

# Adjacency & Subdivision Five-Year Report Update

Tim Carr, Senior Planner  
Eric Sanderson, Senior Planner  
Ben Godsoe, Planning Manager

Stacie R. Beyer  
Executive Director

18 Elkins Lane  
Augusta, ME 04333

(207) 287-2631  
[www.maine.gov/dacf](http://www.maine.gov/dacf)



# Overview

- Background
  - 2019 Adjacency and Subdivision Rulemaking
  - 2021 Work Plan
  - Staff Plan for the Five-Year Report
- Outreach and Other Research Conducted
- Next Steps

# 2019 Adjacency and Subdivision Rulemaking

## Goals

- Encourage certain types of new development in and adjacent to existing developed areas
- Provide clearer, more flexible subdivision standards with more design options
- Protect natural character on hillsides
- Facilitate wildlife passage through and around development

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# 2019 Adjacency and Subdivision Rulemaking

## Rule Changes

- Designated 39 communities as Rural Hubs, established Primary and Secondary Locations
- Considered emergency services
- Allowed recreation-based subdivisions around certain lakes and trailheads
- Established the Resource-Dependent and Low-Density Development Subdistricts
- New subdivision design standards and options, including road standards
- Hillside development standards
- Wildlife passage standards

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# 2021 Reporting Work Plan

Variety of strategies, including:

- Survey rural hub towns and other municipalities to identify long-term implications
- Analyze travel distances for emergency services
- Identify any adverse impacts of resource-based development on natural or recreational resources
- Compare lot creation through subdivision with the historic rate
- Assess effectiveness of hillside development standards

# Questions for the Five-Year Report

- Are new development subdistricts being sited close to existing development and where services can be provided efficiently?
- Is resource-based development having negative effects on surrounding resources or burdening service providers?
- Are there emerging patterns of development related to the rule change which may have long-term implications?
- Have new subdivision design options affected lot creation through the subdivision process?
- Do the hillside standards effectively minimize views of development from scenic resources?
- Are wildlife corridors being incorporated into the design of subdivisions and commercial development as intended?

# Methods

- Outreach
  - Officials and Staff, Stakeholders, Applicants
  - Focus on Rural Hubs near relevant development
  - Interviews, meetings, survey
- Data collection
  - LUPC records and applications
  - municipalities (permitting data, ordinances)
  - registries of deeds
- Comparisons of Development Trends
  - between municipalities and the LUPC's service area
  - within the LUPC's service area before and after the rule change
- Case Studies and Field Work

# Outreach to Rural Hubs, Other Municipalities, and Counties

- Outreach
  - 6 MMA Forums for Local Government
  - Survey sent to 37 of 39 Rural Hubs
  - Interviews of Municipal Officials, Staff, and Service Providers
  
- Who Has Staff Heard From?
  - 36 communities
  - 14 of 39 Rural Hubs
  - Variety of Officials and Local Staff
    - Selectmen and assessors
    - Town managers
    - Municipal fire and EMS, County sheriffs, State police
    - County commissioners and managers
    - Regional planning agencies
    - State legislators

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# General Development Patterns

- Residential development has primarily involved renovations
  - Few new dwellings since 2019
- Commercial development has been very limited, but:
  - Recreational trail development is increasingly important
  - Mixed-use residential and commercial development is planned or underway at former mill sites
- Towns are not seeing businesses locate in the UT just across their borders
- Lack of land for sale has hindered residential and commercial development in towns and the UT

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# Other Findings

## Subdivision

- Subdivision development very limited over the past 5 years or more in most towns
  - Decreased demand, increased cost, and lack of land

## Services

- Service costs are increasing dramatically, and staffing is a significant issue
  - Backcountry emergency response costs increasing with growth in use of trails
  - Recreational infrastructure is frequently located in the UT
  - Towns struggle to keep up with road maintenance

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# Other Findings

## Housing

- UT seen as “neutral territory” potentially playing a role in housing regional services
- Some concern that UT residential population is growing and increasing disposal costs
  - Residential construction waste increased significantly during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Housing is a critical issue - Housing in the UT should supplement the supply in towns
  - Do not allow sprawling or remote residential development

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# Next Steps

## Outreach

- Directed outreach to key Rural Hubs
- Include other groups (applicants, conservation organizations, realtors, state agencies)
- Survey follow-ups

## Other Data from Rural Hubs

- Follow up with Rural Hubs for permitting data and copies of ordinances
- Continue data collection from deed registries

## Analyses

- Comparisons of development trends

## Case Studies

- Subdivision design
- Wildlife passage
- Provision of and distance from services

Do Commissioners have any questions or feedback?

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Thank You

