works Department has identified the following problem intersections:

- Maine Route 109 and US Route 1 *
- Maine Route 9B and US Route 1
- Maine Route 9 (The Kennebunk Road) and US Route 1
- Maine Route 109 and Route 9A – very poor condition *
- Maine Route 109 and Route 9 *
- Bear's Den Road and Maine Route 9B

These problems are due to heavy traffic volumes and outdated designs. The two problem intersections identified with a * are also listed as a high crash locations as identified in Table 15.

Sidewalks

In 2000, the Town established a sidewalk committee with the responsibility of identifying locations for the extensions of new sidewalks. The Sidewalk Committee identified Route 1 between Drakes Island Road and Stewart Street (Area A) and Route 109 between Route 1 and the Wells Transportation Center (Area B) as the highest priority for the construction of sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities. The Town of Wells Sidewalk Development Plan and related ordinance amendments were approved at Town Meeting in April 2003. The Plan includes goals, policies, standards, implementation strategies, and a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to develop pedestrian walkways in the identified priority areas.

Bridges

According to the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) Bridge Management Program, there are twenty-seven (27) publicly owned bridges that carry motor vehicles in town. Responsibility is determined by the MaineDOT Local Bridge Program, which became law in July of 2001. Bridges of at least 20 feet in length on town or state-aid roadways are the responsibility of MaineDOT. Minor spans, which are bridges that are at least 10 feet but less than 20 feet in length, that are on town roadways are the responsibility of the municipality. If a minor span is located on a state or state-aid roadway, maintenance responsibility falls with MaineDOT. As such, the Town of Wells is responsible for the maintenance of ten (10) bridges.

MaineDOT inspects all Bridges and Minor Spans on public ways every two years in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and MDOT’s Bridge Management Coding Guides. The inspections result in a Federal Sufficiency Rating (FSR) for each bridge, which is calculated by analyzing the condition of each of the bridge’s components, such as the deck, the substructure, the superstructure, etc. Table 16 describes the FSR scale.

Table 16
Federal Sufficiency Ratings (FSR)

FSR Range	Condition Description	FSR Range	Condition Description
90-100	Excellent	40-49	Poor
80-89	Very Good	30-39	Serious
70-79	Good	20-29	Critical
60-69	Satisfactory	1-19	Imminent Failure
50-59	Fair	0	Failed

Source: MDOT Bridge Management Division

If the FSR on a state bridge located on a state or state-aid highway is less than 50, the bridge requires attention and may qualify for federal funding, depending upon the individual condition ratings of the bridge’s various components. In Wells, nine (9) bridges with a sufficiency rating of 50.0 or lower. These are noted in Table 17. The Town should work closely with MDOT in order ensure that these bridges are maintained at a satisfactory level.

Table 17
Bridge Conditions of Concern - Town of Wells

Bridge Number/Name	Custodian	AADT	Sufficiency Rating
0821/Buffam (Old)	Town	Pedestrian	0.0
1253/Stover Mill	Town	123	49.5
3091/Branch Brook	MaineDOT	1980	47.7
3199/High Pine Crossing	MaineDOT	7820	45.7
3577/Drakes Island	Town	1456	47.5
3765/Bourne Avenue	MaineDOT	2498	49.3
3771/Skinner	MaineDOT	435	48.9
3916/Lewis West	Town	969	49.1
5337/B&M RR Underpass	Railroad	railroad	0.0

Source: Maine Department of Transportation, Bridge Management, 2003

Parking

Wells Beach, Moody Beach, Wells Harbor Park, Drake's Island Beach, the Wells Reserve/ Laudholm Beach, and the roads leading to the beaches experience parking problems during the tourist season. There is limited on-street parking on Ocean Avenue and Atlantic Avenue specifically. The amount of available parking limits the number of automobiles and consequently the number of persons who can use the beach area. There is need for additional off-street parking adjacent to Route 1 that can be serviced by the trolley to shuttle beach goers.

At certain times during the day and year, some motorists park in the break down lane and passing lane of US Route 1. Commercial activities that are close to the road along with yard sales create this type of condition. In general, parking does not tend to be a problem in other parts of Town.

Other Modes of Transportation

Wells' transportation system is in large part a reflection of the historical growth of the Town. At the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, a light electric rail service was available in Wells and other nearby coastal southern Maine communities. The rail service connected the coastal Southern Maine communities with Sanford and Springvale. Long distance railroads with two stations in Wells served the Town. Similar to the pattern that evolved throughout the United States during the early to middle part of the 20th century, the private automobile became the primary means of transportation in Wells.

While motorized vehicles including automobiles, heavy and light trucks, will continue to be the primary form of transportation in Wells for the next several decades, the Town has been effective in encouraging and planning for other suitable forms of transportation. The most significant example of this planning is for the Wells Transportation Center, which opened for business in December 2002. The Wells Transportation Center is located directly off of Exit 19 (formerly Exit 2) of the Maine Turnpike on Route 109/9. It is an intermodal transportation center serving southern Maine served by passenger rail service and commuter parking for 220 vehicles.

Wells Trolley

The Wells Chamber of Commerce, with assistance and cooperation from the Town of Wells, established and continues to operate the Wells Trolley system. The trolley system currently serves the Town center area and the beaches between late June and Labor Day. The Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC), at the time of writing, was coordinating a study to determine the feasibility and potential route and costs of additional transit service along the southern Maine Coast. Part of this work was focused on the Wells Trolley. A May 2004 Draft of Service Design Alternatives, prepared by Tom Crikelair Associates, noted the following issues with the existing Wells Trolley service:

- § A route that is too long, with too many diversions;
- § Infrequent service, resulting in part from the length of the route;
- § Unpredictable service, with long gaps and no published timetable;
- § Slow and indirect access to hotels from the Wells Transportation Center;
- § Inadequate transfer facilities for connections with the Ogunquit trolley;
- § No southbound access to Beach Acres campground; and
- § Limited northbound access to the Wells Plaza.

At the time of writing, two suggested improvements were being pursued: (1) to eliminate service to the Wells Transportation Center [The study recommends replacing the service to the Wells Intermodal Center with hotel shuttles for increased traveler convenience. Other stops that would lose service could be served by the recommended fixed-route service out of Sanford]; and (2) to move the transfer with the Ogunquit Trolley to the Wells Chamber of Commerce.

Rail Service

Amtrak's Downeaster passenger rail service was initiated in December 2001 and includes four round trips from Portland, Maine to Boston, Massachusetts with stops in Wells. Since its inception in December 2001, the Downeaster service has been increasingly popular. In a 1993 transportation impact study for a restored passenger rail service, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) predicted that 121 passengers would use the Wells station each day in the first year of service (1994 for that study). By 2010, it was expected that Wells would see 255 passengers per day. During the summer months of 2003, a weekday average of 97 passengers boarded or disembarked at the Wells Station, less than that projected for the first year of service. For the summer 2003 weekends, the average number of passengers was 92.¹

Taxi Service

Three taxi companies from outside Wells serve the Town primarily during the summer tourist season. One operates from Ogunquit, a second from Kennebunk, and a third from Sanford.

Social Service Agency Transportation

The York County Community Action Corporation (YCCAC) provides a public demand responsive transit service for its resident clients in Wells and other York County communities. Clients call in advance and schedule their transportation need with the agency. The service targets the elderly, disabled, and low-income populations although the general population can use the service on a space available basis. Another group that provides a similar service in the Kennebunk-Wells area is FISH

¹ April 13, 2004 Memorandum to Tom Crikelair regarding Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission Coastal Explorer Study

(Friends in Service Helping). The York Hospital also provides a bus service for patients who require transportation to and from the hospital.

YCCAC also operates the Wheels to Access Vocation and Education (WAVE) service between Wells and Sanford. The WAVE connects people with jobs and job training with 24-hour advance registration. The WAVE currently provides between 2,300 and 3,000 one-way rides to approximately 100 people per month. Roughly a third of these riders travel to work or training in Wells, including Spencer Press, McDonald's, and York County Community College.

Air Service

Wells is approximately ½ hour from Portland International Jetport and Pease International Tradeport in Portsmouth, NH. Manchester, NH or Logan Airport in Boston are about 1¼ hour away. Shuttle service is available to Boston and Portland from private carriers.

Bicycle

Any segment of roadway having a paved shoulder of at least 4 feet in width is generally considered appropriate for bicycle travel. As mentioned previously, as state highways such as Routes 9 and 109 and US Route 1 have been improved, the Town and MaineDOT have worked to provide for bicycle lanes by creating adequate paved shoulders and proper striping. A portion of Route 109/9 has a bicycle lane. As highways are improved and upgraded, the Town will encourage adequate shoulder widths in order to accommodate bicycle travel. According to the Maine Department of Transportation's (MDOT's) policy for paving shoulders, any highway improvement, reconstruction, or pavement preservation project on state and state-aid roads where the Summer Average Daily Traffic exceeds 4000 vehicles shall include paved shoulders. The construction of shoulders on other roadways would be the responsibility of the town.

Several interest groups (Saco Trails, Old Orchard Beach Trails, Scarborough Conservation Land Trust) are working to establish a four-season corridor for cyclists, hikers, walkers, inline skaters, cross-country skiers called the Eastern Trail from South Portland, Maine to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The Eastern Trail follows the old Boston and Maine Eastern Line, which travels through the western section of Wells. Wells has joined eleven other municipalities and the private Eastern Trail Alliance to form the Eastern Trail Management District. The District will be the entity managing the trail once it is built. MaineDOT has been supportive of the trail development, including funds for it in its Biennial Transportation Improvements Plans for the past two biennia. The District is currently designing trail improvements in Scarborough, where it will connect with existing sections of the trail in South Portland.

Analysis

The inventory of transportation identified a number of issues, which need to be addressed in the Action Plan of this chapter of the plan update. They include:

1. The need to provide a safe, efficient and balanced transportation system that meets the needs of the citizens of Wells as well as visitors to the Town while recognizing that the road system provides the framework for the bulk of the transportation in, through, and out of Wells.
2. The need to play an active role in ongoing planning for improvements to the US Route 1 Corridor

in coordination with the Maine Department of Transportation to ensure that the following issues are addressed:

- The definition of US Route 1's role as a state arterial and principal local business street, i.e. "Main Street";
 - Exploring options for alternative north-south connector routes;
 - Improvement of problem intersections;
 - Need for off-street parking areas and sidewalk, walking trails and biking lanes;
 - Desire to reduce congestion.
3. Working with the Maine Turnpike Authority and other towns in the area to better understand and address the impact of the Turnpike's toll policy and accessibility on the movement of traffic in Wells and the surrounding region. This may include investigating the need for a new Turnpike interchange in the Moody/Ogunquit area.
 4. The need to play an active role in the Route 109 Corridor Committee being coordinated by the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission to ensure that Corridor Committee recommendations that effect the Town of Wells are consistent with the findings of the Route 109/9 Corridor Study and with the objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.
 5. The need to encourage appropriate techniques for access management to ensure safe traffic movements on the Town's major arterials and collectors, especially in urban compact areas where MaineDOT's access management rules do not apply.
 6. The need to create a Master Plan for the envisioned Central Area that ensures that the Town Center provides opportunities for appropriate multi-modal linkages using sidewalks, trails and bicycle paths.
 7. The opportunity to establish a more formalized system of classifying local roadways that will enable the Town to effectively program roadway projects that will produce the most benefit. This effort could assist the Town in determining how best to handle safety and capacity problems on collector roads such as Routes 9 and 109. Also, a formal local functional classification system could allow for differing design standards in rural and growth areas that could help encourage development in growth areas while maintaining rural character elsewhere.
 8. The need to dedicate funds to continue the Road Surface Management Program to establish priorities for road reconstruction, rehabilitation, and resurfacing.
 9. The need for the Town to coordinate with MaineDOT to design and schedule improvements to the 12 locations identified in the inventory as having safety issues.
 10. The need to support the implementation of the Sidewalk Development Plan. There is also a need to recognize that while sidewalks are appropriate for some sections of Town (built up areas, Town Center, along major highways), natural gravel trails may be desirable for the beach areas and more rural parts of Wells. The overall pedestrian facility system should be coordinated with the Transportation Center and the Eastern Trail.
 11. The need for the Town to continue to participate in the planning and development of the *Coastal Explorer*, a potential transit service that would connect York County communities with existing

intercity transit services such as the *Downeaster* passenger rail service, to ensure that proposed plans provide for intermodal transportation opportunities such as regional bus service, ride sharing, trolley service and bicycling.

12. The need to address the condition of the bridges identified as “Bridges of Concern” in the inventory.
13. The need to address the parking limitations for the beaches.
14. The opportunity to improve options for bicycle travel. The Maine DOT is supportive of adding adequate shoulder width to a state highway when an improvement is being constructed in order to provide a bicycle lane. Local plans and policies will provide direction to local and state officials to ensure that bicycle lanes are constructed in a coordinated manner.
15. The need to develop clear policies regarding the acceptance of new roads and the abandonment or discontinuance of old public roads, including colonial roads.

Section 6 -- Housing

Household Change

The rate of growth of Wells' households closely matched that of the Town's population. In 1980 there were 2,591 households in Wells. By 1990 there were over 3,056 households, an increase of 465 households during this 10-year period. From 1990 to 2000, household growth was even more rapid as Wells added 948 households for a 2000 total of 4,004. See **Table 17**.

Table 17 Household Change	
	Number of Households
1980 Census	2,591
1990 Census	3,056
Change 80-90	+465 (17.9%)
2000 Census	4,004
Change 90-00	+948 (31.0%)

Using the population projections from the Section 1, the number of households in Wells may reach 4,300 by 2005, 4,700 by 2010 and 4,900 by 2015. These figures assume a steady average household size of 2.35 persons. A continued decrease in the Town's average household size would result in even greater household growth.

As mentioned in Section 1, the actual number of residential building permits issued between 2000 and 2003 in Wells was 467. However, the number of new households added would not have been so great for two reasons: some new units are seasonal, and some old units have been torn down since 2000. Adjusting for these two considerations, SMRPC estimated that the change in occupied housing units from 2000-2003 was 393, meaning that there are an estimated 4,397 year-round households in Wells as of 2004.

Though population projections for Wells have been reasonably on target (see Section 1), the estimated number of households in 2004 exceeds the state's projection for 2005 by 100 households, indicating a continued trend of decreasing household size in Wells. The number of households in Wells could therefore easily exceed 5,000 by the year 2015, if not sooner.

Understanding how the number of households is changing is important for planning purposes since in terms of land use and municipal services, this figure is often the key unit for determining demand on public services. Table 18 shows how the number of year round households changed between 1980 and 2000.

After growing more slowly than other towns in southern York County during the 1980s, Wells' household growth rate picked up considerably from 1990 to 2000. Kennebunk and York both still grew at faster clips than did Wells, however, during the 1990s. **See Table 18.**

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>% Change 1980-90</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>% Change 1990-00</u>
Wells	2,591	3,056	+17.9	4,004	+31.0
Kennebunk	2,506	3,161	+26.1	4,229	+33.8
South Berwick	1,380	2,104	+52.5	2,403	+14.2
York	3,152	3,788	+20.2	5,235	+38.2
York County	49,648	61,848	+24.6	74,563	+20.6

Source: US Census, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission

During the 1980s and 1990s, Wells continued to witness changes in the composition of households. Household size dropped at a rapid rate during the 1990s: according to the 2000 census it was just 2.35 persons per household compared to 2.55 in 1990, 2.59 in 1980 and 2.83 in 1970. York County as a whole also saw household size drop from 2.75 persons per household in 1980 to 2.63 in 1990 to 2.54 in 2000. This decrease in household size is the result of lower birth rates, higher divorce rates, increased longevity among seniors and a greater number of younger and elderly individuals living independently in single households. Based upon regional and national trends, this figure is likely to continue to drop.

This phenomenon of an increasing population with a decrease in the size of households has a significant effect on growth and residential development. In effect, it requires a greater number of households to house the same number of people. This affects the number of housing units as well as the amount of land needed for residential uses.

Housing Stock Characteristics

In addition to total housing supply and growth, it is also important to examine the composition of a municipality's housing growth. The availability of different types of housing units (i.e., single family, multi-family, manufactured (mobile) and renter occupied versus owner occupied) is significant if the housing needs of all segments of the community are to be served adequately.

Wells' housing stock is predominantly single family, owner-occupied housing units. As of 1980 Wells had 2,879 year round housing units and another 1,750 seasonal units for a total of 4,629. 74% (2,140 units) of the Town's total year round housing units were single family. Of these 89% were owner occupied. Conversely, 14% of Wells housing was multi-family, while 12% was manufactured. By 1990 Wells had 5,217 housing units of which 3,849 were single family, also 74% of the housing stock. By comparison York County had over 79,000 total housing units and of that single family was only 68%.

According to 2000 Census data, Wells had a total of 4,333 year-round housing units. Among these units, 4,004 were occupied and 329 were vacant—a vacancy rate of about 8.2%. Most of the vacant units were considered rental units but it is possible that some of these were not really vacant housing units but were actually lodging units (see next paragraph). Among occupied units, 3,282 (82%) were owner occupied and 722 (18%) were renter occupied.

The 2000 Census also reported a total of 3,461 seasonal housing units in Wells. If accurate, this figure would represent an increase of more than 1,000 seasonal units from 1990. However, it appears that the Census figures include many new units built in recent years that are, in fact, lodging units and not dwelling units. In the past, it may have been possible that many seasonal units were being illegally used as off-season dwelling units. However, the Town now has a full-time employee in the Code Enforcement Office whose job it is to monitor lodging units for code compliance. This position has greatly reduced the threat of the illegal use of lodging units.

Table 19 compares lodging and seasonal units in Wells from 1994 to 2004. Overall, the Town added more than 1,000 seasonal units, the bulk of which were campground/RV park spaces. There was a significant increase in the number of seasonal cottages in the Town as well, as that inventory grew from 184 in 1994 to 450 in 2004.

Table 19
Lodging and Seasonal Units in Wells

Lodging Type	No. of Units/Spaces		Change	
	1994	2004	No.	Percent
Hotel/Motel Rooms	1,672	1,529	-143	-9.3%
Bed & Breakfast Rooms	21	67	46	219.0%
Cottages	184	450	266	144.6%
Campground Spaces	1,977	2,822	845	42.7%
Total	3,854	4,868	1,014	26.3%

Source: Maine Dept. of Human Services & Town of Wells Code Enforcement Office

Housing Conditions

General guidelines which are often used to classify housing units as substandard are those which have more than 1.01 persons per room, lack complete plumbing and lack central heat (excluding wood and flue heaters). Based upon the 2000 Census, just 38 units were overcrowded and only 14 lacked complete plumbing. These figures have changed little since the 1990 Census.

Another statistic that may be an indicator of the quality of Wells housing is the age of the housing stock. Generally a community with a housing stock comprised of newer units is less likely to have problems or to have been built without proper plumbing and heating since building codes have become more stringent over time.

A large percentage of the Town's housing units (about 72%) were built after 1960. A substantial amount has been built since 1980 (44%). Consequently, Wells is quite likely to have only a few substandard housing units. However, Wells has only been enforcing building codes since the late 1980s, so some units built prior to that time may have not been built to code.

Housing Affordability

The Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) tracks the status of Maine's housing by town and housing market. MSHA includes Wells in the Biddeford housing market, although it borders both the Sanford and Kittery/York markets as well. MSHA's chief indicator of housing affordability is its Affordability Index, which compares the affordable housing price for a household earning the median income level in a given area with the actual median home sale price in that area for the past year. For example, a town's median affordable price was \$120,000 and the actual median sale price in the past year was \$160,000, that town's Affordability Index would be 0.75.

In 2003, MSHA reported Wells' Affordability Index as being 0.64, making it one of the least affordable towns in York County (the countywide average in 2003 was 0.78). Looking into these numbers, the median household income for Wells as reported by MSHA was \$50,922, and a household earning this much would be able to afford a home priced at about \$158,000. The actual median sale price for homes sold in Wells in 2003 was \$245,000—\$87,000 above the median affordable price.

Affordability in York County has been on the decline for several years. As recently as 2000, the county's overall Affordability Index stood at 0.97, but has fallen every year since then to its current level of 0.78. During that span, the county's median home sale price ballooned from \$124,500 to \$184,000—an increase of 48% in just three years.

Looking at surrounding housing markets, the Kittery/York and Biddeford markets are increasingly unaffordable, as MSHA's Affordability Index levels for those two markets in 2003 were 0.65 and 0.68, respectively. The Sanford market's Index was 0.86, making it more affordable than the other two and the county as a whole. Wells' affordability index does compare evenly with its coastal neighbors York (0.64) and Kennebunk (0.64). However, Wells is less affordable than inland neighbors like South Berwick (0.80), North Berwick (0.78) and Sanford (0.77). Ogunquit has a very low index of 0.40, but its very small size and concentration of off-season rental housing skews its affordability figures.

MSHA also reports on rental housing. According to the 2003 report, there are 792 renter households in the Town and that the average rent for a two-bedroom unit was \$1,063. This is quite a bit higher than both the countywide average rent of \$978 and the Biddeford market's average rent of \$862. However, Wells' median rent is considerably lower than that those of York (\$1,187), Kittery (\$1,228) and South Berwick (\$1,113). At Wells' average rent level, a household would need to earn about \$42,500 per year to afford a unit. MSHA estimates that 59% of renter households cannot afford the average rent level in the Town.

Another issue related to affordability is that Wells has put emphases on exempting affordable units from its residential growth ordinance. Accessory units that are attached to existing units are exempt from the growth ordinance, as are certain types of general and elderly affordable units. These exemptions are playing a strong role in increasing the Town's inventory of affordable units. The growth ordinance issue is discussed further in Sections 8 and 10.

HOUSEHOLDS IN NEED OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Maine Growth Management Law defines the affordability of homes and apartments as follows:

A home (apartment) is affordable to a household if that household can pay its mortgage, utilities and property taxes for a cost that does not exceed 28-33% of its gross income. An apartment is affordable to a household if that household can pay rent and utilities for a cost that does not exceed 30% of its gross income.

The law further requires that new housing stock be provided in the community that can be afforded by households that have incomes categorized as very low, low and moderate. Very low income is defined as income less than 50% of the county median. Low income is 50 to 80% of the county median and moderate income is 80 to 120% of the median. As of 2003, the county median income level was estimated by the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) to be \$48,522. To more easily define Very Low, Low, and Moderate levels for the area, this figure has been rounded up slightly to \$50,000.

Therefore, the income levels are:

- Very Low: Under \$25,000
- Low: \$25,000 to \$40,000
- Moderate: \$40,000 to \$60,000

Not all households within the very low, lower, and moderate-income ranges have an unfulfilled need for housing. Some are renters who are in an acceptable unit at a price that is affordable to them. Some are renters who because of their stage in life would not choose to buy a home even if they had the opportunity. Others, including many senior households or people who inherit family property, may have a relatively low income but already own a home and are content where they are.

Based on the income to housing cost thresholds defined above, as well as current interest rates, utility rates and property tax bills, MSHA estimates that, to afford a housing unit, a York County household's income should be at least 33.75% of the value of the home. By this standard, if a household earns \$50,000 per year, its maximum affordability level for a housing unit would be about \$148,000.

The income and home price levels for households in Wells are thus assumed to be:

- Very Low: Income below \$25,000, home price below \$74,000
- Low: Income from \$25,000 to \$40,000, home price from \$74,000 to \$118,000
- Moderate: Income from \$40,000 to \$60,000, home price from \$118,000 to \$178,000

An issue that is very difficult to quantify is the “invisible” affordable housing inventory in Wells. There are more than 4,000 seasonal housing and/or lodging units in the Town. The Town's ordinances limit occupancy of lodging units to no more than 28 continuous days, and the Town has recently committed to enforce this law by assigning a Code Enforcement staff member exclusively to dealing with lodging and campground properties. Even though lodging units may not be occupied long-term, many provide short-term housing to new arrivals and/or temporary workers. In addition, many seasonal units are rented at affordable prices in the off-season, thus increasing the effective supply of affordable housing units in Wells. As a result, household income levels in Wells are fairly modest—as of 2003, MSHA reported the Town's median household income as \$50,922, just slightly above the county's median.

CURRENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED—GAP ANALYSIS

The current affordable housing gap is measured by comparing Wells' present population's income profile with that of York County. The central assumption in this analysis is that each community in the county should have an equal share of low to moderate income residents and thus bear its fair share of the region's affordable housing need.

Table 20 compares 2000 Census data on very low, low and moderate-income households for Wells and York County to illustrate where the gaps exist.

**TABLE 20
VERY LOW, LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS, 2000**

	Wells		York County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very Low (<\$25K)	918	23.0%	19,503	26.2%
Low (\$25-40K)	793	19.8%	14,150	19.0%
Moderate (\$40-60K)	841	21.1%	15,965	21.4%
Market (>\$60K)	1,443	36.1%	24,910	33.4%
Total	3,995	100%	74,527	100%

Source: US Census; SMRPC

The “gap analysis” conducted to determine Wells' present affordable housing shortage was a matter of determining how many more very low, low and moderate-income households would need to be housed in the Town in order for its income profile to match that of York County. **Table 21** illustrates the gap analysis.

**TABLE 21
AFFORDABLE HOUSING GAP ANALYSIS**

	Current Affordable Units	Units Needed to Match County Ratios	Affordable Housing Gap (Units)
Very Low (<\$74K)	918	1,045	127
Low (\$74-118K)	793	758	0
Moderate (\$118-178K)	841	856	15
Total	2,552	2,659	142

Source: US Census; SMRPC

As Table 12-2 shows, Wells' present affordable housing shortage is estimated to be 142 units, with 127 being in the very low-income range (units priced below \$74,000), none in the low-income range (priced between \$74,000 and \$118,000) and 15 in the moderate-income range (priced between \$118,000 and \$178,000).

To close the existing gap of 142 units, Wells would need to add an average of about 9.5 affordable housing units over a 15-year period.

FUTURE AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED

The Maine State Planning Office (SPO) projects that Wells' year-round population will increase by 2,213 persons for the period spanning 2000 to 2015. Using the Town's 2000 average household size of 2.35 persons, this translates to a net change of 942 year-round housing units.

Maine's Comprehensive Planning statutes mandate that local Comprehensive Plans ensure that at least 10% of new housing units in each municipality are targeted for affordable housing. Applying that standard to the forecasted change of 942 units, this would translate to 94 affordable units over a 15-year period, or an average of about 6.3 per year.

Thus, the total annual target for affordable housing units in Wells through 2015 should be 16 per year, or a total of about 240 total units by 2015.

LIKELY TARGET GROUPS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

To get a more accurate picture of what types of households in Wells may have unmet affordable housing needs, it is useful to look at four specific groups:

- **Moderate Income Households in Homebuying Years** – This group of households is typically headed by individuals who are 25 to 44 years in age with incomes of approximately \$40,000 to \$60,000. These represented an estimated 9% of all households in Wells in 2000 or approximately 330 households.
- **Very Low and Low Income Elderly** – These include citizens that have incomes below the federally established incomes for eligibility in subsidized rental housing units and have a need or desire to rent. As of 2000, there were about 330 elderly (headed by person aged 75 and up) households that fell within these income guidelines.
- **Very Low and Low Income Family Households** – These include households headed by a person under 65 years and that have incomes below the federally established incomes for eligibility in subsidized rental housing units and have a need or desire to rent. There are an estimated 780 such households in Wells as of 2000 that fell within these income guidelines.
- **Seasonal Workers** – The employment base in Wells is extremely variable, as many coastal-area businesses either only operate in the summer or add staff during the summer. As such, there is always a need to house workers who come to town only during the peak of the tourism season. Many of these workers have historically tapped into the general affordable housing supply for seasonal rentals, but this supply is getting smaller and smaller, thus creating a need for seasonal worker housing.

These groups provide the most likely target populations for affordable housing in Wells. They together make up about one-third of the Town's total household base and will continue to demand housing into the future.

Analysis

The inventory of Wells' population and demographic characteristics suggest the following implications for the long-range planning of the community.

1. The household population of Wells increased steadily over the past 15 years, while the surrounding region has generally been growing at a faster rate. As a result of the continued increase in residential development, the Town should review its policies with respect to population growth and determine if those policies can accommodate the recent and projected levels of residential development.
2. Wells has an older population base in 2004 than it did in 1990. The Town therefore needs to continue to assess the most appropriate policies for providing appropriate opportunities and services for this group
3. Although Wells' household population is increasing, its household size is decreasing. There will continue to be demand for new household formation.
4. Wells' seasonal population grew substantially over the past 15 years, continuing a similar trend since the 1970s. The Town will continue to need to establish policies and strategies to accommodate future demand in a manner consistent with its small town vision.
5. There is a growing shortfall in affordable housing for both the elderly and other families.
6. The Town will need to provide about 240 year-round housing units (an average of 16 per year over a 15-year period) for low to moderate-income households in order to shoulder its fair share of the region's affordable housing need. This conclusion was based on an analysis of the Town's needs using projections of future growth. Actual growth rates will need to be monitored to ensure that the Town is, in fact, keeping up with its fair share of affordable housing.

Section 7 -- Historic and Archaeological Resources

Introduction

EARLY HISTORY

Wells was incorporated in 1653 as the third town in the Province of Maine. Prior to this time there were early settlements on or near the beaches by traders and fishermen. By 1641 Edward Littlefield established a permanent home, sawmill and gristmill at the site of the Webhannet River Falls. Reverend John Wheelright soon followed and in 1642 established a church and a small settlement.

The early settlers took advantage of the numerous rivers and brooks in the area by establishing mills that served clusters of nearby farms. Stores, blacksmith shops and post offices soon grew up in these population concentrations. Original land grants extended 2.5 miles inland from the upper edge of the marsh to what today are Ridge and Branch Roads. Farmsteads, orchards and pasture lands, hay fields and wood lots were soon developed. Just as the Town began to grow the Indian Wars (first the King Phillip's War and then the French & Indian War) that lasted from approximately 1675 until the mid-1700s took a toll on the residents and stunted the growth of this newly formed community.

Following Revolution and the War of 1812, Wells prospered from fishing and shipping trade that sent mainly timber to Europe and imported such products as sugar and rum from the West Indies and Europe. This period flourished until after the Civil War. Although overland travel was difficult, by 1825 there were eight taverns serving stage coach travelers. The railroad arrived in the 1840s providing local employment and accessibility from all directions. The rails soon displaced much of freight transport previously carried by ships. It was during this period that businessmen and other residents from inland cities in Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts began to discover Wells' beaches during the summer months. By late in the century the "tourism" business began to materialize. This trend expanded during the 20th century and today Wells has a significant tourist economy.

Although there are remnants of the Wells early history, much of the natural resource-based farming and timber economy has given way to the tourist landscape and residential growth. However, the early settlement patterns have left Wells with a number of village areas including High Pine, Tatnic, Wells Branch and Merriland Ridge.

Types of Resources for Growth Management Planning

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission in establishing guidance to local communities for addressing historic resources has recommended three types of historic and archaeological resources. These are:

- Historic structures—buildings and other above-ground structures;
- Prehistoric archaeological sites—Native American sites prior to European arrival; and
- Historic archaeological sites—mostly European, after written records.

The following discussion accounts for each of these resources in Wells.

Historic Resources and Structures

The town of Wells, settled in 1640/1 and incorporated in 1653, has a wealth of historic resources as a result of its longevity as the third oldest town in Maine. Only during this past century have many of these resources been recognized. For example, the Storer Garrison House was listed as significant in 1936 when it was noted by the National Park Service in its Historic American Building Survey and is noted in the National Archives.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTIES

It was not until 1978, when the Wells Historic Preservation Committee was formed by a vote of the town and an inventory of the significant old buildings was begun, did the actual nominations to the National Register of Historic Places begin. With the assistance of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in January 1980, 15 cape-style homes were accepted in a thematic grouping known as the “Early Capes of Wells, Maine”. These were scattered throughout the community and were significant for their early 18th century architecture. **See Table 22.**

Since 1990, five three additional properties have been added to the register, bringing the current total to 20. These properties were added when the Historical Society of Wells & Ogunquit added the Historic First Church-now the Meeting House Museum in 1992; the Laudholm Trust had the Wells Reserve Research Facility added and the Wells Historic Preservation Commission was instrumental in the placement of the Division 9 Schoolhouse. The other two are the Libby Tea Room/Restaurant and a Paleo-Indian site on the Spiller Farm.

The National Register designation denotes a property as a significant resource. It does not provide protection unless State or federal funding is involved in a project, such as road widening. Any such project must recognize the historic significance of the National Register resource and be consistent with federal guidelines.

Table 22
Properties on the National Register of Historic Places

1. Storer-Hennessey Homestead	433 Branch Road
2. Wells Branch Baptist Church Parsonage	1384 Branch Road
3. Wells Homestead	232 Sanford Road
4. Dorfield Farm	16 Dorfield Lane
5. Bragdon House-Early Post Office	88 Crossing Road
6. Littlefield House	2077 Sanford Road
7. Emery House	2449 Sanford Road
8. Hatch House	2104 Sanford Road
9. Littlefield Homestead	1458 Branch Road
10. Mill House	502 Post Road
11. Littlefield Tavern	1107 Littlefield Road
12. Littlefield-Chase Farmstead	1485 North Berwick Road
13. Littlefield-Dustin Farm	41 Dodge Road

14. Littlefield-Keeping House	1673 Littlefield Road
15. Lord Homestead	317 Laudholm Road
16. (Former) First Congregational Church	938 Post Road
17. Wells Reserve Research Facility	342 Laudholm Road
18. Division 9 School	1760 North Berwick Road
19. Libby Tea Room/Restaurant	Post Road
20. Paleo-Indian Site	Spiller Farm

Source: Wells Historic Preservation Commission

Local Historic Preservation

A Preservation Ordinance for Wells was enacted in 1985 that changed the previous Preservation Committee status which had an unlimited number of members to a Commission with five members. (The number of members was amended at the 2000 Town Meeting—it now has nine members.) The purpose of this Commission is to protect, enhance and preserve buildings possessing historical, cultural or architectural significance; designate significant districts, sites and structures with regulation; and review standards applied to prevent inappropriate exterior alterations, demolition of historic buildings and destroying of historic sites.

The Preservation Commission worked to place nine properties on the local register. Of these, four are on the National Register (Littlefield-Keeping House, Littlefield-Dustin Farm, Former First Congregational Church and Division 9 School). The other five properties are:

- The Moulton Homestead - 61 Post Road
- The Rankin School - 1817 Post Road
- The Eldridge Tavern - 6 Eldridge Road
- The Oliver West Farm - 359 Bald Hill Road
- The Rose Cottage - 224 Sanford Road

After a lapse in meetings in the middle 90s, the Wells Historic Preservation Commission was reactivated in the fall of 1999. An in-depth survey of significant properties and sites in Wells was once again begun. The survey was completed in 2004 and presented to the Board of Selectmen. A community informational program on preserving historic properties is planned to commence in the near future. As of this writing, at least 90 buildings, over 200 cemetery sites and six monument locations are being considered. **See Table 23** for the building inventory. The monuments include:

- The Storer State Park & Monument
- The Monument at Webhannet Falls
- The Monument at site of Edmund Littlefield's house
- The Monument at site of the first church
- The Monument recognizing Col. John Wheelwright's garrison
- Founders Park Monument—recognizing early families (1653-1734)

The Commission with the assistance of the Department of Public Works produced a report on cemeteries—*Cemetery Locations in Wells, Maine* in 1997. A second report—*Veteran's Gravesites in Wells* was produced in January, 2000. These reports provided information on name and location of the cemetery as well as brief descriptions of each site.

In 2003, the Commission designed and published a self-guided driving tour of historic sites in Wells.

In 1976, the Bicentennial Committee (an ad hoc group) renovated School House # 9 on the Berwick Road, furnished it with furniture and equipment and gave it to the town for public use.

The John Wells House, which dates from ca. 1710, is being restored as a museum showing early construction. This will be the only museum of its kind in Maine. The museum is scheduled for opening by early 2005.

PERKINS COVE/MOUSAM RIVER HERITAGE COASTAL AREA

A portion of the Perkins Cove/Mousam River Heritage Coastal Area (HCA) is located in Wells. Within Wells, the HCA includes the beaches and marsh systems from the Ogunquit River to Branch Brook. The Heritage Coastal Area Program is designed to identify, document and protect areas of significance to the State's coastal heritage.

A survey of Wells' Coastal Area was undertaken by the Institute of Maritime History in the fall of 1999 and the spring of 2000. Many wharf and dock sites were documented as part of Wells' Working Waterfronts from the settlement years and into the 20th century. Wrecks of derelict ships were found and examined. A maritime history was written documenting the uses of the Webhannet River inlets, the marsh, the harbor and the beaches from the "Age of Sail", when residents were dependent upon navigation, to the present.

Table 23
Inventory of Significant Buildings Being Considered

1.	William Parson House -	6 Tatnic Road
2.	Holiday House -	68 Post Road
3.	Division 4 School -	145 Post Road
4.	WinnBragdon House -	345 Post Road
5.	Enoch Furbish House -	365 Post Road
6.	George H. Moody House -	387 Post Road
7.	The Williams House -	392 Post Road
8.	The Phillips House -	449 Post Road
9.	The A. Wheelwright House -	525 Post Road
10.	The M. Wheelwright House -	563 Post Road
11.	Division 3 School -	32 Eldridge Road
12.	The Beach Farm -	97 Eldridge Road
13.	The Moody Home -	664 Post Road
14.	The Augustus Littlefield Farmstead -	694 Post Road
15.	The Ivory Littlefield House -	12 Vera Lane
16.	The Hill Homestead -	27 Mile Road
17.	The Junior High School -	1470 Post Road
18.	The Milbray Freeman House -	Post Road
19.	The Parker House -	1516 Post Road
20.	The Capt. Wells House -	1532 Post Road
21.	The N. Littlefield House -	1544 Post Road
22.	The Sayer/Gilman Homestead -	42 Harbor Road
23.	The Lindsey Tavern -	1619 Post Road
24.	The Hubbard House -	1615 Post Road
25.	The Samuel Curtis House -	1637 Post Road

26.	The Congregational Church -	1695 Post Road
27.	The S. Littlefield House -	1784 Post Road
28.	The J.P. Rankin House -	1820 Post Road
29.	The W. Rankin House -	1823 Post Road
30.	The S. Rankin House -	1830 Post Road
31.	The JR. Rankin House -	1853 Post Road
32.	The Hobbs Home -	1863 Post Road
33.	The J. Storer House -	1871 Post Road
34.	The Lord & Buzzell House -	Post Road
35.	The E. Stevens House -	Post Road
36.	The J. Littlefield House -	1902 Post Road
37.	The M. Bragdon House -	1908 Post Road
38.	The M. Richardson House -	1914 Post Road
39.	The D. Eaton House -	1983 Post Road
40.	The Goodale House -	1996 Post Road
41.	The E.Pope House -	1999 Post Road
42.	The M. Bragdon House -	2010 Post Road
43.	The Gooch Homestead -	2011 Post Road
44.	The S. Bragdon House -	2016 Post Road
45.	The Wm. Hemmenway House -	2022 Post Road
46.	The R. Hemmenway House -	2023 Post Road
47.	The Bean Home -	2033 Post Road
48.	The Elms School -	2083 Post Road
49.	The Wells Homestead -	2104 Post Road
50.	The N. Cole Farm -	2208 Post Road
51.	The Smith Home -	2204 Post Road
52.	The L. Cole Farm -	2232 Post Road
53.	The S. Parks Home -	19 Laudholm Road
54.	The Blacksmith Shop -	Laudholm Road
55.	The Sammy Wells House -	Skinner Mill Road
56.	The Skinner Mill House -	167 Skinner Mill Road
57.	Libby's Restaurant -	2721 Post Road
58.	Wells Branch Community Hall -	1411 Branch Road
59.	The Goodwin Farm -	83 Chick Crossing Road
60.	The Taylor /Penney Homestead -	144 Chick Crossing Road
61.	The Gowen/Littlefield Homestead -	336 Chick Crossing Road
62.	The D. Chick Store & Post Office -	617 Chick Crossing Road
63.	The S. Chick Farmstead -	779-1 Chick Crossing Road
64.	The Clark Farm -	202 Clark Road
65.	The Weeks/Goodwin Farm -	1285 Branch Road
66.	The Spiller/Wells Farm -	1140 Branch Road
67.	Capt. Theodore Wells House -	936 Branch Road
68.	The Hobbs/James Farm -	189 Hobbs Farm Road
69.	The Benjamin Storer House -	Meetinghouse Road
70.	The Hilton Farm -	2010 Sanford Road
71.	The Hutchins Home -	2007 Sanford Road
72.	The Dodge House -	1852 Sanford Road
73.	The Brick Oven House -	2039 Sanford Road
74.	The Sanitarium -	2124 Sanford Road
75.	The Division 14 School	
76.	The Homestead -	176 High Pine Loop
77.	The Bragdon Farm -	1389 Bragdon Road

78.	The Wideman Homestead -	22 Sunset Ridge Road
79.	The Johnson/Tobey Farm -	1939 North Berwick Road
80.	The Harris Home -	604 North Berwick Road
81.	The George Gray Home -	1607 North Berwick Road
82.	The Lydia Littlefield Tavern -	1401 North Berwick Road
83.	The A. Getchell Homestead -	27 North Berwick Road
84.	The J.F.Littlefield Farm -	65 Merriland Ridge Road
85.	The Curtis Farm -	367 Loop Road
86.	The Merrifield Farm -	504 Hilton Lane
87.	The Littlefield Farm -	553 Hilton Lane
88.	The Hilton Farm -	1105 Tatnic Road
89.	The Kimball Farm -	1643 Tatnic Road
90.	The A. Bragdon Farm -	1735 Tatnic Road
91.	The Hobbs/Matthews Cottage -	567 Ocean Avenue
92.	The George W. Moody Home -	698 Ocean Avenue
93.	Dr. C. Horsch -	702 Ocean Avenue
94.	The Minnetonka/Grey Gull -	475 Webhannet Drive
95.	The Lester Kimball Home -	393 Webhannet Drive
96.	The Webhannet House -	371 Webhannet Drive
97.	The Cambridge Cottage -	174 Webhannet Drive
98.	The Bon-Aire Cottage	19 Atlantic Avenue
99.	The Eaton Farm -	97 Shady Lane

Source: Wells Historic Preservation Commission

Archaeological Resources

As of September 1999, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission has inventory data on the following archaeological sites in Wells:

ME 467-01	Little River Site (mid-1600s)
ME 467-01	Jefferd's Tavern Site (ca 1750-1790)
ME 467-05	Storer Garrison Site (ca 1680-1750)
ME 467-09	Laudholm Farm (19th century)
ME 467-10	J. Bennett Farmstead Site (19th century)
ME 467-11	George Bennett Farmstead Site (19th century)

Wells potentially contains numerous sites from the earliest period of English settlement that need documentation. Since very limited professional survey work has been conducted to date in Wells, there is a need to identify, evaluate and protect these resources. The sites of mills, working waterfronts, derelict vessels and garrison houses are but a few to consider.

PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

As of August 2000 the State Preservation Commission lists the following sites:

- 4.13 - Spiller Farm, highly significant (on National Register as of 2004)
- 4.12 - Ceramic Period Site, small site at the location of the proposed gas storage tank. Not significant.

From maps provided to the Town by Dr. Arthur Spiess, archaeologist from the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission, potential sites of archaeological resources in Wells are the tidal marshes, the areas surrounding all local rivers and the heath areas in town.

Cultural Resources

There are many cultural resources available in the town of Wells.

The Wells Public Library opened in 1979 and provides resources, programs and services to the public using updated technology for all age groups. Over 35,000 titles are available along with videos, audio cassette books, large print books, copier for public use and an automated circulation and catalog system.

The Meetinghouse Museum with its Historical and Genealogical Research Library is maintained by the Historical Society of Wells & Ogunquit. The Auditorium of this former First Church of Wells is used for historical, educational and cultural events. The annex has Exhibit Rooms displaying artifacts and memorabilia from the Wells & Ogunquit area. The upstairs Annex houses the Esselyn Perkins Memorial Library where a sizable collection of historical and genealogical volumes are used by folks from all over the country researching their roots.

The Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, established in the mid 1970s as the Coastal Maine National Wildlife Refuge, has purchased much of the marshlands of Wells thus providing great opportunities for research and wildlife observation of this area. The Refuge is committed to preserving wildlife habitat and waterfowl migration routes along Maine's coastal estuaries. Visitors experience a mile-long accessible self guided trail, the "Carson Trail", at the refuge headquarters on Port Road.

Wells' National Estuarine Research Reserve was established at Laudholm Farm in 1986. The Research Department is housed in the buildings that were once used as the farmstead. Today this area contains exhibits, a Welcome Center and meeting room. Seven miles of trails give visitors a view of habitats of a variety of wildlife. The Educational Department provides day and evening nature programs through tours, talks, slide shows, school and group field trips, summer camp, artist's workshops and kayak adventures.

The Wells/Ogunquit Community School District, Adult Education Programs, the York County Technical College as well as the seven churches in the town provide educational, cultural programs as well as concerts to the community as a whole. The Senior Service Committee of the town provides additional cultural enrichment for the community's seniors.

Note: Much of the information for this section of the Comprehensive Plan Update was provided by Hope Shelley of the Wells Historic Preservation Commission.

Analysis

The Town of Wells has a wealth of historic, archaeological and prehistoric resources. The Historic Preservation Commission has made significant progress in identifying and documenting many of these resources. However, additional work could be done to further identify and document both historic and prehistoric archaeological sites.

The Town has also adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance for the protection of local historic resources. The current work by the Commission will identify additional resources that will come under this ordinance. The Commission will need to continue to pursue its efforts to identify, document and protect these valuable resources.

At present, the Town is not a Certified Local Government for purpose of receiving matching funds from the state for historical and archaeological research and projects. With such valuable resources in the Town, such a designation would be a significant step in protecting and maintaining the Town's historic and archaeological assets.

Section 8 -- Land Use

A. FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURAL LAND

Forestry

Much of the undeveloped area of Wells is in forest. A significant amount of land is being actively managed as forest land or is enrolled in the Tree Growth Tax Law. A total of almost 4,000 acres on 131 different parcels are covered by the tree growth program. The holdings range from approximately 10 acres to 286 acres, with 10 owners controlling 100 acres or more. The current average size of parcels in the program is 30.5 acres, reflecting a trend toward smaller individual parcels in the program.

The Soil Conservation Service rates soils for forest production. The Town contains a limited amount of area with soils rated as very good for tree production. These soils are located primarily along Branch Brook, in the Hobbs Brook area, near the Merriland River, along the Sanford town line and around the Green River in the southern part of Town. In addition, large areas of the Town have soils which are capable of supporting commercial forestry use.

Agriculture

The use of land for agricultural purposes in the Town has diminished over the years. There is still a small amount of land in active agricultural production, including the Spiller and Rigby farms in Wells Branch, the Merriland Ridge farm on Route 9, Hilton's farm on the Tatnic Road, and a number of horse farms in the Tatnic area. As of 2004 there are 17 parcels encompassing 1,028 acres in the Farm and Open Space Tax Act program. These parcels only account for about three percent of the Town's total land area.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has identified those soil types that are highly suited for agricultural purposes. This land is divided into two categories, prime farmland and agricultural soils of statewide significance. The Town has a very limited amount of prime farmland soils. These are located primarily in the Bragdon farm area and in Wells Branch. There is also a limited amount of soils of statewide significance primarily in these same areas.

B. RECENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Residential Development

During the 1970s, Wells experienced a large amount of land subdivision activity. The 1980 Comprehensive Plan identified 73 approved subdivisions in Wells with a total of 1,790 lots during this period. These subdivisions were scattered throughout the Town. Almost half of the subdivisions and almost 60% of the approved lots were located east of the Maine Turnpike in Moody, along Route 9-B, near Route One and near Cozy Corner. The remaining subdivisions were located west of the Turnpike concentrated in the Perkinstown-Ell Pond area, the High Pine-Route 109, scattered along the 9-B area, the Bragdon Road area and Wells Branch. This activity created a substantial inventory of approved lots in Wells.

During the 1980s the level of subdivision activity was significantly lower than that experienced during the 1970s. From January 1980 through August 1988, the Town approved only 19 subdivisions with 5 or more lots and a total of 217 approved lots—less than 15% of the lots approved during the period from 1970 to 1980. Most of this activity occurred in the area west of the Turnpike. During this same period, the Town approved 5 condominium projects with a total of 71 units and the Stephen Eaton elderly housing project with 40 units of subsidized housing for older and handicapped households.

While the level of new subdivision approvals slackened during the 1980s, the Town continued to experience significant development of new housing. Much of this development occurred as single-family housing on the inventory of lots created during the subdivision boom of the late 1970s. Between January 1, 1980, and September 1, 1989, the Town issued building permits for approximately 850 to 900 new single-family homes. In addition, the Town issued permits for approximately 125 new housing units in multifamily structures. Over this same period, permits were issued for locating approximately 200 mobile homes. During this period, the Town had a growth ordinance in effect that limited construction to a maximum of 132 new units per year.

During the early part of the 1990s the level of subdivision approvals and building permits continued to remain static. The pace of development picked up in the latter part of the decade. The level of subdivision activity was much higher than the previous decade. In 1999 alone there were more subdivision lots approved (245) than during the nine-year period between 1980 and 1988 (217). The bulk of these lots occurred in two developments: The Forest (120 lots) and Spinnaker Ridge (54 lots).

Subdivision activity has actually slowed since 2000, partly in response to the abundance of lots approved in 1999. In the four year period of 2000 through 2003, there were just 122 new subdivision lots approved in Wells, an average of 30 per year. As of 2004, there are an estimated 152 approved but unbuilt subdivision lots in the town.

Similar to the previous decade, much of this subdivision activity occurred west of the Maine Turnpike, although there was significant subdivision activity between US Route One and the Turnpike in the Burnt Mill Road area and the Moody area between Tatnic and Edgewood Roads.

On the other hand, the number of building permits for single and multifamily housing was limited to a certain extent by the Growth Ordinance. Between 1995 and 2003 there were 794 growth permits issued. The lowest year was 1997 with 62 permits issued. The highest was 2003 with the maximum of 132 permits issued. See below for more discussion about the Growth Ordinance.

Non-Residential Development

During the 1980s, Wells experienced a substantial increase in transient/tourist housing accommodations. In 1985 and 1986, the Town approved over 700 units in condo-hotels. The Town also approved 10 motel developments during the 1980s with a total of 329 rooms. Virtually all of this development occurred in the Route One Corridor or at Wells Beach.

Wells experienced a large amount of commercial development between 1980 and August 1988. The industrial park saw Shaw's construct a 240,000 square foot distribution center in 1983 and a 230,000 square foot expansion in 1987. During this period, the Town approved over 100,000 square feet of retail and office construction primarily in the Route One area. Since 1988, the Town has approved the construction of a new supermarket at the intersection of Route One and the Mile Road adjacent to the existing shopping center.

By comparison during the early part of the 1990s commercial development was not as rapid during the 1980s. While non-residential growth has been steady since the middle 1990s, it generally has been smaller scale. There have been two additions to the Spencer Press and smaller retail growth such as Rite Aid and Canon Factory Outlet. One of the most significant non-residential developments has been the York County Technical College.

Since 2000, there has been growing reinvestment in older commercial properties in the Route 1 corridor. The Ames department store shut down in 2002, but was redeveloped as a Marden's store that opened in 2004. As Wells' residential base continues to grow other aging shopping center and stand-alone commercial properties will likely continue to be attractive for reinvestment.

Residential Growth Management Ordinance

In 1980 Wells adopted a Residential Growth Management Ordinance (presently Chapter 175 of the Municipal Code) to limit the number of residential building permits for new dwelling units in a given year. The ordinance has been modified three times since then: in 1986, 1993 and 2003, to be more reflective of the growth situation at that time and to provide a more efficient and equitable system for managing the issuance of residential growth permits. This ordinance was adopted in an effort to provide for a predictable residential growth rate so that the Town could reasonably plan for community facilities and services such as education, fire, police and roadway maintenance and construction, while protecting valuable natural resources and open space. The Town recognizes that protection of its natural resources enhances its attractiveness for tourism and natural resource-based industries.

At present, the limit on the number of permits is 132 per year with no more than 11 being issued

in any one month. This growth ordinance has monthly lottery system that further limits the type of permit issue. It allows up to four permits per month for non-subdivision dwelling units and seven for dwelling units in subdivisions. There are exemptions from the growth ordinance for accessory dwellings, affordable housing units and elderly affordable units. Any individual or corporation building an affordable unit also receives an exemption for one non-affordable unit.

From 1993 through 2002, the limit was never reached. In 2003, however, the maximum number of subdivision growth permits was reached. As of September 2004, the waiting time for a growth permit in subdivisions is at about two years.

There are now 16 other communities in York county with similar such ordinances. There has been some question about the legality of these regulations. Though the state Supreme Court upheld the Town of Eliot's growth ordinance in a 2000 case, the Maine Legislature has amended state statutes on these types of ordinances. The State Planning Office's interpretation of the legislation now requires towns to make a strong need-based case for maintaining growth caps. A change to the state statute in 2002 explicitly encourages municipalities to make use of differential growth caps that limit growth in rural areas but encourage growth in urban or urbanizing areas.

With this in mind, an analysis of the fiscal issues related to Wells' need to maintain its residential growth cap can be found in the Fiscal Capacity chapter (Chapter 10).

C. CURRENT LAND USES

Introduction

This element of the Comprehensive Plan Update focuses on existing land uses in Wells. The pattern of land use in Wells gives the community its special character. This character is also shaped by a variety natural, historical and cultural features that are intertwined with Wells' historical pattern of growth. The traditional settlement pattern that defines much of Wells' character consists of a major highway corridor with associated commercial, retail and institutional uses, several commercial/residential village centers, one industrial park, scattered residential neighborhoods, and rural areas that are marked by single family housing, agricultural lands and forested areas. **See Map 2, Current Land Uses.**

In addition to an understanding of the Town's natural resource opportunities and constraints, an analysis of existing uses is necessary to plan for future growth and change. The accompanying maps and discussion of land use trends help to determine where development has occurred to date and where it is likely to occur in the future. Comparison to existing zoning districts are provided and inconsistencies are identified. This information identifies the needs and problems associated with growth in accordance with the Town's current land use regulatory and management system.

Residential Land Use

Residential land use in Wells is by far the largest use of developed land—about 10,300 acres on more than 5,000 parcels, representing 29% of Wells' total land area. This includes the

approximately 400 parcels coded as Waterfront by the Wells Assessor's Office and 68 parcels coded as Residential Condominium. Waterfront parcels are primarily seasonal, but have become increasingly populated by year-round residents in the past few years. **See Table 24, Summary of Wells Land Use Data.**

The pattern of residential use in Wells is quite similar to the pattern that was noted in the 1990 Comprehensive Plan. In that plan rural subdivisions and centers with established development patterns were considered as one category. Given the additional rural subdivisions that have occurred in the last decade, it would seem appropriate to distinguish it from the established centers. Thus the land devoted to residential purposes generally falls into five broad categories:

- beach development
- development in the Route One corridor on public water and sewer
- rural subdivisions
- centers with established development patterns
- scattered rural residential uses along existing roads.

The Land Use Map provides an indication of those areas in which these patterns dominate. The existing residential development on Drakes Island, Wells Beach, and Moody Beach is relatively high density (more than five units per acre) on small lots. The majority of structures are one- and two-family homes. These areas are virtually fully developed, with only a small number of vacant, buildable lots. These neighborhoods are quite stable.

Residential use in the Route 1 corridor varies widely in terms of type and density. Most of these areas are serviced by public sewerage and water. Though there are some older areas in the corridor that are built at higher densities (4-8 units per acre), the bulk of housing in the area is newer housing built at densities of about two units per acre. Housing type varies from single-family homes to multi-unit condominium and apartment developments.

West of US Route 1 and the Maine Turnpike there is a greater variety of residential development, but in general it tends to be at a lower density. There are a number of locations with established residential development areas around the older rural centers. These include such centers as Wells Branch and High Pine. These rural centers contain many historic structures on small lots that were developed as railroad villages. Though they are built at higher densities, they lack public water or sewer and often have concerns about environmental resources (particularly in Wells Branch).

Over the past several decades there have been more and more relatively large residential subdivisions approved that tend to be more scattered and further from the older village centers than prior to this period. In addition, there are a number of newer (built since 1960) densely developed areas in rural Wells such as Perkins Town and the Route 109/Wire Road area.

Development in the rural areas of Wells is often dependent on on-site water supply and septic disposal, although those closer to Route 1 may have public water and sewer. The predominant housing type in these areas is single-family homes with a small number of two-family or multifamily units.

Throughout the remainder of the Town, there is a significant amount of scattered residential development along existing public roads. This development is predominantly low density and has on-site septic disposal and water supply.

Table 24
Land Use Summary

Use	Number of Parcels	Total Acres	% of Town
Residential Single-Family	5,020	10,045	28.4%
Residential Condominium	68	244	0.7%
Commercial/Industrial	435	3,422	9.7%
Public	219	2,959	8.4%
Other Exempt (Churches, non-profit)	106	1,818	5.1%
Farm/Open Space	17	1,028	2.9%
Tree Growth	131	3,989	11.3%
Vacant	1,116	11,847	33.5%
Total Land	7,112	35,353	100.0%
<i>Source: Wells Assessor Office, 2004</i>			

Commercial/Industrial Land Use

Commercial use of land in Wells occurs in two principal areas:

- Wells Beach/Wells Harbor
- the Route One corridor

The use of land for industrial establishments is limited to the Spencer Industrial Park between Route 109 and the Burnt Mill Road east of the Maine Turnpike. There are a few contractors and similar uses in other areas of the Town.

In addition, there are a small number of commercial uses scattered in other areas of the Town, a number of which are associated with the traditional service centers or arterial state roads such as Routes 9 and 109. Commercial/industrial use comprises 3,422 acres of Wells or approximately 10% of the Town's land area. This amount includes extractive uses located in more rural areas of the town in addition to the commercial and industrial parcels east of the Maine Turnpike.

The Wells Beach commercial area consists of tourist-related uses including motels, restaurants, and shops, as well as small retail uses servicing the residents of the beach area. The intensity of use is high, but the overall area of commercial use is small and concentrated around Casino Square. The Wells Harbor area supports both marine commercial and recreational uses. This area contains a marina and associated facilities, a restaurant and public parking lots.

The Route One commercial area runs from the Ogunquit Town line to Cozy Corner (Route 9 intersection to Kennebunk). The commercial character of this area varies from segment to segment. From Cozy Corner to south of Drakes Island Road is an intensely developed stretch with a variety of commercial uses, including motels, campgrounds, and retail uses. To the south of this area is a segment with limited commercial development. Within this area, the historical building character has been maintained, even though many older properties have been converted

to commercial use. The area in the vicinity of Wells Corner is extensively developed for commercial uses and to a limited extent functions as the center of the Town. This area includes a mix of retail, restaurant, public, and motel uses.

The area of Route One north and south of the Mile Road is the most intensely developed portion of the corridor. This area includes the Town's major shopping facilities, fast food establishments, retail uses, restaurants, and motels. The southernmost section of the corridor is centered on the Moody area and is only moderately developed for commercial use. Uses include motels, campgrounds, offices, and scattered retail uses.

There are a number of commercial activities west of the Maine Turnpike. Although they are not concentrated in any specific area, there are commercial uses at the intersection of Routes 9 and 109, along Route 9B in the High Pine area and in Perkinstown. These uses are predominantly local businesses serving local markets.

There are several active gravel pits in Wells, mostly in the western portion of the Town. These facilities are a major source of sand and gravel for the York County area. There are also a number of exhausted or abandoned pits in these areas. A major facility for the processing and handling of earth materials (sand, gravel and quarry stone) is located off Route 9 and the Boyd Road near the North Berwick border. The assessor records code part of this area as Commercial/Industrial where earth materials are processed.

The western portion of the Town contains a number of areas with sandy and/or gravelly soils. These areas are a resource and may be the focus of additional extractive efforts in the future. The utilization of this resource may present conflicts with residential use.

Open Space and Recreational Land Uses

Wells has a significant amount of land that is permanently committed as open space. The Town of Wells owns several parcels of land dedicated to open space and recreational use, including the multipurpose fields on Route 9A (68 acres), the Fenderson Wildlife Commons along the Sanford line and land near Ell Pond (over 400 acres) and the Wells Heath property (500 acres). In addition, the Town is a major landholder (245 acres) within the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, which is approximately 1,600 acres in total.

The state and federal governments are also major owners of open space in the Town. The State owns an approximately 200 acres parcel of land adjacent to Laudholm Farm. This land was acquired with the intention of developing a state park. It is now being used as part of the Wells Reserve, although there is public beach associated with this parcel. The Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge is also a major owner of land within the community. The refuge has acquired approximately 865 acres of coastal wetlands and adjacent upland in Wells and continues to acquire upland fringe areas adjacent to the wetland in an effort to protect wildlife habitat. These lands are also included in the Wells Reserve.

There are a number of other dedicated open spaces within Wells. There are more than 200 acres of open space land that qualify for state's Farm and Open Space Tax Act under 36 MRSA Sec. 1101. These are public-private partnerships between the York Land Trust, the Great Works

Regional Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy and the Town of Wells. In addition, the Wells Reserve Management Authority owns land adjacent to the Wells Reserve. As part of new subdivisions, a number of areas have been set aside as common open space. These include land in the Hamlin Brothers subdivision, Canterbury Manor, Jeremy Cobb Estates, Ocean 18, and Spicebush. The Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District owns four parcels of land in the Branch Brook watershed for the purpose of protecting the water quality of Branch Brook. The Wells-Ogunquit Little League has playing fields on Route 9 near the public works garage.

Wells also has substantial ocean frontage—about five miles. There are about five miles of publicly owned beach frontage in Wells. Public access to the beaches is available at four different locations, as outlined in Chapter 4.

Municipal Lands

The Town of Wells owns approximately 49 properties that have associated lands that range in size from 0.17 acres (the Boy Scout Hall) to 127 acres (Transfer Station/close Landfill). Other facilities include the Town Hall site, Town Hall annex, the Town gravel pit on the Burnt Mill Road, public works garage site, and beach parking areas and accesses. The town also owns a number of vacant parcels of land for municipal use, conservation purposes, and for buffer or right-of-way use. In total there are 553 acres of Town-owned land or 1.5% of the land area.

In addition, the Town also owns a number of parcels that are not currently used for municipal purposes. The Town should review these parcels to determine their potential for municipal or conservation purposes.

Forestry and Agricultural Land

The inventory of forestry and agricultural land is discussed in detail under Heading A above.

Analysis

For the past several decades, residential development activity has been spread over the entire geographic extent of the community. Most new single-family housing, which has comprised the bulk of new housing in Wells, has occurred in the western portion of the community in areas that were previously rural in character. This pattern of development has required the Town to increase public services in these areas. It has also resulted in conflicts between traditional natural resource industries, such as gravel extraction and residential uses.

At the same time, the trend toward more intensive development of the Route One corridor for commercial uses and lodging has changed the character of this area and has contributed to traffic problems on Route One. While there is substantial acreage in farm and timber current use programs, these areas are still subject to continuing demand for additional residential and commercial development.

Wells has three distinct types of existing character: rural, village and tourist-related. It should be a priority of the Town to maintain the distinctions among these three very different types of

places. In addition, the Town will need to continue to monitor mineral extraction (including sand and gravel) activities to not only ensure that they minimize environmental impact, but also to ensure that future non-extractive uses in these locations are compatible with the community's long term goals and policies for these areas.

As the Town continues to grow and change, a better system of tracking development needs to be created. The best tool for tracking change is the assessor's database. While the assessor's database is very effective at fulfilling its primary purpose—determining property assessments—it is presently not compatible with efforts to use it as a planning tool. Current land use codes that are useful for planning purposes need to be added to the database, as does information regarding the inventory of approved but unbuilt subdivision lots.

Section 9 – Public Facilities and Utilities

A. PUBLIC FACILITIES

General Government

The major community administrative functions of Wells are located in the Town Hall building located on Route 9 between Route One and the Maine Turnpike. Built in 1988, this two-story structure provides office space for the following departments:

- Town Manger
- Town Clerk
- Assessing
- Planning and Code Enforcement
- Engineering
- Finance
- Administration
- Welfare
- Voter Registration

The Town Hall also contains meeting facilities on the first floor for selectmen's meetings and the meetings of other town boards and commissions. Although the Town Hall is only slightly depreciated based on the findings of the Facilities Report, it is crowded and lacks adequate storage and meeting space and customer waiting space. In the fall of 2002, a proposal for an addition to the Town Hall was rejected by the voters, but it was reintroduced at Town Meeting in 2004 and approved. The expansion will take place in 2005.

Public Safety

As the Town continues to grow, it will face a number of issues with respect to public safety policies, services and equipment needs. The Town has a full time fire and police department as well as an emergency medical service.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

In December 1998 the Wells Fire Department prepared a two-year Action Plan that addressed equipment, facility, personnel and program needs. A number of the recommendations in that plan were acted on, such as the purchase of a new ladder truck.

In 2003, there were a total of 679 service calls to the Wells Fire Department, an 11% increase from the 2000 call total of 612. Fires only account for a small percentage of calls to the Fire Department as just 9.5% of all calls from 2000 through 2003 were for actual fires. The largest share of calls for service was for Rescue/EMS (40% of calls). There were also more calls for Hazardous Conditions (13.5%), Service Calls (12.8%) and Good Intent calls (12.3%) than for actual fire calls.

Facilities

The Fire Department is housed in three facilities — Corner, High Pine and Wells Branch Stations. The Corner Station is considered the central station and is located at Wells Corner. This facility provides office and administrative space, meeting facilities, equipment bays and facilities for the full-time paid firefighters. This facility houses one engine, a rescue/utility vehicle and an 85-foot ladder truck. In 2000 the Emergency Medical Services vehicles and offices were re-located to a new location associated with the new York Hospital medical facility in Wells.

Wells Corner Station is becoming too small for the needs of the fire department. Both administrative space and an area for volunteers are needed. It is imperative that the volunteers have a place to call their own, as it is important for the full time staff to have adequate space for their requirements.

The High Pine Station on Route 109 in the western portion of Wells was in marginal condition until a number of improvements were made during 1998. It now has a bay for an EMS vehicle and space for a live-in firefighter. The roof was replaced in 2002 and has been adapted into a useful training facility. It would make an ideal meeting and training facility for other town functions.

The Branch Station is a former schoolhouse that has been converted to a fire station. Remodeling was completed in the fall of 2000, allowing an engine to be moved from High Pine. In 2002, a fire alarm system was added to bring the building up to code.

It has been recommended to replace High Pine and the Branch stations. The Department plans to combine both stations into one station near the Meetinghouse and Sanford Road intersection. This station would be a four-bay, two-deep station, with a community hall, kitchen, dormitory for future firefighters as well as an area for storage. The Department is also researching the feasibility of a shared station with the town of Ogunquit along Littlefield or Tatnic Roads. A station in this area would provide the coverage needed in that part of town. An analysis of new fire station needs is found below.

Facility/Equipment Type	Year Purchased	Description	Expected Investment Date	Estimated Investment Cost
Wells Corner Station	1988	1 st floor 4,110 sq. ft 2 nd floor 1,388 sq. ft. 5,500 sq. ft total	2005	\$400,000
Highpine Station	1946	1 st floor 2240 sq. ft. 2 nd floor 1600 sq. ft 3840 sq. ft. total	2006	\$1,000,000 to combine Highpine and Branch.
Wells Branch Station	1920 Old School House	2188 sq. ft	2006	Combined station of Highpine and Branch.
Tatnic Road Station	2008	2500 sq. ft.	2028	\$450,000

Source: Wells Fire Department

The department works closely with the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells (KKW) Water District for installation of hydrants. Outside the hydrant district the department has installed 15 dry hydrants.

Apparatus

Table 26 presents an inventory of the Fire Department's apparatus, the expected time each piece will need to be replaced and an estimated replacement cost.

Table 26 -- Fire Apparatus

Vehicle Type	Year Purchased	Description	Expected Investment Date	Estimated Investment Cost
Engine 1	1994	Pumper	2014	\$500,000
Engine 2	1988	Pumper	2008	\$600,000
Engine 3	1976	Pumper	Out of Service	No Cost
Engine 4	1986	Pumper	2006	\$450,000
Engine 5	1982	Pumper/Tanker	2002 (OVERDUE)	\$450,000
Engine 6	2000	Aerial Fire Truck	2030	\$1,000,000
Engine 7	1978	Pumper	1998 (OVERDUE)	\$450,000
Squad 1	1996	Rescue/Utility	2016	\$150,000
Brush 1	1973	Brush Unit	1993 (OVERDUE)	\$60,000
Car1	2003	Chief's Vehicle	2011	\$23,485
Car2	1995	Officer's Vehicle	2005	\$22,000
H.P. 1	1998	Jet Ski (Water Rescue)	Out of Service	No Cost
Beach 30	1985	Truck	1993 (OVERDUE)	\$20,000
<i>Source: Wells Fire Department</i>				

The Fire Department has enough fire fighting apparatus to handle the number of calls that it is required to make. Based on the life span for several pieces of apparatus, though, there are a number of items that have outlived their planned periods of service: a pumper/tanker, a pumper, a brush unit, a Zodiac water rescue unit (to replace the Jet Ski) and a utility truck. The total cost to replace these five items is estimated at \$988,000. Funds for acquiring the brush unit, pumper and water rescue unit were approved at the 2004 Town Meeting.

Personnel

The Wells Fire Department is currently staffed with six full-time firefighters, a chief and approximately 25 volunteer firefighters who are paid an annual stipend. There are two full-time fire fighters on staff each day. New OSHA standards under review by the State of Maine may require additional firefighter(s) each daily shift. The department has ongoing program of training for both full-time and volunteer firefighters, particularly as its areas of responsibility have increased to include hazardous materials response, water & ocean rescue, and emergency medical responses. The department also trains lifeguards in water rescue operations.

Personnel also provide inspection services for residential properties for chimneys, wood stoves and other safety needs, and would like to expand such services to commercial industrial properties. In addition, the Fire Chief is actively engaged in reviews of applications for residential and commercial development to ensure adequate fire protection for new projects.

New Station Analysis

During the summer of 2004, an analysis was performed by SMRPC using Geographic Information System software (GIS) of the coverage of the existing rural fire stations in Wells. (See **Table 27 and Map 14**). Former Fire Chief Dean had identified that the position of the Wells Branch and High Pine substations did not provide adequate coverage to the southwestern quadrant of Wells, south of Route 109 and west of the turnpike. In 1997, Chief Dean identified two optimal locations for two new rural firestations:

1. Sanford & Meetinghouse Roads intersection; and
2. Bear's Den & Littlefield Roads intersection.

Chief Dean proposed at that time that fire protection would be greatly improved in western Wells, and emergency travel times reduced, if the Branch and High Pine firestations were replaced by new stations in those locations. Current Fire Chief Moore has continued to be concerned that the need for new stations has grown since 1997 in the southwestern part of the Town, and asked for the new analysis to be performed.

This analysis examines the number and valuation of existing structures in the town located within one and three-mile radii of five locations—the three old stations and the two proposed new stations. The proposal examined here would maintain the Corner station in its existing location, while closing the Wells Branch and Highpine stations and replacing them with the new new stations.

The Sanford/Meetinghouse Road station would replace the two closed stations. As Map 14 shows, this location would sit about three miles from the Wells Branch station and about two miles from the High Pine Station. Only a very small, undeveloped portion of the Town's northern half would lie more than three miles away from either this location or the Corner station.

The Littlefield/Bear's Den station would provide much-needed fire coverage for the southern half of Wells, as there are presently no stations located in the Town's southern section. This station would serve the developing Route 9, 9B and Tatnic Road corridors, all three of which are presently miles away from existing fire stations.

Table 27, which documents the results of the analysis can be found on the next page.

Table 27**Analysis of Changes in Fire Protection from Proposed New Fire Stations (Within 3 miles of Station Locations)**

	Developed Lots	Vacant Acres	Assessed Value
Existing Stations			
High Pine	1,207	7,901	\$47.9 million
Wells Branch	734	7,553	\$63.7 million
Corner	3,140	10,568	\$506.7 million
Total	5,081	26,022	\$618.3 million
Proposed New Stations			
Sanford/Meetinghouse	1,347	12,716	\$76.5 million
Littlefield/Bear's Den	1,661	12,393	\$146.5 million
Corner	3,140	10,568	\$506.7 million
Total	6,148	35,677	\$729.7 million
Difference—New vs. Old			
Numerical Difference	1,067	9,655	\$111.4 million
Percent Difference	20.9%	37.1%	18.0%

The 2004 analysis confirmed the findings of 1997. If the High Pine and Wells Branch stations were closed, and replaced by the two new stations at Meetinghouse and Bear's Den, the assessed value of protected properties within 3 miles would increase by over 18% townwide. Leaving the Corner station out of the calculation, the total assessed value covered in the rest of the Town would jump from \$111.6 million to \$223.0 million—an increase of 99%.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Wells Police Department is located in the former Town Hall building located at the intersection of Rte 1 and Rte 109.

The Police Department is one of the busiest per officer agencies in Southern Maine and its force has seen a dynamic growth in calls for service over the last ten years. For example, the calls for service have increased for the police department over 36% from 1996 through 1999. Since 2000, the calls for service have increased by another 20%.

Police calls for service now approximate 23,000 a year. The Town of Wells has a relatively high crime rate due to its transient population, its summer influx, and its many vacant daytime homes. As suburban sprawl spreads north the Town has experienced more big city crime and has felt its impact especially in youth related crime, (particularly substance abuse). In 1999, Wells Police, in conjunction with School District Officials, placed a school resource officer in the school to help focus on this particular problem.

The Police Department consists three divisions: Communications, Patrol, and CID (Criminal Investigative Division). Patrol consists of a chief, 2 lieutenants, 4 sergeants, and 12 patrol officers. The Detective Division consists of three detectives. The Department currently also has a School Resource Officer who handles all youth-related matters.

The Department utilizes a Community Policing style of law enforcement in which the department addresses traditional criminal activity, but also tries to address non-traditional concerns of the public such as the fear of crime and reduction of crime through prevention and education. The department has one of the highest crime clearance rates in Southern Maine.

The Department has a full time animal control officer who handles over 800 calls a year. The ACO is a highly specialized individual who is currently one of only two nationally certified ACO's in Maine.

The Communications Division consists of five full time dispatchers who handle all incoming telephone traffic, including emergency calls for the police department, fire department and EMS. They also handle radio and telephone calls for the Highway Department and the lifeguards in the summer months. Collectively the dispatch receives over 60,000 calls a year. They also maintain all federally and state mandated teletype records, criminal history data, and are responsible for most data entry of the computer generated data screens and internal databases. These specialized personnel handle all of Wells emergency calls and began utilizing E-911 as of the summer of 2000.

The Wells Police Station is located at the Town Hall Annex Building at the intersection of Route 1 and Route 109. The current staffing levels of the departments have placed it at capacity. The needs of the department are expected to grow in the future and there is an immediate need for an expansion or new facility. The Police Department has estimated the necessary investment at approximately \$2,000,000.

RESCUE SERVICES

Wells Emergency Medical Services is a non-profit corporation, owned by the Town of Wells, operated by a Board of Directors who are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Provides ambulance services to the Wells community and its' guests 24 hours a day / 7 days a week, with three fully equipped ambulances with state of the art equipment, staffed with 35 part-time EMS licensed professional employees and a full-time Director.

The Service responds to more than 1,000 ambulance calls annually (many of the calls involve more than one ambulance and/or more than one patient). The number of calls has steadily risen since 2000, increasing from 1,038 in that year to 1,205 in 2003—a 16% increase. Through September 2004, there were already 1,202 calls for service, so the 2004 total will be even higher. Of all calls to WEMS, 72% are medical related and 28% are trauma related. Most hospital transfers by WEMS (66%) are to York Hospital, with 25% going to Southern Maine Medical Center, 7% going to Goodall Hospital and 2% to other hospitals.

During the summer months there are five people on duty during the day (beginning July 1), at night there are three on duty. The remainder of the year there will be four on duty during the day and two on at night. Additional assistance is received when needed from Wells EMS and Wells Fire Department volunteers, who are paid for their services, and the Wells Police Department. In addition, the Service is beginning to do scheduled transfers, which requires additional employees.

Wells EMS operates from a leased space in the Wells Regional Medical Facility, located on Sanford Road. The approximately 3,900 square foot space includes: three ambulance bays, Director's offices, EMT office with three work stations, a medical supply room, kitchen / break room, four bedrooms, and two bathrooms/shower. The EMS moved into this facility in October 2000 from the Wells Corner Fire Station, which was not designed for another full time service.

Highway Department

The Highway Department is located on Route 9 just west of the Route 109/Route 9 intersection. This location contains six buildings. The department operates out of a garage/office facility on Route 9. This facility includes 6 working bays and a small cafeteria. In addition, there is long shed for storage of equipment and vehicles, a round shed for vehicle storage and a smaller garage for storage of smaller equipment. Two smaller buildings are located at the facility including a police evidence storage building and a health equipment storage building for the Wells/Ogunquit Health Association. At present, salt and sand are stored outside. A town-owned gravel pit provides all the Town's sand and gravel requirements.

The department has 10 employees including a director, a crew chief, four heavy equipment operators and four light equipment operators. At present, the Town Manager is designated as Road Commissioner. Table 28 identifies the current major equipment that the department has which includes a number of dump trucks as well as a larger vehicle for plowing.

Table 28 – Highway Department Apparatus

Vehicle Type	Year Purchased	Expected Investment Date	Estimated Investment Cost
Mack Dump Truck	1988	1998 (OVERDUE)	\$50,000
Mack Dump Truck	1988	1998 (OVERDUE)	\$50,000
Mack Dump Truck	1986	1996 (OVERDUE)	\$50,000
Mack Dump Truck	1984	1994 (OVERDUE)	\$50,000
Ford F350 Truck	2000	2010	\$33,773
Ford F450 Dump Truck	2000	2010	\$45,630
GMC 1-Ton Truck	1998	2008	\$64,000
Ford F350 Truck w/Plow	1997	2007	\$75,000
Ford F350 Dump Truck w/Plow	1997	2007	\$37,000
Ford Ranger 4x4 (Beach)	1998	2008	\$29,000
GMC Sierra Dump Truck	2002	2012	\$28,797
Bens Dump Truck	1988	1998 (OVERDUE)	\$40,000

GMC Dump Truck	1996	2006	\$85,000
GMC Dump Truck	1998	2008	\$36,000
International 4900 Plow Truck	1998	2008	\$86,000

Source: Wells Highway Department

The department sets a standard for its vehicles to be no more than 10 years old. Currently, there are five dump trucks that have exceeded this age. The total replacement cost of these five vehicles is estimated at \$240,000. The department also needs a salt shed for covered storage of salt and sand. Although there is sufficient space for department needs, the main garage is old and has a number of building deficiencies. In the past the department has prepared long-term capital equipment replacement programs, but budget constraints have made implementation of such programs difficult.

Solid Waste

The Town operates a transfer station and recycling facility at the former landfill site on Willie Hill Road of Route 109. This facility is under the auspices of the Highway Department. The landfill has been closed for over ten years and was officially capped in 1998 based on an approved closure plan from the Maine DEP. The Town has a contract with the Maine Energy Recovery Company (MERC) to dispose of the Town's domestic solid waste at the MERC incinerator in Biddeford.

At present residents haul trash to the transfer station where it is dumped into one of several covered bays. The waste is then loaded into trailers and the hauled to the MERC facility. Table 29 identifies the major equipment that is associated with the facility.

Equipment Type	Year Purchased	Cost	Expected Investment Date	Expected Investment Cost
GMC Tractor	1984	\$49,805	2003	\$80,000
Great Dane Trailer	1987	\$2,500	Not to be replaced	
Freuhauf Trailer	1980	\$2,500	Not to be replaced	
Freuhauf Trailer	1979	\$2,500	Not to be replaced	
ACE Trailer	1987	\$32,362	Not to be replaced	
BOBC Trailer	1989	\$2,500	Not to be replaced	
DEMP Trailer	1984	\$29,165	Not to be replaced	
DEMP Trailer	1984	\$29,165	Not to be replaced	
BENS Trailer	1988	\$36,448	Not to be replaced	

Source: Town of Wells

The Town operates a voluntary recycling program at the transfer station for aluminum cans, glass, newspapers and cardboard. The goal of the program is to reduce the volume of waste that must be sent to MERC thereby working toward the state's recycling goals. The Town has a

recycling rate of over 68%—the highest of any York County municipality. This high rate is in part the result of recycling efforts by the large businesses in the Spencer Industrial Park.

The facility is at capacity and plans are currently in process to expand the transfer station and allow for separate disposal of cardboard and glass/cans for recycling.

Recreation Facilities and Programs

The town operates a year-round recreation program for its residents. The Recreation Department offices are located at the Wells Recreation Park on Rte 9A. The 70-acre park consists of two ball fields, 4 tennis courts, 2 basketball courts, a playground, 2 storage sheds, public bathroom, a small office/maintenance building, a split level ranch housing the Recreation Department's offices and art room, and nature trails surrounding Hobbs' Pond. In addition to the Route 9A facility, the department operates and maintains a playground on the Mile Road.

The department operates a wide variety of recreational programs for community members of all ages. Some of the more popular programs include Summer Day Camp for grades K-9, youth swim lessons, and youth sports. Other non-sport related classes include children's theater, arts & crafts, mad science, and preschool play. Most of these programs are operated in the schools. Some activities are offered at the Wells Activity Center in rented space. Outdoor programs are held at the school fields or the fields at the Recreation Park on Route 9A. Swim lessons are held at the Elmwood Resort located on Route One.

Special events and school vacation field trips are always well attended. The Department offers holiday events such as a Halloween hayride, Christmas programs, and an Easter Egg Hunt. Dances and socials are held for grades 4-8 throughout the year. In the winter snowshoes and cross county skis are rented to town residents.

The Recreation Commission is currently working on a strategic plan for the next five to ten years for the Department. The Commission has not lost sight of possibly getting a field house built at the Recreation Park on Route 9A. Table 30 lists the Recreation Department's facilities and equipment.

Table 30 -- Recreation Department Equipment and Facilities

Facility/Equip Type	Year Purchased	Cost	Expected Investment Date	Expected Investment Cost
Facilities				
Office/Maintenance bldg	1970s			
Admin office bldg	2000	75,000	2013	\$1,000,000
Wells Activity Center				
Mile Road Playground				
Rec Park Playground				
Septic Tank	1998	6,000	2020	\$8,000
Public Restroom	1998	48,194	2020	\$60,000
16x20 Storage Shed	1999	6,000	2013	\$30,000
8x10 Storage Shed	2002	0	not replace	
2 Bball Dug out			2004	
Tennis Hut			2010	\$2,000
Outdoor Bleachers			2005	\$5,000
Equipment				
445 John Deere Tractor	1997	8,200	2005	\$20,000
Golf Cart	2000	2,000	2010	\$5,000
Sm John Deere Tractor	1992	?	2010	
Ford E350 Van	1999	22,494	2004	\$36,000
GMC Dump Truck	2002	28,797	2013	\$35,000

Library

The Wells Public Library is housed in a building on Route One that is part of the school complex described in the Education Section of this chapter. The use of the library has grown steadily over the past ten years.

The collection consists of over 40,000 materials, which include adult and children's books, reference books, audio books, videos, magazines, children's CD-ROMs and large print adult books. In 1999 the library added a total of 1,366 items. Circulation in 1999 was 85,880 down slightly from 1998, which is attributed in part to the opening of the York County Technical College library. The number of reference questions has increased significantly — 2,123 in 1999 compared to 1,530 in 1998. This phenomenon is attributed to having a part-time reference librarian.

In 1998 the Library Trustees completed a long-range Strategic Plan that provides a set of goals, objectives and tasks to be undertaken by the library and Trustees through 2004. These tasks deal with library services, buildings and infrastructure and funding.

At present the library is over capacity and the conditions are very crowded for the staff. Along with the need for additional office space, other possibilities include a community room and a

technology area. Library trustees are continuing to examine space requirements for all of these uses.

Health Care

In October, 2000 the Wells Urgent Care Facility opened near the Town Hall on the Sanford Road (Route 109). This is a two-story 19,000-square foot urgent care, walk-in facility with associated laboratory services and diagnostic facilities including x-ray, mammography and ultrasound. The Facility is managed by York Hospital. The second floor has physician specialist offices for oncology, minor surgery, obstetrics/gynecology and orthopedics. In addition to health care services, the facility has incorporated the Wells Emergency Medical Service facilities.

There are a number of physicians and other health care providers within the community, most of which are located in the Route One corridor. Other hospitals are available in York, Sanford, and Biddeford.

Education

Public education in Wells is provided by the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District. The district serves students residing in Wells and Ogunquit. In 2003, the district ended its agreement that provided education for secondary students from Acton on a tuition basis due to capacity concerns at Wells High School.

As of October 1, 2003 there were 1,507 students enrolled in the district, excluding holdover students from Acton who are still enrolled at Wells High. Most of the students in the district reside in Wells—1,439 compared to 68 for Ogunquit. **See Table 31.**

		Elementary	Secondary	Total
1990	Wells	983	385	1370
	Ogunquit	55	29	76
1991	Wells	988	377	1365
	Ogunquit	50	29	79
1992	Wells	957	391	1348
	Ogunquit	57	28	85
1993	Wells	961	391	1352
	Ogunquit	56	26	82
1994	Wells	963	397	1360
	Ogunquit	49	31	80
1995	Wells	946	418	1354
	Ogunquit	58	27	85
1996	Wells	953	397	1350
	Ogunquit	52	25	77
1997	Wells	956	425	1381
	Ogunquit	49	20	69

1998	Wells	949	426	1375
	Ogunquit	59	14	73
1999	Wells	981	408	1389
	Ogunquit	57	21	78
2000	Wells	999	434	1430
	Ogunquit	51	18	69
2001	Wells	993	438	1431
	Ogunquit	38	21	59
2002	Wells	983	467	1450
	Ogunquit	43	17	60
2003	Wells	979	460	1439
	Ogunquit	51	17	68
<i>Note: Figures exclude secondary Acton tuition students</i>				
<i>Source: Maine Department of Education</i>				

The total enrollment by students living in the district has increased slowly but steadily since 1990, rising from 1,446 to 1,507. This represents an increase of just 4.2% over the 13-year period, though. Enrollment by Wells students increased from 1,370 in 1990 to 1,439 in 2003, a gain of 5.0%. From 1990 to 2000 the total year-round population of Wells grew by 21%.

The population of the town therefore grew at a rate that was more than four times greater than public school enrollment. This fact bears out two demographic trends being experienced in Wells and throughout Southern Maine. First, people moving to the town are older and thus have no children enrolled in the schools. Second, birth rates are down overall. The national birth rate peaked in the early 1990s when the youngest of the baby boomers turned 30 and have been in decline ever since. Thus, there has been a spike in enrollment throughout the region among children born between the years of 1987 and 1992. The oldest of this group will graduate from high school in 2005, and enrollments are expected to begin to decline as a whole from that point forward.

The District presently operates four buildings, all in the Town of Wells. In August 2004, the State's Fire Marshal ordered the Ogunquit Village School closed and the School Committee is in the process of returning the building to the municipal officers in Ogunquit.

The remaining elementary school is Wells Elementary School, a facility which opened in 2003. This facility is located on Route 109, just north of Town Hall. The building houses all students in grades K-4 from both Wells and Ogunquit. Designed to accommodate 600 students, the September 2004 enrollment is 525 students.

The Junior High School is located on Route 1 and serves grades 5 through 8. The building has undergone many additions since the original building was constructed in 1936. A renovation of the junior high began in July 2004 and is expected to be completed by October 2005. When complete, the building will find the 6th, 7th and 8th grade occupying the 1930s and 1980s buildings, a new fifth grade wing where the "old elementary school" once sat, renovated allied

arts and Ward Gym area as well as the Office of the Superintendent moved to the 6 classrooms on the south end of the campus. The renovation has 28 classrooms (7 per grade) and can accommodate 560 students. The September 2004 enrollment is 510 students.

Wells High School is located between the other two campuses and is accessed through the access drive shared with Town Hall. The school was built in 1977 and a six-classroom third floor addition and expanded library space was completed in 1989. The high school shares space with Adult Education and has converted many areas into small classroom spaces. The school, through local donations, built a health facility to accommodate its physical education and athletic needs. Currently, lacking adequate storage, conference space, social services areas, technology suites, and adult education daytime programming, the high school will undoubtedly need to be renovated in the near future.

The district had enrollment projections prepared in 1999 by the New England School Development Council. Such projections are most accurate for the for the two-to-three year period after the projection. By the school year 2003-04, total district enrollment was projected to reach 1,506 or an increase of seven students over the current enrollment. This has proven to be exactly correct.

Based on the current growth in the community and the recent enrollment changes, the District is projecting slow, but steady growth for the next several years. Recent investments to school facilities should maintain them at in an adequate condition for many years to come.

Costs for operating the district are borne almost exclusively by the property tax in the two communities. Due to the high property valuation in Wells and Ogunquit, the district receives very little in the way of state aid. As of 2003, only about 5% of the Town of Wells' education budget was funded by the State of Maine.

Cemeteries

The Ocean View Cemetery Association owns and operates the Ocean View Cemetery on Route One. This Association is a private organization, although the Town provides financial support for burial of paupers and the maintenance of veterans' graves. There are available gravesites and an undeveloped area within the cemetery.

Harbor Facilities

An inventory of harbor facilities is found in Section 4 – Marine Resources.

B. PUBLIC UTILITIES

Wastewater Treatment System

Public sewer service in Wells is provided by the Wells Sanitary District. The district is an independent entity with its own elected trustees.

The district operates a sewer system with approximately 36 miles of sewers, including 9 pump stations. The sewage treatment plant can treat up to 2 million gallons per day (mgd). The service area includes most of the beach areas, Route One corridor and adjacent areas. There are some unsewered developed areas within the general service area, primarily along the west of Route One. The district's master plan proposes providing service in these areas.

During 2003, the district treated 279.1 million gallons of sewage with a peak summer flow of approximately 1.6 million gallons a day. In that year, 2,243 cubic yards of biosolids were generated, processed and disposed at district permitted sites. The district presently has enough reserve capacity to meet the town's needs for many years.

In 1998, the district began an ambitious program to upgrade its twenty-one year old treatment facility. Construction on the \$4.2 million renovation and modernization project that was completed in 2002. The district's treatment facility should not require any major modifications until 2022.

The district's policy is to provide sewer service and to expand the system as necessary to accommodate new users. To date it has been the policy of the district to require that new users pay the costs for enlargements and/or extensions of the system. In 2003 the district approved two sewer line extensions to private subdivisions.

Although the Wells Sanitary District is a separate entity, its policies and actions play a major role in the growth and development of the Town. The availability of public sewerage is key development factor and is necessary for certain types of nonresidential development and for moderate or higher density residential development.

Water Service

Public water service in Wells is provided by the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District (KK&W), that was established in 1921. The district is an independent, legislatively created public district that is governed by a four-member Board of Trustees.

The system services portions of Wells, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Ogunquit, Arundel, Biddeford and York. In Wells, the service area consists primarily of the beaches, the Route One Corridor and adjacent areas (Figure). In Wells, the district had 3,000 residential users (of which 929 are seasonal customers) and 378 commercial or industrial users (of which 113 are seasonal customers) as of the end of 2003.

The primary source of water for the district is Branch Brook. The district is able to draw and treat a maximum of 5.1 million to 5.3 million gallons per day (gpd) from Branch Brook. This

volume is more than adequate to meet the year-round base usage of approximately 3 million gpd. Peak summer water use has grown significantly in recent years and reached 6.8 million gpd on the peak day of 2003 (July 7).

To meet this excess demand, KK&W has an interconnection with the Biddeford-Saco Water District and can draw upon their supply for up to an additional 2,000,000 gpd. In practice, KKW only draws a very small amount of supply from Biddeford-Saco. In 2003, of the total of 1.09 billion gallons of water used by the KKW system, just 5 million were purchased from Biddeford-Saco.

The District has been involved in a program to replace old or inadequate mains and to improve its storage capacity. With the recent upgrading of the Route One main to 16 inches, the spine of the Wells system is in good shape to service future needs. The District continues to improve its Supervisory Control & Data Acquisition (SCADA) System to allow the entire water system to be monitored by computer from the filtration plant. This system provides for real time monitoring of allowing flexible, efficient management of the water system such as allowing the plant to shut down during low demand periods.

The District's policy is to meet the needs of future growth and development. This would include both supply and distribution. The district presently passes the cost of system expansion on to new users either in the form of construction costs or system development charges.

Utility Rights-of-Way

Wells is crossed by four utility rights-of-way, all of which run in a north-south direction. Verizon (formerly New England Telephone) has two of these and Central Maine Power has the other two.

Verizon has a right-of-way (ROW) that runs through the marshes between Route One and the beaches. Bell Atlantic had removed the lines and has no need for this ROW. Some adjacent property owners have been able to obtain portions of the right of way from the phone company. Verizon also has a ROW that runs along the Sanford-Wells town line.

Central Maine Power (CMP) has two rights-of-way through the town. One, lies between the Maine Turnpike and Route One. This ROW has not yet been developed and is in reserve for future expansion of transmission capacity. Given the pressure for residential development in this section of Wells, the potential is great for future land use conflicts around this ROW corridor, as property buyers may not be aware of this area's status. CMP also has a ROW in the western part of Wells running from the North Berwick town line near Route 9 to Branch Brook west of Chicks Crossing Road. In addition to the existing transmission lines, there is now a natural gas transmission pipe located within this right of way.

The fourth right way is the old Eastern Line, the ordinal right of way of the Boston and Maine Railroad. Rail Service was discontinued when the rail was relocated to the east. In the 1960s, the right of way was purchased is now used for an interstate natural gas transmission pipe. This right of way is under investigation for use as a non-motorized trail. See the discussion in the Transportation Section.

Analysis

The inventory of municipal facilities and services identified a number of issues that need to be addressed in order for the Town to ensure a proper level of service in an efficient manner. These include:

1. The need to provide facilities that provide adequate space and working conditions to allow municipal employees to serve the needs of Wells' growing population. Such facilities include space for general administration, the library, recreational activities, police and fire and public works.
2. The need to properly serve the areas of the community west of the Maine Turnpike in an efficient manner, without encouraging more growth in that part of the town.
3. As the Town continues to grow, ensure that there is adequate personnel to ensure the health and safety of its citizens.
4. The need to maintain strong mutual aid agreements with adjacent communities.
5. The need to continue to coordinate with the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District to maintain adequate school facilities well into the future.
6. Planning for future development along the Central Maine Power easement in order to minimize future conflicts between property owners and the utility company.

Section 10 -- Fiscal Capacity

Assessed Valuation and Tax Rate

The Town's taxable real and personal property, also known as the Town's total assessed valuation, is an important component of the Town's fiscal health. The Maine Department of Revenue maintains its own estimates of local valuation for all municipalities in the state—these estimates are termed the “state valuation.” Since state valuation, unlike local valuation, is continually adjusted, it is therefore not sensitive to revaluations. This section compares state valuations and local valuations for Wells.

Wells' state valuation began to dip from a high of \$1,049,950,000 in the year 1992 - 1993 to a low of \$932,000,000 in the year 1994 - 1995. The decline in assessed valuation of \$117,950,000, or 11.2% of the total, was significant for the Town of Wells.

This decline was largely attributed to the economic decline and consequent out migration of the early 1990s. New England and Maine in particular were adversely affected by the economic recession and loss of high paying civilian defense jobs that occurred in the early to mid 1990s. The closure of the Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, NH coupled with the reduction in work force at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine adversely impacted the economic well being of many communities in Southern Maine and Seacoast New Hampshire, including Wells. With federal assistance, the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission prepared a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region for the purpose of attempting to diversify the region's economic base.

However, since that time, the State's valuation of Wells has climbed consistently, reaching nearly \$1.8 billion for 2004/2005. This represents a 78% increase from 1998/1999. Since the mid-1990s, rising demand for both year-round and seasonal properties in Southern Maine has driven sale prices for residential property to new highs. Causing assessments to jump dramatically. **See Table 32.**

Year	State Valuation
1992 / 1993	\$1,049,950,000
1993 / 1994	\$1,001,650,000
1994 / 1995	\$932,000,000
1995 / 1996	\$944,600,000
1996 / 1997	\$943,000,000
1997 / 1998	\$966,100,000
1998 / 1999	\$978,550,000
1999 / 2000	\$1,001,200,000
2000 / 2001	\$1,047,100,000
2001 / 2002	\$1,171,200,000

2002 / 2003	\$1,320,900,000
2003 / 2004	\$1,468,800,000
2004 / 2005	\$1,788,050,000

Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary 1992/1993 to 2004/2005, Maine Bureau of Taxation and Assessor's Office, Town of Wells

Local assessed valuation followed a similar pattern as state valuation. Beginning in year 1995-1996, the Town began to see the assessed valuation increase. By 2003-2004, the Town assessed value had risen to \$1,692,473,168, which far surpasses the valuation in year 1992-1993.

As indicated in Table 33, the Town's local assessed valuation experienced incremental annual increases of approximately 1% to the year 1998-1999 when there was a decline of \$5,720,703 or 0.5%. The following year showed a very healthy increase of \$50,387,245, or 4.6%. In the year 2000-2001, there was another increase of \$27,965,739 or 2.4%. Since 2000-2001, there has been a dramatic uptick in local valuation, with an overall growth rate of 54% from 1998-1999 through 2003-2004. The largest jump was between 2002 and 2003 when the assessment jumped by 32% due to a townwide revaluation.

Table 33	
Local Assessed Valuation	
YEAR	LOCAL VALUATION
1992 / 1993	\$1,047,202,853
1993 / 1994	\$1,057,776,367
1994 / 1995	\$1,064,560,931
1995 / 1996	\$1,084,072,027
1996 / 1997	\$1,098,314,480
1997 / 1998	\$1,105,598,065
1998 / 1999	\$1,099,877,362
1999 / 2000	\$1,150,264,607
2000 / 2001	\$1,178,230,346
2001 / 2002	\$1,256,924,050
2002 / 2003	\$1,652,034,307
2003 / 2004	\$1,692,473,168

Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary 1992 – 2003; Assessor's Office, Town of Wells

During the 12-year period from year 1992-1993 through year 2003-2004, the Town's property tax commitment (the amount of the budget raised through local property taxes) increased from \$9,466,714 to \$17,916,821 for a net increase of \$8,450,107 or 89%. **See Table 34.** During the same period, the Town's local valuation increased from \$1,047,202,853 to \$1,692,473,168 for a net increase of \$645,270,315 or 62%.

Year	Commitment	Tax Rate per \$1,000	Assessment Ratio
1992 / 1993	\$9,466,714	\$9.04	110%
1993 / 1994	\$9,847,899	\$9.31	110%
1994 / 1995	\$9,879,125	\$9.28	110%
1995 / 1996	\$10,298,718	\$9.50	110%
1996 / 1997	\$10,521,856	\$9.58	110%
1997 / 1998	\$10,856,973	\$9.82	110%
1998 / 1999	\$11,394,136	\$10.20	110%
1999 / 2000	\$12,077,816	\$10.50	110%
2000 / 2001	\$13,431,827	\$11.40	95%
2001 / 2002	\$14,916,690	\$11.87	84%
2002 / 2003	\$17,808,947	\$10.78	100%
2003 / 2004	\$17,916,821	\$10.75	100%

*Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary 1992 – 2003;
Assessor's Office, Town of Wells*

In this section, “tax rate” refers to the total assessment levied on property owners in Wells—this includes Town, county and school district assessments. During the period from 1992-93 to 2003-04 the Town’s tax rate increased by \$1.69 or 19%. The assessment ratio declined from 110% in 1992-1993 to 84% by 2001-2002, spurring a townwide revaluation. As indicated in Table 35, as of 2003, Wells had the second lowest tax rate among its surrounding communities, with only York’s being lower.

Municipality	Tax Rate (2004, per thousand)	Full Value Rate (2004, per thousand)
Wells	\$10.75	\$10.28
Kennebunk	\$10.90	\$12.19
North Berwick	\$13.70	\$13.31
Ogunquit	\$12.87	\$8.41
Sanford	\$16.42	\$18.83
South Berwick	\$13.90	\$13.78
York	\$9.70	\$10.66

*Source: Town Assessor's Office in each municipality, Maine
Municipal Association*

Operating Revenues and Expenditures

This section investigates the sources and revenues used to operate the municipal government and the school system and how the Town spends those resources.

According to Table 36, for the year ending June 30, 2003, the Town of Wells generated revenues of \$21,109,645 with \$17,670,966 or about 84% of the total, derived from local property taxes. Excise taxes accounted for about \$1.8 million or 8.6% of the total. Excise taxes includes the Town's share of motor vehicle registrations. Miscellaneous revenue, which represents about 3.7% of the total, includes such items as fees from beach parking, building permits, licenses and penalties on unpaid taxes. Intergovernmental revenue includes federal and state assistance such as funding from the Rachel Carson Reserve, State of Maine revenue sharing, Maine Department of Transportation funding, the Tree planting program among others. Because of its high level of assessed valuation, the Town receives very little State education assistance.

Category	Amount	% of Total
Property Taxes	\$17,670,996	84%
Excise Taxes	1,805,938	9%
Intergovernmental revenue	850,860	4%
Miscellaneous Revenues	781,851	4%
Total Revenues	\$21,109,645	100%

Source: Town of Wells Financial Audit Report, June 30, 2003

For the year ending June 30, 2003, the Town expended \$19,630,963 to operate the municipal government and the Wells school system. **See Table 37.** Of that total amount, the Town spent 55% or \$10.7 million on public education. The percentage of the budget allocated to education is consistent with other nearby communities. For example, Kittery spends about 60% of its budget on education. General government and public safety accounted for next two highest categories at \$1.6 million (8%) and \$2.7 million (14%).

Category	Amount	% of Total
General government	\$1,557,935	8%
Public safety	2,663,819	14%
Health and Welfare	541,747	3%
Recreation & Culture	203,891	1%
Beach and harbor services	302,678	2%
Education	10,744,507	55%
Public works	951,829	5%
Library	234,156	1%
Debt Service		

Principal	128,986	<1%
Interest	50,606	<1%
York County tax	1,039,603	5%
Unclassified	1,211,206	6%
TOTAL EXPENDS.	\$19,630,963	100%

Source: Town of Wells Financial Audit Report, June 30, 2003

Many communities have the responsibility for the maintenance and long-term operation of a municipal water system and a municipal wastewater treatment plant. In Wells, the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District provides water and the Wells Sanitary District provides sewer service. Users of the service and not Town taxpayers pay for these two services. Town wide charges for water or wastewater do not appear in the Town's Financial Report.

From 1999 through 2003, revenues increased by 47.5% while the Town's expenditures increased by 41.5%. **See Table 38.**

Year	Revenues	% Change	Expenditures	% Change
1998-99	\$14,311,695		\$13,877,688	
1999-00	\$15,008,352	4.9%	\$14,418,586	3.9%
2000-01	\$15,292,602	1.9%	\$14,253,437	(1.1%)
2001-02	\$17,944,141	17.3%	\$18,138,483	27.2%
2002-03	\$21,109,645	17.6%	\$19,630,963	8.2%

Source: Town of Wells, Financial Audit Reports, June 30, 1998 through June 30 2003,
Fiscal Year 2004 Tax Worksheet

Debt

Wells has a modest level of long-term debt relative to its borrowing capacity. Debt obligations in Fiscal Year 2004 amounted to about 1.5% of the total municipal valuation, in fact. Maine law limits the amount a municipality may incur in long-term debt to 7.5% of its state valuation. Given Wells' 2004 state valuation of \$1,788,050,000, the Town could legally borrow up to \$134 million.

As of June 30, 2003, the total amount of long-term debts carried by the Town of Wells was \$1,267,902. At Town Meeting in 2004, the Town approved a General Obligation bond of \$4,225,000 to finance land acquisition around the old Town Dump and other capital projects. Adding these figures together, Wells' total long-term debt as of June 2004 is about \$5.5 million, or about 0.3% of the Town's state valuation.

In addition to the Town's debt, Wells owes a much higher level of debt to the Wells-Ogunquit Consolidated School District. As of June 2004, the CSD's total outstanding debt level was \$26,808,919 (\$19.52 million in principal, \$7.29 million in interest). In addition, the voters of Wells and Ogunquit approved an additional \$1 million in June 2004 for an interest-free revolving fund, for which \$200,000 is forgiven by the state, so the CSD's debt level is increased by

\$800,000. Thus, the district’s total debt comes to \$27,608,919. Of the total amount, Wells’ current share is set at 77.45%. This is pegged to present levels of enrollment and property valuation and changes each year as the two variables change. At the current level, though, Wells’ obligation is estimated to be \$21.38 million.

Adding together Town and School debts, the total debt level of the Town of Wells as of June 2004 is \$26,876,009, or 1.5% of the Town’s total property valuation. The Town therefore has substantial capacity to take on additional debt to finance capital projects if it so chooses.

Fiscal Implications of Residential Growth Ordinance

As discussed in Section 8, Wells’ Residential Growth Ordinance (growth cap) was originally enacted as a means of ensuring that the Town would grow at a predictable rate. One of the benefits of predictable growth is to control the rate of spending increases for local government services.

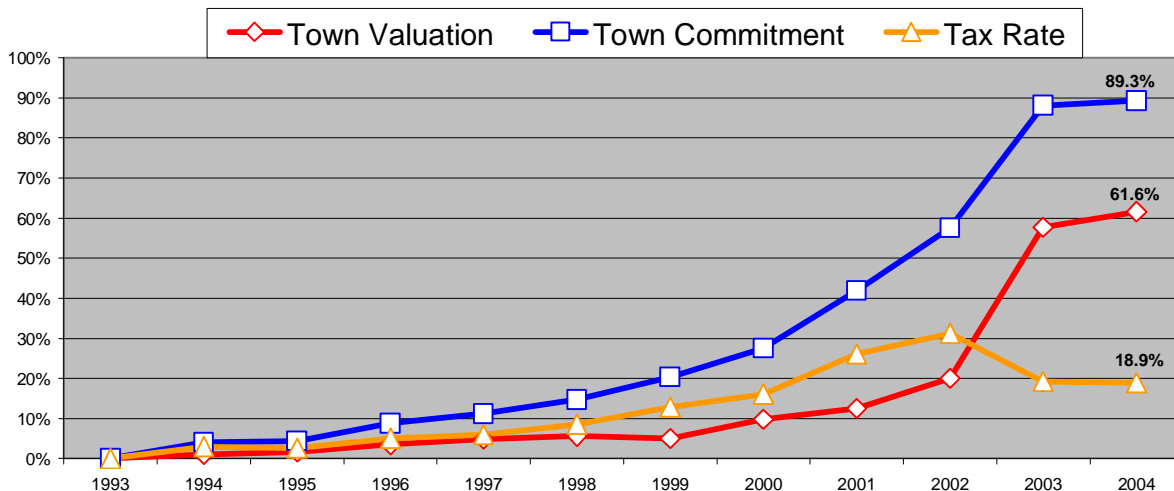
Education spending is the largest line item in the Town budget and has therefore been at the heart of the growth cap debate for the past 25 years. As outlined above, education spending:

- Accounts for about 55% of all municipal spending in Wells;
- Comes almost exclusively from the Town’s own resources, as very little state aid goes to the Wells-Ogunquit CSD;
- Has been rising rapidly in recent years

There are two reasons for the last fact. First of all, unlike many other school districts in southern Maine, enrollment in the Wells-Ogunquit CSD has actually been on the rise. Secondly, the cost per pupil to educate children has been rising rapidly in recent years due to increased pressure to meet both federal and state-mandated performance measures.

Also key to the growth cap issue is the fact that both property assessments and the property tax rate have been on the rise, leading to large increases in the tax bills among property owners in

Cumulative Change in Valuation, Commitment and Rate



Wells. The following graphic illustrates trends over the past 10 years for three different fiscal factors: property valuation, municipal expenditures and the property tax rate.

The cumulative change in the Town's property tax commitment from 1993 to 2004 was 89.3%, or about 6.0% annually. Even as property valuations grew slowly during the mid-1990s the town's tax commitment continued to rise. The gap closed somewhat with the 2002 revaluation, but overall the valuation's growth rate of 61.6% still lagged far behind the growth in tax commitment. Accordingly, the Town's property tax rate increased by 19% during the period, from \$9.04 to \$10.75 per \$1,000.

By these measures, a property that was valued at \$100,000 in 1993 would have been valued at \$161,600 by 2004. The annual tax bill on this property would have increased from \$904 in 1993 to \$1,737, an increase of \$833 or 92%. This represents a compound annual growth rate in tax bills of 6.1%.

Continued development pressure in Wells has further inflamed concerns about growth, as the pace of housing development since 2000 has reached levels not seen since the 1980s. As mentioned above, the cap for subdivision lots was finally reached in 2003. The question must be asked: since the cap is now "working," what effect is it having on the rate of growth in municipal expenses?

"Tax commitment" refers to the total amount of money collected by the Town in real property taxes. As Wells' population has increased since the mid-1990s, the Town's tax commitment has shown a clear upward trend. After showing modest gains for most of the 1990s (less than 5% per year), the annual growth rate in the tax commitment began to spike upward beginning in 1999, as it grew 6.0% during 1999. The following three years saw the tax commitment grow by 11.2% during 2000, 11.1% during 2001 and finally 19.4% during 2002 before leveling off to 0.6% in 2003.

The increased rate of residential growth has undoubtedly been a contributor to the Town's rapidly rising spending since 1998. From 1995 to 1999, the Town issued an average of 74 permits per year. From 2000 to 2003, though, the average jumped to 106. However, as shown above, the increase in valuation of real property in the Town has mirrored that of the tax commitment, so there has been a substantial increase in revenues brought in by new development to help defray the costs of serving the new development.

There is no doubt that new lots and homes are selling at ever higher rates. Even for homes that house schoolchildren, there is a point above which the annual property tax bill covers the amount of public services used. Although no such study has been done for Wells, this point commonly occurs for a household with two children in public schools when the assessed value of a home exceeds \$300,000. With so many homes in Wells now valued at or above this level, the net fiscal impact of new construction may actually be positive, especially for households with no children in public schools.

Complicating this discussion is the issue of demographic shifts. It is typically assumed that new households with children enrolled in public schools produce the greatest burden on municipal budgets, as school spending comprises more than half of the Town's spending. However, as noted in Chapter 10, the number of students enrolled in the Wells-Ogunquit CSD has been growing at a much slower rate than the population as a whole. Thus, new residential construction has not been a strong indicator of increased demand for public educational services.

A final point in regard to the growth cap is that of bonding capacity. As outlined above, the Town of Wells is only using about one-sixth of the amount of debt that it is legally allowed to take on, though voters may be reluctant to approve additional borrowing. Thus, as new development creates the need for major capital investments, the Town may have to pass along the capital costs created by new growth to those responsible for development through an impact fee system.

In conclusion, the core reason for Wells to desire a growth cap—maintaining a predictable level of growth—is a legitimate concern. Growth pressures in Wells are as strong as ever and the Town faces the prospect of having to make major capital investments in many different types of public facilities to serve new development. However, the exact relationship between the public costs of new residential growth and the tax revenue it produces is not clearly understood. In order to truly understand the dynamics of a growth cap, this issue must be further investigated.

Analysis

1. The town has managed its finances in a conservative and prudent manner.
2. The Town of Wells has a fairly modest amount of debt relative to its valuation and consequently has the capacity to issue additional debt if required. At the request of the Board of Selectmen, the Town staff prepared a report entitled *Facility and Infrastructure Report*. This report identifies needed capital projects that the Town should consider for future investment.
3. Wells is a “property rich” community, but not necessarily an income rich one, as its 2003 median household income level of \$50,922 is only about \$2,500 above the York County median. The high property valuation in Wells also means that the Town does not qualify for any noteworthy amount of State education aid. Given the growing gap between income and property value in Wells, the Town needs to advocate for the state to consider other economic indicators in its school funding formula such as lower per capita income, underemployment and a community's overall ability to pay.
4. Wells' Residential Growth Ordinance was created so that the Town could reasonably plan for the additional costs of providing public services and facilities for new households. While new residential growth is undoubtedly contributing to rising public spending and growing tax bills, there are other issues at play as well. These include increased property values and a lack of federal/state support for mandatory educational initiatives.

The relationship between public costs to serve new residential development and the tax revenues

brought in by it is not clearly understood at this time. The Town therefore needs to better understand the real effects of new residential development on its fiscal health when making decisions regarding controlling the pace of residential growth.

Appendix B

Residential Buildout Analysis

November, 2000

PURPOSE

A rural/residential buildout analysis for the town of Wells, ME was conducted as a means of gauging future development potential. The objective of the analysis was to estimate the number of parcels of land within the rural and residential zoning districts of the town that might accommodate future development based on current zoning regulations and environmental/land use constraints. The analysis provides an important tool to the town as it seeks to manage for and limit the impacts of future growth.

METHODOLOGY

Data Sources

The buildout analysis utilized the following data sources:

- Parcel boundaries – provided by the town of Wells in digital format in June, 2000. The associated parcel “property use” codes were reviewed and updated by the town in October, 2000. The following use categories were assigned:

0000 Vacant	1100 Exempt/Municipal
0100 Residential	1200 Exempt/State
0200 Commercial/Industrial	1300 Exempt/Federal
0300 Waterfront	1400 Exempt/Other
0700 Condominium/Residential	

- Zoning district boundaries – provided by the town of Wells in digital format in June, 2000.
- Soils data – provided by the town of Wells in June, 2000. Soils were coded to reflect hydric units (e.g. poorly drained/very poorly drained) and slope characteristics.
- National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) wetland delineations – provided by the town of Wells in digital format in June, 2000.
- Floodplain boundaries – provided by the town of Wells in digital format in June, 2000.

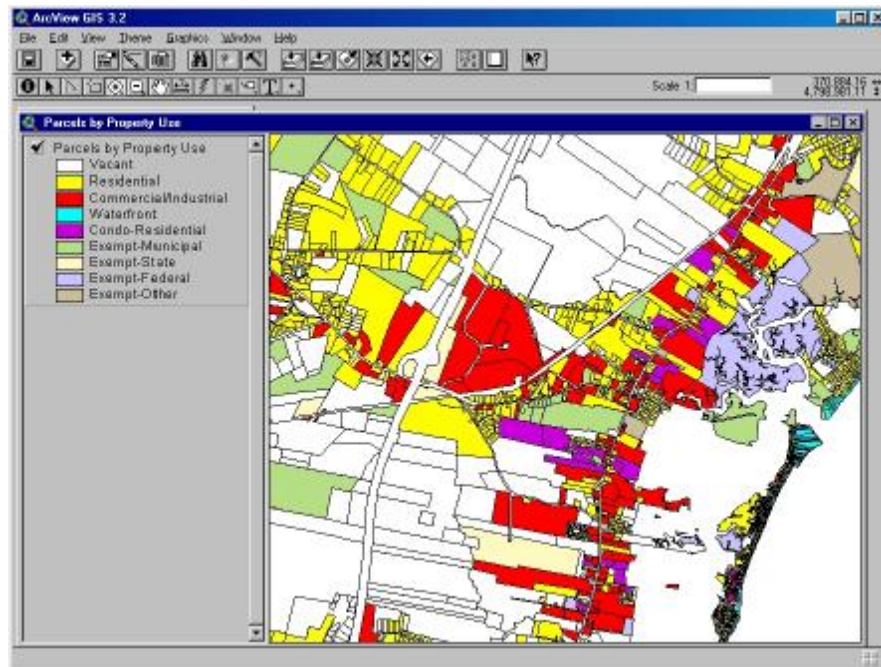
Each of the above data sets was acquired, managed, and processed using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology. This environment allowed the analyst to overlay maps of the individual data sets, and to explore patterns of coincidence within the overlays. Further, it provided the necessary tools to execute the buildout model as described below.

Buildout Model

The approach to the buildout analysis required evaluating each non-exempt, unconstrained piece of land within each eligible zoning district, and determining if that parcel could support additional development. The determination was made by applying the minimum lot size requirement from the zoning ordinance to each parcel. The specific steps of the analysis included:

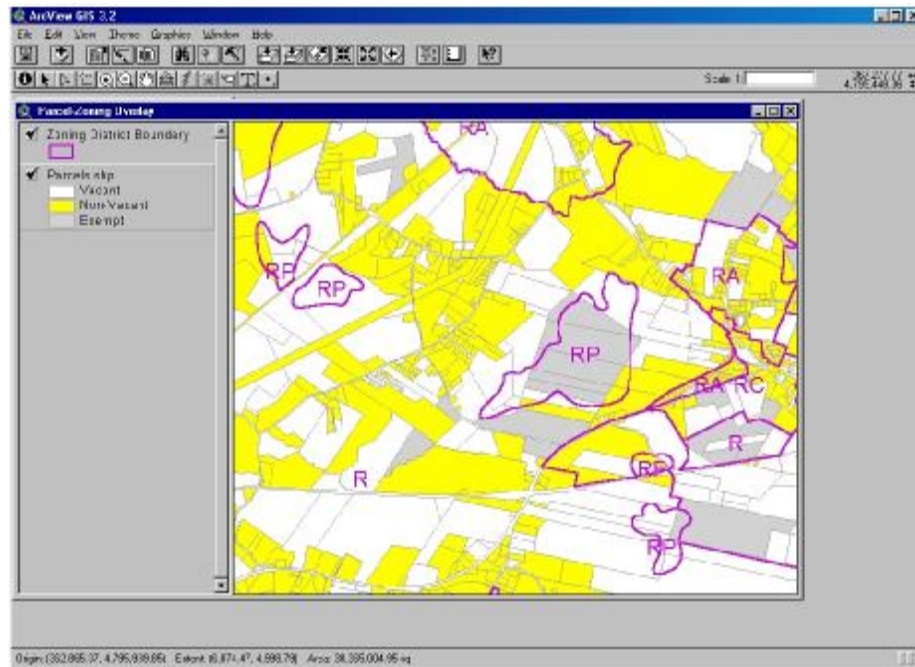
- Add an attribute to the parcel data to identify those parcels served by public sewer. On the advice of town representatives, access to public sewer was approximated by assuming all parcels east of Interstate 95 and south of Burnt Mill Road are served by public sewer.
- Map parcels by existing property use, to allow for the identification of vacant and non-vacant parcels (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Parcels by property use for subset of Wells.



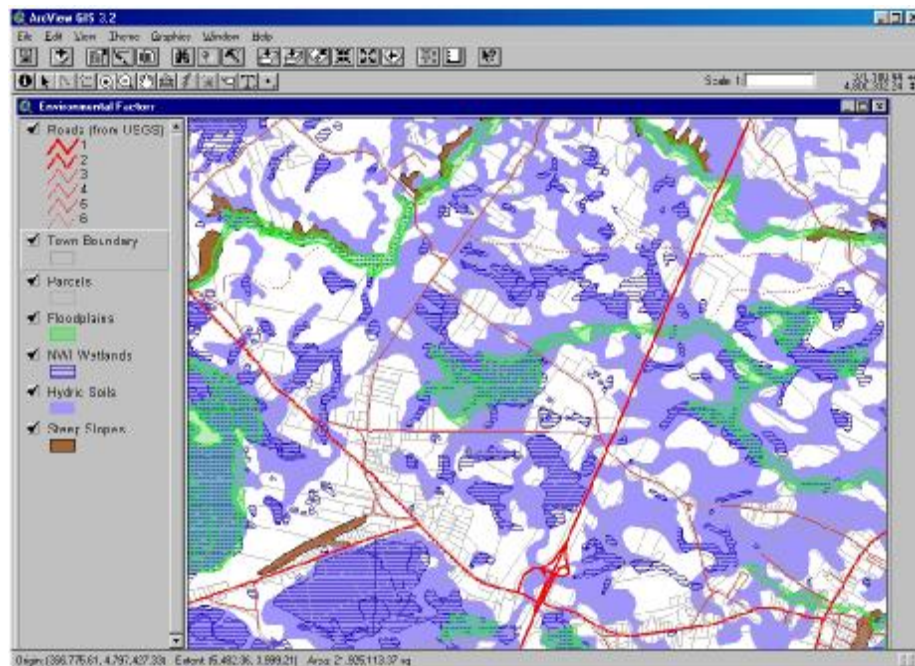
- Create a composite of the parcel use data and the zoning district boundaries, to support the analysis of each parcel relative to the zoning ordinance regulations (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Vacant/non-vacant parcels with zoning district overlay for subset of Wells.



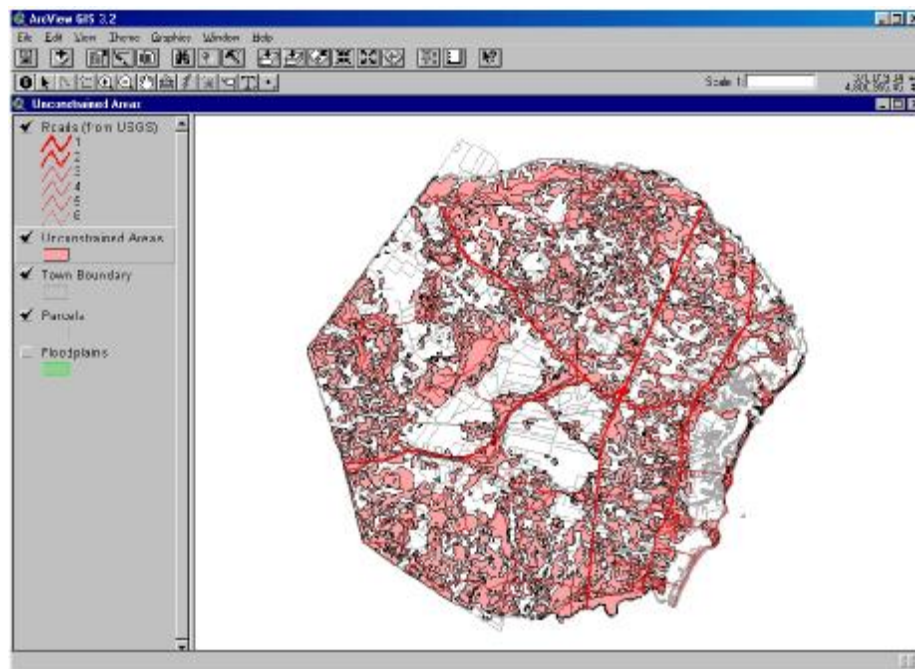
- Create a composite of all environmental constraints used in the analysis (wetlands based on either the NWI data or the soils data), and steep slopes (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Environmental constraint composite for subset of Wells.



- Overlay the parcel data with the environmental constraint composite to view remaining buildable acres (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Overlay of parcel data with environmental constraint composite for town of Wells, showing buildable (unconstrained) areas within each parcel.



- For each **vacant, non-exempt, buildable (e.g. unconstrained)** parcel of land within each rural and residential zone, apply the following buildout calculation:

- Number of new parcels =
$$\frac{(\text{Total lot size} * .9)}{\text{Minimum lot size for that zone}}$$

Note that 90% of each vacant parcel was considered eligible for development. The analysis assumed that the remaining 10% of the land area would be required for driveways and/or rights-of-way associated with development.

Further, note that the analysis accounted for the difference between parcels on septic systems and those served by public sewer for the relevant zoning districts. For example, a minimum lot size of 40,000 sq. ft. was utilized for those parcels in the Rural district that are served by public sewer, while a minimum lot size of 100,000 sq. ft. was applied to the remaining parcels in that district.

- For each **nonvacant, non-exempt, buildable (e.g. unconstrained)** parcel of land within each rural and residential zone, determine whether that parcel is at least twice the minimum lot size for that zone. If no, assume the parcel will not support further subdivision. If yes, then apply the following buildout calculation:

- Number of new parcels =
$$\frac{((\text{Total lot size} - \text{Existing use}) * .9)}{\text{Minimum lot size for that zone}}$$

- Apply the floodplain data as an additional environmental factor after the buildout calculation. This data was used to characterize the potential new lots relative to their presence in the 100-year floodplain.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the results of the rural/residential buildout analysis. The number of potential new parcels for each zone is reported based on their location east or west of Interstate 95, and also relative to their coincidence with additional environmental factors (e.g. floodplains). The corresponding data is presented in map format in Figure 5.

Table 1. Results of rural/residential buildout analysis.

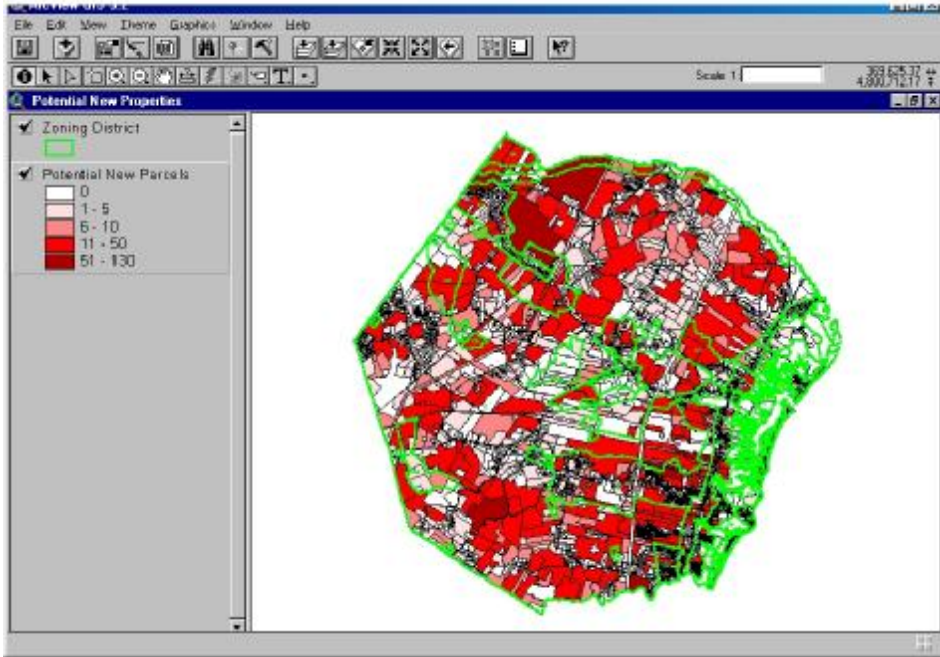
Zoning District	East of I95 – Not Floodplain	East of I95 – In Floodplain	West of I95 – Not Floodplain	West of I95 – In Floodplain	Total East of I95	Total West of I95	Total
Residential A	874	22	729	7	896	736	1632
Residential B	76	42	0	2	118	2	120
Residential D	35	3	0	0	38	0	38
Residential/Commercial	102	2	45	0	104	45	149
Rural	949	16	2846	37	965	2883	3848
TOTAL	2036	85	3620	46	2121	3666	5787

Note that the table reports very few buildable lots within the 100-year floodplain. In fact, much of the floodplain coincides with areas that were previously eliminated due to the application of the environmental constraint composite, and thus only the remaining floodplain area is represented in this tabulation.

Based on data provided in October, 2000, there are presently 6,788 parcels within the town. An additional 5,787 parcels in the Rural/Residential zoning districts, as presented in Table 1 above, represents almost a 100% increase in the number of parcels within the town.

See Appendix 1 for the results as applied to all other zoning districts in the town.

Figure 5. Map of buildout analysis results.



LIMITATIONS OF ANALYSIS

There were a number of limitations associated with the buildout analysis that should be recognized. They include:

- As noted above, data on areas served by public sewer were approximated.
- Only the minimum lot size requirements from the zoning ordinance were applied. Frontage requirements were not included in the analysis.
- A liberal estimate of wetlands was incorporated in the analysis, based on both poorly drained soils and the National Wetlands Inventory delineations. Since the wetland data was used to eliminate land from eligibility for subdivision, this likely produced conservative estimates of development potential.
- Certain properties that were considered “exempt” by the town, and therefore excluded from the analysis, may not be permanently protected. As above, a conservative buildout estimate likely resulted from this limitation.

APPENDIX 1

Although not referenced in the body of the report, the buildout analysis was conducted for each zoning district in the town of Wells. Accordingly, results are provided in Table 2 below for the remaining districts.

Table 2. Results of buildout analysis for non-rural, non-residential zones.

Zoning District	East of I95 – Not Floodplain	East of I95 – In Floodplain	West of I95 – Not Floodplain	West of I95 – In Floodplain	Total East of I95	Total West of I95	Total
Beach	25	4	0	0	29	0	29
Business General	568	7	0	0	575	0	575
Business Harbor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Light Industrial	76	0	194	0	76	194	270
Quarry Manufacturing	0	0	31	0	0	31	31
Aquifer Protection	0	0	186	1	0	187	187
Total	669	11	411	1	680	412	1092

It is recommended that readers use and interpret these additional figures with extreme caution for the following reason. The analysis applies the minimum lot size from the zoning ordinance to each eligible parcel of land. In the case of Light Industrial, for example, the ordinance indicates that a minimum lot size of 40,000 sq. ft. is required. Yet, it is clearly unlikely that any industrial facility would be constructed that did not considerably exceed that minimum. Similarly, it is unrealistic to assume that existing manufacturing facilities in this district only consume the 40,000 sq. ft. minimum area. Hence, it is probable that the results above significantly overestimate the development potential within the non-rural and non-residential zones.

Appendix C

Conservation Commission Recommended Land Use Classification
System for Town Owned Land

(as it appeared in the April 2002 Adopted Comprehensive Plan)

DRAFT

Owen Grumbling July 13, 2000; July 14; Oct. 9, 2001; GRM 10-29-01, 11-29-01

USE DESIGNATIONS FOR LAND OWNED BY THE TOWN OF WELLS

The following use designations will be applied by the Board of Selectmen, with the advice of appropriate departments, committees, and the public, to the inventory of lands owned by the Town. The designations will define and limit uses to which a parcel may be put as long as it remains so designated. Unclaimed land or delinquent tax land may be retained by the Town if deemed by the Selectmen as valuable in one of these use categories. The Planning Board [Conservation Commission] will be responsible for reviewing the Town's inventory of land, and such lands as may become available to the Town, and will recommend appropriate designations to the Selectmen.

Conservation Lands

The purposes of the Town's Conservation Lands are to sustain wildlife by preserving and enhancing habitat; to serve as field sites for environmental education; and to provide the public with opportunities for non-intensive traditional outdoor recreation activities dependent upon undeveloped natural features. Examples of non-intensive traditional outdoor recreation activities are hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, fishing, hunting, birding, picnicking, photography, and orienteering, provided that these activities do not significantly impair the purpose of sustaining wildlife or threaten public safety. The Town may log Conservation Lands only if there is no significant overall impairment of wildlife habitat. In the case of donated lands, logging will take place only if consistent with the intent of the donor. Logging activity will proceed according to a management plan written by a certified forester which will be recorded in the Town Assessor's office.

A parcel of Conservation Land that is suitable in size, access, and resource features may additionally be designated as "Wildlife Commons." A Wildlife Commons, such as the *Fenderson Wildlife Commons*, is a site of particular ecological value offering especially good opportunities for outdoor recreation, with appropriate size, access, and natural features that would attract public visitation. Development of the Wildlife Commons will be limited to cutting and marking trails, interpretive signage, creation of access points, and ecological management to enhance habitat.

The Town accepts donations of Conservation Land and such gifts may come with restrictions prohibiting types of development. The decision to accept such lands and the terms of the gift must be approved by the Town's Legislative Body.

Policy regarding the Town's Conservation Lands shall be drafted by the Conservation Commission and recommended by them to the Board of Selectmen. Prior to the Selectmen's decision, the recommendation shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Board.

Recreation Lands

The purpose of the Town's Recreation Lands is to provide the public with space for intensive recreation involving fields and facilities, such as baseball, softball, tennis, swimming and football. Examples of Recreation Lands include the Walter Marsh Recreation Area and the Harbor Park. Policy regarding the Town's Recreation Lands shall be drafted by the Town's Recreation Department and recommended by them to the Board of Selectmen. Prior to the Selectmen's decision, the recommendation shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Board.

Facility Land

The purpose of the Town's Facility Lands is intensive use to meet public needs. Examples include the transfer station, town garage, police and fire stations, training grounds, and storage areas. Use of the Town's Facility Lands shall be recommended by various departments to the Board of Selectmen. Prior to the Selectmen's decision, the recommendation shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Board.

Investment Lands

The purpose of the Town's Investment Lands is to provide revenue to the Town through sale or lease, and to swap with willing sellers in order to acquire property suitable for designation and use as Facility, Recreation, or Conservation Lands. Investment Lands shall be recommended by various departments to the Board of Selectmen. Prior to the Selectmen's decision, the recommendation shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Board.

Appendix D

**Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District Memo
(dated November 17, 2000)**

(as it appeared in the April 2002 Adopted Comprehensive Plan)

Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District

Trustees:
Thomas P. Oliver, President
K. C. Bach
R. Littlefield

David A. Sweet, Superintendent
Wayne A. Brockway, Treasurer
Normand R. Labbe, Asst. Supt.

PO Box 88, 92 Main Street
Kennebunk, Maine 04043

Phone 207-985-3385
Fax 207-985-3102

November 17, 2000

TO: Steering Committee, Comprehensive Plan
FROM: David Sweet
RE: Branch Brook Aquifer Protection Zone

At your request, we have reviewed the existing Wells Zoning Ordinance and offer the following recommendations regarding land-use activities we believe are compatible with our goal of protecting the Branch Brook Aquifer, and highlight some uses we believe are not compatible. In addition, we have some suggestions regarding the configuration of the Branch Brook aquifer protection zones.

As you know, the existing aquifer protection zones only cover the area within 800 feet of Branch Brook and does not include the tributaries. We would urge you to consider that the protective area should include the entire aquifer since all of the ground water and surface water within the aquifer/watershed contributes to the flow of Branch Brook and needs to be protected.

Although a 200 day travel time zone is recommended to be designated as the high risk area, the brook is extremely vulnerable from contaminated surface water runoff from any point within the watershed especially when the ground is frozen. It is, however, recommended that two zones be created. The first would encompass the area between the brook and the 200 day travel line and the second would include the remainder of the aquifer. Today's land-use planning approach of utilizing available scientific data to establish zones is favored over the setback method at the State and National level as the best way to identify sensitive areas needing protection. The aquifer limits or zones could be reconfigured so that RP-BB would encompass that area that is within the 200 day travel time and the remainder of the aquifer would then be reclassified as BBA.

The aquifer is presently zoned as RP-BB, BBA, RA and R. The existing land use table lists 35 uses that are permitted within the RA and R zones (Note: Some

of these require plan review). This means that among the land uses the present ordinance would allow, medical care facilities, public/private schools, recreational vehicle parks, junkyards (automobile grave yard) and underground fuel tanks are included. Clearly, some of the uses that are presently allowed within the aquifer zone should be prohibited.

We have reviewed the existing land use table and have listed those uses that we believe would allow the landowner reasonable use of his or her property, and at the same time provide an acceptable level of protection for Branch Brook.

Recommended Land Uses

1. Single family dwelling *
2. Public utility facility Pr
3. Passive recreation
4. Accessory uses
5. Forest management Pr
6. Timber harvesting Pr
Establish setbacks from brook
Restrict from steep slope
7. Home occupation Pr
Storage of hazardous materials not allowed
8. Mineral extraction BBA, PR
9. Transmission Tower Pr
10. Yard Sale

Pr = Permitted use with plan review

- * Since Branch Brook is such a small stream it is extremely sensitive and therefore the density of use or its cumulative effect should be given careful consideration. Single family housing that is allowed in zone RP-BB should be of low density. Lot sizes and setbacks should be determined to assure absolute protection. Cluster zoning as a planning tool should be avoided. In zone BBA these numbers could be less stringent, thus allowing a higher density.

It is suggested that ordinances already in place in other communities could be used as guide-lines.

As previously reported, the Branch Brook aquifer within the Town of Wells contains approximately 3612 acres. The area within the 200 day travel time zone totals 2080 acres. The District owns approximately 434 acres of this land, leaving 1646 acres of which a portion is already protected by the ordinance now in place. The remaining acreage represents less than 4 percent of the total land area in the Town of Wells.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on the existing ordinance and to make recommendations that will be considered for the comprehensive plan update. If we can provide you with any additional information, or answer any questions, please call.

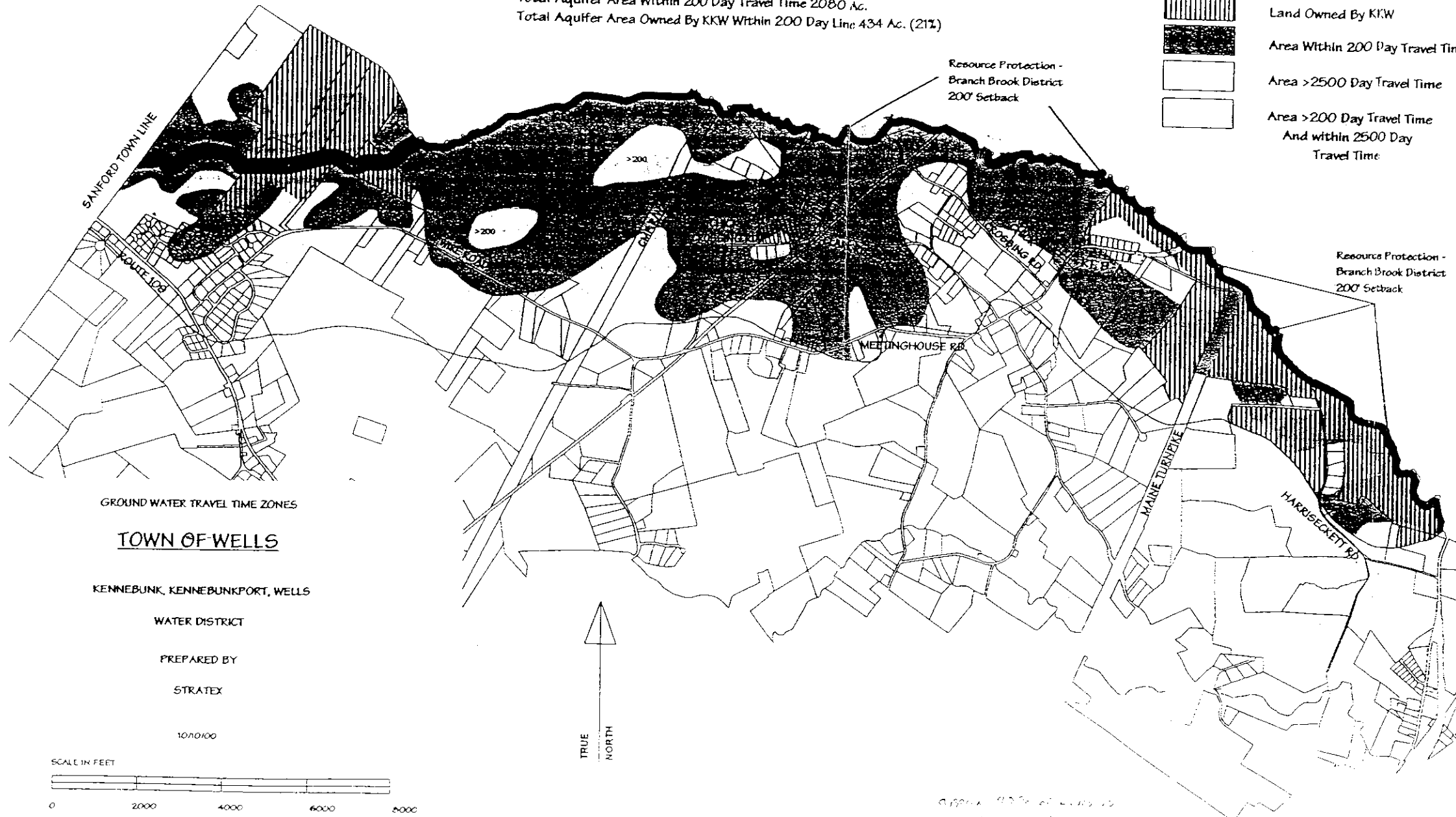
ACREAGE

Total Aquifer Area Within Town Of Wells 3612 Ac.
Total Aquifer Area Owned By KKW 628 Ac. (17%)

Total Aquifer Area Within 200 Day Travel Time 2080 Ac.
Total Aquifer Area Owned By KKW Within 200 Day Line 434 Ac. (21%)

LEGEND

- Recharge Boundary
- ▨ Land Owned By KKW
- Area Within 200 Day Travel Time
- Area >2500 Day Travel Time
- Area >200 Day Travel Time And within 2500 Day Travel Time



Approx 90% of wells in
in the aquifer area
KKW which has to purchase land in the 200 day zone