



# SOUTH PORTLAND 2040



Fourteen Square Miles of Tomorrow  
by Julietta (Jules) Vázquez

The air hums electric on summer nights,  
streets stitched with bike lanes and wildflowers,  
Casco Bay sparkling like a kept promise beyond the pines

We walk barefoot through damp park grass  
where concrete once ruled,  
laughing under streetlights fueled by sun,  
breathing deep  
no smog, no sorrow.

The lighthouses still stand,  
older than memory,  
their beams sweeping across a city that finally listens to the tides.

Ferry horns echo across murals and open-air markets,  
kids dart between food trucks and music rising from the docks,  
while surfers and old sailors swap stories by the fire.

Neighbors trade seedlings and second chances,  
front porches flicker with guitars and open doors,  
housing isn't a prize  
it's a promise.

The ocean, once bruised by our forgetting,  
shimmers clean, whales carving silver arcs through the open blue  
and the tides carry only hope to the shore

Here, we don't build walls  
We build tables, longer and longer,  
until no one stands alone

South Portland  
a city stitched together by hands,  
hearts,  
and the stubborn belief  
that tomorrow deserves our best today.

South Portland Comprehensive Plan



# Acknowledgments



Thank you to all the South Portland community members who contributed their time and insight to this comprehensive planning process. This plan would not have been possible without your dedication and engagement.

A special thank you to the past and present members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, who have worked diligently since to guide the planning process—reviewing data, engaging with the public, and helping shape the community’s vision, values, and goals.

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- Greater Portland Council of Government
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# Executive Summary



This plan is the community's expression for how we collectively want South Portland to evolve, and how we prioritize decisions, over the next 15 years. Like a roadmap, it guides City leaders toward smart choices about land use, business investment, community-building, and public policy generally. The plan speaks to where we are today, what we might need tomorrow, and how to handle the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Beyond expressing the community vision for the future, the Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the Maine Growth Management Law, and benefits South Portland by increasing eligibility for state funding and giving us the power to create local growth, conservation, and land use laws.

*The Comprehensive Plan has two parts:*

- **Part I** – This is the heart of the plan; it provides the community's overall vision, with clear policies that apply City-wide or in specific areas where change may be occurring. Part I includes maps that help show future land use preferences. The City's policies came from community input and lessons from data provided in Part II.
- **Part II** – These inventory chapters provide data on South Portland — such as like housing statistics, transportation conditions, environmental resources, and more. These chapters are based on local, state, and federal information, and meet the Growth Management Law requirements.

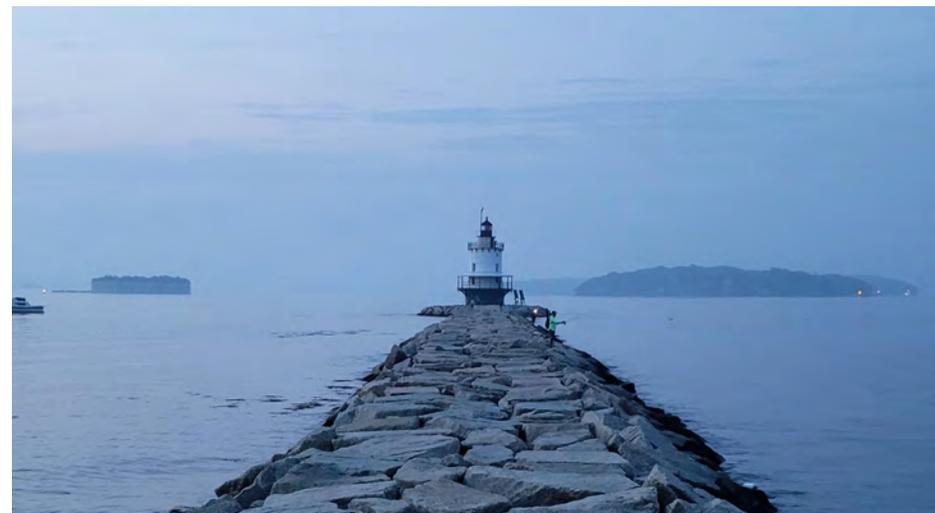


Photo: Deidra Levasseur

## Vision

An ambitious but achievable view to our future, the vision builds on existing strengths and aligns with broader trends relevant to our community. The vision emphasizes the importance of equitable outcomes, as well as thoughtful and sustained investment in the City's infrastructure, housing, economy, and services. Community engagement during implementation is also vital to ensure that projects match community values and priorities.

### *Community Vision (summary)*

*In 2040, South Portland will be a welcoming, inclusive, and climate-ready City with affordable housing, great schools, and safe transportation. Our City will have grown in ways that support clean energy, local jobs, and a high quality of life for everyone.*

## Future Land Use Plan

One of the most important parts of the Comprehensive Plan is the Future Land Use Plan. This section helps the City decide where and how growth should happen. It gives guidance for how zoning rules might evolve to match the community’s vision.

As required by State law, the “Future Land Use Map” identifies South Portland’s Growth, Rural, and Transition Areas through designations that guide how much and what type of change is expected. The Future Land Use Map also flags Key Land Use Policy Areas (KLUPAs) where special attention or tailored policies are needed to achieve the community’s vision. For each KLUPA, the plan defines the preferred land uses and scale of development; guidance is provided for future zoning laws, and policies that help address unique conditions and needs in the area.

All parts of the City, including the KLUPAs, are assigned a growth designation as follows:

- **A: Conservation / Reduced Growth Areas (“Rural” Area)**  
Areas that should stay mostly the same, such as the City’s parks, natural resources, and public spaces like Bug Light Park and Barberry Creek. Major new building is rare, and investments are focused on maintaining what already exists.
- **B: Limited Growth Areas (“Transition” Area)**  
Allow relatively small, new projects to occur that are similar in type and scale to what is already there. Big developments, unlike anything in the area, are not desired, but some infill construction is welcome.
- **C: Growth Areas (“Growth” Area)**  
Areas suitable for more development, replicating the larger buildings that are present in the area already. Investment in expanding roads, services, and utilities is expected to support additional growth.
- **D: Unique Growth Areas (“Growth” Area)**  
These areas expect big changes compared to what exists

today—like evolving the former Sable Oaks golf course into a mixed-use neighborhood, accelerating investment in our downtown, and developing former industrial sites into neighborhoods that complement the existing community. Unique Growth Areas also expect investment in roads, services, and utilities to support additional growth or changing land use patterns.

- **Mixed Areas (A blend of other designations)**

Certain areas face particular conditions—like flooding or infrastructure issues—that need to be addressed before a desired form of growth can be pursued. If a condition or challenge is addressed, these areas generally allow more to occur.

## Plan Implementation: Seven Big Themes

Creating a plan is just the first step—putting the plan into action will be the community’s responsibility over the coming years. To help ensure success, the plan’s actions are organized around seven themes, each with specific goals, strategies, and timelines for completion. The City department responsible for moving each strategy forward is also listed to ensure accountability and track progress over time.

The seven Comprehensive Plan Themes are:

1. **Ecology and Climate Readiness**
2. **Economy and Land Use**
3. **Housing, Land Use, and Quality of Life**
4. **Safe and Reliable Transportation**
5. **Social Vitality and Public Health**
6. **Effective City Operations and Infrastructure**
7. **State-Mandated Goals to Ensure Compliance with State Law**

## Plan Implementation: Four Takeaways

South Portland is a complex community, rich in history, blessed with wonderful natural resources, humming with economic activity, with a very bright future. The policies of the Comprehensive Plan—spread across our seven themes and detailed in the Key Land Use Policy Areas—reflect the voices, needs, and goals of a diverse community. To summarize this entire Comprehensive Plan, the following four takeaways capture the direction and policy that the plan suggests for the coming years:

# 1.

### Climate Resilience and Environmental Stewardship are Foundational

The plan places a strong emphasis on preparing South Portland for the growing impacts of climate change—particularly sea level rise, coastal storms, and more extreme weather events. It calls for concrete actions such as revising building codes to require

flood-resistant construction, expanding stormwater management systems, and investing in infrastructure that minimizes risk. Beyond climate adaptation, the plan also aims to protect and enhance the City's natural assets, including green spaces, wetlands, and the Casco Bay watershed. Efforts like tree planting, green infrastructure, and preserving biodiversity are central to reducing urban heat islands and supporting ecological health. The City's gradual shift away from petroleum storage along the waterfront signals a commitment to cleaner energy systems and a healthier environment.

# 2.

### Intentional, Balanced Growth and Economic Transformation Guide Development Priorities

South Portland's growth strategy goes beyond simple expansion—it promotes development that is intentional, diversified, and responsive to shifting needs. Key Land Use Policy Areas (KLUPAs) outline expectations for where growth should happen, at what scale, and

in what form. KLUPAs—ranging from conservation to unique high-growth zones—tailor decision-making for each part of the City. The plan promotes economic development that generates good-paying, inclusive jobs, especially in emerging sectors like clean energy and advanced manufacturing. It also encourages the reuse of underutilized industrial lands, particularly former petroleum-related sites, for new opportunities.

# 3.

### Housing Choice and Sustainable Transportation Enhances Quality of Life

A major focus of the plan is addressing the City's housing shortage by increasing the availability of homes for a wide range of incomes, ages, and family types. The plan encourages zoning reform, higher-density development in appropriate areas, and

new approaches like Community Land Trusts to support long-term affordability. At the same time, the plan seeks to enhance mobility and reduce car dependency by expanding South Portland's bike and pedestrian networks (such as the Greenbelt), improving public transportation, and redesigning roads for safety and accessibility. The result is a more connected, livable City where residents can move freely and efficiently, regardless of income, ability, or access to a personal vehicle.

# 4.

### Strong Governance and Inclusive Services Are Central to Civic Life

South Portland is committed to inclusive, transparent governance that reflects the values of its residents. The plan underscores the need for municipal services and infrastructure that can adapt to changing demographics and community needs. This includes

improving accessibility across City buildings, programs, and spaces; investing in health and wellness initiatives; and expanding opportunities for community engagement. It also highlights the importance of working with nearby towns and regional partners to tackle shared issues like housing affordability, transportation congestion, and climate adaptation. By prioritizing civic pride, accountability, and regional collaboration, the City aims to build a government that is responsive, resilient, and deeply rooted in community.

# Community Engagement



## Community Engagement

This Comprehensive Plan process centered on community voices in all phases of the project. The project's outreach is summarized below.

### Comprehensive Plan Committee's Engagement Process

- Meeting-In-A-Box: 237 participants (in-person and online)
- Online Engagement: 191 submissions
- Tabling: 1258 notes from 20 events
- 6 Key Policy Questions: 330 Submissions
- Resilience Questions: 520 submissions
- Design Charrettes: ~50 attendees
- CPC meetings: 53 meetings; 2,961 watches online ca. 2022
- Written comment: 255 submissions (posted to CPC Agendas)

### Direct Outreach

- School District
- South Portland Land Trust
- Chamber of Commerce
- Gulf of Maine Research Institute
- Greater Portland Council of Governments
- SoPo Unite
- SoPo Adult Ed
- Maine Immigrants Rights Coalition
- Community Organizing Alliance
- Gateway Community Services
- Opportunity Alliance

South Portland Comprehensive Plan



Participants at the Coastal Resilience Workshop, 2024

*Direct Outreach, cont.*

- The Opportunity Alliance
- The Waterfront Alliance
- Affordable and market-rate housing Providers
- Local businesses
- Maine Department of Environmental Protection
- Maine Department of Transportation
- Maine Center for Disease Control
- Region 1 US Environmental Protection Agency
- State Reps/Legislators
- Neighboring communities
- And others!



June 8 Open House



National Night Out

*Media and Communications*

- SouthPortland2040.com website
- Newsletter
- Expanded comment at Comp Plan Committee meetings
- Translated documents in over 10 languages
- Family/kid friendly functions
- Multiple venues for coverage across the City
- Community-hosted neighborhood meetings
- Coffee chats
- Social media
- Tax Bill notifications
- Boat tours
- Walking tours
- Events and festivals
- Email mailing list (with dedicated address)



Tabling at Bug Light

# Community Vision

## *In 2040...*

South Portland strives to be a welcoming and inclusive place for everyone. Our City continues to offer a fantastic place to live, work, and play. We have high-quality schools, safe and reliable transportation options, a friendly business environment, and housing choices that are affordable for people of all income levels and life stages. Our residents take pride in South Portland, lead community events, and play an active role in government decisions. City leadership is responsive and represents the community with well-staffed departments committed to serving South Portland.

We are leaders in preparing our community for climate change. We are active in stewarding our natural places and planning for a safe and climate-resilient future. As a community vulnerable to coastal hazards, we work collaboratively with public and private partners to protect South Portland's areas most at risk to sea level rise.

Our waterfront continues to attract and inspire residents, businesses, and visitors. Expanded public access and diverse economic uses enhance the enjoyment and prosperity of South Portland's iconic waterfront. Our all-season deep-water port offers opportunities that transform our City and state for a bold future. As a major energy port in a time of global energy transition, we leverage existing resources and seize opportunities to help imagine new possibilities of a cleaner energy future in partnership with energy providers.

Our public facilities are a source of pride for their welcoming and inclusive character and physical accessibility. We offer diverse recreational and learning programs for all ages, income levels, and abilities. Our community promotes robust life-long learning and



Photo: Deidra Levasseur

provides the best educational opportunities in the state from Pre-K to Grade 12 schools and beyond.

Anticipated residential and commercial growth occurs in ways that boost social connections while supporting the business community that helps make South Portland a desirable place. Residential neighborhoods provide a diverse mix of housing types that meet our community housing needs. Commercial areas support business success and employment opportunities. Neighborhoods with a mix of uses create healthy, walkable places that provide housing, amenities, and services.

Expanded mobility options ensure residents and visitors can decrease their reliance on cars and still reach key destinations easily. We prioritize safety and reliability as we improve transportation and access throughout our City.

# Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan is a map and land use policies that help guide South Portland's decisions on zoning, land use, and public investment. It guides future zoning updates to help implement the community's vision. Other policies beyond those dealing with land use and public investment—as well as state and federal laws—work alongside the Future Land Use Plan.

State statute (30-A MRS §4326(3-A)) requires that the Future Land Use Map classifies the community into three basic categories: **Growth Areas**, which expect the most change and investment over the life of the plan, and where most development is directed. **Transition Areas** allow for some development and investment, but not to the same degree as Growth Areas. **Rural Areas** protect lands from development pressure, expect less change, and may include conservation policies for natural or other resources.

A unique feature of South Portland's Future Land Use Map is the inclusion of 26 "Key Land Use Policy Areas" (KLUPAs). [An online interactive map can be found here.](#)

## Key Land Use Policy Areas (KLUPAs)

KLUPAs are parts of the community with unique conditions (opportunities, constraints, or both) that need nuanced policies to guide the City's decisions. City-wide goals and policies in the *Plan Implementation* section work in unison with KLUPA policies but more detailed, place-based guidance is given in the KLUPAs. For example:

- **City-wide policy sets the sea level rise scenario** that the whole City will prepare for, and calls for the development of coastal resilience zoning standards. Certain KLUPAs contain policies to deal with heightened flood concern or what to do until the zoning standards are adopted (e.g. Willard KLUPA);

- **City-wide transportation policy guides all transportation investment and encourages safety and mobility improvements everywhere.** Certain KLUPAs may name important trail connections, safety concerns, or congestion bottlenecks that need attention (e.g. KLUPA #15 Shipyard & Terminal Area requires development to avoid congestion on Broadway);
- **City-wide housing policy asks all neighborhoods to provide more housing options while maintaining neighborhood character.** Certain KLUPAs with sensitive conditions or unique capacity for growth, may add detail about building design, the appropriate number of housing units, building heights, and resiliency in the face of climate risks.

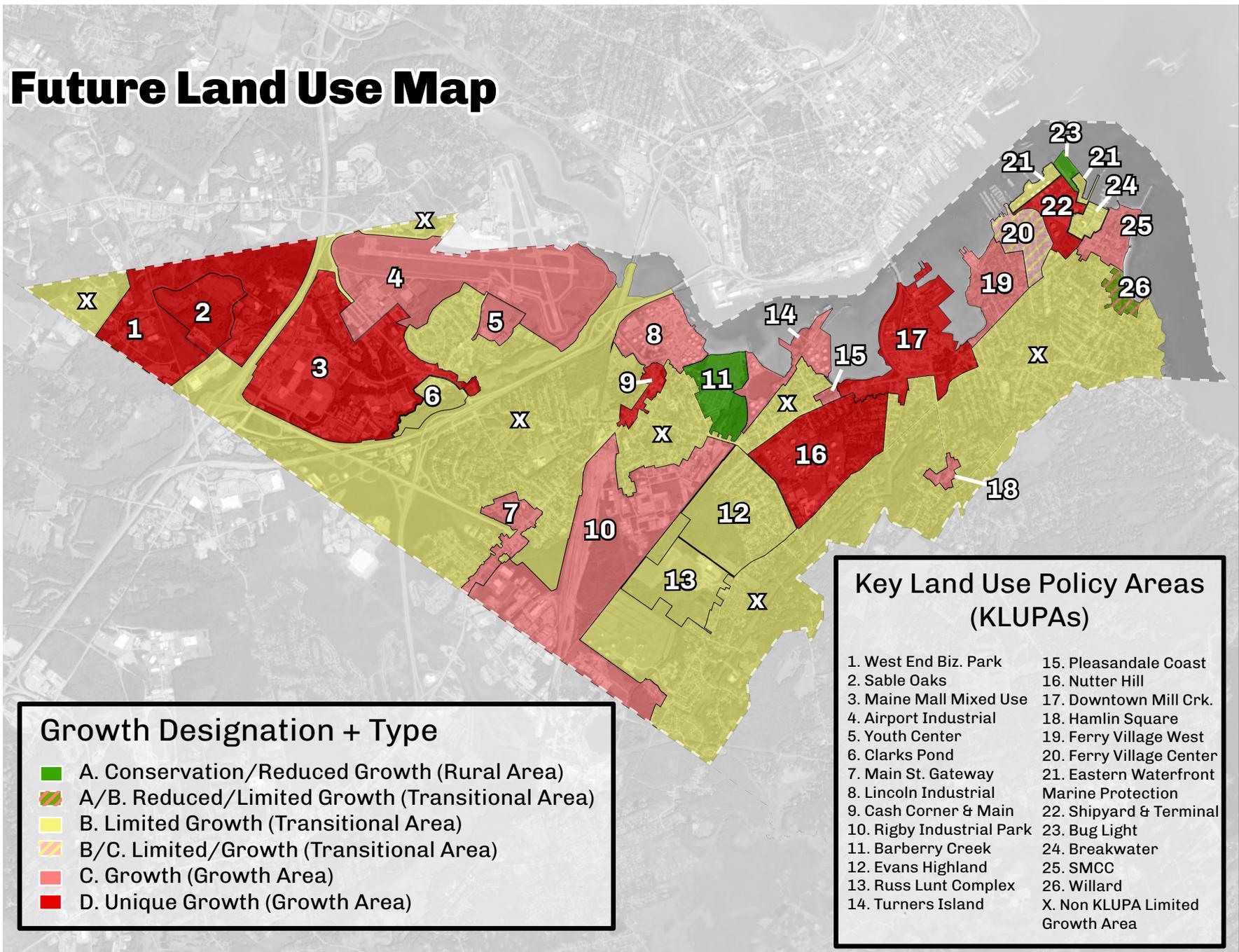
Following the Future Land Use Map, a dedicated section for each KLUPA is provided, with the following components:

- **Preferred Land Uses:** The kinds of land uses that should be allowed in subsequent zoning decisions.
- **Preferred Scale:** KLUPAs that are sensitive to residential density limits and building height may give specific guidance for subsequent zoning decisions.
- **Vision:** A description of the area and the future vision.
- **Land Use Strategies:** The zoning and land use regulations that should be adopted to achieve the vision.
- **Other City Strategies:** Strategies not related to land use that the City should pursue.
- **Growth Designation:** All areas of the City, including the KLUPAs, include growth classifications to satisfy State law and to guide growth and investment. The table on the following page outlines the City's growth designations, and their alignment with the Growth Management Act.

### Future Land Use Growth Designations

Growth Designation	Growth Type & Description	Statute Term
<b>A</b>	<p><b>Conservation/Reduced Growth</b> – Areas where the City is seeking to suppress or prevent new or additional growth and development. These areas may contain policy guidance to retain open space and undeveloped conditions.</p> <p><i>Infrastructure Investment: Supports maintenance for existing development.</i></p>	<b>Rural Area</b>
<b>B</b>	<p><b>Limited Growth</b> – These areas welcome new development similar to existing lower-density uses in the area. Infill development is possible but opportunities for larger development are limited (e.g. undeveloped lots are small and/or there are few lots large enough for larger construction). Anticipated growth is not expected to need major additional infrastructure —such as road, sewer, or water— however maintenance will be required to ensure infrastructure services are available.</p> <p><i>Infrastructure Investment: Supports maintenance for existing development and some upgrades for limited growth.</i></p>	<b>Transition Area</b>
<b>C</b>	<p><b>Growth</b> – These areas welcome new development similar to existing higher-density uses that are already in the area. Strategic locations (e.g. intersections and along major roads) may allow slightly increased scale or more flexibility and diversity in the permitted uses. Development standards will encourage a smooth transition in scale within the neighborhood. Some additional infrastructure or upgrades will be required to accommodate anticipated growth.</p> <p><i>Infrastructure Investment: Supports upgrades for growth and maintenance for existing development</i></p>	<b>Growth Area</b>
<b>D</b>	<p><b>Unique Growth</b> – These areas allow new development that is unique compared to existing conditions in terms of either increased scale or density, a wholly new land use that is not common in the area, or a combination of both forms of change. Anticipated changes in these areas are expected to require infrastructure and other investments to support the unique forms of growth or development that are desired.</p> <p><i>Infrastructure Investment: Supports upgrades for growth and maintenance for existing development</i></p>	<b>Growth Area</b>
<b>Mixed</b>	<p>KLUPAs that show two Rank values with an arrow in between (e.g. A→B), indicate that the policies of the area will change from the first number to the second number of growth only after specified conditions are met. These are areas where the community wants to see a new direction for the scale and intensity of development, but certain constraints or barriers must be rectified as specified in the KLUPA policy.</p>	<b>Mixed</b>

# Future Land Use Map



**Growth Designation + Type**

- A. Conservation/Reduced Growth (Rural Area)
- A/B. Reduced/Limited Growth (Transitional Area)
- B. Limited Growth (Transitional Area)
- B/C. Limited/Growth (Transitional Area)
- C. Growth (Growth Area)
- D. Unique Growth (Growth Area)

**Key Land Use Policy Areas (KLUPAs)**

1. West End Biz. Park	15. Pleasandale Coast
2. Sable Oaks	16. Nutter Hill
3. Maine Mall Mixed Use	17. Downtown Mill Crk.
4. Airport Industrial	18. Hamlin Square
5. Youth Center	19. Ferry Village West
6. Clarks Pond	20. Ferry Village Center
7. Main St. Gateway	21. Eastern Waterfront
8. Lincoln Industrial	22. Shipyard & Terminal
9. Cash Corner & Main	23. Bug Light
10. Rigby Industrial Park	24. Breakwater
11. Barberry Creek	25. SMCC
12. Evans Highland	26. Willard
13. Russ Lunt Complex	X. Non KLUPA Limited Growth Area
14. Turners Island	

# 1. West End Business Park

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**D**

**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Warehousing/  
Distribution/Logistics, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Open Space/  
Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

Unique Growth

Scale Preferences:

**Residential Density: 20 units/acre (min)  
Height: 6 Stories (max)**

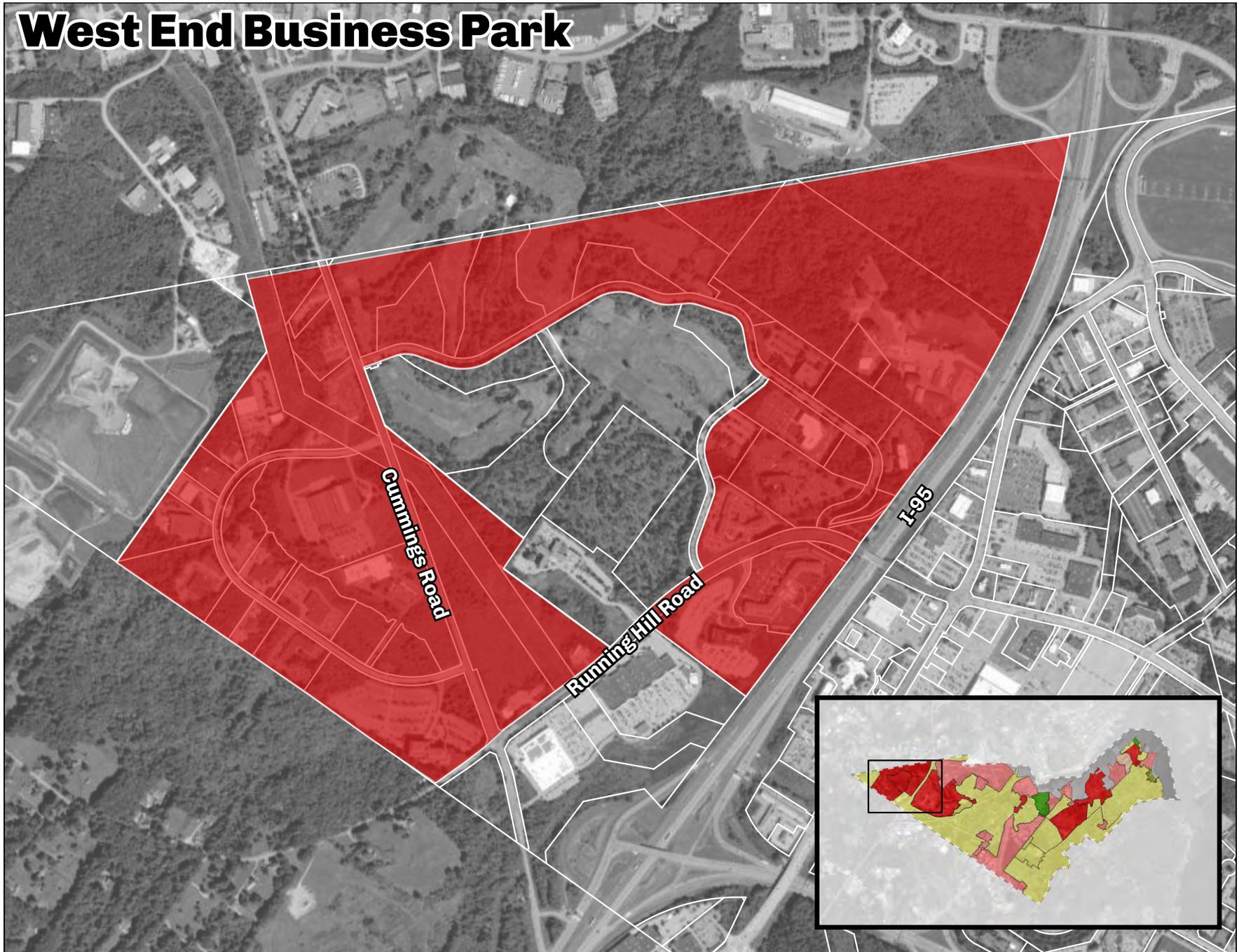
*““The West End of the city is not at all safe for pedestrians. Encourage safe walking and cycling options in this area.”*”

**Vision:** This area has historically been disconnected from the rest of the City due to the interstate and limited infrastructure. Continue to prioritize this area as an economic development growth hub that provides high quality office and other nonresidential investment opportunities. Allow residential uses that complement the business park context and minimize the need for commuting to employment opportunities provided in this area. Supportive and complementary amenities that create an attractive living and working environment should be encouraged.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Minimize airport noise impacts by establishing indoor noise standards or restricting sensitive uses within the airport noise-affected areas.
B. Encourage higher density development by providing supportive bulk and space standards that allow denser construction patterns.
C. Allow light industrial uses that do not create nuisances for office and residential activities nearby.
D. Require development plans to consider and provide for walk and bike access and mobility
E. Encourage the diversity of neighborhood design and number of residential units in development proposals to achieve public access/spaces, connectivity, and natural resource protection goals.

Other City Strategies
F. Coordinate public infrastructure expansion with private development proposals. The City’s investment in infrastructure should not be speculative (i.e. without development proposals that demonstrate a need for the public investment).
G. If it is in the City’s financial interest, consider expanding sewer service to properties within South Portland that currently are served by Westbrook sewer.
G. Recognizing that this area will be closely integrated with Westbrook’s growth, plan and coordinate road and other connections that would allow business and residents to reach services and other destinations north of South Portland.

# West End Business Park



# 2. Sable Oaks

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Open Space/  
 Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

**D** Scale Preferences:  
**Residential Density: 20 units/acre (min)  
 Height: 6 Stories (max)**

**Unique Growth**

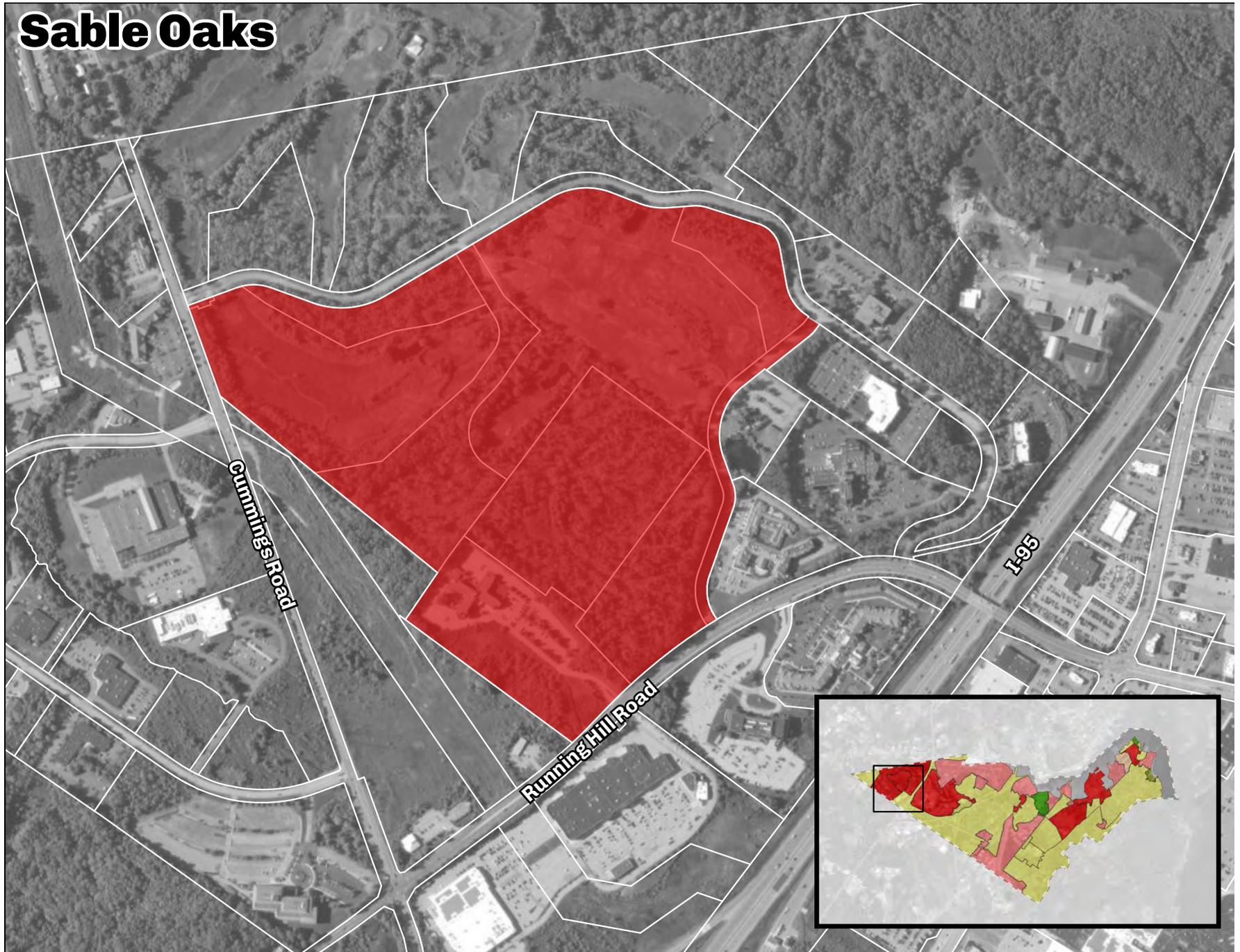
**Vision:** This former golf course provides scenic vistas and an attractive environment for residential development. While there is a limited road network through the area, major roads provide efficient connection to the surrounding area. This area should be redeveloped into residential neighborhoods that provide complementary commercial activities, services, and public institutions. Development proposals should pay significant attention to preserving natural resources and should emphasize public gathering spaces because the area is separated from other public centers of civic and social life.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
<p>A. Require development plans to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consider and provide for walk and bike access and mobility,</li> <li>2. Ensure that open spaces are well planned,</li> <li>3. Incorporate natural resource areas,</li> <li>4. Provide public spaces and open areas throughout.</li> <li>5. Incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) Principles to manage stormwater and drainage from development.</li> </ol>
<p>B. Encourage the diversity of neighborhood design and number of units in development proposals to achieve public access/spaces, connectivity, and natural resource protection goals.</p>
<p>C. Encourage higher density development by providing supportive bulk and space standards that allow denser construction patterns.</p>
<p>D. Assess residential needs, such as schools, parks, etc., and plan for necessary infrastructure improvements to support desired residential growth.</p>



Photo: David Jordan

# Sable Oaks



# 3. Maine Mall Mixed Use

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

**D**

Unique Growth

Scale Preferences:

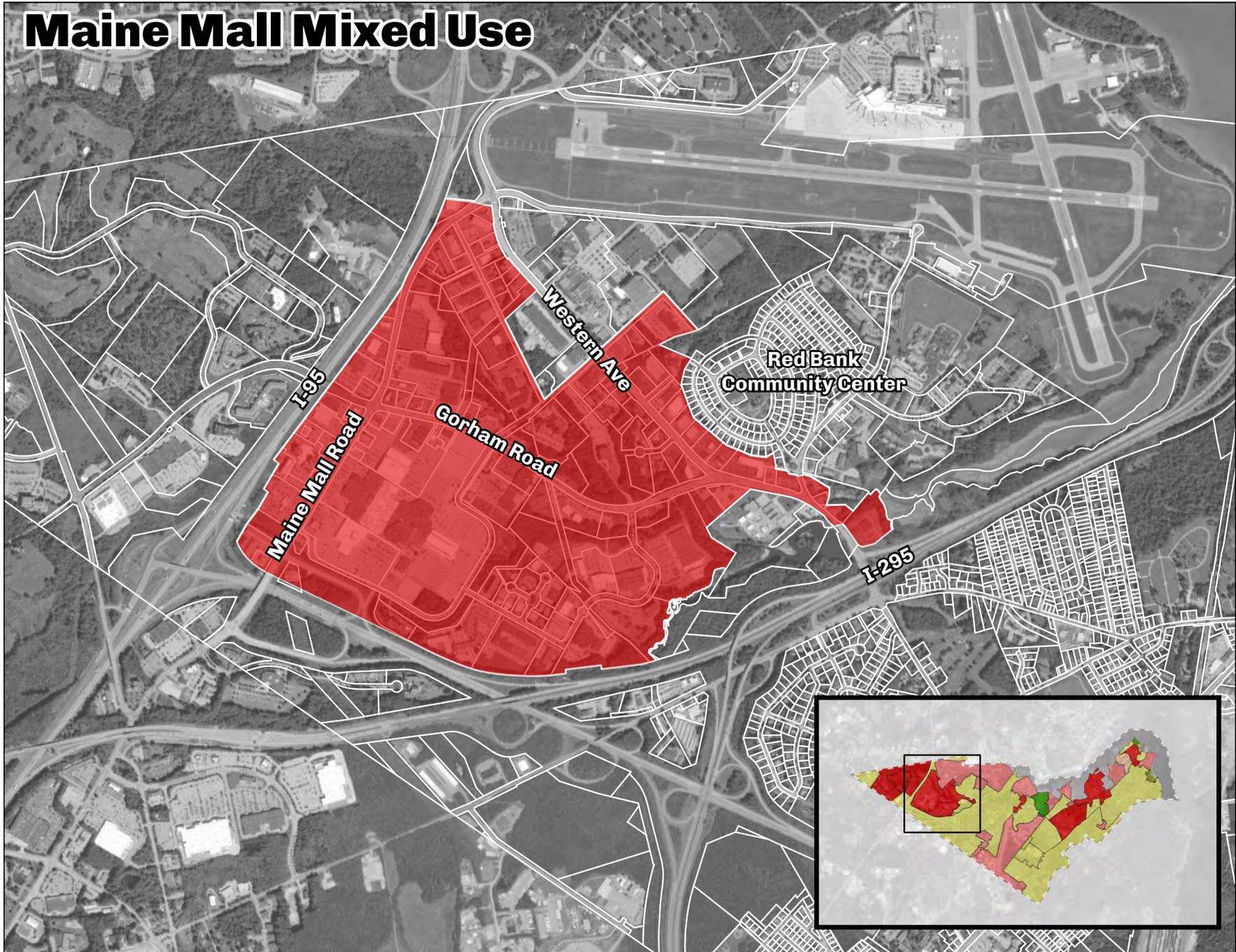
**Residential Density: 20 units/acre (min)  
Height: No Maximum Height**

*“Build in empty parking lots at the Maine Mall!”*

**Vision:** The Maine Mall area is a destination for Northern New England and should continue to thrive in this role. Major investment should be encouraged to allow older buildings to be repurposed, surface parking areas to be used more efficiently, and continued diversification of the area. Residential uses shall be permitted to assist with the City’s housing needs and to support the area’s businesses. As a regional destination, the road network supports high volumes, contains known high crash locations, and has limited or insufficient bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Due to extensive impervious cover, this area experiences hotter temperatures than surrounding areas; future development should not exacerbate this condition.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Allow residential development, including mixed use development.
B. Encourage higher density development by providing supportive bulk and space standards that allow denser construction patterns.
C. Require new development to include open areas that are accessible to the public and encourage new open spaces, trails, sidewalks, and roads that create smaller blocks and better connections for bicycle and pedestrian traffic within the area.
D. Adopt design and landscaping standards so that future development reduces areas of extreme heat (i.e. Urban Heat Island effect).
E. Support transit operations through increased density.
F. Encourage diversity of design of new development and do not establish a height maximum.

Other City Strategies
G. Recognizing that there are infrastructure impediments to infill and other redevelopment in this area, the city should proactively identify, plan for, and invest in public improvements that will encourage private investment.
H. Evaluate the feasibility of constructing public parking structures to help minimize surface parking.
I. Assess residential needs, such as schools, parks, etc., and plan for necessary infrastructure improvements to support desired residential growth.
J. Improve connections to the Redbank community, especially the pedestrian pathways that access Western Avenue.



# 4. Airport Industrial Park

**Growth Type:** **C**  
**Land Use Preferences:** Residential (with conditions), Lodging, Warehousing/Distribution/Logistics, Other Commercial, Light Industrial.  
**Scale Preferences:** Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning  
 Height: Determined Through Zoning

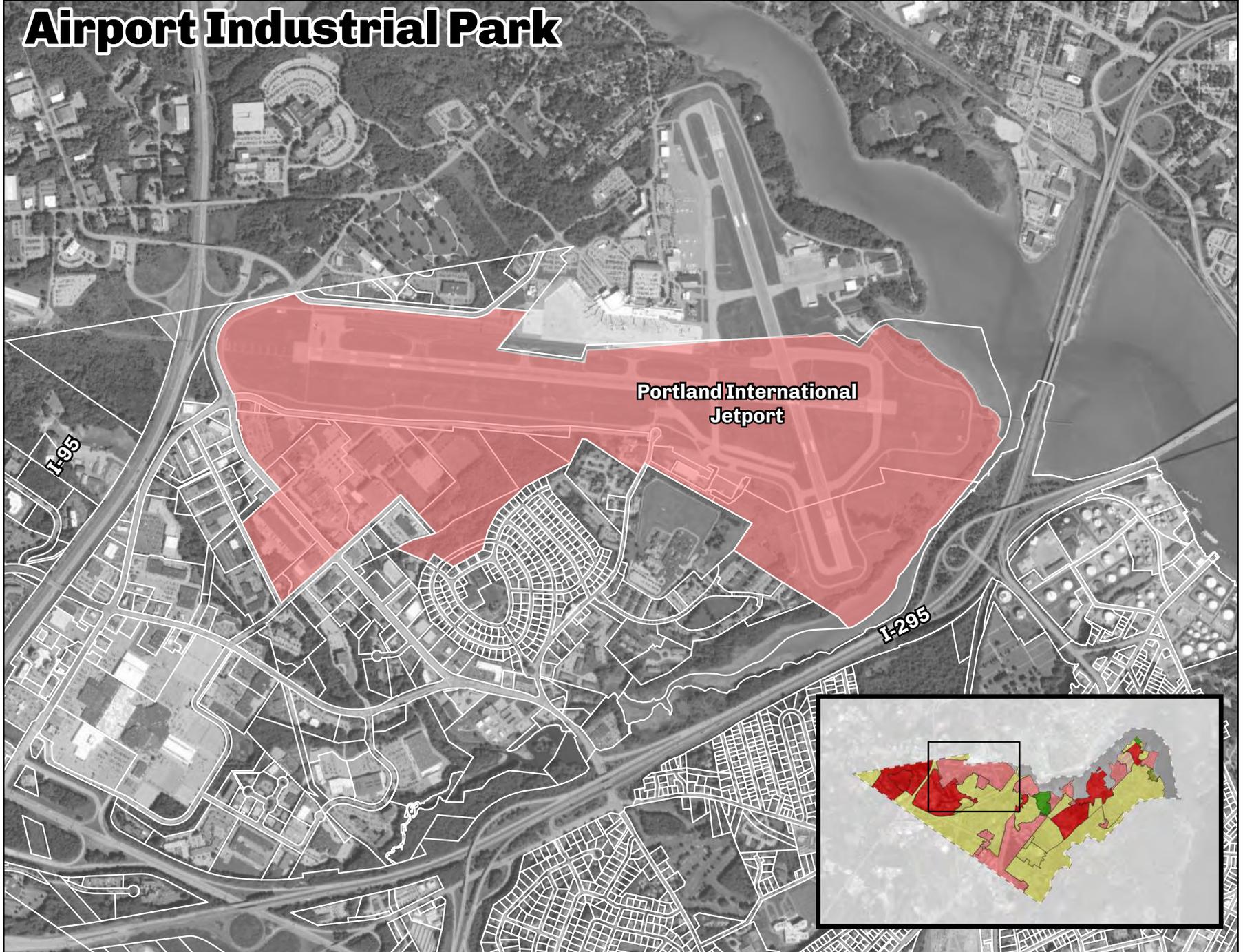
*“Area ripe for more aviation-oriented/light industrial/warehousing; perhaps just-in-time shipping for high value components that travel by air.”*

**Vision:** This area is defined by the airport and should remain industrial in character. Continued development of warehousing, logistics, light industrial, and lodging businesses should be encouraged. The semiconductor/technology firms in this area are important employers to the City and region, and the City should work proactively and in partnership with these businesses to encourage their continued growth and vitality. New housing development should be supported only adjacent to existing housing. Development should not exacerbate this condition.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Support existing land uses, and avoid residential uses except on parcels abutting existing residential development that are not within an airport noise affected area.
B. Energy needs will continue to be high and critical to the vitality of area businesses. The City should allow electricity storage, distribution, service, and generation activities with very limited barriers to development.
C. While economic development is a primary goal in this area, the KLUPA abuts the Redbank residential neighborhood, therefore business activities, and new development, should be sensitive to, compatible in scale with, or separated and buffered from this neighborhood to maintain safety and quality of life.



Photo: David Jordan



# 5. Youth Center

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**C**

**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Warehousing/  
Distribution/Logistics, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Cultural,  
Institutional/Government**

Growth

Scale Preferences:

**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning  
Height: Determined Through Zoning**

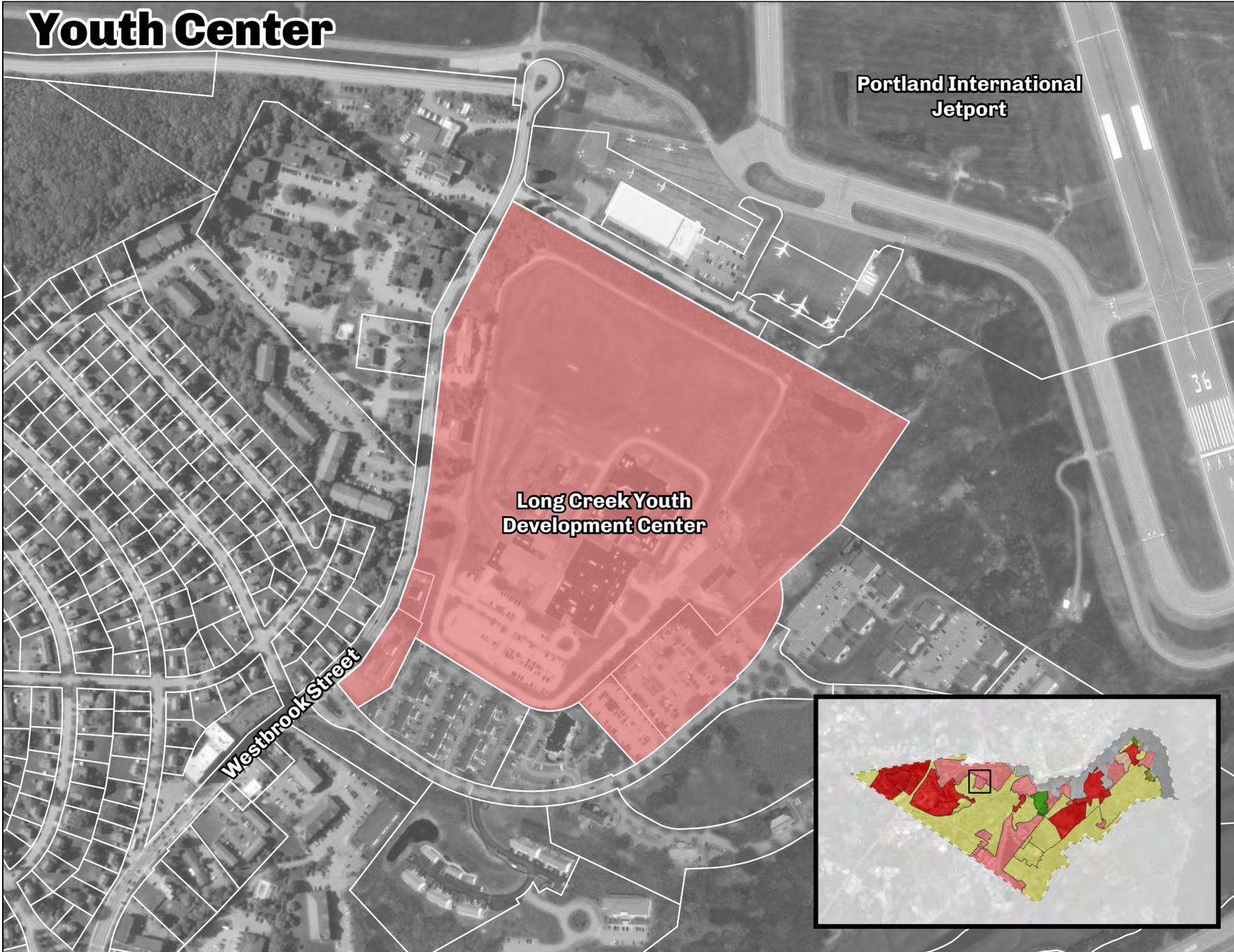
*“Future closure of Long Creek could create significant opportunity for residential redevelopment; perhaps with services that serve the local neighborhood.”*

**Vision:** This area is characterized by the State-owned Long Creek Youth Detention Center, however the facility may cease operations over the lifespan of the Comprehensive Plan. If the facility is decommissioned and sold, the City should encourage commercial development, with limited residential development, to increase job opportunities in the area. If the facility is decommissioned and not sold, other uses may be proposed by the State to meet broader community needs (such as housing or State facilities).

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Allow nonresidential development that is sensitive to or separated and buffered from abutting residential neighborhoods to maintain safety and quality of life.
B. Allow residential units only in a mixed-use context to prioritize nonresidential development.
C. Allow public/governmental facilities as the area may be a suitable site for future school facilities.
D. Permit other potential uses proposed by the State with a well-developed master plan that ensures nearby neighborhoods will not be disadvantaged or significantly impacted.
E. Develop an institutional zoning district that reflects the State's use of property and require substantial development by the State to be completed in accordance with a Campus Master Plan.
F. Minimize airport noise impacts by establishing indoor noise standards or restricting sensitive uses within the airport noise-affected areas.



Photo: David Jordan



# 6. Clarks Pond

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

**B**

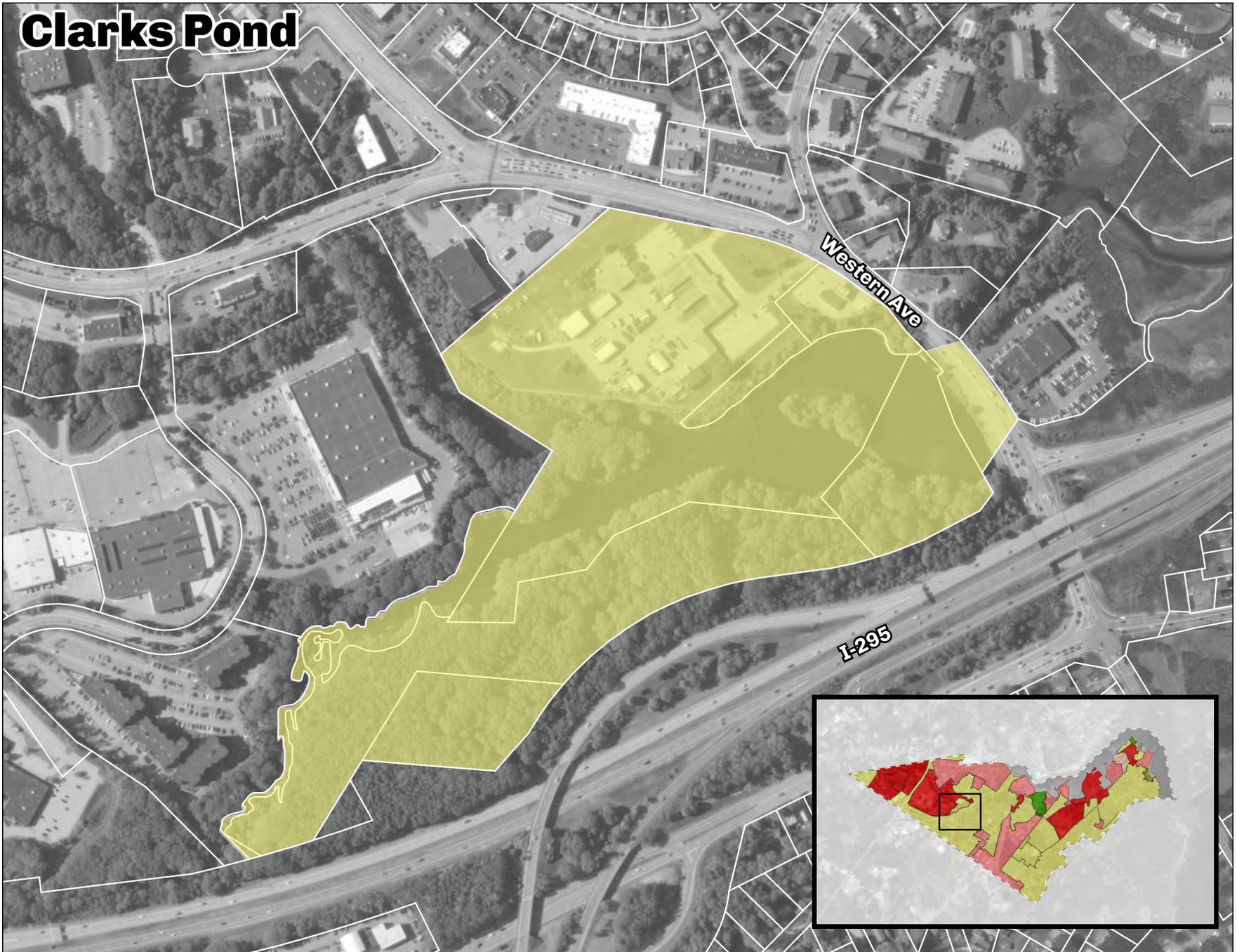
**Limited Growth** Scale Preferences:  
**Residential Density: N/A**  
**Height: Determined Through Zoning**

**Vision:** As adjacent areas develop, this area should remain a natural and open space resource while preserving areas already developed for future public and municipal needs. The long term rehabilitation of Long Creek should remain an ongoing effort.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Seek to obtain the Air National Guard property and allow the full range of municipal facilities and functions to develop on this site. Assess residential needs, such as schools, parks, etc., and plan for necessary infrastructure improvements to support desired residential growth.
B. If the City is not successful in acquiring the Air National Guard property for civic functions, zoning standards shall achieve the objectives of this KLUPA and mirror land uses in the Maine Mall KLUPA.
C. Require new development, whether it is by the City or private developer, to include open areas that are accessible to the public and maintain or enhance the City's trail and open space resources around the waterbody.
D. Support efforts to restore Long Creek and protect or enhance wetlands in the area.
E. Improve connections to the Redbank neighborhood, especially the pedestrian pathways via Western Avenue.



Photo: David Jordan



# 7. Main Street Gateway West

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

**C**

**Growth**

**Scale Preferences:**  
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**  
**Height: 6 Stories (max)**

*“Would love to see a swimming pool, pickle ball, or ice skating rink at Sawyer Park.”*

**Vision:** As a “Gateway” into the City, this area has potential to accommodate residential and commercial growth. Larger development should be allowed along Main St but not so tall as to interrupt the neighborhoods near them. Sawyer Park is an important amenity, particularly for youth, in the area.

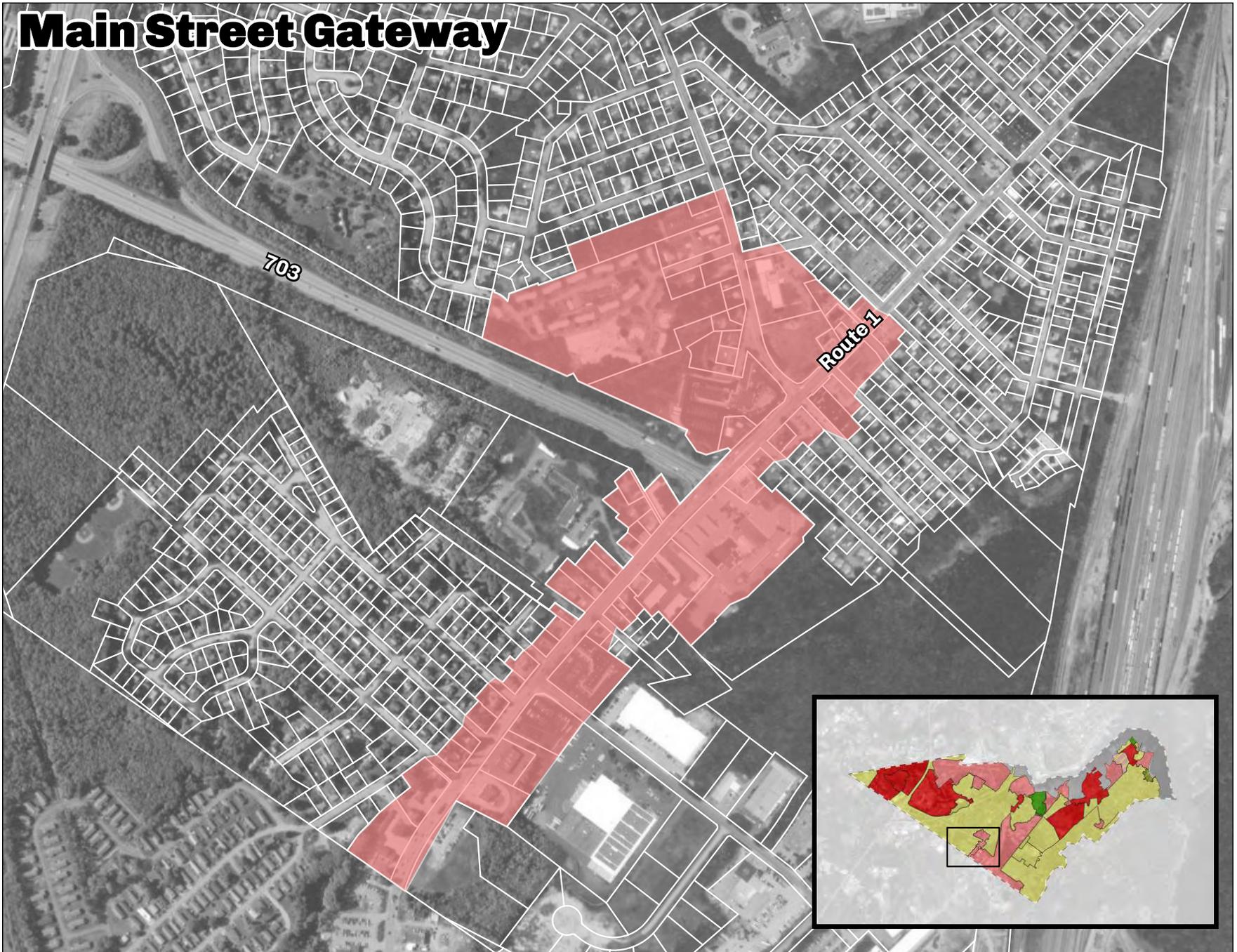
Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Promote gateway improvements along Main Street through design standards for site development and architecture.
B. Monitor the intersections west of the turnpike to ensure that growth and development do not significantly degrade their safety or efficiency.

Other City Strategies
C. Enhance the use of the existing bike lanes with improvements to Cash Corner intersection
D. Consider Universal Design/8-to-80 principles to improve the experience and safety of this area for all ages.
E. Develop Sawyer Park into an all-age destination park, while respecting the low intensity use requirement for this greenspace.



Photo: David Jordan

# Main Street Gateway



# 8. Lincoln Industrial Waterfront

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**Warehousing/Distribution/Logistics, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Commercial/Recreational Waterfront**

**C**

Scale Preferences:

**Residential Density: N/A**

**Height: Determined Through Zoning**

Growth

**Vision:** This area is defined by historically industrial activities, water-oriented uses and infrastructure that support business in the area, a connection to the interstate, and a gateway to the City. This area should serve as an economic hub that provides and grows employment opportunities with new and existing businesses. Economic development strategies should seek to attract or expand clean energy and high-value manufacturing/warehousing sectors.

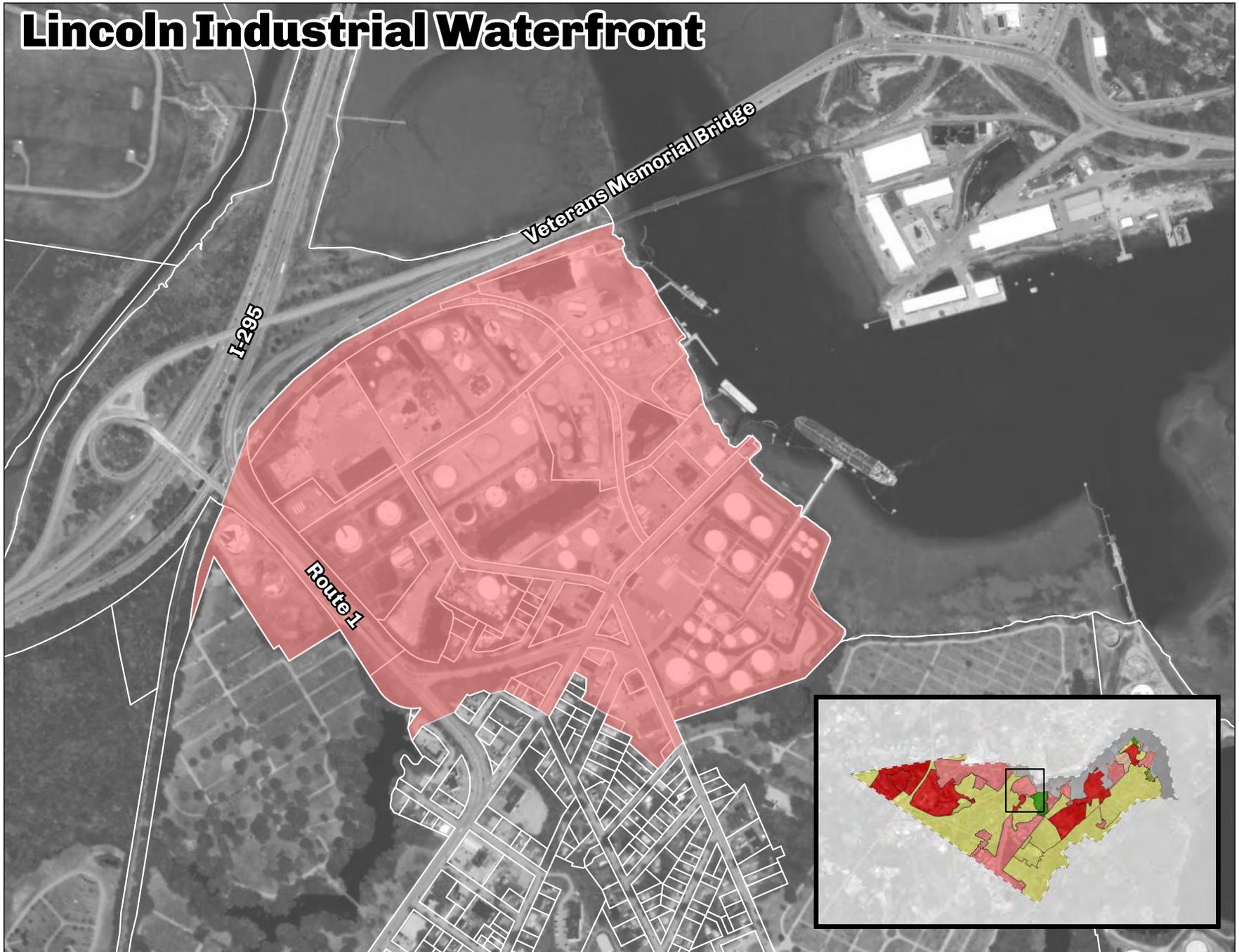
Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Develop an industrial waterfront zone.
B. Enhance buffers (visual and sound) between businesses and residential outside the KLUPA.
C. Encourage redevelopment into clean energy and high-value manufacturing sectors by removing development barriers, and allowing appropriate land uses.

Other City Strategies
D. Investigate the development of a licensing program to more closely monitor industrial activities, pollutant emissions, and track shoreline stability.
E. Assess infrastructure, and other opportunities and constraints to attract/expand clean energy, manufacturing in emerging sectors, and logistics sectors.
F. Work with Maine DEP and the petroleum terminal operators to ensure existing facilities are fortified against coastal storms. Consider regulations if needed.



Photo: David Jordan

# Lincoln Industrial Waterfront



# 9. Cash Corner and Main Street North

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Other Commercial, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

**D**

**Unique Growth**

**Scale Preferences:**  
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**  
**Height: 6 Stories (max)**

*“I am extremely pleased with the new pedestrian crossing signals at Cash Corner. A Green Belt connector to the Thornton Heights neighborhood would also be fantastic.”*

**Vision:** This area would continue as a commercial district allowing office, retail, wholesale, and service uses. Residential uses would also be permitted. The short-term focus would be to realize economic and housing development opportunities with attractive design along an improved corridor that serves as a gateway into the community.

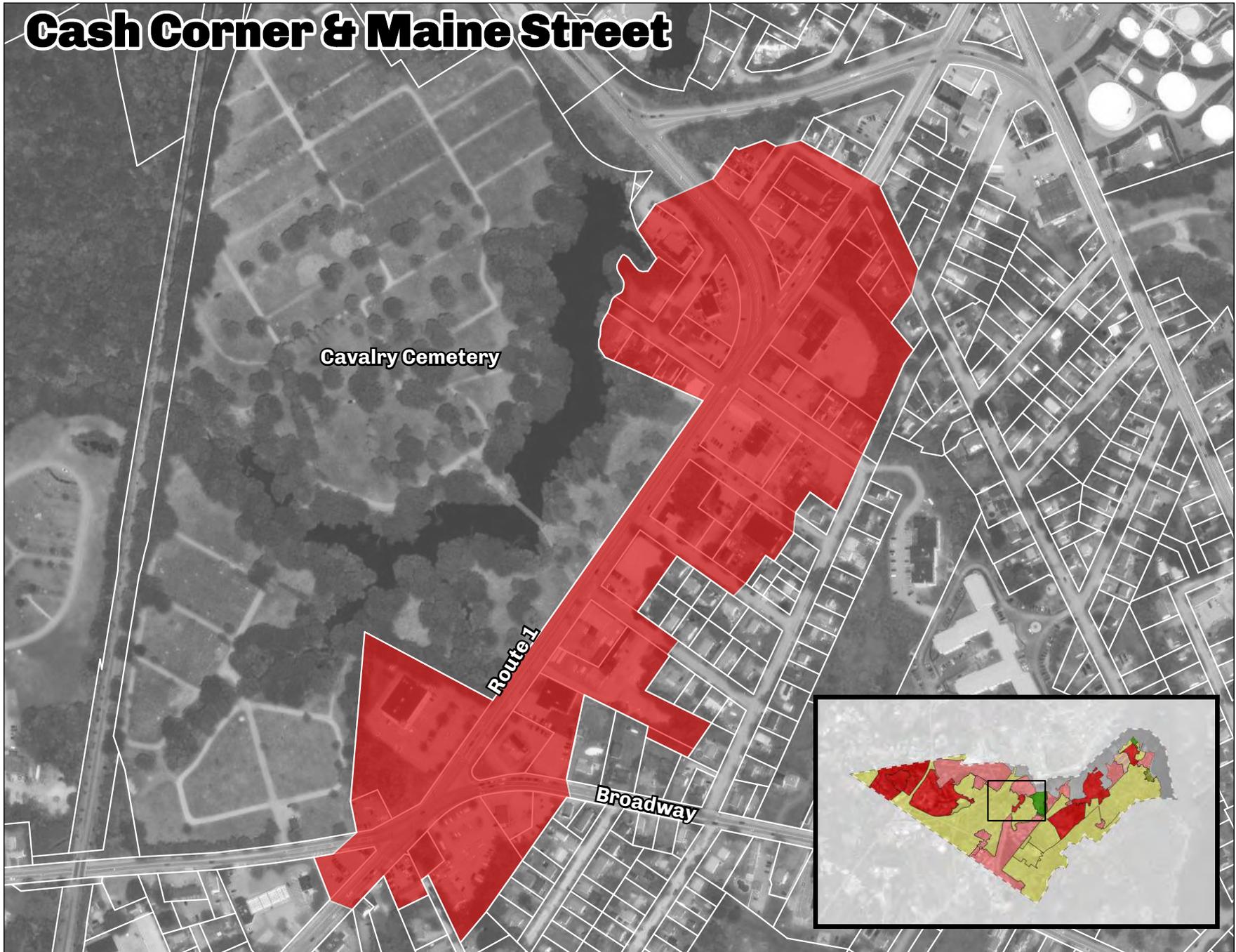
Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Promote gateway improvements along Main Street through design standards for site development and architecture.
B. Support mixed use development

Other City Strategies
C. Assess and improve Cash Corner intersection, with primary goals being to improve safety, facilitate traffic flow, and activate economic development opportunities through improved access and more efficient land use.
D. Bike and Ped facilities along Main St. between Cash Corner and Lincoln St. will be maintained and enhanced.



Photo: David Jordan

# Cash Corner & Maine Street



# 10. Rigby Industrial Park

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

Warehousing/Distribution/Logistics, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Institutional/Government

C

Scale Preferences:

Residential Density: N/A

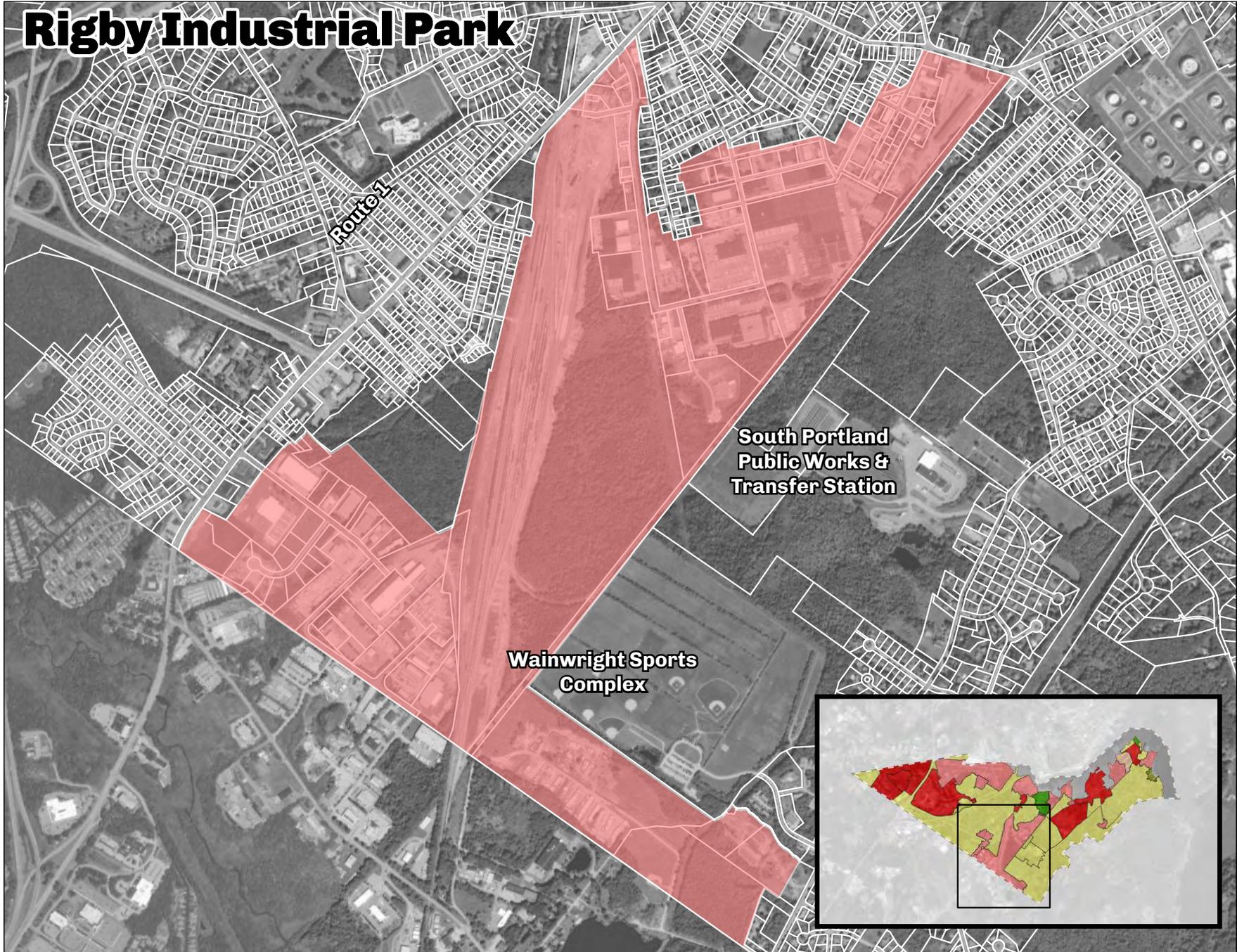
Height: Determined Through Zoning

Growth

**Vision:** This area contains both established industrial uses and cleared land prepared for future industrial development. This area should continue to allow commercial growth while restricting residential development. Increase separation of residential and nonresidential uses by better defining these distinct areas and through physical buffering (i.e. landscaping and fencing) and development buffering (i.e. lower intensity commercial uses between existing residential and higher intensity commercial areas.)

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Establish sufficient buffer requirements to separate industrial uses from Wainwright and residential lots.
B. Reduce development barriers and requirements to facilitate economic investment and development.
C. Promote road network connectivity to Scarborough roads.
D. Address congestion and intersection limitations along Main Street to reduce safety concerns and facilitate efficient movement
E. Support land uses and infrastructure developments that aid the warehousing and logistics activities in the area. Explore improvements that support freight activities, such as overnight truck stop area to minimize idling trucks, and congestion or damage to freight roads.

Other City Strategies
F. Maintain designated freight routes and assess the need for freight designations in the Wallace Avenue area.
G. Unless incorporated into the Crosstown Connector roadway project, or an extension of Rigby Road through Scarborough, restrict freight access to Highland Avenue.
H. Promote and encourage commercial growth with economic development and infrastructure planning
I. Consider ways that preserve wetland areas while allowing development in this area generally.
J. Ensure Rigby Road is developed as a complete industrial street with future development proposals.
K. Assess and improve trail access to Wainwright Fields.
L. Implement measures that allow for non-freight movement while reducing freight traffic on residential streets.
M. Continue to study and, if financially feasible, support the “Crosstown Connector” extension of Rumery Road to the Municipal Services Facility on Highland. Roadway design should consider access improvements to Wainwright and interconnection with bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the area.



# 11. Barberry Creek and Forest City Cemetery

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Commercial/Recreational Waterfront, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural**

**A**

**Conservation**

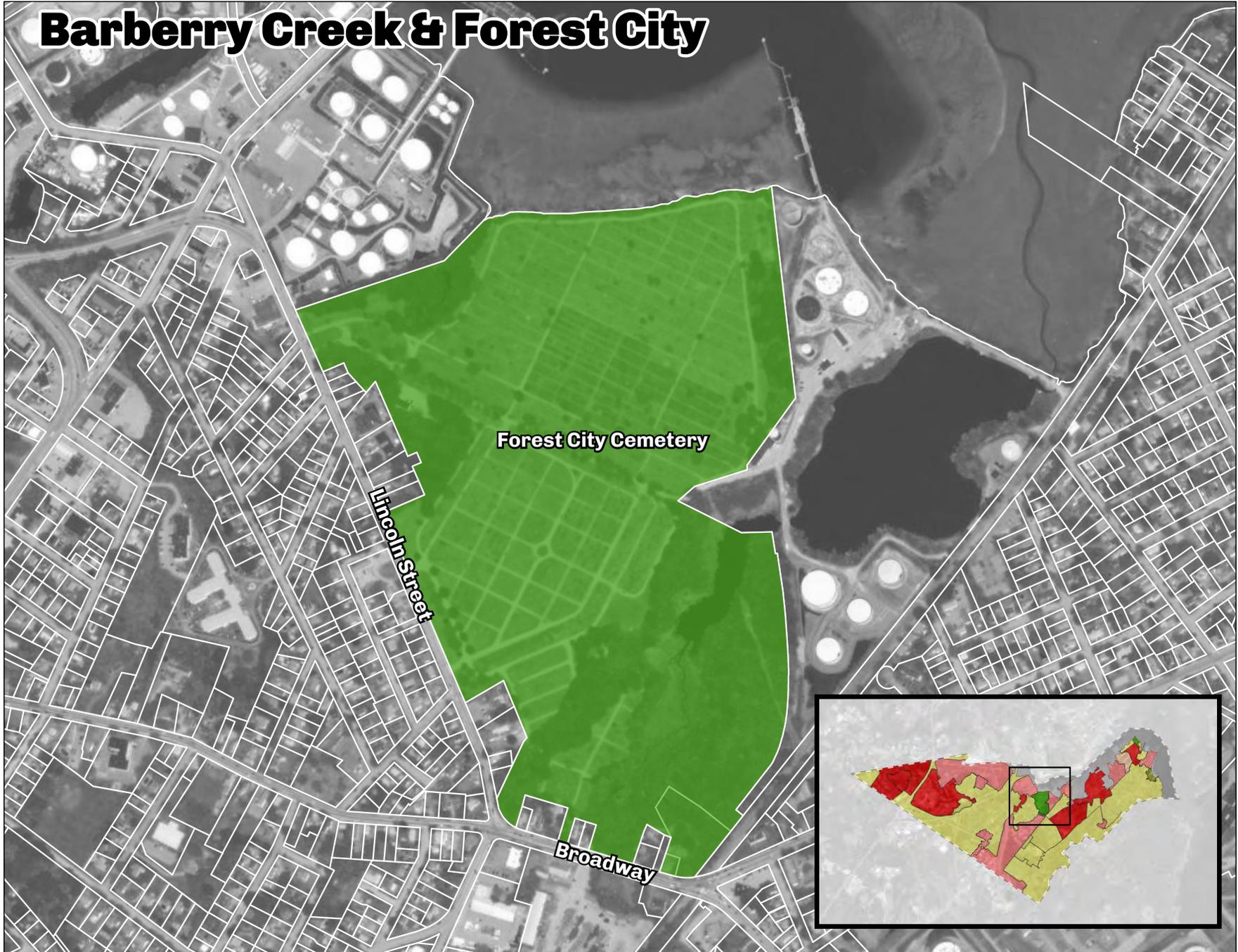
**Scale Preferences:**  
**Residential Density: N/A**  
**Height: Determined Through Zoning**

**Vision:** This area is defined by Forest City Cemetery and the undeveloped lands of Barberry Creek’s lower watershed. This area should continue to function as a cemetery that provides public amenities that include shoreline access, trails, and stormwater detention and inundation buffers.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Remove residential and commercial development opportunities from the cemetery property.
B. Adopt development standards for parcels abutting the Broadway-Lincoln and Broadway-Evans intersections that prepare for future intersection redesign and improvement to address traffic bottlenecks.

Other City Strategies
C. Coordinate with the City of Portland to allow increased public use, waterfront access, and respectful passive recreational amenities in the cemetery.
D. Continue to reduce combined sewer overflow pressure on the Barberry Creek outlet.
E. Develop transportation impact fees that prepare the City for intersection upgrades at Broadway-Lincoln and Broadway-Evans.
F. Acquire land to expand City right-of-way on Broadway to improve bicycle and pedestrian access between Whitehall and Lincoln.
G. Seek to acquire private property in the Barberry Creek watershed as an open space amenity and coastal inundation buffer in the long term.
H. Coordinate with the City of Portland to implement living shoreline and other measures to prevent erosion of the cemetery bluffs.

# Barberry Creek & Forest City



# 12. Evans Highland

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Residential, Open Space/Recreation**

**B**

**Limited Growth** Scale Preferences:  
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**  
**Height: Determined Through Zoning**

*“Improve sidewalks at Highland and Evans.”*

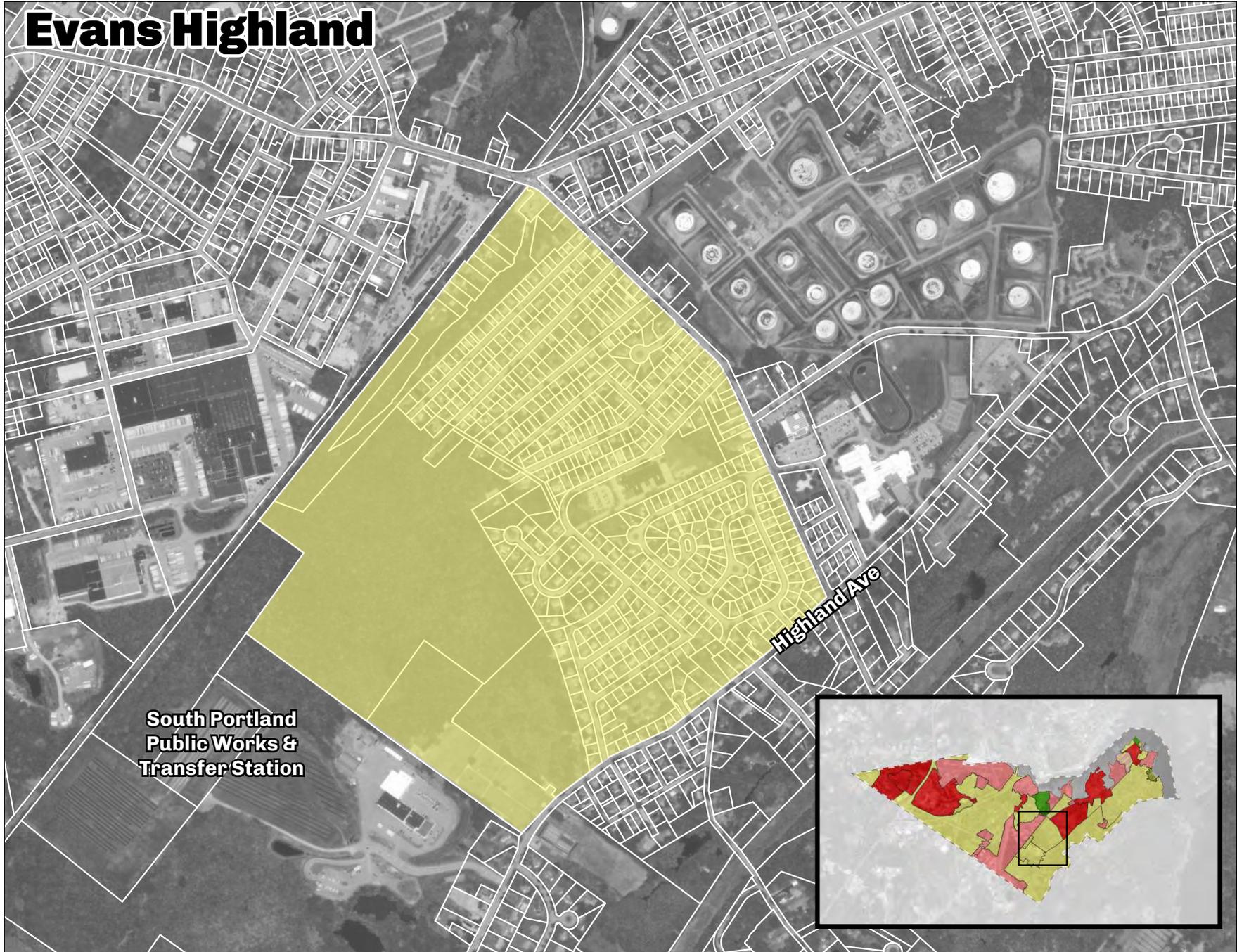
**Vision:** This area contains established residential neighborhoods and a few large undeveloped parcels. Wetlands in the undeveloped areas should be preserved. Non-wetland areas could be developed as a continuation of the existing neighborhoods.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Increase protections against development in wetlands. Consider the use of the City’s parcel along Highland in a land swap agreement to protect privately-owned wetland habitats from development.
B. Consider development of City owned property abutting Highland into housing, and, to encourage the development of underserved forms of housing as identified in a housing assessment for the City, be flexible on density and development standards.

Other City Strategies
C. Connect dead end streets with bicycle and pedestrian links, and improve accessibility for street maintenance.
D. Maintain the Greenbelt, upgrade to multiuse path standards, and, when feasible, consider developing additional recreational trails into and throughout residential neighborhoods in the vicinity.
E. Promote Dyer school as a neighborhood gathering hub.



Photo: David Jordan



# 13. Russ Lunt Municipal Services Complex

**Growth Type:**

**Land Use Preferences:**

**Residential (with conditions), Warehousing/Distribution/Logistics, Light Industrial, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

**B**

**Scale Preferences:**

**Limited Growth**

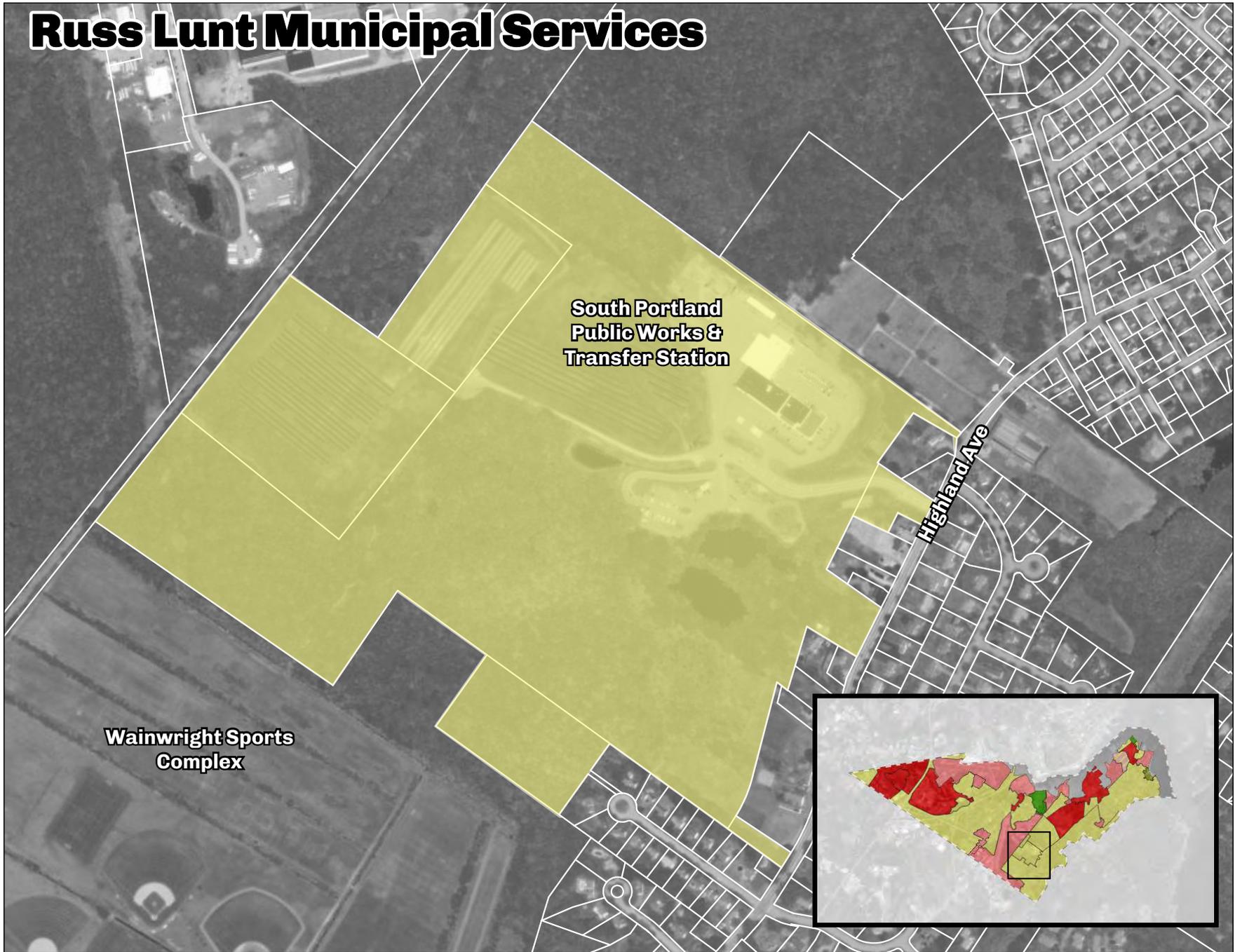
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning  
Height: Determined Through Zoning**

**Vision:** This area should continue to be a municipal service center with some potential for residential development near Highland Avenue. The Greenbelt crosses through the KLUPA and additional or improved active recreational trails should be encouraged.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Future development and infrastructure projects shall minimize impacts to wetlands and vernal pools to the greatest extent possible, however community-serving infrastructure projects (access improvements or municipal facilities) may need to impact wetlands.
B. Nonresidential uses should be limited to municipal functions, including municipal facilities that are industrial, utility, or commercial in character, such as the municipal services facility.
C. Avoid placing non-residential uses, including municipal nonresidential uses, near Highland Avenue.
D. Consider residential development on City-owned land near frontages to Highland Avenue.

Other City Strategies
E. Continue to study and, if financially feasible, support the “Crosstown Connector” extension of Rumery Road to the Municipal Services Facility on Highland. Roadway design should consider access improvements to Wainwright and interconnection with bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the area.
F. Maintain the municipal services facility and ensure there is sufficient land to support any necessary expansions.
G. Promote bicycle and pedestrian trail systems throughout the KLUPA, building on the existing Greenbelt connections.

# Russ Lunt Municipal Services



# 14. Turner’s Island

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:

**C**

**Growth**

**Residential (with conditions), Warehousing/Distribution/Logistics, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, Commercial/Recreational Waterfront**

**Scale Preferences:**

**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning  
Height: Determined Through Zoning**

*“Significantly increase the capacity of Turners Island to act as a marine terminal and feeder to Rigby.”*

**Vision:** Turner’s Island is defined by the sea-to-rail infrastructure, petroleum terminal operations, a residential enclave with coastal access and views, and the City’s Greenbelt. This area will continue to operate and thrive as a logistics, distribution, and warehousing commercial-industrial area, while enhancing the residential neighborhoods within and adjacent to the KLUPA. Industrial activities with significant odor and pollutant emissions will be encouraged to transition to alternative sectors.

## Land Use/Zoning Strategies

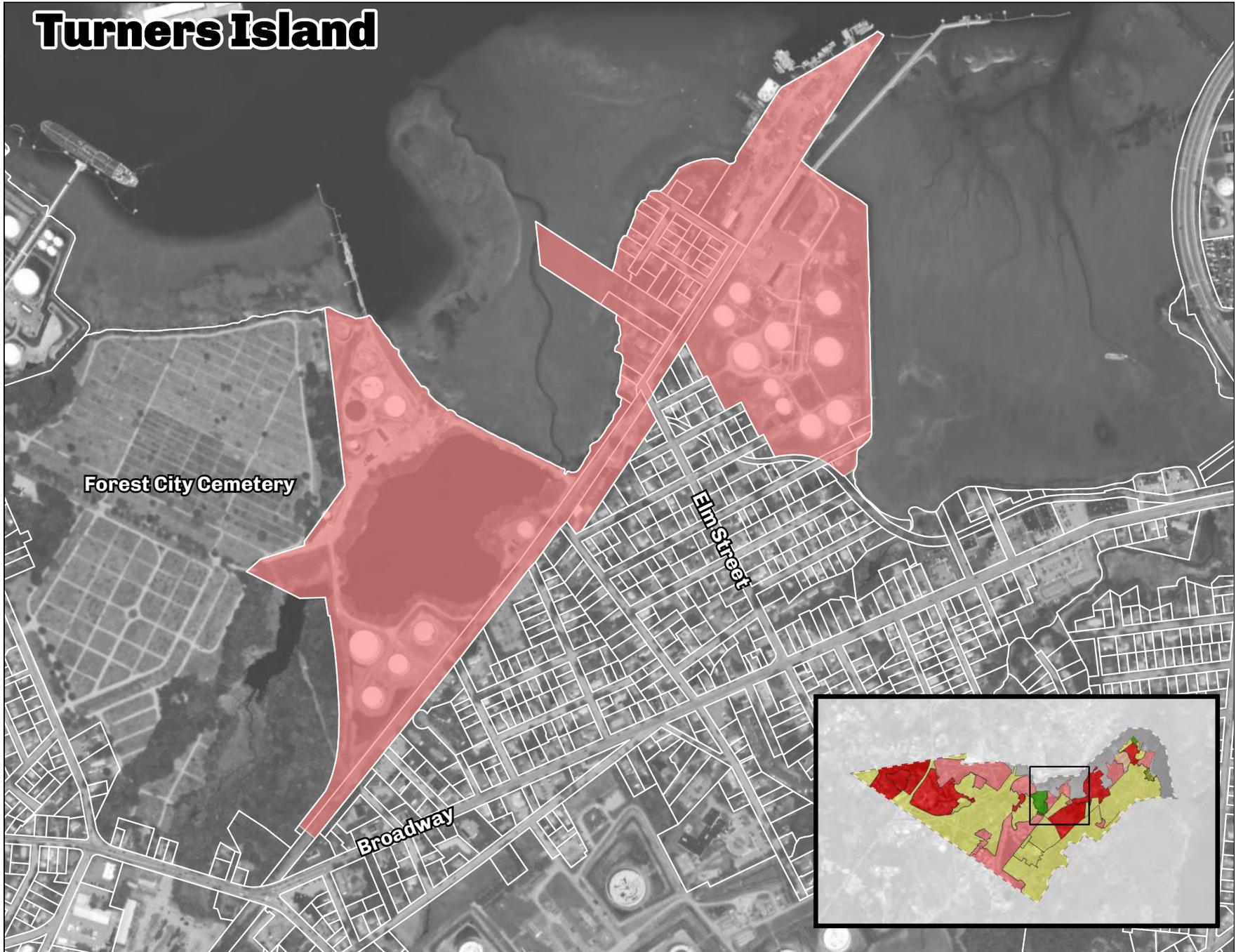
- A. Update noise standards to better control industrial activities in collaboration with area businesses to ensure the viability of logistics operations.
- B. Decrease the residential density of the Elm St. enclave to avoid additional exposure to industrial activities and coastal risks.
- C. Develop an industrial waterfront zone.
- D. Enhance buffers (visual and sound) between businesses and residential outside the KLUPA.
- E. Encourage redevelopment into clean energy and high-value manufacturing sectors by removing development barriers, and allowing appropriate land uses.

## Other City Strategies

- F. Work with private property owners to ensure the Greenbelt remains and maintains sufficient width for a multi-use path.
- G. Develop the Pearl Street pump station as critical infrastructure to sustain the City’s sewer needs.
- H. Partner with private property owners to improve road and rail access.

- I. Assess the lifespan, capacity, and integrity of the sewer trunk line under Turner’s Island to ensure long term viability and that maintenance and upgrades is coordinated to minimize disruption to rail and logistical business operations.
- G. Utilize the City-owned parcel on Elm St. as a coastal inundation buffer and for coastal habitat preservation, possibly that provides coastal access for small craft.
- J. Coordinate with the Barberry Creek dams operator to assess their capacity, and long term functionality under rising seas, and suitability for pipelines to mitigate risks for adjacent land.
- K. Update emergency preparedness plans, develop communication tools, and coordinate directly with property owners to improve evacuation protocols for the Elm Street residential enclave.
- L. Investigate the development of a licensing program to more closely monitor industrial activities, pollutant emissions, and track shoreline stability.
- M. Assess infrastructure, and other opportunities and constraints to attract/expand clean energy, manufacturing in emerging sectors, and logistics sectors.
- F. Work with Maine DEP and the petroleum terminal operators to ensure existing facilities are fortified against coastal storms. Consider regulations if needed.

# Turners Island



# 15. Pleasantdale Coastal Area

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Residential, Open Space/Recreation**

**B→C\***

Ltd. Growth/  
 Growth

**Scale Preferences:**  
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**  
**Height: Determined Through Zoning**

*“This is such a prime location! Would love to see high density housing and mixed-land use to promote vibrant communities here.”*

**Vision:** This small coastal area is susceptible to coastal inundation in the long term and contains adjacent residential land uses that may be affected by periodic flooding. This area and surrounding properties will encourage low-density use, and when redevelopment is proposed, the development of property shall seek to provide inundation capacity on site as a buffer to protect buildings and infrastructure. Higher density development shall be encouraged along Broadway.

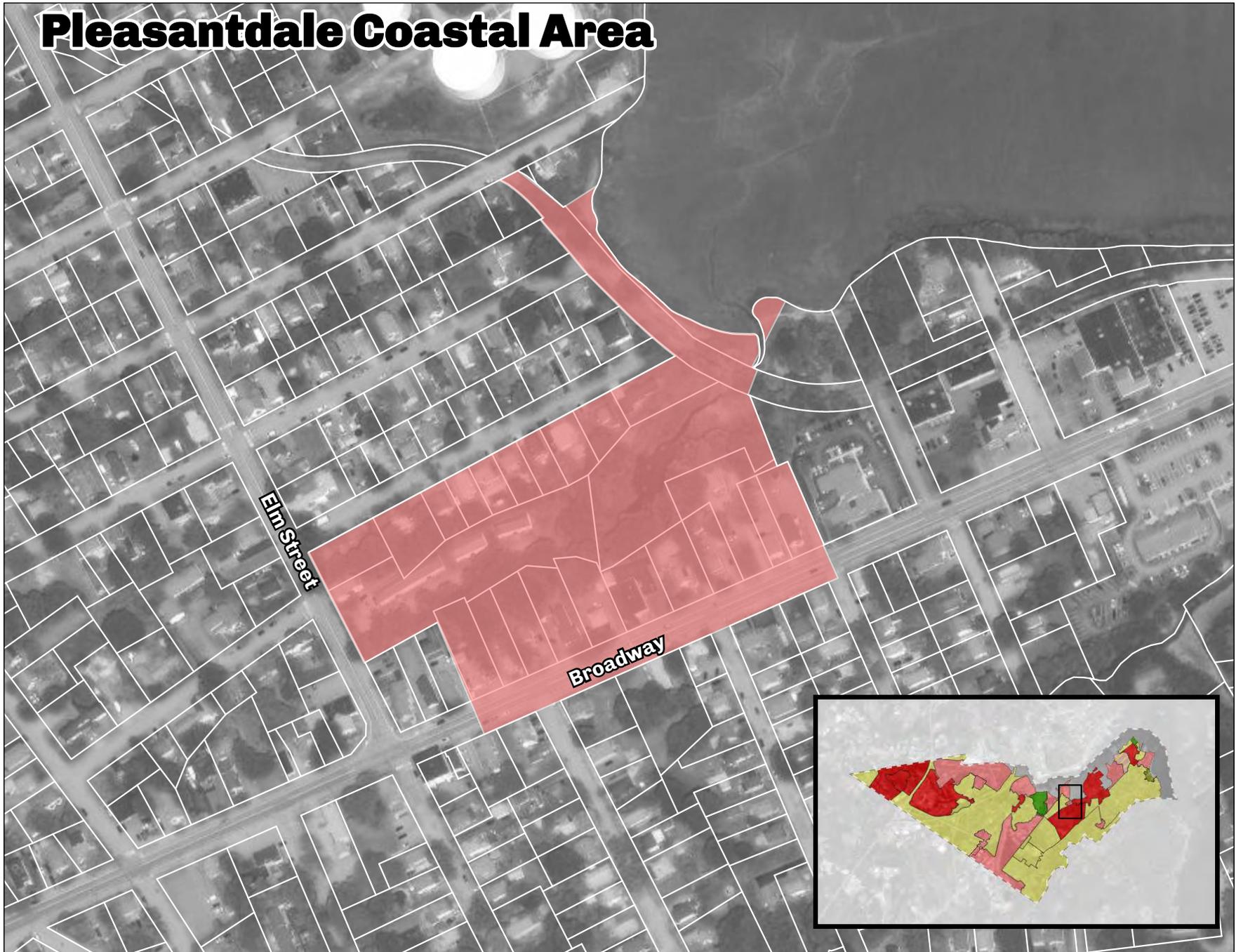
Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Require rear yard setbacks that provide or enhance the floodable area abutting the inlet.
B. Relax development standards to encourage the location of structures close to Mildred St. and Broadway.
C. *Increase the development capacity of properties on Broadway, while requiring development closer to the street, to encourage redevelopment and increase inundation capacity.
D. Consider 500-year storms when planning upgrades for the Greenbelt.

Other City Strategies
E. Study and coordinate with Maine DOT on maintaining a sufficiently-sized culvert under the City’s Greenbelt to avoid overtopping and damage to the multi-use path.
F. Implement living shoreline and other measures to prevent erosion and vulnerability to the greenbelt path.



Photo: David Jordan

# Pleasantdale Coastal Area



# 16. Nutter Hill Neighborhood

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Other Commercial, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

**D** Scale Preferences:  
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**  
**Height: 5 Stories (max)**

**Unique Growth**

*“Redevelopment should add some housing but also recreation like a hockey rink, a sports bubble, or a field.”*

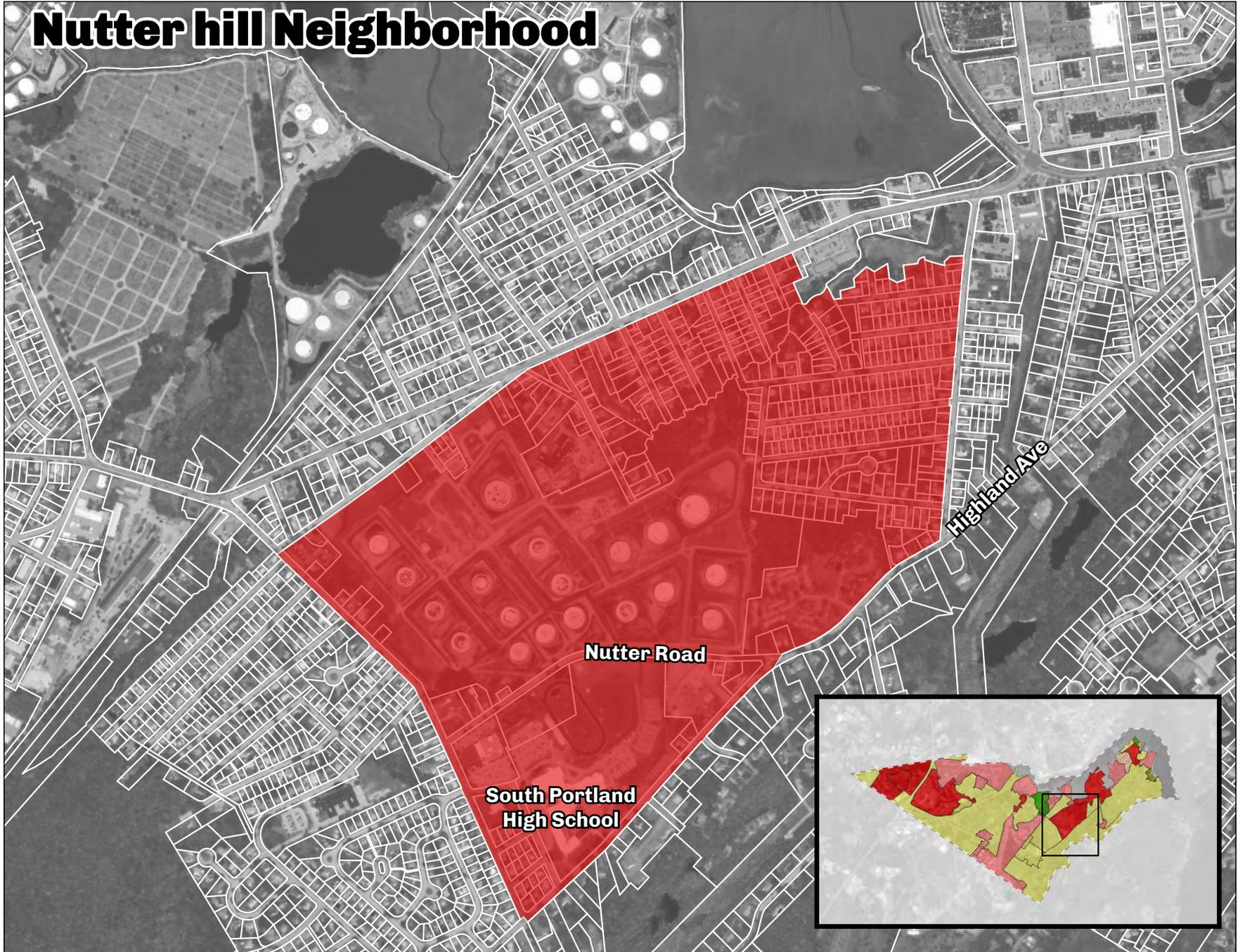
**Vision:** This area includes an existing 100-acre petroleum storage facility, schools, a recreation center, and surrounding residential neighborhood. The redevelopment possibility of the petroleum storage facility presents an enormous opportunity and need for proactive land use planning. The capacity for petroleum storage should not be expanded, and the City should engage with the property owner about future uses. Zoning changes that encourage the redevelopment of the petroleum facility shall include community input.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Remove land use allowances for petroleum-products storage facilities, however do not hinder existing facilities from undertaking improvements to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve air quality or visual aesthetics; or</li> <li>2. Comply with more stringent Federal, State, or local standards as they may be developed and adopted.</li> </ol>
B. Amend zoning to primarily encourage the development of a “complete neighborhood” (mixed residential and light commercial). Also allow a limited commercial area as a minor portion of the area
C. If the electrical utility infrastructure in this area is needed to support the needs of the City and region, as identified in regional electrical utility planning, the City may allow the site to be used for critical electricity infrastructure that helps support widespread electrification, as well as increased grid resilience and capacity.
D. Battery energy storage facilities and related utility infrastructure may be supported in this area when separated from existing and future residential neighborhoods. Battery energy storage facilities shall occupy a minor share of this area.
E. Commercial power generation shall only be permitted if it demonstrates consistency with the City’s Climate Action Plan and the City Council finds it to be in the community’s best interest.

F. At the time of a redevelopment of large properties in this KLUPA, the new development shall: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve road connectivity between Nutter and Hill/Broadway.</li> <li>2. Improve safety for walking/biking in the area and to the schools, greenbelt, and community center.</li> <li>3. Provide open space amenities for the neighborhood.</li> <li>4. Promote a modest density that can include structures of up to four stories, however the development shall blend and transition into the scale of the surrounding neighborhood.</li> </ol>
G. Existing, predominantly single-family neighborhoods in the KLUPA will strive to create infill housing opportunities consistent with City-wide housing goals and strategies.

Other City Strategies
H. Evaluate need and distribution of public services and consider purchasing land to reserve for future needs (i.e. school, park, etc.).
I. Engage with the petroleum storage facility property owner to encourage a transition of the property from light and heavy industrial uses, except for those related to electricity infrastructure as outlined in this KLUPA otherwise.

# Nutter hill Neighborhood



# 17. Downtown Mill Creek Core

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**C**

**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Light Industrial, Commercial/Recreational Waterfront, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

Growth

Scale Preferences:

**Residential Density: See Policy Below**

**Height: See Policy Below**

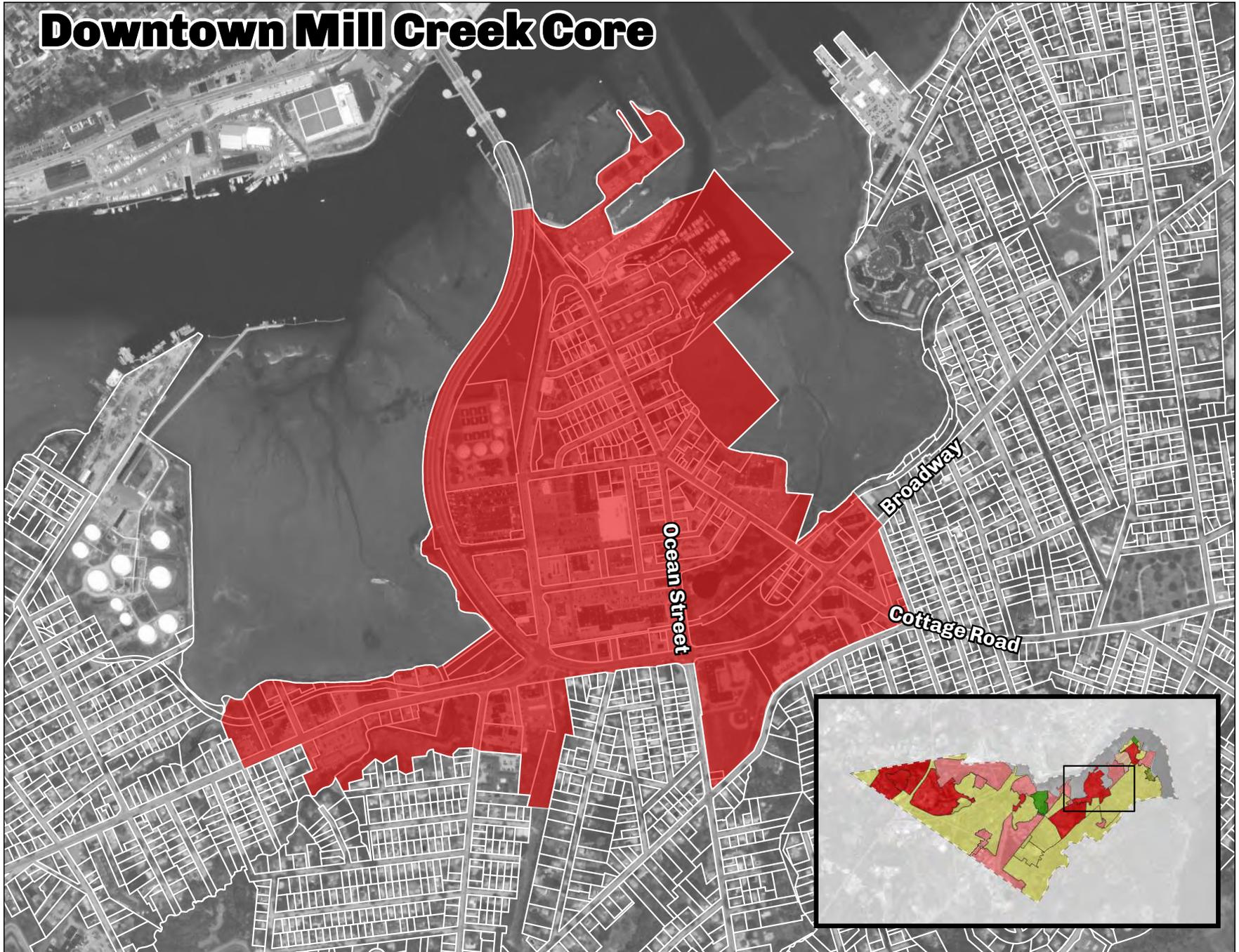
*“I think we need to prioritize mixed use and pedestrian friendly development here.”*

**Vision:** This area is the City’s “downtown” and center of civic life. This area contains a wide diversity of land uses and neighborhood types that require careful and nuanced guidance on growth from a Master Plan. The plan should coordinate the needs of waterfront properties, businesses, residences, institutions, infrastructure, open space, cultural, and recreational uses.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Allow mixed-use or residential development up to 6 stories south of E Street, with consideration of 8 stories with detailed design guidelines that are developed in an updated Mill Creek Master Plan.
B. Allow at least 12 units per acre on larger parcels in the VC and VR districts.
C. Allow unlimited density in structures involving only interior retrofitting and minor exterior changes to existing structures.
D. Retain water-dependent uses and support their continued operation on the northern end of the Mill Creek peninsula.
E. Continue to evolve the Knightville Area in a “village concept” with multi-story, mixed-use buildings, and active streetscapes that favor walking and cycling over vehicles.

Other City Strategies
F. Update the Mill Creek Master Plan and expand it to incorporate the Knightville Fore and Aft plan and address the rest of the KLUPA.
G. Develop a consolidated civic campus for City services at the former Mahoney School and ensure adequate multi-modal access is provided, and the facilities are flood resilient.
H. Increase the supply of off-street public parking through City and private partnerships.
I. Leverage existing City property to support the goals of the Mill Creek Master Plan, including providing public parking, housing, and coastal resilience as appropriate.
J. Maintain Mill Creek park as a desirable, multi-purpose open space that prioritizes coastal resilience in the downtown area.
K. The City will maintain and, if needed, expand the capacity of the sewer treatment plant to ensure there is sufficient sewer management for the City’s desired growth, and that the facility is resilient in the long term.

# Downtown Mill Creek Core



# 18. Hamlin Square

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

**C**

Growth

**Scale Preferences:**  
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**  
**Height: 3 Stories (max)**

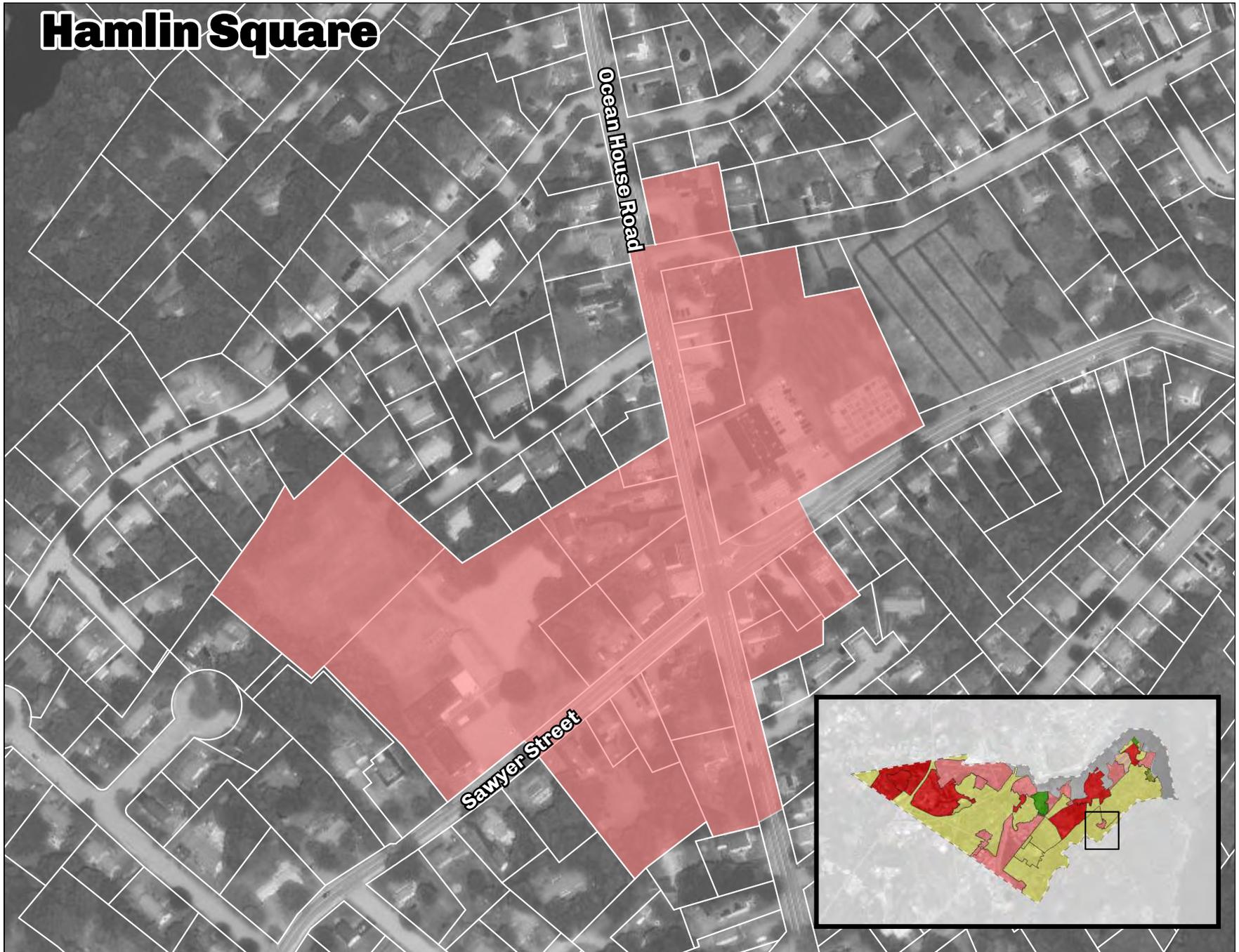
**Vision:** This area should redevelop as the neighborhood mixed-use node it once was. It offers opportunities for residential, commercial, and mixed-use growth that can connect to high-quality amenities such as Hinckley Park, Bayview Cemetery, and the Trout Brook Nature Preserve trail system

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Allow mixed use development that blends into the surrounding neighborhood.
B. Encourage, but do not require 1st floor nonresidential uses on the ground floor along Ocean and Sawyer corridors.
C. Provide for an open space amenity at the former Hamlin school. Support (re)development of the property, and relocate the community garden to facilitate the (re)development.
D. Improve safety and pedestrian improvements to the Ocean/Sawyer intersection.
E. Encourage the development of underserved forms of housing as identified in a housing assessment for the City and be flexible on density and development standards for City owned properties.
F. New construction should be towards the sidewalk with parking behind.
G. Allow medium-scale shelters within the KLUPA.



Photo: David Jordan

# Hamlin Square



# 19. Ferry Village West

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**C**

**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

Growth

Scale Preferences:

**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning  
Height: Determined Through Zoning**

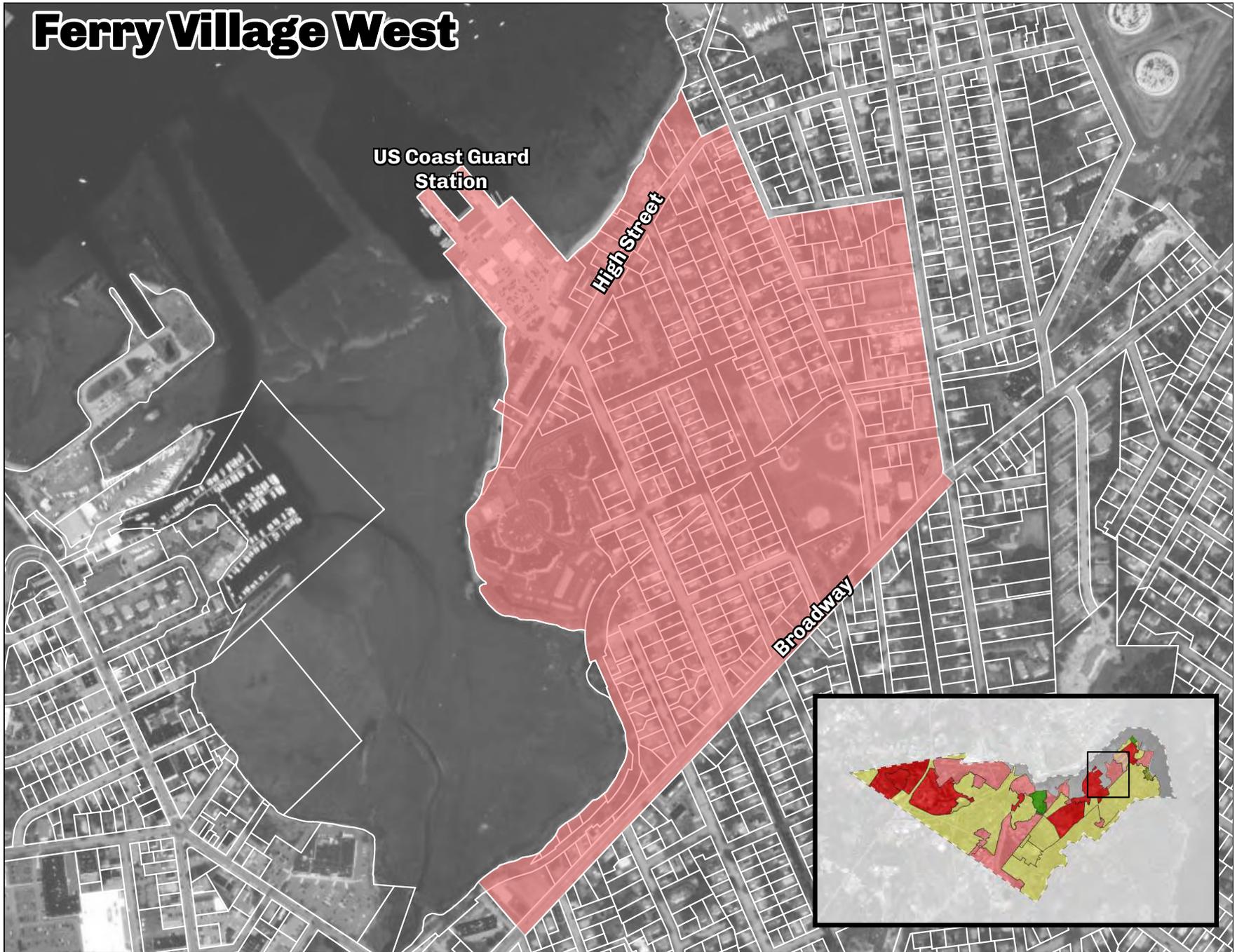
*“Higher density, allow more apartments and fewer single family homes here.”*

**Vision:** This area is one of the City’s historic neighborhoods, and is differentiated from “Ferry Village Center” due to its relatively limited flood risk. The area contains established single-family neighborhoods, open space and recreational amenities, and small-scale infill opportunities on underutilized properties. The City will maintain Ferry Village as a desirable neighborhood, and allow increased residential development that is compatible with the mix of small lots, and two-family and multi-family conditions.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Allow mixed-use development at more prominent intersections that allow for flexible ground-floor land uses, including residential apartments that are compatible with residential uses on upper stories.
B. Reduce development standards to allow for closer-knit development that still maintains a mix of single-family, two-family, and multifamily housing by reducing minimum lot size requirements to historical norms of approximately 5,000 sq. ft., reducing building separation requirements, reducing parking requirements to no more than 1.5 spaces per unit, reducing frontage widths to at least 50 feet, and increasing building coverage allowances to at least 60% while instituting a minimum landscaped area requirement of at least 20%.
C. Rezone the current Commercial district to reflect the existing land uses of Riverplace and commercial waterfront activities at the Coast Guard facility, and to remove allowances for industrial activities.
D. Restrict additional development at Riverplace until the Costal Resilience Overlay Zone (CROZ) is adopted.

Other City Strategies
E. Develop transportation impact fees that prepare the City for intersection upgrades at Broadway-Sawyer and along the Broadway corridor in this KLUPA.
F. Support the U.S. Coast Guard’s continued existence and efficient operations.

# Ferry Village West



# 20. Ferry Village Center

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**B** → **C**

**Residential (with conditions), Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Commercial/Recreational Waterfront, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government**

Ltd. Growth/  
Growth

Scale Preferences:

**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**  
**Height: Determined Through Zoning**

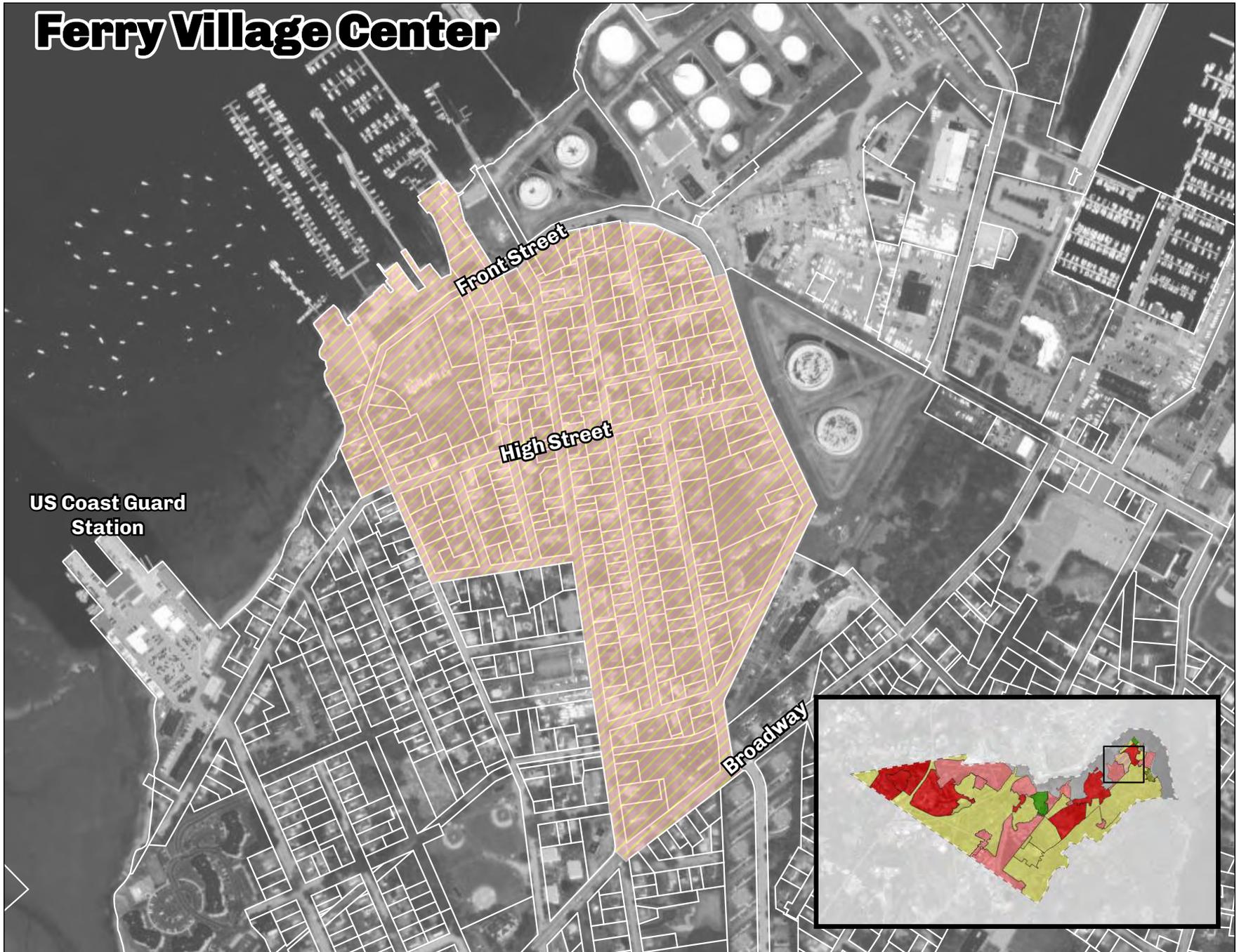
*“Ferry Village used to have a small ‘town center’ with a market, movie theater, grocery store, etc... it would be a dream to live in a versatile neighborhood like that again.”*

**Vision:** This area is one of the City’s historic neighborhoods, and is differentiated from “Ferry Village Core” due to its long term flood risks. The area contains established residential neighborhoods, a commercial/recreational waterfront, and limited infill opportunities. Because the area contains small parcels, (re)development will be driven by multiple and distinct parties. Ferry Village will continue to be a desirable neighborhood. Additional development will be limited until flood risks are reduced through development standards or infrastructure improvements.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Ensure new construction is resilient to future flood risks as outlined in citywide policies (i.e. Costal Resilience Overlay Zone (CROZ), infrastructure resilience standards, etc.). Until the CROZ is adopted, suppress development to reduce exposure to future risks.
B. Mirror the land use and development allowances of the Ferry Village West KLUPA when new construction standards for coastal resilience or flood-mitigations are in place.
C. Maintain existing development standards and land uses for the commercial/recreational waterfront along Front Street, however, restrict additional development until the Costal Resilience Overlay Zone (CROZ) is adopted.
D. Allow commercial and recreational waterfront uses near the coastline.

Other City Strategies
E. Evaluate flood risk and possible interventions for Front and Preble Streets to maintain access in the long term.
F. Improve stormwater and sewer conveyance capacity under wet-weather conditions.

# Ferry Village Center



# 21. Eastern Waterfront Coastal Area

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:

**B**

Limited Growth

**21a. Retail, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government, and Water-Dependent forms of Warehousing/Distribution/Logistics.**  
**21b. Water-Dependent Forms of Uses Listed Above.**

**Scale Preferences:**

**Residential Density: N/A**

**Height: 3 Stories (max)**

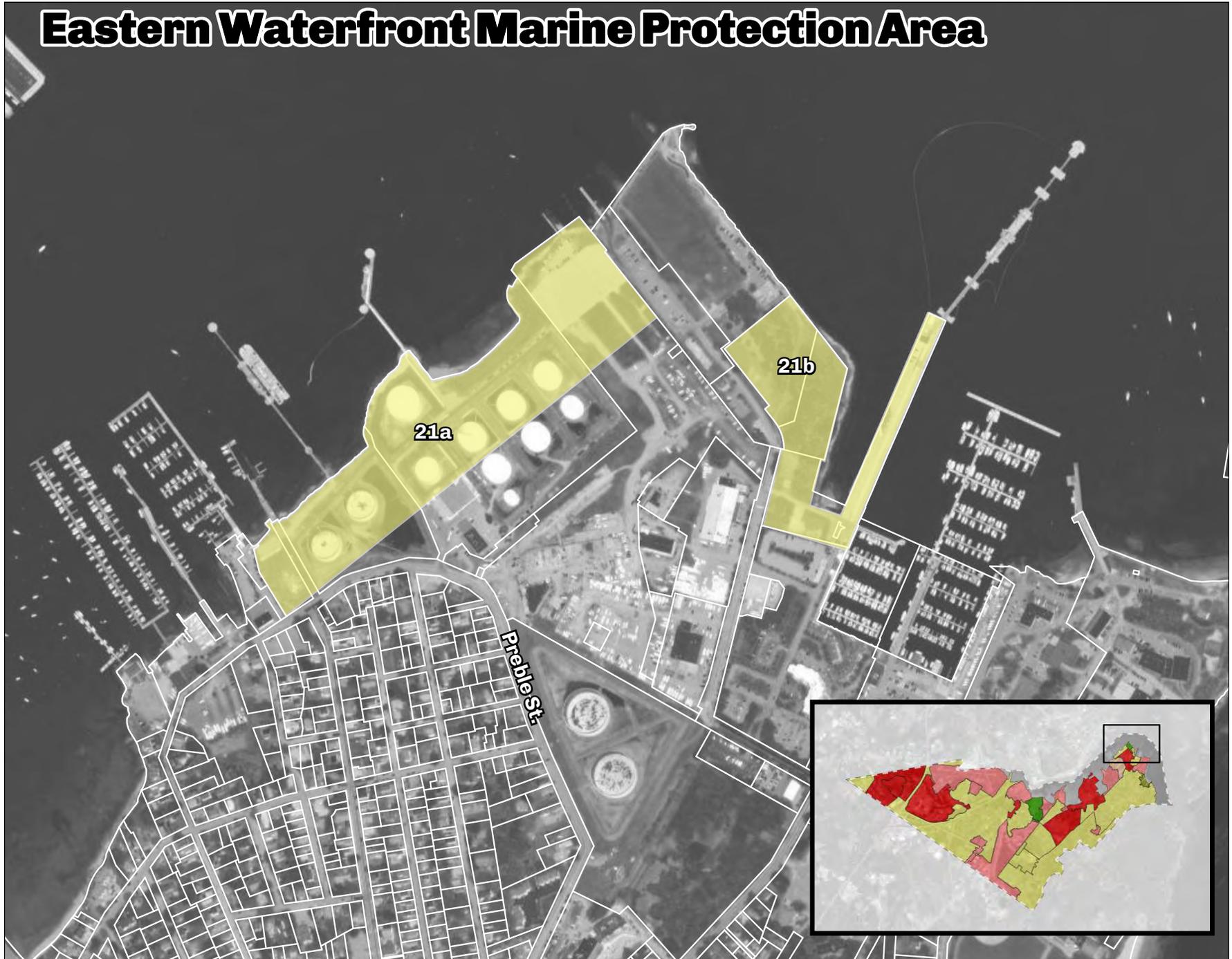
*“Coastal preparedness techniques need to be employed throughout the Eastern Waterfront.”*

**Vision:** This area prohibits housing and reserves land closest to the water to establish connected public access, open spaces, and flood resilient measures that protect adjacent and inland areas. The eastern area will focus on marine-dependent uses, while the northern shore will allow more flexibility for commercial activities as an incentive to redevelop existing petroleum facilities. This area may be an integral component of large-scale resilience measures for future coastal storm impacts and should be considered for these purposes as redevelopment occurs. The City shall ensure that future development complements and minimizes negative impacts to the public use and enjoyment of Bug Light Park.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
<p>A. Remove land use allowances for petroleum-products storage facilities, however do not hinder existing facilities from undertaking improvements to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve air quality, coastal resilience, or visual aesthetics; or</li> <li>2. Comply with more stringent Federal, State, or local standards as they may be developed and adopted.</li> </ol>
<p>B. The area should allow commercial activities that are compatible with the build out of the Shipyard KLUPA and Ferry Village. Road, the block pattern of streets, trail systems, and land subdivision patterns shall connect the area to the surrounding neighborhoods.</p>
<p>B. Establish zoning standards that encourage redevelopment such that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Large volumes of freight traffic will be discouraged.</li> <li>2. Peak hour traffic on Broadway shall be minimized to avoid significant congestion or improvements will be made to the street network to increase capacity for additional traffic. If street network upgrades are proposed, they shall be limited to improvements that maintain the general character of the adjoining neighborhoods.</li> </ol>

<p>2. (cont.) Development that would necessitate street upgrades that would result in high speed, high volume traffic would be discouraged. In addition, a development's impact on vehicle miles traveled shall be considered in traffic studies.</p>
Other City Strategies
<p>D. Consider expanding the Greenbelt multi-use path to and along the waterfront.</p>
<p>E. Seek to establish continuous and connected public access to the shoreline through property acquisition or private development requirements.</p>
<p>F. Encourage assessment and remediation of Brownfield sites through federal or other programs.</p>
<p>G. Consider acquiring or preserving in perpetuity undeveloped property adjacent to Bug Light Park to maintain the amount of land available for public use.</p>
<p>H. Support coastal resilience measures that provide protection to adjacent areas.</p>
<p>I. Preserve or enhance public views of the waterfront.</p>

# Eastern Waterfront Marine Protection Area



# 22. Shipyard & Terminal Areas (subareas a, b, c, and d)

**D**

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences: 22a. & 22d. Residential (with conditions), Retail, Other Commercial, Light Industrial, Open Space/ Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/Government, and Water-Dependent forms of Warehousing/ Distribution/Logistics.

**Unique Growth** 22B. & 22C. Uses allowed in 22a as well as Lodging.

**Scale Preferences:**  
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**

**Height (Max):** 22a. 3 Stories      22b. 2-3 Stories      22c. 4-5 Stories      22d. 6 Stories

**Vision:** This area includes large industrial and underutilized properties near Bug Light Park and south to Broadway. The area has significant potential to connect the community to the waterfront and provide commercial opportunities, however, development challenges are present: limited access via Broadway, exposure to future flood risk, surrounding industrial development, compatibility with existing neighborhoods, infrastructure capacity limitations, Brownfield remediation from prior industrial uses, and sensitivity to protecting the City’s park and water access. This area will evolve subject to detailed standards that allow a range of uses similar to the Mill Creek Core KLUPA. As this evolution occurs, the City will expect carefully planned development that complements surrounding neighborhoods, meets community needs, and addresses the development challenges listed above.

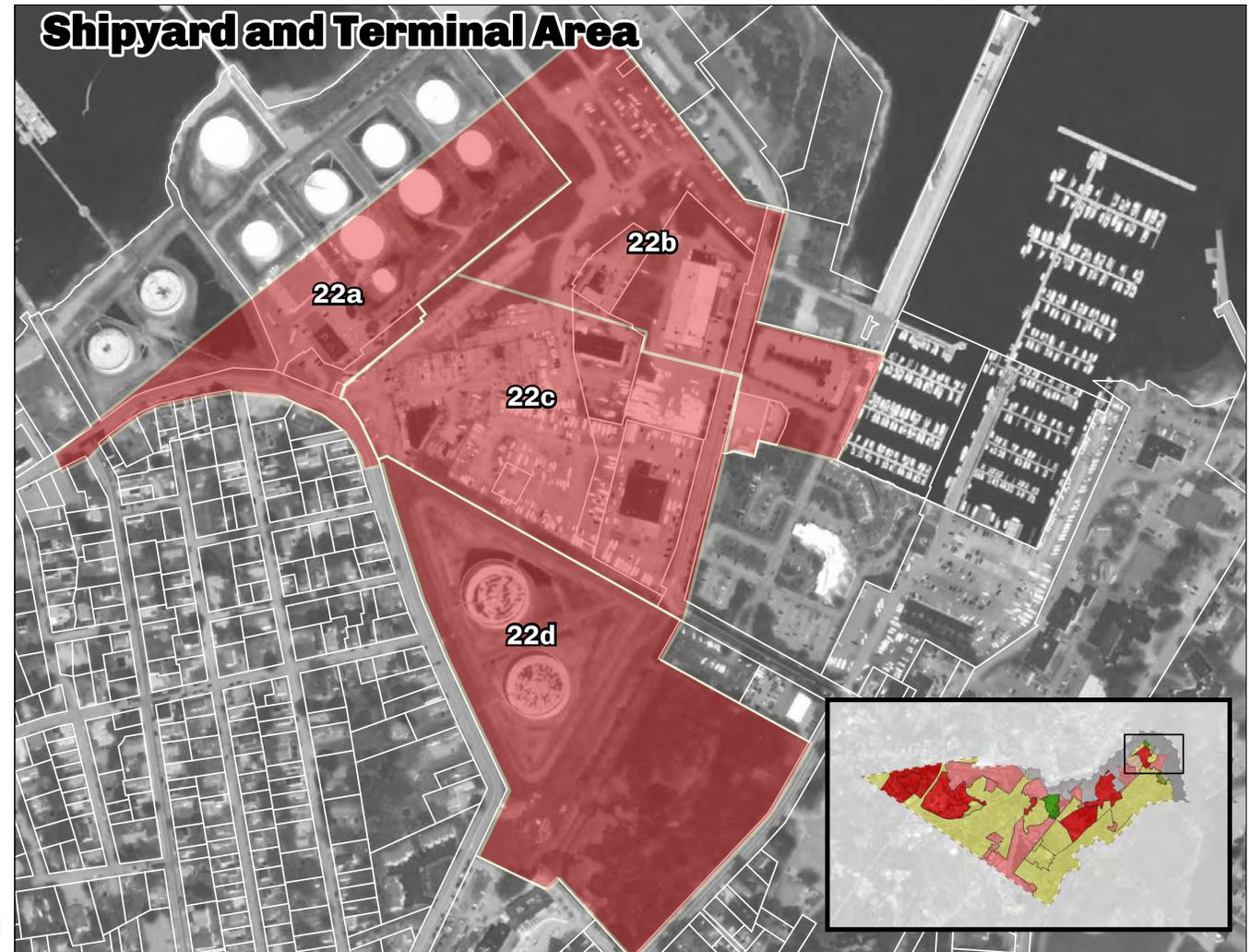
Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Remove land use allowances for petroleum-products storage facilities, however do not hinder existing facilities from undertaking improvements to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve air quality or visual aesthetics; or</li> <li>2. Comply with more stringent Federal, State, or local standards as they may be developed and adopted.</li> </ol>
B. Allow a diversity of land uses that are compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods. However, new residential development near facilities with significant VOC emissions should only be considered after an evidence-based analysis of the multiple health risks of VOC emissions and ground contamination demonstrates that the area has acceptable conditions for long term occupancy.
C. If residential development is allowed, the entire area should strive to provide a mix of housing types that serve diversified needs.
D. Seek to establish continuous and connected public access to the shoreline through property acquisition or private development requirements.

E. Require private development—possibly through impact fees—to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Require bicycle and pedestrian improvements within and from the area, linking the area to the adjoining neighborhoods and the Greenbelt.</li> <li>2. Provide or support transit infrastructure, and coordinate with providers to bring transit to the area.</li> </ol>
F. Continue to track emissions with fence line monitoring in coordination with State and Federal partners.
G. Investigate the feasibility of a licensing program to more closely monitor industrial activities and pollutant emissions.
H. Assess infrastructure, and other opportunities and constraints to attract/expand clean energy sectors.
I. Work with Maine DEP and the petroleum terminal operators to ensure existing facilities are fortified against coastal storms. Consider regulations if needed.

## 22. Shipyard & Terminal Area

### J. Adopt development standards such that:

1. New construction is resilient to future flood risks as outlined in citywide policies (i.e. Coastal Resilience Overlay Zone (CROZ), infrastructure resilience standards, etc.)
2. Building heights are compatible with adjacent neighborhoods acknowledging that height flexibility to allow flood resilience should be considered.
3. Building massing and scale meets urban design standards that are oriented to pedestrians.
4. Clustered development is promoted to preserve public view corridors to the water, maximize open space, and reserve areas for stormwater retention and treatment.
5. Soils that contain contaminants are appropriately remediated, and erosion controls are implemented to ensure site stability.
6. Substantial, interconnected, and publicly-accessible open spaces and/or recreational areas are provided.
7. Large volumes of freight traffic will be discouraged.
8. Road, the block pattern of streets, trail systems, and land subdivision patterns shall connect the area to the surrounding neighborhoods.
9. Development must include access to and along the waterfront.
10. Peak hour traffic on Broadway shall be minimized to avoid significant congestion, or improvements will be made to the street network to increase capacity for additional traffic. If street network upgrades are proposed, they shall be limited to improvements that maintain the general character of the adjoining neighborhoods. Development that would necessitate street upgrades that would result in high speed, high volume traffic would be discouraged. In addition, a development's impact on vehicle miles traveled shall be considered in traffic studies.
11. Adopt subdivision standards that require block dimensions similar to Ferry Village.



# 23. Bug Light

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Open Space/Recreation, Cultural**

**A**

**Conservation** Scale Preferences:  
**Residential Density: N/A**  
**Height: Determined Through Zoning**

*“Clean up the area and focus on enhancing the natural environment left at Bug Light Park.”*

**Vision:** This area includes Bug Light Park at the former World War II shipbuilding complex. It offers a walking path, saltwater fishing access, the Portland Breakwater Lighthouse, the Liberty Ship Memorial, the Cushing’s Point House museum and Historical Society offices, a scenic view of the City of Portland as well as Casco Bay, and a venue for open-air events programming. The South Portland Municipal Boat Ramp is part of Bug Light Park and provides critical shore access for watercraft. The area will maintain these cherished public functions, and seek to evolve Bug Light park to be resilient and adaptable to coastal conditions and flooding events.

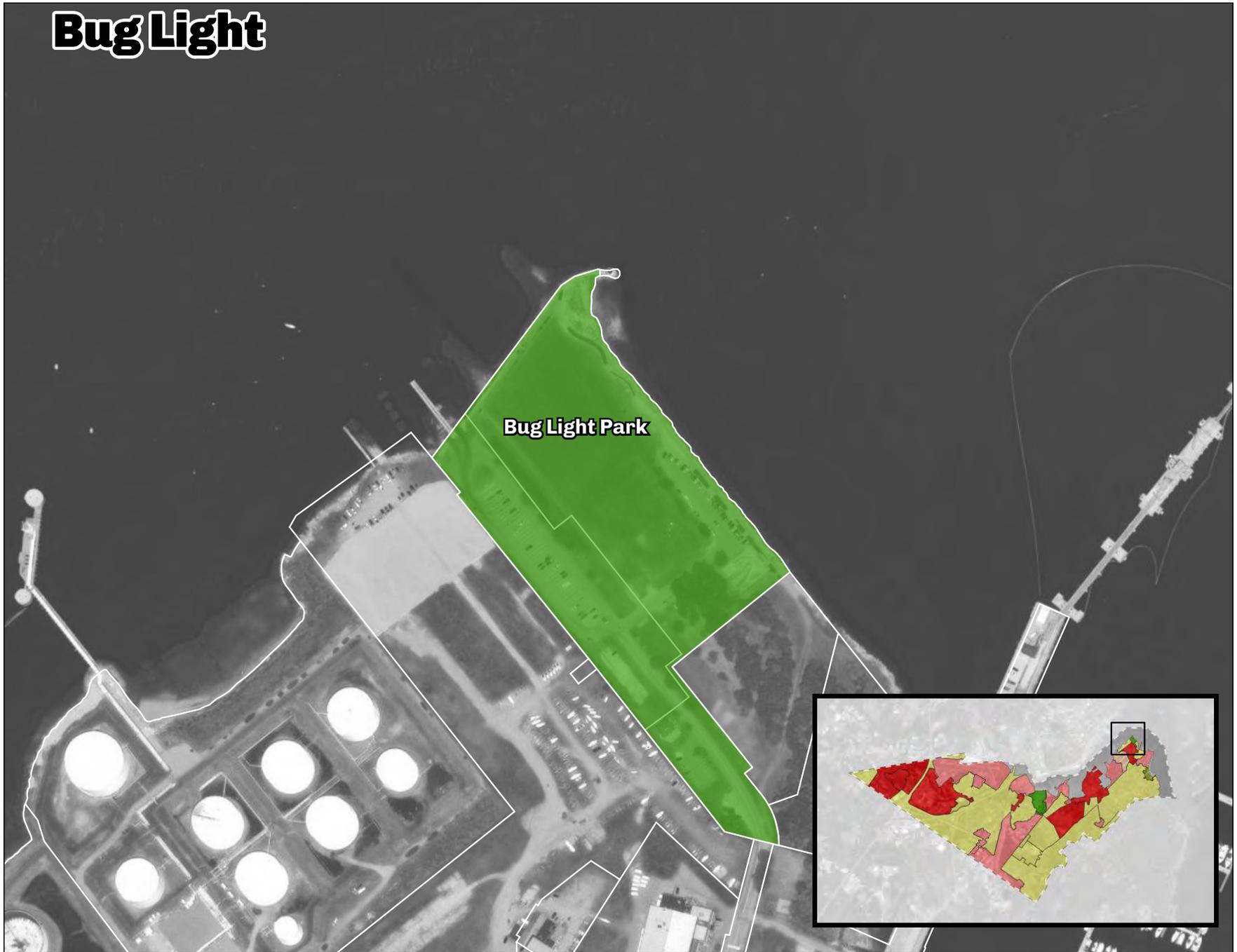
Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Allow the expansion and/or relocation of the Cushing’s Point House museum and Historical Society offices near their present location, and consistent with citywide coastal resilience policies.

Other City Strategies
B. Continue and expand public events and programming at Bug Light Park to increase community awareness, attachment, and enjoyment of the park and its history.
C. Maintain the Municipal Boat Ramp.
D. Support initiatives that improve access to the park with bicycle, pedestrian, and transit connections.
E. Study the feasibility of nature-based solutions that build wider coastal resilience while maintaining the functions of Bug Light Park.
F. Coordinate effective, compliant, and affordable improvements to mitigate or adapt community assets (including the waterfront pathway), property, or interests that are at risk from coastal flooding or storm damage.



Photo: Deb LaPointe

# Bug Light



# 24. Breakwater

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**B**

**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Commercial/Recreational Waterfront, Open Space/Recreation, Institutional/Government**

Limited Growth

Scale Preferences:

**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning  
Height: Determined Through Zoning**

*“Add new infrastructure that will protect the sensitive areas along Breakwater’s marina and townhouses, and over to the City’s marina at Port Harbor Marine.”*

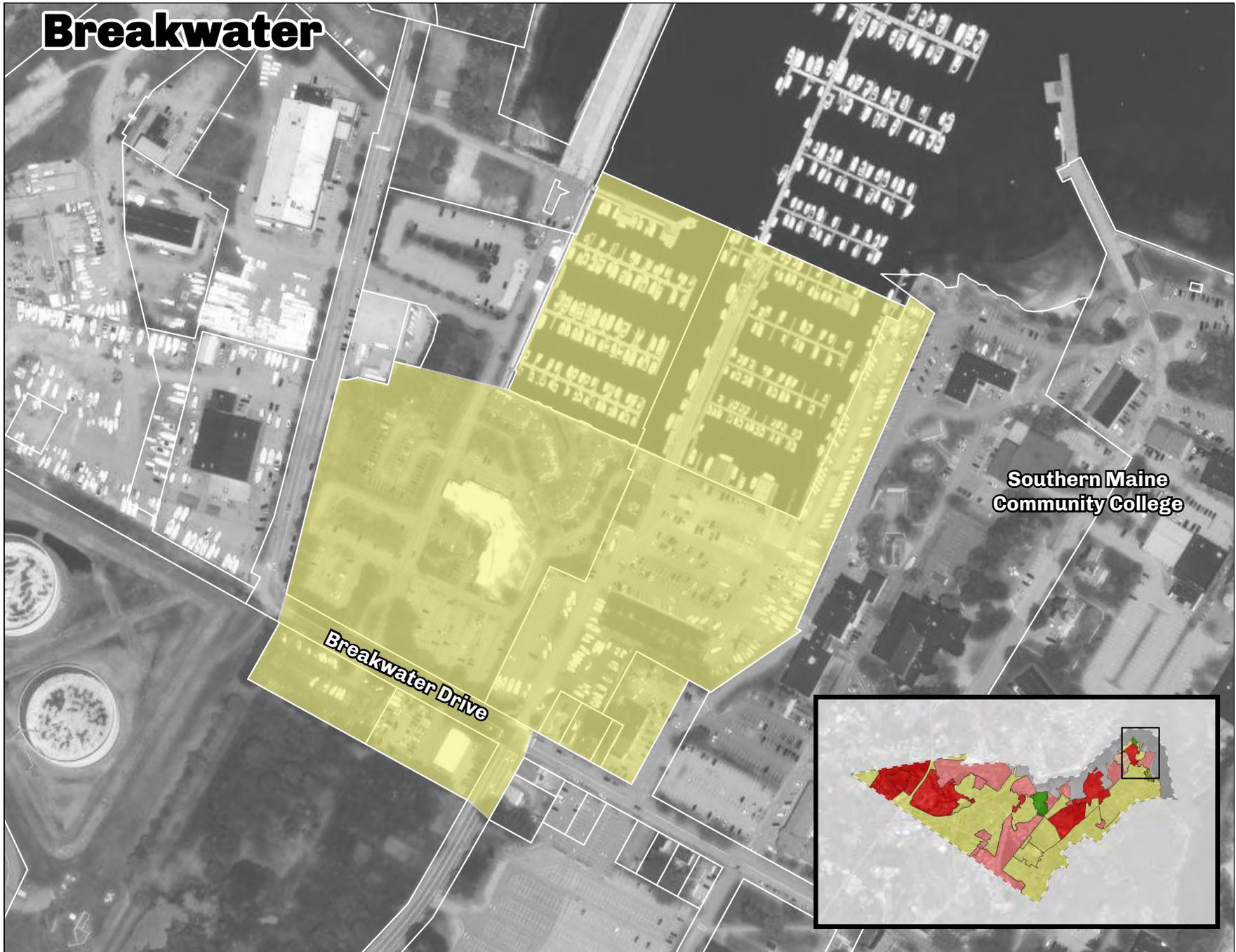
**Vision:** This area includes the Breakwater development, adjacent water-oriented commercial and recreational facilities, and related facilities on Benjamin W. Pickett Street. The area is largely built-out, and it faces long term coastal flooding risks from storms and tidal action with 3.9 ft sea level rise (SLR). Breakwater will continue to thrive in its current form but additional development will be restricted unless it is the expansion of flood-resilient water-oriented businesses and recreational facilities.

## Land Use/Zoning Strategies

- A. Allow a transfer of development rights from areas north of Benjamin W. Pickett to properties on the inland side of the street or adjacent to the Broadway intersection—where flood risks are limited in the long term—when the transfer improves coastal resilience or reduces residents’ risk exposure.
- B. Support marine uses at the water’s edge as well as the redevelopment of at-risk properties to similar flood-resilient uses.



Photo: David Jordan



# 25. SMCC

Growth Type:

Land Use Preferences:

**C**

**Residential, Retail/Service/Office/Medical, Lodging, Commercial/  
Recreational Waterfront, Open Space/Recreation, Cultural, Institutional/  
Government**

Growth

Scale Preferences:

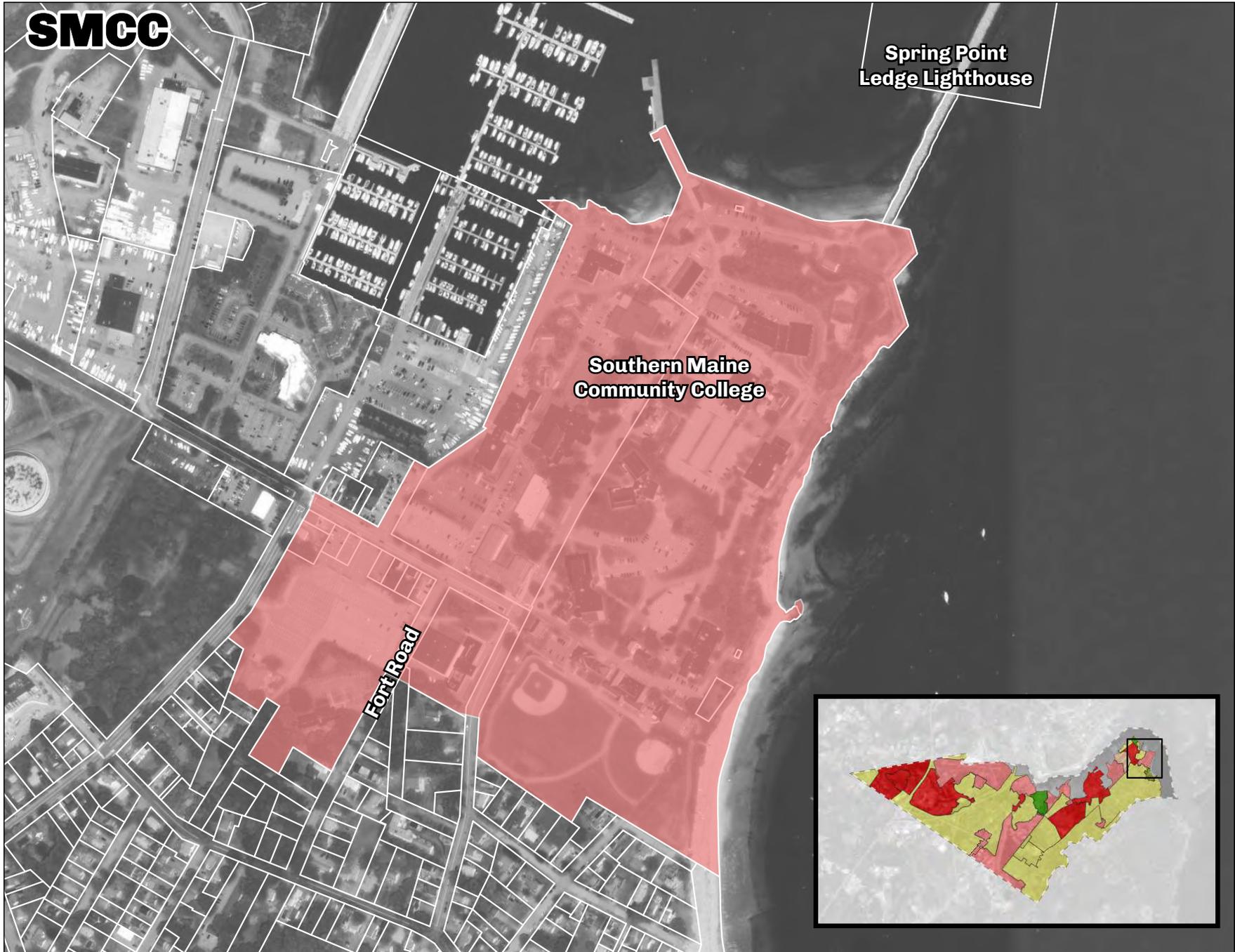
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning  
Height: Determined Through Zoning**

*“SMCC is an important institution for workforce development; the City should promote continued growth of the college, more opportunities for student housing, more businesses near the campus, etc.”*

**Vision:** This area includes the Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) campus, and supports the growth and (re)development of the college within the KLUPA. Development in the campus adjoining residential neighborhoods is tapered to transition to a lower scale or intensity. All significant (re)development is done in accordance with a Campus Master Plan that has been approved by the Planning Board.

Land Use/Zoning Strategies
A. Develop an institutional zoning district that reflects SMCC’s use of property within the KLUPA and require substantial developments that trigger site plan to be completed in accordance with a Campus Master Plan.
B. Allow student dorms to help alleviate commuter traffic to the campus.

Other City Strategies
C. Maintain a positive and collaborative relationship with State partners to ensure that development and investment in SMCC is coordinated with the City.
D. Support efforts to maintain efficient and frequent transit service to the campus from downtown Portland and major transit hubs.
E. Coordinate with SMCC regarding access, use, and improvements of Willard Beach and the Shoreway improvements to maximize the extent and quality of the public beach and Shoreway.
F. Support SMCC in preserving historic resources vulnerable to flooding impacts.
G. Prioritize preventing the erosion of the bluffs by partnering with SMCC to implement living shoreline and other measures.
H. Partner with Federal and State agencies, SMCC, and private partners to preserve Fort Preble and Spring Point Shoreway for public access, and advocate for the State or SMCC to implement shoreline protection measures



# 26. Willard

**Growth Type:** Land Use Preferences:  
**Residential, Open Space/Recreation**

**A→B**

**Conservation/ Ltd. Growth** Scale Preferences:  
**Residential Density: Determined Through Zoning**  
**Height: Determined Through Zoning**

*“Willard has a reputation for being a contaminated beach. This resource serves not only the local population, it also serves SMCC students and others who come here from the surrounding area.”*

**Vision:** This area includes the coastal portions of the Willard, which contain single-family residential development and an isolated pocket of clustered housing near Willow and Willard Streets. This area will continue to be a desirable residential neighborhood, with some opportunities for infill compatible with non-coastal portions of the neighborhoods. Willard Beach is migrating inland, and that presents challenges for coastal areas and beach enjoyment. While the migration will take decades, the City intends to retain public access to and enjoyment of the beach. In the short term, the City will prioritize safety, ensure public infrastructure is viable, and restrict development in coastal risk areas. In the medium and long term, new construction may be allowed when built to flood-resilient standards. Resilience improvements will be supported by the City. The City will allow and/or facilitate voluntary relocation to help residents migrate to safer ground.

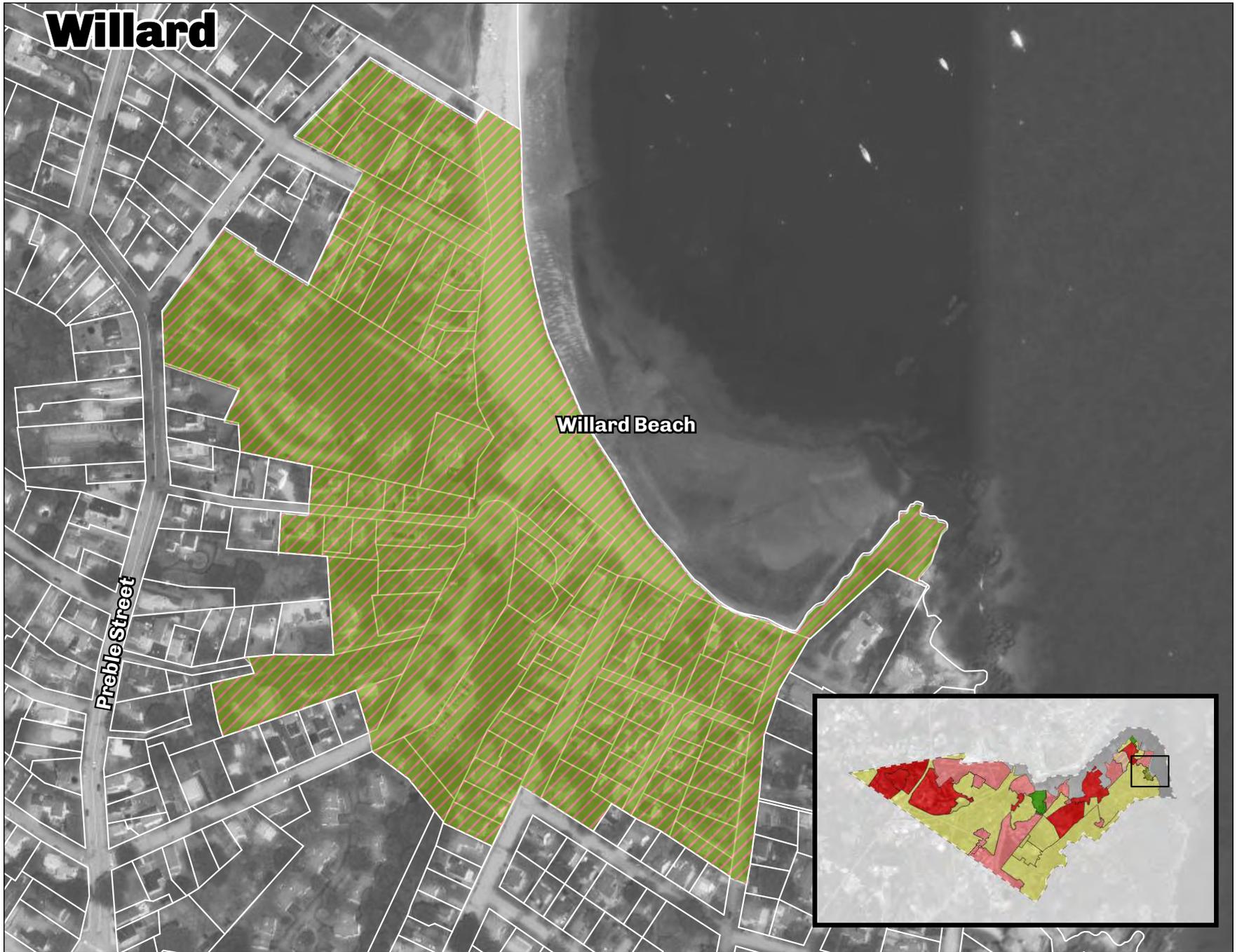
## Land Use/Zoning Strategies

- A. Ensure new construction is resilient to future flood risks as outlined in citywide policies (i.e. Coastal Resilience Overlay Zone (CROZ), infrastructure resilience standards, etc.). Until the CROZ is adopted, suppress development to reduce exposure to future risks.
- B. Allow a transfer of development rights (TDR) model from properties within the KLUPA to inland properties—where flood risk is lower—when the transfer improves resilience or reduces resident risk.
- C. Allow elevated buildings for flood adaptation but limit the height of raised buildings to preserve views and neighborhood cohesion.

## Other City Strategies

- D. Explore the relocation of municipal facilities from coastal risk areas near Willard Beach.

- E. Adopt long term measures that protect, enhance, or replenish the beach dune system and coastal bluffs.
- F. Evaluate risks to public utilities and municipal infrastructure in coastal risk areas.
- G. Implement effective, legal, and affordable improvements to mitigate or adapt community assets at risk from coastal flooding or storm damage.
- H. Facilitate or participate in coordinated efforts among private property owners considering resiliency upgrades to promote effective and cohesive interventions.
- I. Develop criteria and explore funding mechanisms for acquiring beachfront properties to allow dune and beach migration.
- J. Study and consider other methods that facilitate the voluntary relocation of structures from the Willard Beach area
- K. Implement and update the Willard Beach Master Plan to ensure high quality beach habitats are preserved and enhanced over time.

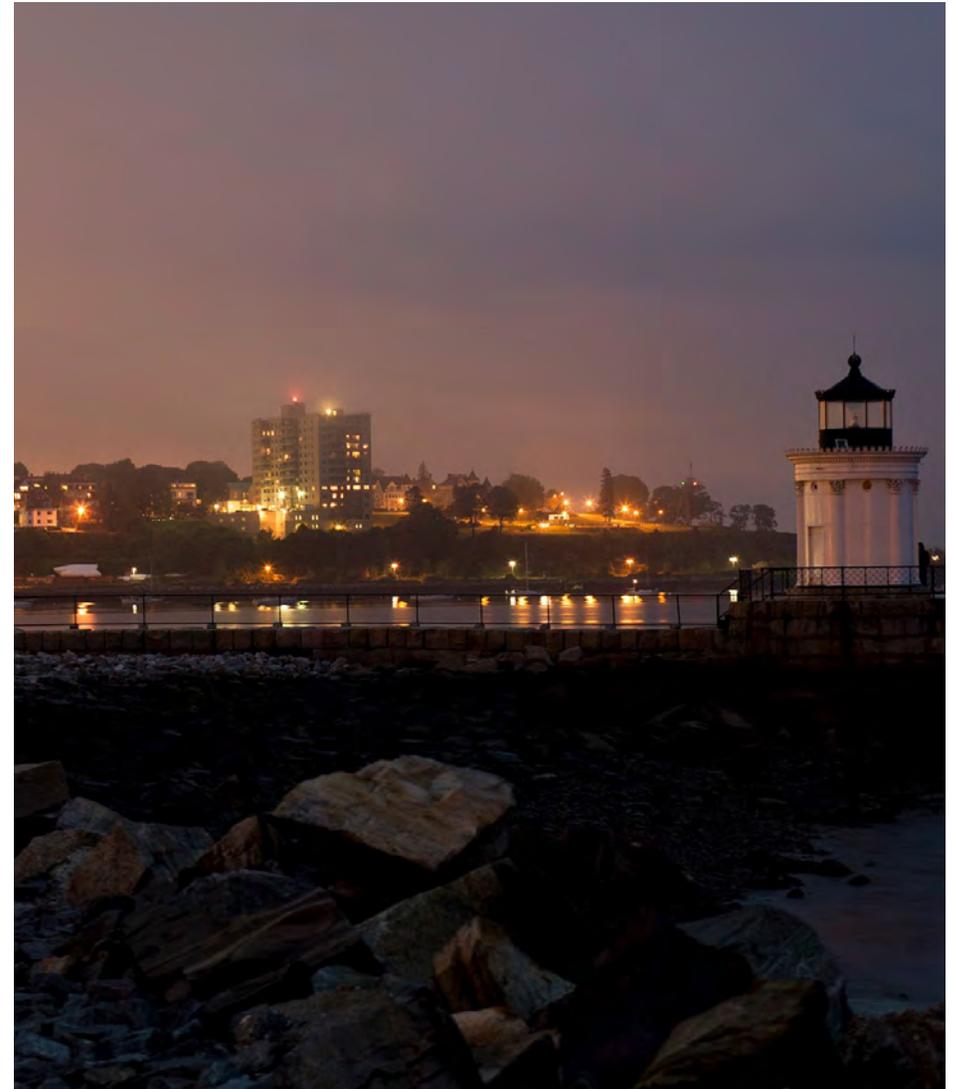


# Regional Coordination

South Portland is part of the Greater Portland region and plays an important role in southern Maine. Located on Casco Bay and just across the Fore River from Portland, the City is home to a mix of neighborhoods, businesses, industrial areas, and open spaces that connect it to the region in many ways. While this Comprehensive Plan focuses on South Portland's local needs, it also recognizes that issues like housing, traffic, climate change, and water quality are shared across communities and require a regional response.

South Portland regularly works with neighboring towns, county agencies, and regional organizations to address these challenges. The City is an active partner in several efforts that support housing, transportation, the environment, emergency services, and economic development:

- Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG): South Portland works with GPCOG on regional planning, transportation, climate action, and economic development. The City is part of GPCOG's Economic Development District.
- Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS): South Portland takes part in regional transportation planning and helps guide investment in roads, transit, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
- Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP) and Friends of Casco Bay: These organizations help monitor and protect the health of Casco Bay. South Portland contributes local data and takes part in water quality and coastal planning efforts.
- Long Creek Watershed Management District: South Portland works with Portland, Westbrook, and Scarborough to reduce stormwater pollution and meet water quality standards in the Long Creek watershed.



Bug Light and the City of Portland

- One Climate Future: This joint plan with Portland outlines shared goals for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, supporting clean energy, and preparing for sea level rise and extreme weather.
- Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency (CCEMA): South Portland coordinates emergency preparedness and response with the County and other local communities.
- Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce: The City works with the Chamber on regional business development and workforce support.
- South Portland Housing Authority: This partner helps expand and preserve affordable housing options in South Portland and nearby towns.
- METRO: The City coordinates with METRO on bus routes, fare systems, and regional transit planning.
- Portland International Jetport: The Portland International Jetport (PWM) is owned and operated by the City of Portland, but part of the property, including the main runway, is in South Portland.

South Portland’s role as a job center and commercial hub means its planning decisions affect the region. Roads like Broadway and Route 1, along with the Maine Mall area, carry commuters and goods through the City every day. Housing policies in South Portland also contribute to the region’s overall supply and affordability.

Environmental planning is another area where regional cooperation is key. Most of South Portland lies in the Casco Bay Watershed. The City works with state agencies and neighboring towns to protect streams, manage runoff, and plan for future climate impacts like flooding and sea level rise.



South Portland Bus Service

Public safety and emergency response are also coordinated across town lines. South Portland shares dispatch services and mutual aid agreements with nearby communities to improve response times and emergency coverage.

In the years ahead, South Portland will continue to work with regional partners to address shared issues and plan for the future. Whether it’s housing, infrastructure, public services, or climate action, regional coordination remains essential to the City’s success and resilience.

# Plan Implementation

The success of a plan is measured by how well it is implemented. The Comprehensive Plan is a living document and a tool for community decision makers to set policies, target investments, and develop programs that reflect the values and priorities of the South Portland Community. Boards, Committees, and City staff will refer to this document when making decisions about public investments, future work plans, and policy decisions. Following the adoption of this plan, the City's Comprehensive Plan Committee will serve as an implementation committee to steward the work of these goals, objectives, and strategies.

## Goals and Strategies

Through the planning process, the South Portland community identified goals and strategies to support the City's vision and values today, and help meet the challenges and needs of the future, organized under 6 core themes:

- Theme 1: Ecology and Climate Readiness
- Theme 2: Economy and Land Use
- Theme 3: Housing, Land Use, & Quality of Life
- Theme 4: Safe & Reliable Transportation Networks
- Theme 5: Social Vitality and Public Health
- Theme 6: Effective City Operations & Infrastructure

Each strategy includes a responsible party and timeline. Following local goals and strategies, all state required goals polices and strategies are included as Theme 7. These implementation tables will form the road map for the City to implement the plan.

**How the Plan's Vision, Themes,  
& Strategies come together:**

### VISION & FUTURE LAND USE

The Community Vision and Future Land Use Plan describe what we hope the Community will look and feel like by 2040.



### GOALS

Goals describe the conditions we desire. Goals can be broad policies or tangible. Goals are organized into **CORE THEMES** for easier reading.



### STRATEGIES

Strategies are action items and policies that are specific, measurable, and time-based.

## Theme 1: Ecology and Climate Readiness

## Goal:

# A Plan for Sea Level Rise and Coastal Storms

Prepare the community for the short and long term risks of sea level rise and coastal storms by using science-based projections and accounting for uncertainty.

*“Take a long term perspective. Ensure that new development takes place in an environmentally responsible manner.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
1.A.1	If private infrastructure is developed in coastal risk areas, it shall not be accepted as public unless City Council determines it provides a distinct community benefit.	City Council	Ongoing
1.A.2	Require that new development and redevelopment in coastal areas meets flood-resilient building and design requirements that minimize risk from at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3.9 ft of sea level rise + the 1% chance (100 yr) storm for development generally</li> <li>• 8.8 ft of sea level rise + the 1% chance (100 yr) storm for critical public and private infrastructure and critical services.</li> </ul> Requirements related to flood risk mitigation will prioritize human health and safety and not apply to non-habitable or accessory uses.	Planning	Short
1.A.3	Adopt standards that allow flood-resilience improvements on private property, but balance the need to install these resilience improvements with their potential to negatively impact neighboring properties.	Planning	Short
1.A.4	Advocate for state and federal support to achieve climate goals.	Executive	Short
1.A.5	Use up-to-date, evidence based climate data and projections when developing land use regulations, and public investment decisions.	Executive, Planning	Ongoing
1.A.6	Support the installation of educational signage and public art to educate the community and encourage property owners to plan for sea level rise.	Sustainability	Ongoing
1.A.7	Enhance communication with the community around sea level rise and flood risks, particularly before predicted high tide storm events, to boost social resilience and emergency preparedness.	Sustainability	Ongoing
1.A.8	Facilitate coordinated efforts among private property owners that are considering resiliency upgrades to their properties to ensure effective and cohesive interventions are implemented.	Sustainability	Short

## Theme 1: Ecology and Climate Readiness

## Goal:

**B****Become Climate Resilient Against Extreme Weather and Work With Property Owners to Protect and Enhance the Built Environment**

*Adapt codes, ordinances, policies, and services to prepare for the impacts of climate change.*

*“Infrastructure should be considered when approving new projects in areas forecast with a high inundation risk. Prioritize infrastructure that benefits the most or those with high risk in the community.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
1.B.1	Adopt ordinances that require new development to prepare for extreme weather events.	Planning, Sustainability	Short
1.B.2	Develop programs, policies and ordinances that require or encourage onsite stormwater retention or management, stormwater and sewer system separation, and relocating sensitive utility systems and equipment from flood-prone areas.	Water Resource Protection (WRP), Planning	Medium
1.B.3	Reduce areas where heat builds up (urban heat islands) by expanding the use of green infrastructure (i.e. pervious pavement, rain gardens, green roofs, etc.) and prioritize municipal tree-planting in heat islands. Provide incentives for private property to mitigate heat islands, and establish development standards that reduce heat islands. Adopt land use policies that encourage the establishment of biodiverse green roofs in areas where natural habitat and other green space is limited.	Public Works, WRP, Parks & Rec	Medium
1.B.4	Ensure that climate resilience and climate change mitigation strategies can be implemented efficiently by reducing procedural or other regulatory barriers.	Planning, Sustainability, Econ. Dev.	Short
1.B.5	Remove or modify regulations and procedures that impair resiliency efforts, such as but not limited to regulations that limit distributed clean power generation, preclude raising structures to avoid flooding, impair efforts to build defensible space for structures.	Planning, Sustainability, Econ. Dev.	Short
1.B.6	Adopt, fund, implement, and regularly update a climate action plan (i.e. One Climate Future) that addresses adaptation and mitigation needs and opportunities in the community.	Sustainability	Medium
1.B.7	Keep severe weather protocols up to date and ensure the local emergency service providers and support teams have the resources needed to assist the community during extreme events.	Fire	Ongoing
1.B.8	Maintain an effective Hazard Mitigation Plan with County and regional partners.	Fire	Ongoing
1.B.9	Continue to work with neighboring municipalities, the County, and other partners, on dry evacuation routes during storm-induced flooding.	Fire	Ongoing

## Theme 1: Ecology and Climate Readiness

## B: Become Climate Resilient Against Extreme Weather and Work With Property Owners to Protect and Enhance the Built Environment

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
1.B.10	Prioritize climate resilience for evacuation routes and streets connected to critical services such as fire and police stations.	Fire, Police	Ongoing
1.B.11	Develop educational programs and resources for the community to prepare for extreme weather	Sustainability	Medium
1.B.12	Evaluate existing City stormwater infrastructure and consider modifying development standards requirements to prepare for increasing storm intensity, and frequency, and heavier pollutant loads.	WRP, Planning	Short
1.B.13	Explore regulatory incentives to remove impervious areas on private property, especially in impaired watersheds. Explore the adoption of stormwater impact fees on new development.	WRP, Planning	Short
1.B.14	Develop parking maximums to prevent excessive private parking development.	Planning	Medium
1.B.15	Promote the reuse of underutilized parking areas for public spaces, green space, and green infrastructure, especially during redevelopment activities.	Planning	Short
1.B.16	Revise floodplain management provisions as new floodplain maps become available.	Planning	Ongoing
1.B.17	Work with waterfront businesses and property owners to prepare waterfront facilities for climate change conditions and protect adjacent neighborhoods and coastal waters from hazards related to flooding, erosion, damage to facilities, or pollutant spills. Develop and share tools for waterfront resiliency.	Econ. Dev.	Short
1.B.18	Support the transition to efficient, electrified, and resilient buildings.	Sustainability, Planning	Short
1.B.19	Adopt land use regulations that encourage infill development, and redevelopment, on disturbed properties instead of encroaching into open space and natural resource lands.	Planning	Short
1.B.20	Explore ways to more closely monitor industrial activities including shoreline stability and storm preparedness.	Sustainability, Executive	Short
1.B.21	Continue to invest in citywide stormwater management and water quality improvements to protect waterways.	WRP	Ongoing
1.B.22	Develop a Native Plant Ordinance for City-owned property	Parks & Rec	Medium

Theme 1: Ecology and Climate Readiness

Goal:

**C**

**Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment**

*Protect South Portland’s coastline, green spaces, and natural habitats.*

*“Preserve natural habitat for local wildlife and outdoor recreation.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
1.C.1	Update Climate Action Plan/Open Space Plan to strengthen ecosystem resilience through enhancing connectivity, biodiversity, and healthy habitat	Sustainability	Medium
1.C.2	Conduct an urban tree canopy study to catalog trees, measure loss, and identify priority public areas for planting to strengthen canopy coverage.	Parks & Rec.	Medium
1.C.3	Assess and mitigate hazard trees within the right of way and public spaces.	Parks & Rec.	Ongoing
1.C.4	Develop and implement a municipal tree planting program that includes incentives to remove invasive species from wooded habitats, mitigation for heat islands on public and private property, and provides tree planting resources to property owners.	Parks & Rec.	Medium
1.C.5	Support community education about the natural environment through City communications, existing volunteer committees, as well as Library, Parks, and School District programming.	Sustainability, Parks & Rec	Ongoing
1.C.6	Develop, implement and publicize an invasive species removal program. If necessary, incorporate careful strategies on the use of chemical herbicide, pesticides, and fungicides using best practice guidance from conservation authorities.	Sustainability, Parks & Rec	Ongoing
1.C.7	Explore nature-based solutions to address coastal and river erosion, such as by supporting marsh enhancement and floodable spaces along Fore River tributaries. Whenever feasible, implement living shorelines to curtail coastal erosion.	Sustainability, Water Resource Protection (WRP)	Long
1.C.8	Update the wetland and upland loss compensation fee ordinance to reflect current land costs, and explore the development of additional natural resource mitigation fees and ordinances.	Planning	Short
1.C.9	Acquire additional public open space through the Open Space Acquisition Fund, seek new opportunities to add to the fund, and prioritize acquisition in underserved areas	City Manager, Planning	Ongoing

## Theme 1: Ecology and Climate Readiness

**C: Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment***Protect South Portland's coastline, green spaces, and natural habitats.*

<b>ID</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
1.C.10	Develop and implement watershed management plans to protect waterbodies and improve impaired waterbodies, in partnership with state agencies.	Water Resource Protection (WRP)	Medium
1.C.11	Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City, that sets goals and priorities for each park and open space property	Parks & Rec.	Long
1.C.12	Protect existing and future public open space properties from sale and development	City Council	Ongoing
1.C.13	Improve access to open space throughout the community using the 2019 Open Space Plan as a guide. Ensure that the City's bicycle and pedestrian master plan provides open space linkages	Planning, Sustainability, Public Works (DPW)	Ongoing
1.C.14	Explore and develop a Transfer of Development Rights ordinance to support land conservation	Planning	Medium
1.C.15	Encourage diverse grassland and meadow habitat on City-owned lands, such as through strategically limiting mowing in certain areas.	Parks & Rec	Ongoing
1.C.16	Facilitate tidal wetland migration.	Sustainability, WRP, Parks & Rec	Long
1.C.17	Explore consistent funding for open space conservation, such as supporting State advocacy to allow the City to levy a local land bank fee on real estate transfers to fund open space conservation efforts, similar to the Nantucket Land Bank.	Executive	Medium
1.C.18	Update the Shoreland Resource Protection District to accurately reflect resources at risk and no development areas.	Planning	Short
1.C.19	Work with private property owners and local partners, such as the Land Trust, to expand public access to open space and trails.	Parks & Rec.	Short

Theme 2: Economy and Land Use

Goal:

**Business Growth**

**A**

Attract and support businesses that provide high-quality jobs with livable wages for all education levels.

*“A vision for a city that encourages smart, mixed-use development, creating livable places where people want to reside work, and recreate.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
2.A.1	Update ordinances and procedures to reduce review time for development proposals and improve outcomes. Monitor processing timelines for development review to encourage continual process improvements and efficiency.	Planning	Short
2.A.2	Following an assessment of needs and through a coordinated economic development strategy, support ordinances and initiatives that provide affordable spaces for small, locally-owned businesses. Such initiatives may include supporting the development of a community land trust, partnering with local non-profits, providing space in municipal facilities for business incubators, and updating regulations to preserve commercial space for local or non-chain businesses.	Econ. Dev., Planning	Medium
2.A.3	Partner with or participate in programs provided by local businesses and institutions to provide equitable workforce training opportunities, below market incubator spaces, and educational programs that support high-quality job opportunities, particularly in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), and trades.	Econ. Dev.	Medium
2.A.4	Update the City's Economic Development Plan, and prioritize the goals and strategies that implement the comprehensive plan.	Econ. Dev.	Short
2.A.5	Leverage current and future tax increment financing, grants, and loans to achieve the City's economic, infrastructure, and service goals.	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing
2.A.6	Provide superior business assistance services through the Economic Development Department, and help the business community by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advising on federal, state, and local legislative changes or programs that may impact or support businesses;</li> <li>• providing support when pursuing external funding if the effort will promote the City's economic priorities;</li> <li>• connecting them with local resources and partner organizations;</li> <li>• providing clear and consistent communication;</li> <li>• promoting them through City initiatives; and</li> <li>• offering concierge service toward business development.</li> </ul>	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing

## Theme 2: Economy and Land Use

### A: Business Growth

*Attract and support businesses that provide high-quality jobs with livable wages for all education levels.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
2.A.7	Along major corridors and intersection not guided by KLUPA policy, consider increased development opportunity.	Planning	Short
2.A.8	Support the bicycle/pedestrian tourism economy.	Econ. Dev.	Medium
2.A.9	Evaluate whether the creation of an economic development corporation can expand the City's economic development efforts.	Econ. Dev.	Short
2.A.10	Seek significant growth in non-residential tax revenue.	Executive	Ongoing

## Theme 2: Economy and Land Use

Goal:

**Strengthen the Economy****B**

Establish South Portland's image as the first choice for business expansion or relocation.

*“Allow small-scale, appropriate businesses to exist within neighborhoods and support enhanced/expanded businesses in established areas.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
2.B.1	Encourage existing South Portland businesses to expand and remain in South Portland.	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing
2.B.2	Assess where congestion creates hardship for businesses, and when feasible and appropriate, invest in improving the City's transportation infrastructure.	Econ. Dev., Public Works (DPW)	Medium
2.B.3	Revise parking standards in industrial and commercial growth areas to avoid constraints and reduce excessive requirements.	Planning	Short
2.B.4	Capitalize on South Portland's freight and distribution infrastructure by supporting economic growth, investment, and evolution in this business sector.	Econ. Dev.	Medium
2.B.5	Support business development within existing neighborhoods that is compatible with the neighborhood character and provides amenities/services in a neighborhood context.	Econ. Dev., Planning	Short
2.B.6	Reduce zoning barriers to daycares and preschools and promote their development.	Planning	Short
2.B.7	Encourage and promote street festivals to promote neighborhood economic development, support local businesses, and increase local patronage.	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing
2.B.8	Invest in physical beautification efforts and streetscape improvements in commercial and mixed-use areas.	Econ. Dev., DPW, Parks & Rec	Medium
2.B.9	Promote South Portland as a desirable location for recreational and cultural events that can utilize the City's facilities, and contribute to the local economy.	Econ. Dev., Parks & Rec	Short
2.B.10	Continue to seek and expand access to external funding to facilitate local economic and community development goals.	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing
2.B.11	Collaborate with property owners as well as regional, state, and federal partners to support identification, assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of Brownfield properties in South Portland.	Econ. Dev., Planning	Ongoing

Theme 2: Economy and Land Use

Goal:

# Energy Evolution

**C**

*Proactively adapt codes, ordinances, policies, and services to facilitate evolving energy needs and options.*

*“Support clean energy with community values.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
2.C.1	Create land use plans, including master/infrastructure and redevelopment financing plans, that support the transition of properties that are no longer in use for petroleum storage.	Planning	Ongoing
2.C.2	Support/incentivize industry sectors that provide employment in fields that build a greener economy and generally enable an economy that is either less impactful to the climate or helps mitigate and adapt to changing environmental conditions.	Econ. Dev.	Medium
2.C.3	Ensure zoning regulations support electrification and distributed energy resources. Allow local energy networks, like micro-grids and shared heating/cooling for multiple buildings. Explore requirements for development at certain scale.	Planning	Short
2.C.4	Work with Portland Water District and Central Maine Power to improve capacity and resilience of utility infrastructure without compromising the housing and development goals of the comprehensive plan.	Sustainability	Medium

Theme 3: Housing, Land Use, and Quality of Life

Goal:

# Increase Housing Options

# A

The City will proactively work to close the gap in affordable housing availability so that housing diversity is available across neighborhoods and provides options for residents at all stages of life and income levels.

*“South Portland needs to make it as easy as possible to build all types of housing.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
3.A.1	Incentivize and develop resources to support accessibility improvements in homes to facilitate aging-in-place.	Affordable Housing Committee	Short
3.A.2	Provide education to de-stigmatize voucher holders.	General Assistance, Planning	Ongoing
3.A.3	Evaluate the use of penalties and incentives to reduce the number of vacant or seasonal properties in the community, and support state legislative efforts to pass a vacant property tax law.	Executive	Medium
3.A.4	Ensure housing options allow for transitional and other supportive housing that supports those experiencing homelessness. Coordinate with these housing providers to enhance the effectiveness and success of these housing types in the community without over-burdening City resources. Allow these housing types in suitable locations to ensure access and service availability and establish appropriate operation requirements.	Planning, Police, Fire	Short
3.A.5	Support the development of deed-restricted affordable housing.	Planning	Short
3.A.6	Leverage Affordable Housing Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts to support workforce and affordable housing.	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing
3.A.7	Maintain data on short-term rentals. Enforce and educate the public about short-term rental regulations.	Clerk	Ongoing
3.A.8	Explore the potential for Community Land Trusts and other mechanisms to prevent speculation and provide affordable and workforce housing. The analysis should clarify the City's role and financial commitment.	Planning	Medium
3.A.9	Support efforts to create affordable and workforce housing.	Planning	Ongoing

### Theme 3: Housing, Land Use, and Quality of Life

#### A: Increase Housing Options

*The City will proactively work to close the gap in affordable housing availability so that housing diversity is available across neighborhoods and provides options for residents at all stages of life and income levels.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
3.A.10	Periodically update the City's 2021 Housing Assessment and Strategy Report to reflect current housing conditions and to continually identify strategies for increasing housing options and housing affordability in the community. Actively implement the goals of the Housing Assessment.	Planning	Medium
3.A.11	Support housing-vulnerable residents through education and assistance with accessing tax relief programs.	Finance	Ongoing
3.A.12	Explore and implement effective housing displacement protections beyond the City's rent stabilization ordinance.	Planning, Econ. Dev.	Short
3.A.13	Reduce regulatory barriers to housing production of different types, such as large minimum lot or setback requirements.	Planning	Short
3.A.14	Allow a diversity of housing types in appropriate locations including single-room occupancy and other alternative living arrangement that serve a diverse population.	Planning	Short
3.A.15	Conduct an inclusionary housing feasibility study and consider adopting inclusionary zoning when the City's housing production pipeline is demonstrating that it is keeping pace with housing production goals.	Planning	Medium
3.A.16	Update zoning standards to revive historical development patterns that support additional housing (i.e. narrow setbacks and multifamily structures on small lots).	Planning	Short
3.A.17	Amend land use regulations to treat small apartments as a fractional unit for density purposes to encourage and facilitate the development of this type of housing in those areas where the construction of multi-family housing is desired.	Planning	Short
3.A.18	Amend land use regulations to support the construction of infill housing	Planning	Short
3.A.19	Expedite projects with less than 6 units by streamlining the review process.	Planning	Short

Theme 3: Housing, Land Use, and Quality of Life

Goal:

**Mix Land Uses**

**B**

Encourage growth that provides a vibrant mix of residential, institutional, and business activities.

*“Allow dense growth to address housing needs but preserve existing neighborhood density/aesthetics.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
3.B.1	Explore the development of paid on street parking and a street parking program in strategic areas after researching appropriate and effective strategies that are viable in a community with a winter climate and under present service and infrastructure capacity, particularly with respect to the Public Works; Facilities; and Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Departments and their duties to manage and maintain city streets and property.	Public Works (DPW), Police	Short
3.B.2	Audit and rewrite zoning code to make it more functional for complex developments.	Planning	Short
3.B.3	Consider implementing zoning that focuses on size, form, and placement of development, (rather than use and density) to better enable mixed use development.	Planning	Short

Theme 4: Safe and Reliable Transportation Networks

Goal:

# Expand Bike and Pedestrian Network

# A

Extend the City's existing off-street bicycle and pedestrian network, including the Greenbelt, to provide safe multi-modal connections throughout the City.

*““I love the idea of expanding our path and sidewalk network to promote better walkability and bike-ability.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
4.A.1	When feasible and efficient, pair bike and pedestrian improvements with stormwater/green infrastructure improvements, and update the City's Street Design Manual accordingly. Consider road diets to reduce municipal operation and maintenance burdens.	Public Works (DPW), Water Resources Protection (WRP)	Medium
4.A.2	Promote safe behavior on multi-use trails, and consider enforceable standards.	Parks & Rec.	Ongoing
4.A.3	Seek funding to widen multi-use trails in accordance with federal standards.	DPW	Long
4.A.4	Establish secure bike parking along the greenbelt, commuter routes, and destinations.	Parks, DPW	Medium
4.A.5	Advocate with Maine DOT to improve bicycle safety along Casco Bay Bridge, and along other major routes.	DPW, Bicycle-Pedestrian Committee	Ongoing
4.A.6	"Expand connections to and from the Eastern Trail and Greenbelt, including into the City's existing and emerging residential or mixed-use neighborhoods, such as: 1. Lighthouse/Willard/Cottage loop; 2. Ferry Village coastal loop; 3. Knightville loop with links to Portland (e.g. trail west of the sewer plant and along Waterman Dr.); 4. Kaler School/High School/Community Center; 5. Cemeteries/Ligonia/Cash Corner linking Memorial and Veteran's Bridge; 6. Wainwright/Sunset Park/Thornton Heights/Middle School/Redbank loop."	Parks & Rec	Ongoing

## Theme 4: Safe and Reliable Transportation Networks

### A: Expand Bike and Pedestrian Network

*Extend the City's existing off-street bicycle and pedestrian network, including the Greenbelt, to provide safe multi-modal connections throughout the City.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
4.A.7	Develop, maintain and implement a long-range bicycle and pedestrian plan to improve and expand access, connectivity, and safety. Priorities, that should also be reflected in the plan include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving safety to and from schools</li> <li>• Creating links within all neighborhoods to the Eastern Trail and Greenbelt;</li> <li>• Closing network gaps (e.g. Broadway, Cash Corner, Vachon-Lincoln, west side)</li> <li>• Creating links to employment and service areas as well as the waterfront;</li> <li>• Efficient and strategic connections, leveraging private or third-party partners; and</li> <li>• New facilities in areas transitioning to mixed uses where facilities are limited.</li> <li>• Creating more neighborhood byways to provide alternate routes on low-volume, low-speed streets.</li> <li>• Promoting active living</li> </ul>	DPW, Parks & Rec	Short
4.A.8	Revise land use regulations to require that developments incorporate provisions for pedestrian and bicycle transportation into development plans.	Planning	Short
4.A.9	Encourage developers to invest in bike/ped infrastructure for internal site connectivity & connectivity to surrounding networks.	Planning	Short
4.A.10	Evaluate and prioritize bicycle-pedestrian infrastructure maintenance (including winter maintenance) to optimize limited resources.	DPW	Ongoing

## Theme 4: Safe and Reliable Transportation Networks

### Goal:

## Improve Public Transit

# B

Make public transit routes, schedules, and availability more user-friendly and better integrated with regional transportation offerings, including bus, rail, airplane, and marine transit.

*“Public transit needs to be drastically ramped up with expanded schedules and service areas.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
4.B.1	Support micro-transit deployment in South Portland and to destinations utilized by South Portlanders.	Executive	Short
4.B.2	Revise land use regulations to require that projects along transit corridors provide and enhance transit access and facilities at a commensurate level with the scale of the project and its potential transit demand/impact.	Planning	Medium
4.B.3	Provide incentives, such as reduced parking requirements, when developments enhance transit (e.g. with employee ride programs or provide other financial support for the transit system) based on the level of transit support that is provided.	Planning	Medium
4.B.4	Gather input from transit providers and users to establish priorities for transit investment through Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts.	Planning	Medium
4.B.5	Strengthen the City's transit-oriented development (TOD) nodes to support travel by walking, biking, and public transportation; Implement capital investments and land use policy changes to facilitate TOD.	Planning	Medium
4.B.6	Seek to increase transit accessibility and comfort to encourage ridership.	Executive	Short
4.B.7	Explore subsidizing Metro bus fares.	Executive	Medium
4.B.8	Advocate for Metro to maintain and improve language access for public transit system information.	Executive	Short
4.B.9	Coordinate with Metro on bus stop amenities, with a priority on accessibility, amenities, and quality service, especially at high-use stops.	Executive	Short
4.B.10	Seek to optimize bus service routes/schedule for current and future growth. Prioritize those with higher transit dependency	Executive	Short

## Theme 4: Safe and Reliable Transportation Networks

### B: Improve Public Transit

*Make public transit routes, schedules, and availability more user-friendly and better integrated with regional transportation offerings, including bus, rail, airplane, and marine transit.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
4.B.11	Advocate for bus rapid transit and encourage Metro to consider “fixed guideway” vehicles in South Portland.	Executive	Medium
4.B.12	Work with Metro and South Portland riders to perform a transit service network study to examine potential route reconfigurations and expansions, hop-on/hop-off service, scheduling changes and expansions, regional tourist passes, new payment systems, new bus stop locations, bus rapid routes, transit signal priority, and other transit links. Prioritize those with higher transit dependency through community engagement and goal setting.	Planning	Medium
4.B.13	Prioritize increased transit frequency along corridors where higher-density development is proposed in this plan.	Executive	Short
4.B.14	Encourage Metro to explore opportunities to integrate the transit system with all forms of regional transportation.	Executive	Short
4.B.15	Continue to work with private partners at major destinations (e.g. SMCC, major employers, etc.) to encourage transit ridership and convenience, including considering express bus routes.	Econ. Dev.	Short
4.B.16	Work with local and regional transit providers to ensure that South Portland residents can readily connect to other major job centers in Maine and the Boston metro area.	Econ. Dev.	Long
4.B.17	Ensure the City stays involved in jetport decisions.	City Manager, Planning	Ongoing

## Theme 4: Safe and Reliable Transportation Networks

Goal:

**C****Multimodal and Interconnected Streets**

Upgrade aging infrastructure and redesign roads/intersections for improved connectivity, safety, and mobility for all users.

*“Cars will not go away as the main source of transportation any time soon, so investing in better, safer roads, and improved infrastructure and traffic patterns is ideal.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
4.C.1	Support GPCOG/PACTS initiatives and priorities within the regional Vision Zero plan.	Planning	Ongoing
4.C.2	Support education programs on the rights and responsibilities of different road users to ensure more respectful, safe, and conscientious travel by all users.	Public Works (DPW), Bicycle-Pedestrian Committee	Ongoing
4.C.3	Implement the Street Design Manual to apply Complete Streets when roads are being reconstructed, subject to funding availability.	DPW	Ongoing
4.C.4	Create a priority plan for appropriate traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods, and discourage cut-through traffic when designing and upgrading arterial or connector roads.	DPW	Short
4.C.5	Continue to assess and seek funding for intersection redesign and improvement, especially around high-crash or congested intersections to improve traffic flow and safety, reduce idling-related air emissions, and support growth and development goals.	DPW	Short
4.C.6	Optimize traffic signal infrastructure (i.e. lights or signs) to reduce congestion.	DPW	Ongoing
4.C.7	Identify effective methods to deter freight and commercial through-traffic on roads not suited for these vehicles.	DPW, Planning	Ongoing
4.C.8	Continue to explore additional ways to cross the City, such as a Crosstown Connector between Broadway/Main and Highland that create opportunities for new development parcels and reduce truck traffic through residential neighborhoods, such as Cash Corner.	Planning, DPW	Ongoing
4.C.9	Develop policies and a plan to connect dead-end streets, when possible, but especially during major (re)development proposals.	Planning, DPW	Short
4.C.10	Where feasible, increase street lighting to address safety.	DPW	Ongoing

## Theme 4: Safe and Reliable Transportation Networks

### C: Multimodal and Interconnected Streets

*Upgrade aging infrastructure and redesign roads/intersections for improved connectivity, safety, and mobility for all users.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
4.C.11	Support the development of mobility hubs to coordinate pedestrian and bike trails with transit around the working waterfront to increase connectivity and service frequencies if density increases.	Planning, DPW	Long
4.C.12	Invest in transportation infrastructure and support transit services in areas of the City with high employment concentration to reduce congestion and better connect residents to job opportunities.	Executive	Ongoing
4.C.13	Explore enhanced freight rail connections to Turner's Island, Sprague Terminal, Hannaford Distribution, and other locations.	Econ. Dev.	Long

## Theme 4: Safe and Reliable Transportation Networks

Goal:

**Waterfront Access****D***Expand and improve public access to the waterfront.*

*“ The Greenbelt is wonderful, but parts of it stray quite a distance from businesses and other hubs of activity, so some effort at connecting it to those areas would be welcomed.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
4.D.1	Continue to work with developers and property owners to expand both physical and visual public access to the coastline.	Planning	Short
4.D.2	Consider opportunities for waterfront amenities, and spaces along the Greenbelt to enhance existing access points, such as a harbor/river walk.	Parks & Rec	Long

Theme 5: Social Vitality and Public Health

Goal:

## Collaborate to Support Residents

**A**

*Collaborate with and support first responders, social service providers, and local and regional agencies who protect and assist our residents facing vulnerabilities.*

*“People are the best investment we can ever make.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
5.A.1	Improve coordination with major service providers to enhance the City's "one stop" location where community members can get information and services from the City and other entities.	General Assistance (GA), Clerk, Executive	Short
5.A.2	Make widely known the services of 211.	GA	Long
5.A.3	Maintain safe sharps & Rx disposal locations throughout the City.	Parks & Rec.	
5.A.4	Alongside related service providers, support programs that assist new Mainers; empower these programs through complementary services such as subsidized transportation and coordination of municipal services with third-party programs.	GA, Executive	
5.A.5	Establish a Community Ambassador program that can help with City communications, improve service provision, and bring in more voices from the community. Consider a stipend for a local program and consider partnering with regional municipalities, or GPCOG, to hire ambassadors that have access to the region's service providers.	Executive	

## Theme 5: Social Vitality and Public Health

## Goal:

**Promote the City's History****B**

*Deepen our connection to history by celebrating that which brings us pride while reconciling inequities of the past.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
5.B.1	Support, primarily through facilitation and coordination, the Historical Society in its work to identify and preserve the City's historic resources and inform the public about the history of the City.	Executive, Clerk	Ongoing
5.B.2	Explore the possibility of applying for designation as a Certified Local Government to access grant funds and assistance that can help expand the City's historic preservation efforts, establish local historic districts, and develop standards for reviewing development within mapped potential archaeological sites.	Planning	Medium
5.B.3	Support feasible reuse of key historic properties by nominating them for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, thereby making them eligible for federal and state tax credits for income-producing uses. Encourage private property owners to list their properties.	Planning	Medium
5.B.4	Expand the use of the Greater Portland Landmarks historic marker program on City property to increase awareness of the City's history and historic resources.	Clerk	Short
5.B.5	Consider conducting a City-wide historic resources survey that identifies and documents historic buildings and sites, building on the Willard Neighborhood survey of 2014.	Planning	Medium
5.B.6	Continue to add local landmarks to the City's Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Resources, and explore ways to incentivize historically-sensitive reuse and preservation of the properties.	Historic Preservation Committee, Planning	Ongoing
5.B.7	Support a community history project on redlining, segregation, and displacement with local educational institutions.	Clerk	Medium
5.B.8	Incorporate history into public art and into the bike/ped master plan	Public Art Committee, Public Works (DPW)	Medium

## Theme 5: Social Vitality and Public Health

### B: Promote the City's History

*Deepen our connection to history by celebrating that which brings us pride while reconciling inequities of the past.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
5.B.9	Build relationships with Wabanaki organizations to create a land acknowledgment and incorporate indigenous history into the community. Explore permitting Indigenous cultural use on City land.	Executive	Medium
5.B.10	Ensure that City projects and City-funded activities enhance the historic qualities of identified historic properties when this is feasible and appropriate.	Executive	Ongoing

## Theme 5: Social Vitality and Public Health

Goal:

**C****Improve Health Outcomes**

Promote health initiatives and reduce pollution exposure to advance positive physical and mental health outcomes for South Portlanders.

*“Providing support to community health, education, and social engagement are critical to quality of life and also an important component to support economic growth.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
5.C.1	Share public health program information and educational materials from credible health providers and resources using the City’s communications infrastructure and networks, including print, digital, and public communication.	Executive	Ongoing
5.C.2	Increase hazardous waste collection events per year to two times per year and increase public awareness of electronic recycling	Public Works (DPW)	Medium
5.C.3	Install trash, recycling, & composting receptacles in high-traffic locations.	DPW, Parks & Rec	Ongoing
5.C.4	Enhance the behavioral health liaison program and adopt protocols for liaisons on mental health emergency calls.	Police	Medium
5.C.5	Update the City’s noise and lighting standards for new development. Work with property owners to bring existing lighting fixtures into compliance and promote dark sky community principles in lighting requirements and on City properties.	Planning	Medium
5.C.6	Work to identify disproportionate environmental health impacts within the City’s neighborhoods.	Sustainability, Planning	Medium
5.C.7	Advocate for enhanced access to lead paint abatement programs.	Executive	Short
5.C.8	Work with schools and community groups to promote active lifestyles and behavior.	Parks & Rec	Medium
5.C.9	Increase the collection and use of data from credible sources to inform public health policies and investigate a licensing program to monitor and regulate commercial activities that create verifiable health risks.	Executive	Ongoing
5.C.10	Support and expand access to healthy food and encourage local food sources such as farmers markets, CSAs, and community gardens.	Sustainability	Long
5.C.11	Continue to track VOC emissions from petroleum terminals and seek timely data publication. Monitor and share burst emission and ambient emission data.	Executive	Ongoing
5.C.12	Evaluate health impacts associated with emissions data captured from the petroleum terminals.	Executive	Ongoing

## Theme 5: Social Vitality and Public Health

### C: Improve Health Outcomes

*Promote health initiatives and reduce pollution exposure to advance positive physical and mental health outcomes for South Portlanders.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
5.C.13	Identify strategies that reduce VOC emissions. Advocate for industry adoption of the effective strategies, and require emission reductions should the data indicate dangerous levels in abutting neighborhoods.	Executive	Short
5.C.14	New zoning regulations that permit significant new residential development near facilities with significant VOC emissions should only be considered after an evidence based analysis of the multiple health risks of VOC emissions and ground contamination are provided and demonstrate acceptable conditions for long term occupancy.	Planning	Short

## Theme 5: Social Vitality and Public Health

Goal:

**D****Empower Community Involvement***Empower community members to actively participate in the community and City decisions.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
5.D.1	Foster social networks and neighbor-to-neighbor connections that help individuals through stressors such as natural disasters, isolation, pandemics, etc. Explore developing or supporting neighborhood associations, neighborhood competitions, signage, art, and historical information.	Fire, Executive	Medium
5.D.2	Improve the sense of belonging by increasing multicultural events, public art, and community gathering.	Parks & Rec.	Short
5.D.3	Support programs to get youth, new residents, and all community members involved with local organizations, government, and businesses.	Executive	Ongoing

Theme 5: Social Vitality and Public Health

Goal:

# Promote Accessibility

**E**

*Design City spaces, services, and programs to become more accessible for people of all ages and abilities. Support businesses to do the same.*

*“Invest in making the city welcoming and supportive to all.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
5.E.1	Adopt an ADA Transition Plan for public facilities and access to civic functions; following the Plan’s assessment of needs, plan and budget for upgrades to streets, trails, playgrounds, and parks to ensure accessibility through a long-term capital improvement program.	Public Works (DPW), Clerk, Executive	Short
5.E.2	Work to educate the business community on ADA compliance and funding opportunities.	Econ. Dev.	Medium
5.E.3	Maintain ADA visual accessibility standards on the City’s website and improve language accessibility for elections, City counter service, and other communications channels.	Executive	Ongoing
5.E.4	Ensure user-friendly formatting, and appropriate reading levels for City documents and information. Explore expanding hearing and visually impaired language access for City meetings and engagement opportunities.	Executive	Ongoing
5.E.5	Maintain a database of recreational amenities throughout the City to ensure equitable access.	Parks & Rec.	Medium

Theme 6: Effective City Operations and Infrastructure

Goal:

# Adapt for Community Needs

# A

Ensure City departments, building, facilities, and services are able to accommodate and support projected growth and demographic shifts.

*“A robust suite of city services and people to perform them/ respond to city needs is essential to maintaining South Portland as an attractive place to live.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
6.A.1	Review and assess published long-range financial forecasts regularly, taking into account data on growth and development in the community, as well anticipated or desired growth.	Executive	Ongoing
6.A.2	Increase the accessibility of government services by offering virtual and in-person services when possible. Increase the availability of documents and services in digital, print, and multi-lingual formats.	Executive	Ongoing
6.A.3	Identify City staffing needs under growth projections over the Comprehensive Plan timeline. Support innovation in municipal services and provide adequate staffing to ensure high-quality service delivery. Explore mergers/partnerships with regional, county, and state agencies when efficient outcomes are achieved and South Portland residents will experienced improved service delivery.	Executive	Ongoing
6.A.4	Ensure adequate police/emergency service coverage, so that call response times maintain national or regional best standards for law enforcement and emergency services. Provide the necessary facilities and tools for effective law enforcement, health, and emergency services.	Police, Fire	Ongoing
6.A.5	When new, or substantial upgrades to existing municipal facilities are considered, the City will consider the diversified functions that such facilities may provide the community alongside its core functions. If notable community-building, community resiliency, empowerment, and other civic engagement goals or opportunities for residents can be achieved with additional features in new or upgraded facilities—and the budgetary impact from those features are acceptable to the City Council—the City will pursue and incorporate those features into City facilities. Track City infrastructure investments and ensure our neighborhoods benefit equitably from modernization and resilience upgrades.	Executive	Short
6.A.6	Coordinate long term facility management plans to ensure that capital planning is effective and efficient.	Facilities	Short
6.A.7	Ensure that City zoning is updated to reflect the Comprehensive Plan’s vision, allow the uses laid out in the plan, and welcome growth and opportunity.	Planning	Short

## Theme 6: Effective City Operations and Infrastructure

### A: Adapt for Community Needs

*Ensure City departments, building, facilities, and services are able to accommodate and support projected growth and demographic shifts.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
6.A.8	Enhance access to public restrooms throughout South Portland.	Parks & Rec, Econ. Dev.	Long
6.A.9	Explore opportunities for the GA office to serve as a community liaison person in addition to verifying eligibility for GA services.	GA	Short
6.A.10	Explore developing a community paramedicine program for preventative home visits.	Fire	Long

Theme 6: Effective City Operations and Infrastructure

Goal:

# Adapt for Climate Preparedness

## B

Ensure City buildings, facilities, and services are prepared for a changing climate.

*“Protecting what we currently have and are invested in by taking sensible approaches to the future. Climate change is one of the biggest threats to our existence.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
6.B.1	Provide sufficiently-sized long-term/overnight cooling centers for extreme heat events, and educate the community about the availability of these and other extreme weather relief services.	Fire, Executive	Long
6.B.2	Explore alternative funding mechanisms while continuing to regularly fund and implement the City’s Stormwater Program Management Plan to address combined sewer overflows.	Water Resources Protection	Ongoing
6.B.3	<p>Consider climate hazards, such as coastal flooding, inland flooding, high heat, energy disruptions, and extreme weather in all asset management decision-making (City infrastructure, buildings, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When relocating or redeveloping municipal facilities that must be within flood risk areas, design structures in accordance with policy 1.A11x.</li> <li>• Design municipal infrastructure projects with enhanced stormwater retention/filtration capacity</li> <li>• Assess risks to community assets from sea level rise and saltwater intrusion, explore the use of infrastructure to mitigate risk for the community and develop capital improvement plans accordingly.</li> <li>• Integrate new climate resilience measures into parks and recreational facilities to help counteract the impacts of increased heat.</li> </ul>	Executive	Short
6.B.4	Transition to more sustainable sources of backup power for City buildings and work to make the grid more resilient.	Facilities	Long

Theme 6: Effective City Operations and Infrastructure

Goal:

## Invest in Modern Infrastructure

C

Invest in strategically located, modern, and resilient City buildings, facilities, and infrastructure to become accessible for people of all ages; and support quality high-speed internet access.

*“Our city resources are an important community asset. We should invest in modernizing and maintaining them.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
6.C.1	Undertake a needs assessment for the community center.	Parks & Rec.	Long
6.C.2	Assess the cost of undergrounding street utilities in areas where active streetscapes are desired, such as downtown/Mill Creek, and in mixed-use centers and corridors.	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing
6.C.3	Ensure the City’s digital infrastructure is resilient to threats.	IT	Short
6.C.4	Require or adhere to energy efficiency standards for new or redeveloped municipal structures that model sustainable construction standards and best practices.	Executive, Facilities	Long
6.C.5	Library services and facilities should be as accessible and conveniently located as possible, presenting as minimal a barrier to access to all in the community, and should provide a range of spaces and technological infrastructure to support a wide a range of individual, small group and large event activities and should support varied learning, working, recreational and sensory preferences.	Library	
6.C.6	Ensure municipal facilities and spaces are secure and allow employees and visitors to feel safe and welcome.	Facilities	
6.C.7	Invest in additional hydrants in neighborhoods that are underserved.	Executive	
6.C.8	Strive to provide high-quality and multi-faceted communications from the City to ensure the community is informed, and that emergency or safety messages are received widely.	Executive	
6.C.9	Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by adopting Net-Zero Energy (NZE)-ready standards and performance-based procurement for new City buildings.	Executive	
6.C.10	City property disposition decisions shall rest with the City Council; any disposition shall prioritize long term community benefits over short-term or immediate needs. The Council should consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term leases of City property to support business growth, if possible.</li> <li>• Providing a public database of City property appropriate for housing development.</li> </ul>	City Council	

## Theme 6: Effective City Operations and Infrastructure

### C: Invest in Modern Infrastructure

*Invest in strategically located, modern, and resilient City buildings, facilities, and infrastructure to become accessible for people of all ages; and support quality high-speed internet access.*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
6.C.11	Establish a “Public Arts Program” to support public art in new and existing public facilities. This program should seek matching grants or other outside funding to support public arts programs, in consultation with the Public Arts Committee.	Planning, Public Arts Committee	Short

Theme 6: Effective City Operations and Infrastructure

Goal:

## Financial Responsibility for Implementation

**D**

Practice fiscal prudence and seek additional revenue sources to implement the strategies of the City's long-range plans.

*“If we can pay for this largely by allowing increased developments and getting new tax revenue that seems like a win/win!”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
6.D.1	Identify sources of additional funding to support capital investment in the community that will ensure services, and infrastructure capacity, are keeping up with growth and community needs.	Executive	Long
6.D.2	Maintain a robust and fiscally constrained rolling Capital Improvement Program with annual updates.	Executive	Ongoing
6.D.3	Maintain the City's AAA bond rating.	Executive	Short
6.D.4	Advocate for and, as permitted by State law, develop local-option taxes that reinforce City goals.	Executive	Long
6.D.5	Maintain permit fees, other fees, and registration costs at levels that reflect costs incurred by the City	Planning	
6.D.6	Conduct an infrastructure assessment to ensure that road, sewer, and stormwater systems are sufficient to accommodate anticipated growth. Adopt impact fees, or user fees, to support incremental and fair-share contributions from new development toward infrastructure upgrades, and work with other service providers (e.g. water, electric, gas, and telecommunications) to ensure their networks are prepared for the City's anticipated growth.	Public Works (DPW), Water Resource Protection (WRP)	
6.D.7	Seek significant growth in the non-residential tax base.	Econ. Dev.	
6.D.8	Consider a Cost of Community Services/Fiscal Impact study prior to initiating major zoning modifications that enable growth to understand the long term financial implications of development.	Planning, Econ. Dev.	Short

Theme 6: Effective City Operations and Infrastructure

Goal:

**E**

**Quality Recreation and Activities for All**

Provide high-quality recreational and enrichment opportunities for people of all.

*“These programs help out parents who have to rush into work early or get out late. Senior programs and recreational centers help people stay active.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
6.E.1	Ensure that funding for the Library and the Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront Department is sufficient to provide more and diversified services, subject to guidance provided in operational plans from City staff.	Executive, City Council	Ongoing
6.E.2	Invest in free and fee-waiver recreation programs and public opportunities for healthy and active living.	Parks & Rec., Executive	Medium
6.E.3	Strengthen partnerships with local businesses, non-profits, cultural organizations and schools.	Executive, Econ. Dev.	Short
6.E.4	Develop implement, and periodically update long-range plans and programs to maintain and upgrade outdoor recreation facilities, parks, and public open spaces.	Parks & Rec.	Ongoing
6.E.5	Consider a Cost of Community Services/Fiscal Impact study prior to initiating major zoning modifications that enable growth to understand the long term financial implications of development.	Planning, Econ. Dev.	Short

Theme 6: Effective City Operations and Infrastructure

Goal:

# Learning City

# F

Promote robust life-long learning and provide the best public educational opportunities in the state.

*“Keep funding our schools.”*

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
6.F.1	Provide sufficient funding to allow the School District to achieve its priorities as determined by the school board, and collaborate on initiatives such as use of municipal facilities.	City Council	Ongoing
6.F.2	Advocate for the school board to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet diverse educational needs and provide exemplary education and services.</li> <li>• Provide a Pre-K program available to all residents, as well as subsidized childcare, with a focus on how these investments will support the local labor force.</li> <li>• Promote mentorship programs for students</li> <li>• Ensure that school populations equitably reflect the racial and economic diversity of the City.</li> <li>• Continue providing English language courses, and provide citizenship training and apprenticeship/mentoring opportunities for non-English speakers</li> <li>• Promote better connections with work opportunities and pathways to local post-secondary institutions and vocational-technical programs.</li> <li>• Model and promote an inclusive, cross-cultural school environment and curriculum.</li> </ul>	City Council	Short
6.F.3	Encourage local summer jobs, internships, and service opportunities in the public sector.	Executive	Short
6.F.4	Collaborate with the School Department through regular meetings to align planning efforts and school needs or opportunities, with the intent to promote efficiencies, improve communication, and improve equitable access to educational opportunities.	Executive	Short
6.F.5	Assess current drivers of racial and economic disparities in housing and community development, and develop strategies to mitigate those disparities.	Planning	Medium

## Theme 7: State Goals

# Historic & Archaeological Resources

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: Protect to the greatest extent practicable the significant historic and archaeological resources in the community.		
7.HA.1	For known historic archaeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, through local land use ordinances require subdivision or non-residential developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.	Planning	Short
7.HA.2	Adopt or amend land use ordinances to require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.	Planning	Short
7.HA.3	Work with the local or county historical society and/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for, and if necessary plan for, a comprehensive community survey of the community's historic and archaeological resources.	Planning	Medium

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Water Resources

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To protect current and potential drinking water sources.		
	Policy: To protect significant surface water resources from pollution and improve water quality where needed.		
	Policy: To protect water resources in growth areas while promoting more intensive development in those areas.		
	Policy: To minimize pollution discharges through the upgrade of existing public sewer systems and wastewater treatment facilities.		
	Policy: To cooperate with neighboring communities and regional/local advocacy groups to protect water resources.		
7.WR.1	Adopt or amend local land use ordinances as applicable to incorporate stormwater runoff performance standards consistent with: a. Maine Stormwater Management Law and Maine Stormwater regulations (Title 38 M.R.S.A. §420-D and 06-096 CMR 500 and 502). b. Maine Department of Environmental Protection's allocations for allowable levels of phosphorus in lake/pond watersheds. c. Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program	Water Resource Protection (WRP)	Short
7.WR.2	Consider amending local land use ordinances, as applicable, to incorporate low impact development standards.	WRP	Short
7.WR.3	Where applicable, develop an urban impaired stream watershed management or mitigation plan that will promote continued development or redevelopment without further stream degradation.	WRP	Short
7.WR.4	Maintain, enact or amend public wellhead and aquifer recharge area protection mechanisms, as necessary.	WRP, Planning	Short
7.WR.5	Encourage landowners to protect water quality. Provide local contact information at the municipal office for water quality best management practices from resources such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation District, Maine Forest Service, and/or Small Woodlot Association of Maine.	WRP, Planning	Ongoing
7.WR.6	Adopt water quality protection practices and standards for construction and maintenance of public and private roads and public properties and require their implementation by contractors, owners, and community officials and employees.	DPW, WRP, Planning	Ongoing

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Water Resources

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
7.WR.7	Participate in local and regional efforts to monitor, protect and, where warranted, improve water quality.	WRP	Ongoing
7.WR.8	Provide educational materials at appropriate locations regarding aquatic invasive species.	Parks & Rec, WRP	Short

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Natural Resources

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To conserve critical natural resources in the community.		
	Policy: To coordinate with neighboring communities and regional and state resource agencies to protect shared critical natural resources.		
7.NR.1	Ensure that land use ordinances are consistent with applicable state law regarding critical natural resources.	Planning	Ongoing
7.NR.2	Designate critical natural resources as Critical Resource Areas in the Future Land Use Plan.	Planning	Ongoing
7.NR.3	Through local land use ordinances, require subdivision or non-residential property developers to look for and identify critical natural resources that may be on site and to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.	Planning	Ongoing
7.NR.4	Through local land use ordinances, require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to include as part of the review process, consideration of pertinent BWH maps and information regarding critical natural resources.	Planning	Ongoing
7.NR.5	Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management, and/or regulatory efforts around shared critical and important natural resources.	Planning, Water Resource Protection (WRP)	Ongoing
7.NR.6	Pursue public/private partnerships to protect critical and important natural resources such as through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.	Planning	Ongoing
7.NR.7	Distribute or make available information to those living in or near critical or important natural resources about current use tax programs and applicable local, state, or federal regulations.	Assessing, Planning	Ongoing

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Agriculture &amp; Forestry

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To safeguard lands identified as prime farmland or capable of supporting commercial forestry.		
	Policy: To support farming and forestry and encourage their economic viability.		
7.AF.1	Consult with the Maine Forest Service district forester when developing any land use regulations pertaining to forest management practices as required by 12 M.R.S.A. §8869.	Planning	Ongoing
7.AF.2	Consult with Soil and Water Conservation District staff when developing any land use regulations pertaining to agricultural management practices.	Planning	Ongoing
7.AF.3	Amend land use ordinances to require commercial or subdivision developments in critical rural areas, if applicable, maintain areas with prime farmland soils as open space to the greatest extent practicable.	N/A - no critical rural areas	-
7.AF.4	Limit non-residential development in critical rural areas (if the town designates critical rural areas) to natural resource-based businesses and services, nature tourism/outdoor recreation businesses, farmers' markets, and home occupations.	N/A - no critical rural areas	-
7.AF.5	Encourage owners of productive farm and forest land to enroll in the current use taxation programs.	Assessing, Planning	Ongoing
7.AF.6	Permit land use activities that support productive agriculture and forestry operations, such as roadside stands, greenhouses, firewood operations, sawmills, log buying yards, and pick-your-own operations.	Planning	Ongoing
7.AF.7	Include agriculture, commercial forestry operations, and land conservation that supports them in local or regional economic development plans.	Econ. Dev.	Medium

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Marine Resources

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To protect, maintain and, where warranted, improve marine habitat and water quality.		
	Policy: To foster water-dependent land uses and balance them with other complementary land uses.		
	Policy: To maintain and, where warranted, improve harbor management and facilities.		
	Policy: To protect, maintain and, where warranted, improve physical and visual public access to the community's marine resources for all appropriate uses including fishing, recreation, and tourism.		
7.MR.1	Identify needs for additional recreational and commercial access (which includes parking, boat launches, docking space, fish piers, and swimming access).	Econ. Dev., Parks & Rec.	Medium
7.MR.2	Encourage owners of marine businesses and industries to participate in clean marina/boatyard programs.	WRP, Econ. Dev.	Short
7.MR.3	Provide information about the Working Waterfront Access Pilot Program and current use taxation program to owners of waterfront land used to provide access to or support the conduct of commercial fishing activities.	Assessing, Econ. Dev.	Short
7.MR.4	Support implement of local and regional harbor and bay management plans.	Executive	Ongoing
7.MR.5	If applicable, provide sufficient funding for and staffing of the harbormaster and/or harbor commission.	City Council	Ongoing
7.MR.6	Work with local property owners, land trusts, and others to protect major points of physical and visual access to coastal waters, especially along public ways and in public parks.	Planning	Short

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Economy

ID		Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To support the type of economic development activity the community desires, reflecting the community's role in the region.		
	Policy: To make a financial commitment, if necessary, to support desired economic development, including needed public improvements.		
	Policy: To coordinate with regional development corporations and surrounding towns as necessary to support desired economic development.		
7.E.1	If appropriate, assign responsibility and provide financial support for economic development activities to the proper entity (e.g., a local economic development committee, a local representative to a regional economic development organization, the community's economic development director, a regional economic development initiative, or other).	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing
7.E.2	Enact or amend local ordinances to reflect the desired scale, design, intensity, and location of future economic development.	Planning	Short
7.E.3	If public investments are foreseen to support economic development, identify the mechanisms to be considered to finance them (local tax dollars, creating a tax increment financing district, a Community Development Block Grant or other grants, bonding, impact fees, etc.)	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing
7.E.4	Participate in any regional economic development planning efforts.	Econ. Dev.	Ongoing

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Housing

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To encourage and promote adequate workforce housing to support the community's and region's economic development.		
	Policy: To ensure that land use controls encourage the development of quality affordable housing, including rental housing.		
	Policy: To encourage and support the efforts of the regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.		
7.H.1	Maintain, enact or amend growth area land use regulations to increase density, decrease lot size, setbacks and road widths, or provide incentives such as density bonuses, to encourage the development of affordable/workforce housing.	Planning	Short
7.H.2	Maintain, enact or amend ordinances to allow the addition of at least one accessory apartment per dwelling unit in growth areas, subject to site suitability.	Planning	Ongoing
7.H.3	Create or continue to support a community affordable/workforce housing committee and/or regional affordable housing coalition.	Planning	Ongoing
7.H.4	Designate a location(s) in growth areas where mobile home parks are allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358(3)(M) and where manufactured housing is allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358(2).	Planning	Ongoing
7.H.5	Support the efforts of local and regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.	Planning	Ongoing
7.H.6	Seek to achieve a level of at least 10% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade be affordable.	Planning	Ongoing

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Recreation

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To maintain/upgrade existing recreational facilities as necessary to meet current and future needs.		
	Policy: To preserve open space for recreational use as appropriate.		
	Policy: To seek to achieve or continue to maintain at least one major point of public access to major water bodies for boating, fishing, and swimming, and work with nearby property owners to address concerns.		
7.R.1	Create a list of recreation needs or develop a recreation plan to meet current and future needs. Assign a committee or community official to explore ways of addressing the identified needs and/or implementing the policies and strategies outlined in the plan.	Parks & Rec.	Medium
7.R.2	Work with public and private partners to extend and maintain a network of trails for motorized and non-motorized uses. Connect with regional trail systems where possible.	Planning	Short
7.R.3	Work with an existing local land trust or other conservation organizations to pursue opportunities to protect important open space or recreational land.	Planning, Parks & Rec., Open Space Acquisition Committee	Ongoing
7.R.4	Provide educational materials regarding the benefits and protections for landowners allowing public recreational access on their property. At a minimum this will include information on Maine's landowner liability law regarding recreational or harvesting use, Title 14, M.R.S.A. §159-A.	Parks & Rec.	Short

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Transportation

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To prioritize community and regional needs associated with safe, efficient, and optimal use of transportation systems.		
	Policy: To safely and efficiently preserve or improve the transportation system.		
	Policy: To promote public health, protect natural and cultural resources, and enhance livability by managing land use in ways that maximize the efficiency of the transportation system and minimize increases in vehicle miles traveled.		
	Policy: To meet the diverse transportation needs of residents (including children, the elderly and disabled) and through travelers by providing a safe, efficient, and adequate transportation network for all types of users (motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists).		
	Policy: To promote fiscal prudence by maximizing the efficiency of the state or state-aid highway network.		
7.T.1	Develop or continue to update a prioritized improvement, maintenance, and repair plan for the community's transportation network.	Public Works (DPW)	Ongoing
7.T.2	Initiate or actively participate in regional and state transportation efforts.	DPW, Planning	Ongoing
7.T.3	"Maintain, enact or amend local ordinances as appropriate to address or avoid conflicts with: a. Policy objectives of the Sensible Transportation Policy Act (23 M.R.S.A. §73); b. State access management regulations pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704; and c. State traffic permitting regulations for large developments pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704-A."	Planning	Short
7.T.4	Maintain, enact or amend ordinance standards for subdivisions and for public and private roads as appropriate to foster transportation-efficient growth patterns and provide for future street and transit connections.	Planning	Short

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Public Facilities

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To efficiently meet identified public facility and service needs.		
	Policy: To provide public facilities and services in a manner that promotes and supports growth and development in identified growth areas.		
7.PF.1	Identify any capital improvements needed to maintain or upgrade public services to accommodate the community's anticipated growth and changing demographics.	Executive	Ongoing
7.PF.2	Locate new public facilities comprising at least 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments in designated growth areas.	Executive	Long
7.PF.3	Encourage local sewer and water districts to coordinate planned service extensions with the Future Land Use Plan.	Water Resource Protection (WRP), Econ. Dev.	Short
7.PF.4	If public water supply expansion is anticipated, identify and protect suitable sources?	City Council, Portland Water District	N/A at this time
7.PF.5	Explore options for regional delivery of local services.	Executive	Ongoing

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Fiscal Capacity

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To finance existing and future facilities and services in a cost effective manner.		
	Policy: To explore grants available to assist in the funding of capital investments within the community.		
	Policy: To reduce Maine's tax burden by staying within LD 1 spending limitations.		
7.FC.1	Explore opportunities to work with neighboring communities to plan for and finance shared or adjacent capital investments to increase cost savings and efficiencies.	Executive	Ongoing

## Theme 7: State Goals

## Future Land Use

ID	Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
	Policy: To coordinate the community's land use strategies with other local and regional land use planning efforts.		
	Policy: To support the locations, types, scales, and intensities of land uses the community desires as stated in its vision.		
	Policy: To support the level of financial commitment necessary to provide needed infrastructure in growth areas.		
	Policy: To establish efficient permitting procedures, especially in growth areas.		
	Policy: To protect critical rural and critical waterfront areas from the impacts of development.		
7.FLU.1	Assign responsibility for implementing the Future Land Use Plan to the appropriate committee, board or municipal official.	Planning	Short
7.FLU.2	Using the descriptions provided in the Future Land Use Plan narrative, maintain, enact or amend local ordinances as appropriate to: a. Clearly define the desired scale, intensity, and location of future development; b. Establish or maintain fair and efficient permitting procedures, and explore streamlining permitting procedures in growth areas; and c. Clearly define protective measures for critical natural resources and, where applicable, important natural resources. d. Clearly define protective measures for any proposed critical rural areas and/or critical waterfront areas, if proposed.	Planning	Short
7.FLU.3	Include in the Capital Investment Plan anticipated municipal capital investments needed to support proposed land uses.	Executive	Short
7.FLU.4	Meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and regulatory and non-regulatory strategies.	Planning	Ongoing
7.FLU.5	Provide the code enforcement officer with the tools, training, and support necessary to enforce land use regulations, and ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer is certified in accordance with 30-A M.R.S.A. §4451.	Planning	Ongoing
7.FLU.6	Track new development in the community by type and location.	Planning	Ongoing
7.FLU.7	Direct a minimum of 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.	Executive	Long
7.FLU.8	Periodically (at least every five years) evaluate implementation of the plan in accordance with Section 2.7.	Planning	Ongoing



# Part II: South Portland Yesterday & Today





# 1. Introduction

Part II of the South Portland 2040 Comprehensive Plan focuses on understanding the characteristics of South Portland. What was the community like in the past? How has it developed and changed over time? What are the community's key issues and opportunities?

A comprehensive plan is a way to respond to change over time. It is a long-range (10- to 15-year) visionary plan for the community's physical evolution. This plan helps the community imagine—and create—a better future. The existing conditions component of the planning effort helps the community understand trends, issues, and opportunities in the community and regionally and lays a foundation for the plan.

The City of South Portland last adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2012. This updated document provides an overview of existing conditions and future trends in South Portland and an analysis of the implications. Understanding existing conditions and trends informs the development of future goals, policies, and regulations. These inventory chapters provide important baseline information to serve as the foundation for the South Portland 2040 Comprehensive Plan update.

These inventory chapters were written in 2022 and 2023 and may contain reference to information that has since changed.

## Regional Context

The City of South Portland is a coastal community in southern Maine situated along the Fore River and Casco Bay, on the Maine coastline. The City's boundaries are roughly triangular, with a wide north boundary and two shorter southeast and southwest edges. The City encompasses 14 square miles and measures approximately 7.3 miles from east to west and 3.5 to 4.6 miles from north to south. South Portland borders Scarborough and Cape Elizabeth to the south, Gorham to the west, and Westbrook and Portland to the north. South Portland is easily accessible by car, with Interstate 95 (I-95) passing north-south through the western part of the City. Route 295 and Route 1 pass through the middle of the City, connecting South Portland to Scarborough in the south and Portland in the north.

The Portland International Jetport is located on the border of South Portland and Portland, with one of the main runways located within the City's boundaries. South Portland also has bus service within the City, as well as connections to Portland and the surrounding area through the Greater Portland Metro. While South Portland does not have a ferry service, the City provides direct marina access for boating and water recreation.

### State Planning Context and Report Principles

In 1988, the State of Maine adopted the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act, including what is now the Growth Management Program. Title 30A Chapter 187 of Maine Revised Statutes establishes the Growth Management Program’s purpose, including the following statements:

- To establish, in each municipality of the State, local comprehensive planning and land use management
- To encourage municipalities to identify the tools and resources to effectively plan for and manage future development within their jurisdictions with a maximum of local initiative and flexibility.
- To encourage local land use ordinances, tools, and policies based on local comprehensive plans.
- To incorporate regional considerations into local planning and decision-making to ensure consideration of regional needs and the regional impact of development.

The South Portland Comprehensive Plan will comply with all statutory requirements per MRS 30-A 4331 (“Growth Management Program”). To be certified consistent with the Act, the Plan must be adopted by the City Council, and approved by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry for consistency with Program criteria. If consistent, the Department will issue a “Finding of Consistency,” valid for twelve years.

### Organization

Part II is organized into fifteen chapters—including fourteen for each “element” required by the State of Maine and one additional chapter for coastal resilience—that summarize key trends and challenges, provide an inventory of existing conditions, and offer insights into sustainability and equity that emerged through the

analysis.

Chapter 1: Introduction. This chapter serves as an introduction to the South Portland Comprehensive Planning process and executive summary of the Existing Condition inventories.

Chapter 2: Summary of Past Planning. This chapter provides a high-level overview of South Portland’s recent planning work that informed this Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 3: Historic and Archaeological Resources. This chapter describes South Portland’s historic and archaeological resources—both physical and social—and identifies issues affecting preservation and community building.

Chapter 4: Natural and Water Resources. This chapter describes South Portland’s natural and water resources and identifies issues and opportunities related to quality, conservation, and climate change adaptation.

Chapter 5: Agricultural and Forest Resources. This chapter describes South Portland’s agricultural and forest resources and identifies trends in use, management, and conservation.

Chapter 6: Marine Resources. This chapter describes South Portland’s marine resources and identifies issues and opportunities related to quality, access, and conservation.

Chapter 7: Population and Demographics. This chapter describes South Portland’s demographic and population trends.

Chapter 8: Economy. This chapter describes South Portland’s economic conditions – including the factors that drive them—and identifies regional and local issues related to supporting and strengthening the local economy.

Chapter 9: Housing. This chapter describes South Portland’s housing stock and identifies issues concerning the community’s preservation and development of housing.

Chapter 10: Recreation. This chapter describes South Portland’s recreational amenities and open space resources and identifies

issues and opportunities to support local recreational needs.

Chapter 11: Transportation. This chapter outlines South Portland's existing transportation network, including public transportation and multi-modal facilities, describes ongoing local initiatives and identifies future transportation and circulation planning considerations.

Chapter 12: Public Facilities and Services. This chapter details South Portland's existing public facilities and services and proposes considerations to help meet the community's needs.

Chapter 13: Fiscal Capacity and Capital Investment. This chapter describes South Portland's fiscal capacity and the regulations and resources that shape South Portland's capital investments.

Chapter 14: Existing Land Use. This chapter describes current and projected development patterns.

Chapter 15: Coastal Resilience. This chapter describes current and future sea level rise and coastal storm modeling and map projections.



## 2. Summary of Past Planning

### 2012 Comprehensive Plan<sup>1</sup>

#### *Community Vision*

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan describes a future South Portland that:

- Has a diverse population with diverse housing choices;
- Has livable walkable neighborhoods;
- Is education oriented and provides its children with a quality education and cultivates lifelong learners through ongoing adult education;
- Is connected to the waterfront even as historic waterfront uses transition from a working waterfront to a greater mix of commercial and even residential uses;
- Is a Green City that cares about bringing nature into the community and making it accessible to all residents and that actively cares about land use decisions that promote energy efficiency and conservation; and
- Is economically diverse with a range of businesses from small, locally owned sole-proprietor, “Main Street”-type businesses to major

manufacturers and international office headquarters.

#### *Land Use Objectives*

The following land use objectives were identified in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan.

1. Encourage development and redevelopment that expands the City’s property tax base in a manner that is consistent with the City’s other objectives.
2. Enhance the livability and walkability of the City’s established neighborhoods while allowing infill development that is in character with these neighborhoods.
3. Enhance Mill Creek as a vibrant mixed-use commercial center.
4. Promote the redevelopment of the “eastern waterfront” as a mixed-use area while maintaining the potential for marine use.
5. Allow more intense utilization of the land along the major traffic corridors while assuring that the adjacent residential neighborhoods are protected and the ability of the streets to move traffic is maintained.
6. Maintain the working waterfront while creating limited opportunities for increased public access and a mix of uses.
7. Enhance the role of the Maine Mall area as the state’s premier retail destination while encouraging further diversification of uses in that

<sup>1</sup> 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update <https://me-southportland.civicplus.com/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/138>

area.

8. Provide appropriate locations for continued economic growth in the City.
9. Encourage development and redevelopment to occur in a way that makes the use of alternative transportation more feasible by focusing growth along the major transportation corridors.

### ***Land Use Recommendations and Considerations***

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan provides identified key land use policy areas and recommendations for growth areas and limited growth areas in accordance with the State Growth Management Program. Zoning and land use recommendations were developed for the following key areas.

- Knightville/Mill Creek
- Established Residential Neighborhoods
- The Broadway and Cottage Road Corridors
- The Eastern Waterfront
- The Main Street Corridor
- The Working Waterfront
- The Maine Mall Area
- Industrial Growth

Below is a summary of the area-specific recommendations and considerations relating to goal and policy refinement for these areas.

### **Knightville/Mill Creek**

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objectives for this area.

*Enhance Mill Creek as a vibrant mixed-use commercial center – Mill Creek, and the adjacent Knightville neighborhood, is the historic heart of the City. It is South Portland's downtown and the location of many of its civic activities. Enhancing Mill Creek as a vibrant commercial center with a more diverse mix of uses that is more pedestrian-friendly is essential to achieving the city's vision for its future.*

The City drafted and adopted the Mill Creek Master Plan in 2015.<sup>2</sup> which created several additional zoning districts throughout the peninsula. New goals and policies should be considered to respond to resiliency issues raised in the One Climate Future plan (See One Climate Future Plan below). As a future vision for this area is refined, the City should review land use and dimensional allowances in the Mill Creek zones to ensure they are aligned with the future vision for the City's downtown area.

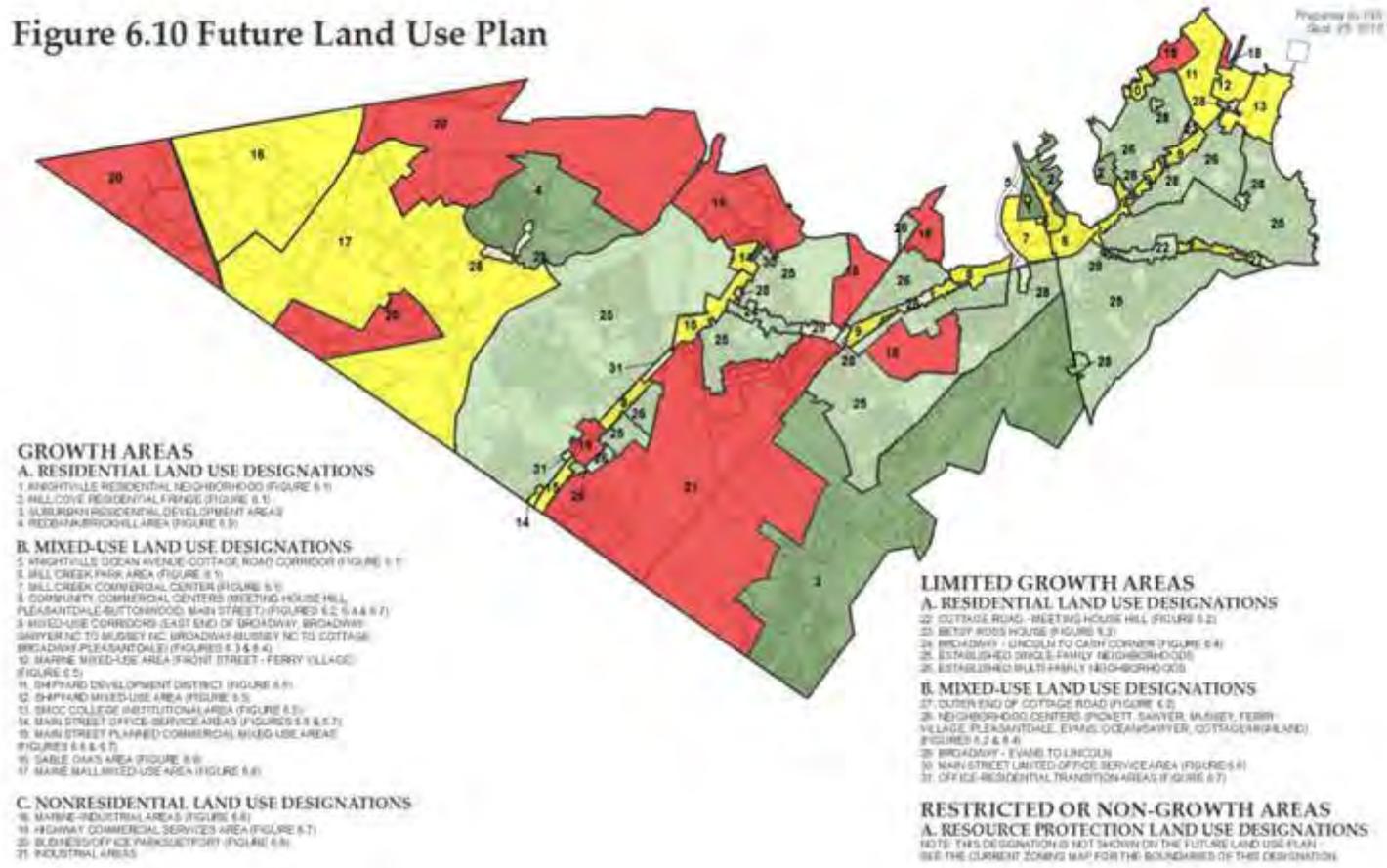
The 2015 Mill Creek Master Plan had the following six objectives:

1. Make Mill Creek more of a pedestrian-focused neighborhood by enhancing the ability of residents, shoppers, visitors, and employees to easily and safely move around the neighborhood on foot while improving the ability of people who live outside of Mill Creek to easily and safely walk (and bike) to the neighborhood.
2. Establish Mill Creek as a distinct and special place with a clear identity, attractive gateways, and a high-quality visual environment so Mill Creek becomes both a destination and a place where people want to spend time and live.
3. Make Mill Creek "greener" in both a physical and environmental sense with more green spaces, trees, landscaping, and flowers, better connections between parks, and upgraded environmental conditions such as green, energy-efficient buildings and improved stormwater management.
4. Increase the diversity and intensity of uses and activities in Mill Creek so that, over time, it becomes a true mixed-use downtown neighborhood with a variety of both commercial and residential uses with a focus on encouraging the development of multi-story, mixed-use buildings within a more pedestrian focused, urban environment.
5. Create a transition between Mill Creek and Knightville to protect the Knightville residential neighborhood (the "letter streets") from the potential impacts of redevelopment of Mill Creek.
6. Minimize the potential impacts of increased flooding from storms and sea level rise on Mill Creek so that it can remain a viable and attractive area in which people want to live, visit, and invest.

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<sup>2</sup> Mill Creek Master Plan 2015, [https://www.southportland.org/index.php/download\\_file/view/5817/1213/](https://www.southportland.org/index.php/download_file/view/5817/1213/)

Figure 6.10 Future Land Use Plan



### Established Residential Neighborhoods

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objectives for these areas.

*Enhance the livability and walkability of the City's established neighborhoods while allowing infill development that is in character with these neighborhoods – South Portland's established residential neighborhoods are its soul and a major reason people choose to live in the city. Assuring that these neighborhoods remain desirable places to live is a fundamental objective of this plan. At the same time, limited development/redevelopment should be encouraged within these neighborhoods as long as it is compatible with the character of the individual neighborhood in which it is located.*

As the City develops policies for established residential neighborhoods, consideration should be given to the following:

- Applying an equity lens to future land use policy decisions.
- Development of design standards for all areas of the City; and
- The Knightville Fore and Aft recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee.
- Maine Mall

### Broadway and Cottage Road Corridors

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objectives for these areas.

*Allow more intense utilization of the land along the major traffic corridors while assuring that the adjacent residential neighborhoods are protected and the ability of the streets to move traffic is maintained; encourage development and redevelopment to occur in a way that makes the use of alternative transportation more feasible by focusing growth along the major transportation corridors.*

Goals and policies should consider land use impacts to circulation infrastructure and the recommendations of the One Climate Future which calls for intensification of growth along corridors where transit is available and can be expanded in the future (transit-oriented development).

The role that each of these identified areas plays in serving as a node for concentrated growth in the future, with transit services, should be explored.

### The Eastern Waterfront

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objective for this area.

*Promote the redevelopment of the "eastern waterfront" as a mixed-use area while maintaining the potential for marine use – the portion of the City's waterfront running from the Yacht Club in Ferry Village around Spring Point to Southern Maine Community College represents a significant opportunity to enhance the City's image as a desirable community that is a destination for both residents and visitors while at the same time expanding the City's tax base. The redevelopment of vacant and underutilized areas in a way that expands public access and the diversity of uses while maintaining marine activities is a fundamental land use objective.*

Specific recommendations were provided for the following subareas:

- Ferry Village Marine Mixed-Use Area
- Marine Industrial Areas
- Shipyard Development District
- Pickett Street Neighborhood Center
- The SMCC Institutional Area

The City should proactively articulate a vision and develop plans for these areas that guide development proposals and advance the community's vision for these areas. Goals and policies should consider the impact of sea level rise on these areas and the mismatch that has occurred particularly, in the SMCC College area, between zoning and existing land uses which can constrain growth and redevelopment.

### The Main Street Corridor

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objective for this area.

*Allow more intense utilization of the land along the major traffic corridors while assuring that the adjacent residential neighborhoods are protected and the ability of the streets to move traffic is maintained; encourage development and redevelopment to occur in a way that makes the use of alternative transportation more feasible by focusing growth along the major transportation corridors.*

Specific recommendations were provided for the following subareas:

- Limited Office-Service Area
- Office-Service Area
- Cash Corner Planned Commercial-Mixed-Use Area
- Office-Residential Transition Area
- Main Street Community Commercial Hub
- Highway Commercial Services Area
- Office-Residential Transition
- Noyes Street Area
- Outer Main Street Planned Mixed-Use Development Area
- Outer Main Street Office-Service Area

Overall, the City should consider whether such fine-grained division along this corridor is necessary or effective. Many of these subareas appear to have a mismatch between zoning and the guidance provided.

### Industrial Land Uses

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objective for this area.

*Provide appropriate locations for continued economic growth in the City – there are limited areas in the city that can accommodate economic growth. The City should assure that available land that is*

*suitable for high-tech, light industrial, distribution, and similar uses is provided with adequate infrastructure and improved access and is not used for other types of uses that can locate in other areas of the City.*

As the City refines its economic development strategy consideration should be given to how industrial activities impact non-industrial and residential uses.

### The Working Waterfront

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objective for this area.

*Maintain the working waterfront while creating limited opportunities for increased public access and a mix of uses – South Portland plays a major role as an oil port because of its all-season deep-water access. While the City should provide opportunities for additional mixed-use development, including expanded public access, in selected areas of the waterfront, the ability of marine-related businesses and activities to be located on the waterfront must be maintained.*

The community will need to determine what the long-term vision is for this area and align the goals and policies with the vision.

### The Maine Mall Area

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following objective for this area.

*Enhance the role of the Maine Mall area as the state's premier retail destination while encouraging further diversification of uses in that area – the Maine Mall and the surrounding retail, commercial, and office development are a regional, and even statewide, destination and a major source of property taxes for the city. Maintaining and enhancing the attractiveness of this area as a destination will maintain its economic vitality. At the same time, the City should encourage additional office, service, high-tech, and even residential development to diversify the uses in that area of the City and further expand the tax base.*

The City has participated in a recent concept plan for the Maine Mall to create a Transit Oriented Development format (see Maine Mall TOD Concept Plan below). New goals and policies relating to the Maine Mall and surrounding land uses should be considered in the Maine Mall TOD Concept plan recommendations and retail trends for regional and super-regional retail centers.

### Growth Areas

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies the following growth areas.

#### Residential Growth Areas

- Knightville Residential Neighborhood
- Mill Creek Residential Fringe
- Suburban Residential Development

#### Mixed-Use Growth Areas

- Knightville Ocean Avenue-Cottage Road Corridor
- Mill Creek Park Area
- Mill Creek Commercial Center
- Community Commercial Centers (Meeting House Hill, Pleasantdale-Buttonwood, Main Street)
- Mixed-Use Corridors (East End of Broadway, Broadway-Sawyer Neighborhood Center to Mussey Neighborhood Center,
- Broadway-Mussey Neighborhood Center to Cottage, Broadway-Pleasantdale)
- Marine Mixed-Use Area (Front Street–Ferry Village)
- Shipyard Development District
- Shipyard Mixed-Use Area
- SMCC Institutional Area
- Main Street Office-Service Areas
- Main Street Planned Commercial Mixed-Use Areas
- Sable Oaks Area
- Maine Mall Mixed-Use Area

#### Non-Residential Growth Areas

- Marine-Industrial Areas
- Highway Commercial Services Area
- Business/Office Parks/Jetport

#### Residential Limited Growth Areas

- Cottage Road-Meeting House Hill
- Betsy Ross House
- Broadway-Lincoln to Cash Corner
- Established Single-Family Neighborhoods
- Established Multi-Family Neighborhoods

#### Mixed Use-Limited Growth Areas

- Outer End of Cottage Road
- Neighborhood Centers (Pickett, Sawyer, Mussey, Ferry Village, Pleasantdale, Evans, Ocean/Sawyer, Cottage/Highland)
- Broadway-Evans to Lincoln
- Main Street Limited Office Service Area
- Office-Residential Transition Areas

*Growth and Limited Growth Areas must be reviewed against sustainability and climate action goals.*

Areas designated as residential growth zones are located further out from the City core and greater distances from shopping, services, employment, and existing City infrastructure and public transportation. Encouraging the development of undeveloped areas invites encroachment into natural resource areas. It requires extending infrastructure and services to new community areas and encourages greater car reliance. Established neighborhoods and non-residential neighborhood centers have been identified as limited-growth area neighborhoods impeding higher-density redevelopment, trip reduction, and efficient access to and utilization of existing infrastructure and services. The City must also take climate concerns such as sea level rise into consideration when determining growth areas.

### Active Planning Projects

#### *One Climate Future*<sup>3</sup>

In 2020, the Cities of Portland and South Portland worked together to complete a climate action plan titled the One Climate Future Plan. The plan focuses on building more sustainable and resilient communities. It provides steps to meet aggressive carbon reduction goals, grow a circular economy, build community resilience, and create more just and equitable cities. Many of the land use goals call for greater walkability to goods, services, and public transportation. Below is a summary of some of the recommended land use actions.

- TU-1.2 Strengthen the cities' transit-oriented development nodes to support travel by walking, biking, and public transportation.
- TLU 1.7 - Plan for future growth in our cities by committing to land use principles for a smaller carbon footprint, codified in the Cities' comprehensive plans, zoning, and subdivision ordinances.
- CR 1 Integrate resilience standards and targets into Portland and South Portland's land use code to minimize flood risk and promote resilient buildings and neighborhoods citywide.
- CR 1.3 Establish open space climate resilience goals and protocols for monitoring progress towards those goals in Portland and South Portland's open space planning.

Specifically, the plan calls for Portland and South Portland to establish four land use commitments as part of future comprehensive planning processes that support City growth in ways that reduce vehicle miles traveled and shrink the City's carbon footprint. These include:

1. Increasing housing availability and affordability near jobs;
2. Collocating transportation and density;
3. Creating livable street networks; and
4. Preserving carbon sinks.

These four principles are intended to guide planning over the long

<sup>3</sup> One Climate Future, [https://www.oneclimatefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/OneClimateFuture\\_FinalJan2021\\_Downsized.pdf](https://www.oneclimatefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/OneClimateFuture_FinalJan2021_Downsized.pdf)

term. The plan calls for policy initiatives and changes to zoning and subdivision ordinances to implement these principles fully.

#### *PACTS and Connect 2045*

The Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Greater Portland region.<sup>4</sup> PACTS coordinates transportation planning and investment decisions with the State, municipalities, and public transportation partners. One of the primary responsibilities of PACTS is to develop a long-range transportation plan which includes recommendations for transportation-supportive land uses. In 2022, a long-range transportation plan titled Connect 2045 was adopted. The following is a summary of some of the recommended land use actions outlined in the plan.<sup>5</sup>

- Target planning and transportation investments to the region's priority centers and corridors to support walkable, bike-able, transit-oriented places and safe connections in between.
- Provide integrated place-based planning to help emerging large developments be the best they can be with a focus on managing traffic, parking, and emissions and enhancing transportation choice, resilience, and broadband.
- Implement a regional Complete Streets policy and provide additional resources and guidance for new projects to accommodate all users of all ages and abilities.
- Support the creation of safe, welcoming, and accommodating public spaces, such as car-free streets, parks, plazas, and other placemaking amenities.
- Incorporate natural elements and low-impact development techniques into PACTS projects to protect water quality.
- Minimize habitat fragmentation by incorporating best management practices such as natural buffers, stream smart crossings, and wildlife underpasses/overpasses into PACTS projects.

<sup>4</sup> The Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) in 2020 absorbed PACTS though PACTS remains the region's MPO and the responsible party for Connect2045.

<sup>5</sup> Connect 2045: A Long-Range Transportation Plan for Greater Portland, Maine. Adopted December 15, 2022. <https://www.gpcog.org/DocumentCenter/View/2538/Connect-2045-PDF>

### ***Housing Needs Assessment<sup>6</sup> and Maine Mall TOD Concept Plan<sup>7</sup>***

The City's Zoning Ordinance regulates compact development through cluster provisions that reduce space/bulk standards in exchange for more efficient land use. According to the Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy Report, standards do not allow for a truly compact design that would allow for higher densities or the smaller units needed for transit-supportive development. Changes to single-family zoning districts, increasing residential densities, and amendments to inflexible parking regulations will be needed for the City to reach its housing production goals.

The Housing Needs Assessment also draws attention to existing density patterns in South Portland which can be used to advance City TOD goals. According to the report, South Portland has the second highest density of people per land area in Maine, an average 9.9 times higher than the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) average. In 2020, the Greater Portland Council of Governments worked with transit stakeholders, municipal staff, and the development community to create a vision for the South Portland Maine Mall site if TOD principles could guide redevelopment. One objective of the plan was to encourage transit use and strengthen the region's transit network. The study found that when employed at the Maine Mall, TOD principles could bring many benefits to the immediate area and that the current zoning ordinance needed to be amended to allow for mixed-use development in the mall area.

Benefits listed include:

- A larger supply of additional housing options to help the City meet its residential housing demand and affordable housing goals;
- More opportunities to live and work in close proximity;
- Economic returns to property owners and local businesses;

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6 Crane Associates Inc. "Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy". May 20, 2022. [https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/\\$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report\\_05.20.2022.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report_05.20.2022.pdf)

7 Maine Mall Transit-Oriented Development Concept Plan <https://www.gpcog.org/DocumentCenter/View/1182/Maine-Mall-TOD-Final-Plan-PDF>

- An attractive and vibrant place that is safe, walkable, and interesting;
- An environmentally friendly place that reduces reliance on vehicle travel, decreases runoff into the watershed, and preserves rural/agricultural lands by targeting growth in a focused area; and,
- Increased transit ridership.

### ***The Gorham Connector***

The Gorham Connector is a proposed new toll road that would link the Maine Turnpike at Exit 45 to the Gorham Bypass off Route 114 in Gorham. In 2007, the communities of Gorham, Scarborough, South Portland, and Westbrook signed a joint resolution requesting the Maine Turnpike Authority (MTA) to assess the feasibility of a new Turnpike connector linking the Gorham Bypass with the Maine Turnpike.

In November 2019, the MTA Board unanimously authorized MTA to move forward on the initial environmental studies, land acquisition, and public outreach planning. After local opposition, the project is currently on hold, and the future of the project is uncertain.



State Reform School Administration Building (2015) Source: Maine: An Encyclopedia

### 3. Historic & Archaeological Resources

Maritime activities and industrial and commercial development have heavily influenced the development of South Portland. The City has significant historic resources, including seven historic neighborhoods which may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places<sup>1</sup>, four individual properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and two archaeological sites of significance identified by the State of Maine Historic Preservation Commission. The City's Historic Preservation Committee, Greater Portland Landmarks, and the South Portland Historical Society all play an essential role in advancing the appreciation, awareness, and protection of historic resources in South Portland. There are also many opportunities to advance protection, preservation, and awareness of the City's historic and archaeological resources.

The State Historic Preservation Commission has indicated that the City needs a citywide archaeological survey to identify potentially significant resources associated with the City's residential, maritime, industrial, and agricultural heritage. Similarly, interview participants indicated that a citywide historic resources survey is needed to build on the Willard Neighborhood survey of 2014.

*“When historic preservation and development work in tandem, you create a community where everybody can feel at home.”*

**- Interview participant**

While South Portland has some protections built into the Zoning, Building, and Subdivision Ordinances, there is a need for a more comprehensive ordinance to fully identify and address the preservation goals of the City and provide more comprehensive protection for the City's historic resources. The Cushing's Point Museum has proven to be a valuable community resource that can serve an important role in increasing heritage tourism and fostering a greater appreciation of the City's history, but would need additional archival, programming, and exhibit space to fully reach its potential. Under Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances, the Historic Preservation Committee is charged with conducting and regularly updating a comprehensive Inventory of Archaeological and Historic Resources. However, lack of funding and professional support has impeded advancing this directive.

<sup>1</sup> Greater Portland Landmarks: South Portland Historic Resources, <https://www.portlandlandmarks.org/south-portland-historic-resources>

## Inventory and Analysis

### *The Development History of South Portland*

Long before European colonization, the Indigenous people known today as Abenaki, Maliseet, Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot, collectively called the Wabanaki, made their home in present-day Maine. The Wabanaki developed trade alliances with Europeans dating back to the late 1500s. Persecution and oppression of the Wabanaki occurred during King Philip's War in 1675 when the neutral Wabanaki were forced to support the English or surrender their guns, which were vital to hunting. According to the Maine State Museum:

*For nearly the next hundred years, the Wabanaki allied with the French to limit English settlement in Maine. Beginning in 1689, war between France and England spilled over to their North American colonies and involved their Indigenous allies.*

Tensions and displacement of the Wabanaki increased over the next 100 years, during which time the Wabanaki were weakened by widespread disease, hostilities between the English and the French, and deeper encroachment into their lands.<sup>2</sup>

### *Early Colonial Settlement and the Nineteenth Century*<sup>3</sup>

Europeans initially colonized the area of present-day South Portland in 1630 to establish a fishing and trading station. South Portland gradually became part of an area characterized by many small villages spread across several miles.<sup>4</sup> South Portland

<sup>2</sup> Maine State Museum First Peoples, <https://mainestatemuseum.org/exhibit/regional-struggle/first-peoples/> also Maine Memory Network \_Maine History Online- 1668-1774 Settlement and Strife, <https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/897/page/1308/display>

<sup>3</sup> City of South Portland, About, <https://www.southportland.org/our-city/about-south-portland/>

<sup>4</sup> City of South Portland, Maine Comprehensive Plan Update, October 15, 2012, [https://www.southportland.org/files/9416/7725/2019/2012\\_Compre-South Portland Comprehensive Plan](https://www.southportland.org/files/9416/7725/2019/2012_Compre-South%20Portland%20Comprehensive%20Plan)

was originally part of the Town of Falmouth, which included today's municipalities of Portland, South Portland, Falmouth, Westbrook, and Cape Elizabeth. In 1765, Cape Elizabeth (at the time encompassing both South Portland and Cape Elizabeth as they exist today), was established, separating itself from Falmouth.

For many years, Maine operated as a province of Massachusetts. Maine was included in the Charter of New England in 1620 and the Charter of Massachusetts Bay in 1629.<sup>5</sup> The question of separation was first raised during and after the Revolution when it was clear that Massachusetts was unable to protect Maine from British occupation. Over the years, separationists would argue that statehood would bring more equitable taxation and lower government expenses. Many coastal mariners and merchants were opposed to separation, while many inlanders supported separation. Massachusetts agreed to grant separation if the voters chose it and, after two unsuccessful votes in 1816, the voters supported separation in 1819.<sup>6</sup> Congress established Maine as the 23rd state under the Missouri Compromise of 1820. This legislation admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a non-slave state at the same time, so as not to upset the balance between slave and free states in the nation.<sup>7,8</sup>

In 1776, Fort Hancock, named after Massachusetts Governor John Hancock, was constructed along the southern approach to Portland Harbor. In 1808, Fort Preble was erected upon the site of Fort Hancock. Fort Preble was built to enforce the trade

[hensive\\_Plan.pdf](#)

<sup>5</sup> US Census Bureau, Stats for Stories: Maine 200th Anniversary (23rd state): March 15, 2020, <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/maine-admission-anniversary.html>

<sup>6</sup> Maine History Online: Maine Memory Network: 1775-1820 Tension, War, and Separation, <https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/899/page/1310/display?page=6>

<sup>7</sup> Susan Collins, Maine Senate, Maine Facts, <https://www.collins.senate.gov/about/maine-facts>

<sup>8</sup> National Archives: Missouri Compromise 1820, <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/missouri-compromise#:~:text=This%20legislation%20admitted%20Missouri%20as,remainder%20of%20the%20Louisiana%20Territory>

embargo that President Thomas Jefferson enacted against the British in 1807. It was named after Navy officer Edward Preble, born in Portland, who distinguished himself in service during the Revolutionary War. Fort Preble was in continual service for almost 250 years before being decommissioned in 1950.<sup>9</sup> What remains of Fort Preble can now be found on the campus of Southern Maine Community College.

The population surged with the shipbuilding developments of the mid-and late-1800s. Ferry Village, Knightville, and Turner's Island were home to commercial businesses that emerged during this period to support the shipyard activity. Municipally funded improvements were needed to support the growing population, bringing about the installation of public water to some sections in the northern areas of Cape Elizabeth. On March 15, 1895, the Governor signed into law an act to approve the division of the town of Cape Elizabeth and establish the "Town of South Portland." In 1898, South Portland became a City by Charter.<sup>10</sup> At the time of the split, Willard, Ferry Village, Knightville, Town House Corner, Pleasantdale, Ligonias, and Skunk Hill represented seven distinct neighborhoods of the City.<sup>11</sup>

#### ***Twentieth Century***

In 1916, the Million Dollar Bridge was constructed providing a safe and reliable connection between the more urbanized areas of Portland and South Portland. The bridge drastically improved travel between the two cities and facilitated additional residential development in South Portland, including the residential developments at Meeting House Hill and Sylvan Site.<sup>12</sup>

The federal government maintained an active interest in the area and reconstructed Fort Preble during the first years of the 21st century. In 1941, the Todd-Bath Iron Shipbuilding Corporation, or the East Yard, was established to build cargo ships for Britain. The West Yard, or South Portland Shipbuilding, started soon after the construction of the Todd-Bath shipyard construction commenced. In 1943, the shipyards were combined to form the New England Shipbuilding Corporation. The New England Shipbuilding Corporation played an important role in supporting the war effort in World War II, constructing ten percent of all the 440-foot Liberty ships during the war years.<sup>13</sup> The shipyard gradually ceased operations after the war ended in 1945.

The Portland Pipeline was built during World War II to safely transport vital oil when enemy warships interrupted tanker traffic bound for the refineries in Canada. The pipeline begins at the 100-acre tank farm and marine terminal along South Portland's waterfront and runs to Montreal, Canada.<sup>14</sup>

With the construction of Interstate-95 (c. 1947) and the construction of the Maine Mall in 1971, South Portland emerged as an important regional retail center. The Maine Mall opened its first twenty stores in August 1971 and is responsible for over 13 million visitors annually to its 1.2 million square feet of retail space.<sup>15</sup>

Today, the creative economy continues to bring new people, new restaurants, and new shops to neighborhoods where historic patterns of development are still evident: Knightville, Ferry Village, Willard Square, and Meetinghouse Hill. Several new restaurants have emerged along Cottage Road from Millcreek to Meetinghouse Hill. The Mad Horse Theatre Company, once located in Portland, relocated to the waterfront neighborhood of Ferry Village, bringing

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9 Kinsley, Julia, True, "Fort Preble", One New England, June 20, 2011, <http://www.onenewengland.com/article.php?id=204>

10 City of South Portland website: About South Portland, <https://www.southportland.org/our-city/about-south-portland/>

11 City of South Portland, Maine Comprehensive Plan Update, October 15, 2012, [https://www.southportland.org/files/9416/7725/2019/2012\\_Comprehensive\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/9416/7725/2019/2012_Comprehensive_Plan.pdf)

12 Maine History Online-Maine Memory Network: Sylvan Site <https://www.mainememory.net/bin/Features?t=fp&feat=76>

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13 Maine History Online -South Portland's Wartime Shipbuilding, <https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/856/page/1266/display>

14 "The Portland Pipeline" by Wayne R. Holmquist, <https://www.raymond-maine.org/content/portland-pipeline-wayne-r-holmquist#:~:text=It%20was%20built%20more%20than,Portland%20Harbor%20to%20Montreal%2C%20Canada>

15 City of South Portland, <https://www.southportland.org/our-city/about-south-portland/>

the number of theaters in South Portland to three.<sup>16</sup>

While retail employment at the Maine Mall has seen some decline due to e-commerce, Hannaford Supermarkets and Distribution Center continue to be major employers in the City. South Portland also has over 1,000 jobs in manufacturing. Many of these jobs are at two large semiconductor manufacturing establishments, Texas Instruments and Diodes Inc. Today, the finance and insurance sector is the largest employer in South Portland, driven by several large firms, including Unum, Provident Life Insurance. For a more detailed economic profile, see Chapter 6, Economy.

## Historic Resources

### *National Register of Historic Places*<sup>17</sup>

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) defines a historic resource as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion on, the National Register of Historic Places, including artifacts, records, and material remains related to such property or resource.<sup>18</sup> The National Register of Historic Places (the Register) is a program of the National Park Service that identifies historically significant buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts. Properties listed on the Register are eligible for certain grants that support preservation activities, income tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic structures, and a state rehabilitative tax credit.<sup>19</sup> Historic resources listed on the Register are considered in the planning phases of federal, state, and local development projects. In Maine, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission oversees

16 Edgar Allen Beem.2015. Down East: “SoPo So Good” <https://downeast.com/features/south-portland-maine/>

17 “National Register for Historic Places, State of Maine Historic Preservation Commission, last modified 2019, <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/national-register-of-historic-places>

18 Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. “Section 106 Archaeology Guidance - Terms Defined”. [https://www.achp.gov/Section\\_106\\_Archaeology\\_Guidance/Terms%20Defined](https://www.achp.gov/Section_106_Archaeology_Guidance/Terms%20Defined)

19 State of Maine, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/tax-incentives>

the administration of the Register program.

The following resources are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

- Portland Breakwater Light (“Bug Light”)
- Seavey–Robinson House
- Spring Point Ledge Light Station
- State Reform School Historic District

### *Cultural & Architectural Resource Management Archive (CARMA)*<sup>20</sup>

The Cultural and Architectural Resource Management Archive (CARMA) database provides information on historic and surveyed, above-ground, non-archaeological properties in the state. This online resource was developed by the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. CARMA does not contain information on archaeological sites. Although CARMA does not include all historic properties in Maine, it provides an online repository of surveyed above-ground historic resources. The CARMA website indicates that many of the surveyed properties listed may have incomplete or missing addresses. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission advises users that no guarantee, inferred or explicit, is made regarding the accuracy of the survey information, addresses, locations on the maps, or eligibility assessments.<sup>21</sup>

The CARMA database for South Portland provides information for the 1,054 surveyed properties listed in the database. Seventy-three percent of the listed structures were built in the 1900s, and

20 State of Maine Historic Preservation Commission, “Cultural & Architectural Resource Management Archive (CARMA)”, last modified 2019, <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/quick-links/carma>

21 State of Maine Historic Preservation Commission: Cultural & Architectural Resource Management Archive (CARMA) Map Viewer <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/quick-links/carma#:~:text=The%20Cultural%20%26%20Architectural%20Resource%20Management,contain%20information%20on%20archaeological%20sites>

### 3. Historic & Archaeological Resources

21 percent were built in the 1800s, including the Albert E. Thurrell House. Others date back to the 1700s.

#### *Archaeological Resources*<sup>22</sup>

Maine focuses on two general classes of archaeological sites based upon their origin. Native Americans created the “prehistoric” archaeological record, and the European Americans made the “historic” archaeological record.<sup>23</sup> The term prehistoric refers to the period before there were written colonial records. For Maine, prehistory is the period before European contact (1500 AD).<sup>24</sup> To protect the integrity of archaeological sites, specific locations are withheld. Instead, general areas are mapped to indicate significant archaeological finds have been made within a radius of the site.

A historic archaeological report index of archaeological surveys conducted in Maine is available on the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) website. MHPC holds several thousand unpublished archaeology reports. Access to these reports is limited to approved archaeologists and others conducting research as permitted under 27MRSA s377.<sup>25</sup> MHPC has identified two prehistoric archaeological sites in urban settings in South Portland. These sites are located near Broadway Avenue and Barberry Creek. Dr. Arthur Spiess, the Chief Historic Preservationist for MHPC, is identified as the author of the record for the two sites.

Three sites have been located along Long Creek at the airport’s south end and have been determined to be not significant. Other

22 Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, “Municipal Planning Assistance Program Planning Data,” Maine.gov, last modified 2021, [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/comp\\_plans/planning\\_data.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/comp_plans/planning_data.shtml)

23 Maine: An Encyclopedia, Archaeology, <https://maineencyclopedia.com/archaeology/>

24 Maine Historic Preservation Commission. “Maine Native American Pre-European History (or Maine “Prehistory)” <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/survey/archaeology/mprehist>

25 Maine Historic Preservation Commission. “MPREHIST: Maine Prehistoric Archaeological Reports on file” <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/survey/archaeology/mprehist>

sites may exist and have yet to be identified.

As of October 2020, The Maine Historic Preservation Commission had identified 12 historic archaeological sites in the City, eight of which are the wreckage sites of various ships. The National Register Status for these sites is undetermined.

#### *An archaeological survey is needed in South Portland.*

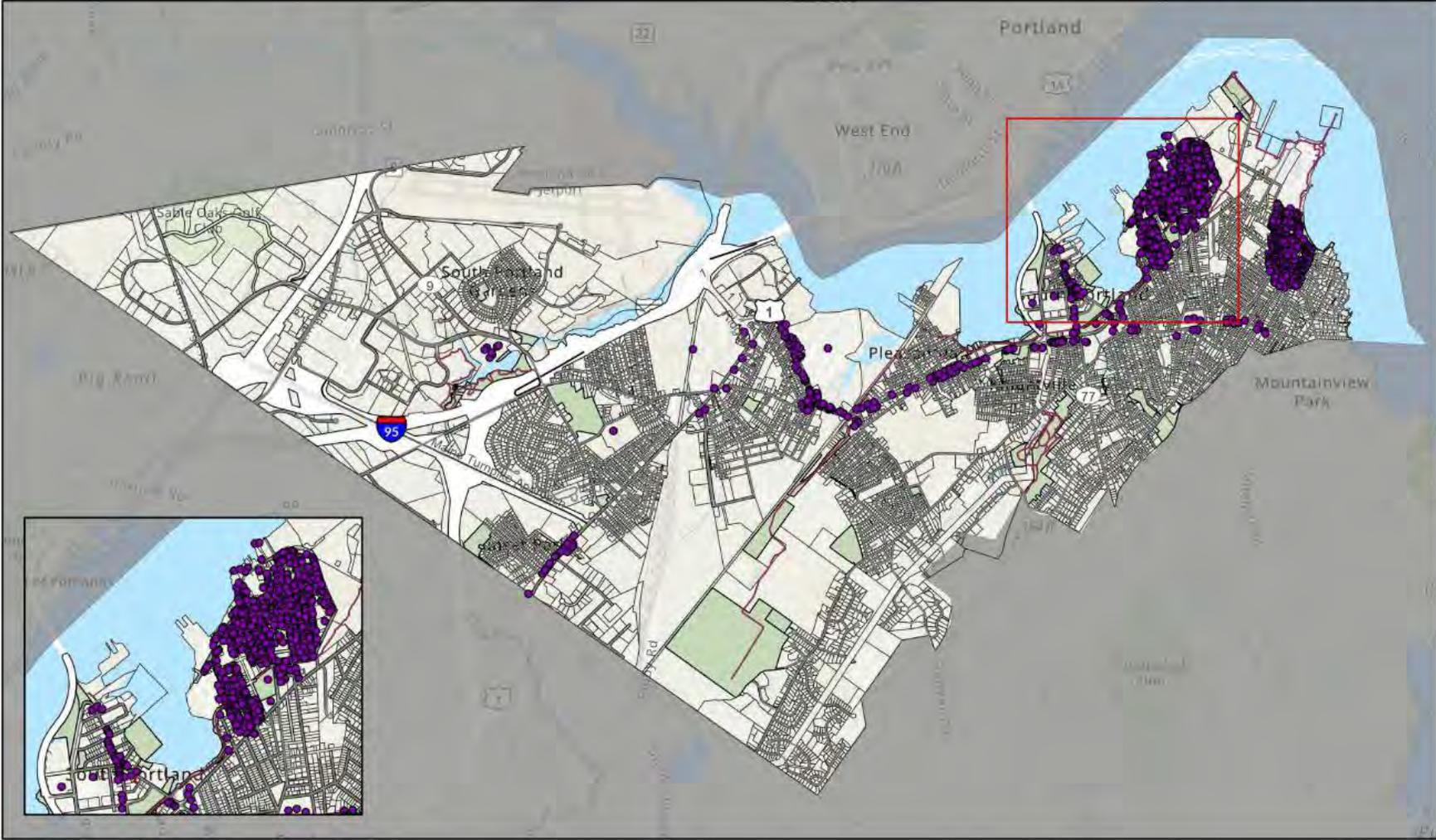
Site	Site Number	Site Type	Periods of Significance
Mill Creek Mill	ME 402-001	Mill	c.1727 – c.1845; c.1855 – c.1887
Fort Hancock	ME 402-002	Military, fort	1776
Fort Preble	ME 402-003	Military, fort	1805-1815, 1861-1865, 1905-1910, 1941-1950
John M Hathaway	ME 402-004	Wreck, screw	6-Sep-59
Dean Reinauer	ME 402-005	Wreck, oil barge	December 30, 1869
Hockomock	ME 402-006	Wreck, ferry	1927
Nancy	ME 402-007	Wreck, vessel	September 7, 1832
Harriet S. Jackson	ME 402-008	Wreck, salvage remains	March 21, 1876
Grand Turk	ME 402-009	Wreck, ship	January 4, 1789
Mary Cobb	ME 402-010	Wreck, schooner	1853
Samuel J. Gaucher	ME 402-011	Wreck, schooner	11-Nov-11
Portland Jetport Wharf	ME 402-012	Wharf	1857-1876

Source: Maine Historic Preservation Commission

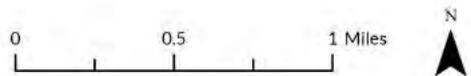
CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND - HISTORIC SITES

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

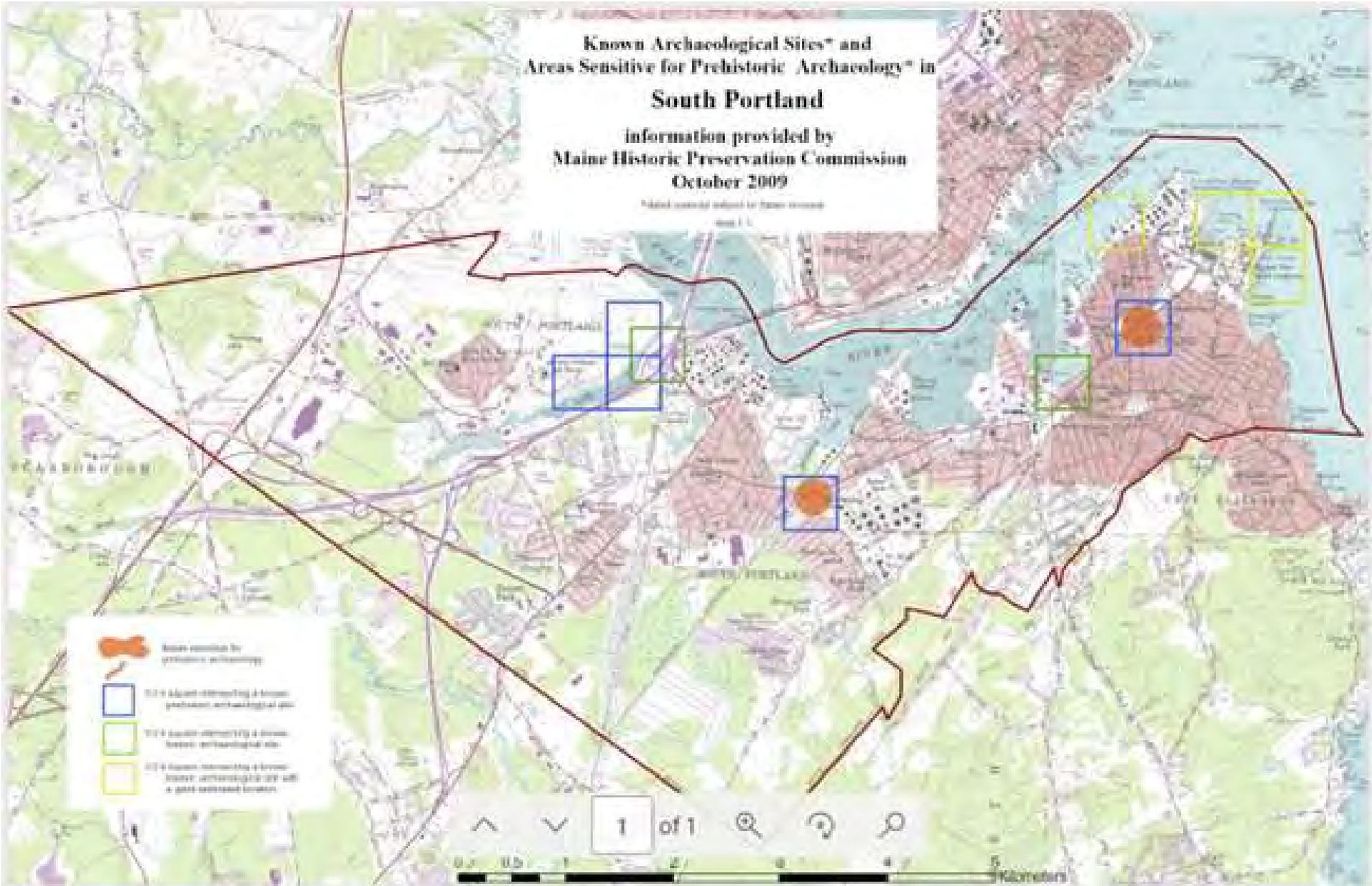
J M GOLDSON



- South Portland Historic Properties
- Trails
- Park/Recreational



Sources: MaineGeoLibrary, ArcGIS



The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has identified further research needed to fully understand, document, and protect the archaeological sites of South Portland.

*“Few archaeological sites have been professionally investigated in South Portland. A citywide archaeological survey is needed to identify potentially significant resources associated with the town’s residential, maritime, industrial, and agricultural heritage, particularly those associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the 17th and 18th centuries. A city ordinance is needed that requires developers to consider the impact of their projects on South Portland’s cultural and archaeological heritage and to fund archaeological surveys. Such programs have been established in many urban areas across the country to the benefit of both public and private sectors.”*

- Maine Historic Preservation Commission<sup>26</sup>

## Historic Preservation Regulatory Protections

### Regulatory Process

In 2019, the City adopted regulatory requirements for properties listed in the South Portland Inventory of Archaeological and Historic Resources. Regulatory provisions allowed for special permitted uses to encourage adaptive reuse, demolition and building permit delay, and establishes a process and criteria for historic designation.

<sup>26</sup> Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, “Municipal Planning Assistance Program Planning Data,” Maine.gov, last modified 2021, [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/comp\\_plans/planning\\_data.shtml](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/comp_plans/planning_data.shtml)

The following regulatory standards address historic and archaeological resources:

**Site Plan Review.** Any proposed development cannot have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic or archaeological resources sites, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, or any public rights for physical or visual access to the shoreline. Any historic or archeological resources must be preserved and incorporated into the development plan in a manner that retains their historic or archaeological value if feasible.

**Building Permit Issuance.** Any permit application involving a building or structure built on or before December 31, 1940, or for a property listed on the South Portland Inventory of Archaeological and Historic Resources, must demonstrate that the proposed development will not have an adverse effect on historic or archaeological resources sites.

**Subdivision Regulations.** Any proposed subdivision must not have an undue adverse effect on historic sites.

**Historic Resource Protections for Roosevelt School property.** Unless otherwise approved by the City Council, modifications and additions to the existing school building are required to adhere to the historic preservation standards of the U.S. National Parks Service to the extent practical and feasible.

**Shoreland Zoning and Development in the Shoreland Area Overlay District.** Any proposed land use activity involving structural development or soil disturbance on or adjacent to sites listed on, or eligible to be listed on, the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by the permitting authority, shall be submitted by the applicant to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment, at least twenty days before action being taken by the permitting authority.

**Shoreland Zoning and Development in the Shoreland Area Overlay District – Docks and Piers.** There must be a finding that any pier, dock, wharf, or other structure located in whole or in part within

### 3. Historic & Archaeological Resources

the Shoreland Area Overlay District must protect archaeological and historic resources.

Conditional Districts. Certain Districts (e.g., G-3 and CAZ) with historic resources have been redeveloped subject to conditions requiring preservation of resources on the associated properties.

Design Standards for Special Zones. Proposed development in this part of the city must preserve and reinforce the historic character of neighborhoods and business districts.

Conditional Armory Zone Protections. Require alterations to the armory that adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings. Sec. 27-1202. Conditions (CAZ). Conditional Armory Zone requiring South Portland Historic Preservation Committee an opportunity to comment on proposed changes to the existing building.

#### ***Demolition Delay***

Section 5-67 of the Buildings Ordinance requires that any building permit application for exterior work or demolition permit application for a building or structure built on or before December 31, 1940, or for a property listed on the South Portland Inventory of Archaeological and Historic Resources (the "Inventory") be delayed for a period of up to 90 days from the receipt of the application. During the stay, the application is reviewed by the South Portland Historical Society to ascertain whether the project impacts a historic resource. If the project is identified as a historic resource, the South Portland Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) reviews the application to determine whether the proposed work is in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings and provides the owner/applicant with a written summary of comments regarding the application. While this process can increase awareness and provide additional time to consider alternatives, it cannot prevent the demolition of historic structures.

#### ***South Portland Historic Preservation Committee<sup>27</sup>***

<sup>27</sup> Chapter 2: Division 9a Historic Preservation Committee South Portland South Portland Comprehensive Plan

The HPC was established in 2014 and reformed in 2021. Its mandate is articulated in Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances. The HPC is charged with assisting the City Council "in preserving the historical and architectural integrity of South Portland, and to promote the educational, cultural, economic, aesthetic value, and general welfare of South Portland." The HPC is a seven-member committee with representation from Greater Portland Landmarks and the South Portland Historical Society. The committee meets monthly.

#### ***South Portland Inventory of Archaeological and Historic Resources***

Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances also provides for the HPC to prepare and regularly update an Inventory of Archaeological and Historic Resources for review and approval by the City Council. Once adopted by the City Council, the Inventory is to be made part of the ordinance by reference. Limitations in professional services funding support have impeded the work associated with this directive.

#### ***South Portland Historical Society***

The South Portland Historical Society was established in 1962 and is dedicated to collecting, preserving, and exhibiting items of historical significance, as well as providing educational programming on local history to school children through seniors.<sup>28</sup> The South Portland Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, public charity that operates and staffs the Cushing's Point Museum at Bug Light Park and hosts an online database that provides online access to some South Portland Historical Society's collections and holdings.

Additionally, the South Portland Historical Society manages the South Portland Online Museum, which provides an online database of over 16,000 catalog items and images. This ongoing project is maintained by both Historical Society staff and volunteers, and new additions are added to the Online Museum regularly.<sup>29</sup>

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Code of Ordinances

<sup>28</sup> South Portland Historical Society, <https://www.southportland.org/online-services/learn-about/south-portland-historical-society/about-us/>

<sup>29</sup> South Portland Historical Society: South Portland Online Museum <https://Inventory.Chapters|A-20>

#### ***Greater Portland Landmarks<sup>30</sup>***

Founded in 1964, Greater Portland Landmarks (GPL) promotes the preservation and awareness of the City's historic buildings, neighborhoods, and landscapes in Portland and surrounding communities, including South Portland. Through a variety of activities, including events, walking tours, education, and advocacy, GPL serves as a community resource as it seeks to build awareness, instill community pride, and encourage public participation in decisions regarding preservation, planning, and development.

Property owners can apply for a historic marker through GPL's marker program. To qualify, a property owner must complete an application that documents a building's date of construction and original owner, along with a brief description of the building's history and architecture. GPL, in turn, does research on the property, and the application is then considered by the GPL Marker Committee "to determine if the building meets the criteria of good physical condition and if it displays the original architectural intent of the builder/architect". Several properties in South Portland have qualified for markers through the GPL marker program.

On their website, GPL notes that although South Portland has seven historic neighborhoods, only three historic buildings and one district, the State Reform School National Register Historic District at Brick Hill, are identified on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>31</sup>

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[www.southportland.org/online-services/learn-about/south-portland-historical-society/south-portland-online-museum-new/](http://www.southportland.org/online-services/learn-about/south-portland-historical-society/south-portland-online-museum-new/)

30 City of South Portland. Maine Comprehensive Plan Update, October 15, 2012, [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/comp\\_plans/South\\_Portland\\_2012.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/comp_plans/South_Portland_2012.pdf)

31 Greater Portland Landmarks Historic Resources, <https://www.portland-landmarks.org/south-portland-historic-resources>

***“We encourage the City, property owners, and local organizations to nominate historic buildings, landscapes, and neighborhoods to the National Register of Historic Places and to participate in Greater Portland Landmarks’ Historic Marker Program.”***

#### **– Greater Portland Landmarks**

##### ***Willard Neighborhood Survey***

In 2014, GPL partnered with the South Portland Historical Society (SPHS) to undertake a survey of historic resources, targeting the Willard Neighborhood area, one of South Portland's seven traditional neighborhoods. The team prepared survey forms and photographs for 336 properties in the Willard Neighborhood which were uploaded into Maine's Cultural and Architectural Resource Management Archive (CARMA).<sup>32</sup>

##### ***Ferry Village Survey Project***

In 2019, a survey was conducted that surveyed the historic resources in the Ferry Village neighborhood. This survey documented approximately (458) primary structures, (98) garages, and 1 trail on 1.3 miles of the neighborhood's (194) total acres. The survey identified a potential historic district in the Ferry Village neighborhood.<sup>33</sup>

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32 Maine's Historic Preservation Plan 2016-2021, [https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/sites/maine.gov/mhpc/files/inline-files/Heritage%20for%20the%20Future%202016-2021\\_2.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/sites/maine.gov/mhpc/files/inline-files/Heritage%20for%20the%20Future%202016-2021_2.pdf)

33 Architectural Reconnaissance Report Ferry Village Survey Project South Portland, ME, Julie Ann Larry, Architectural Historian Greater Portland Landmarks [https://www.southportland.org/files/8916/7725/7345/Ferry\\_Village\\_Survey\\_Project\\_2019.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/8916/7725/7345/Ferry_Village_Survey_Project_2019.pdf)

#### ***South Portland Inventory of Archaeological and Historic Places***

The following sites have been adopted in the South Portland Inventory of Archaeological and Historic Places as local landmarks that could take advantage of the City's adaptive reuse ordinance.

- 265 Cottage Road a.k.a. "The Captain David Boyd House"
- 161 Preble Street, the "Fred G. Hamilton House"

These structures are allowed several additional uses as special exceptions as an incentive to invest in the structure and allow for the long-term maintenance and upkeep of the property, without significantly altering the predominantly residential nature of the zoning district.

#### ***Maine Historic Preservation Commission- Climate Change Resources***<sup>34</sup>

The MHPC has established a webpage to assist entities throughout the state with planning for the effects of climate change on historic properties and cultural resources through the processes of identification, adaptation, resiliency, and mitigation. The website includes toolkits, Maine-specific research, and links to resources from preservation partners, planners, and governmental organizations.

#### ***Maine Historic Preservation Commission – Tax Incentive Resources***

The MHPC administers the state historic rehabilitation tax credit program. Eligible projects can receive a 25 percent state tax credit that can be combined with the 20 percent federal rehabilitative tax credit. Eligible projects that are not utilizing federal rehabilitation tax credits can still apply for a 25 percent state tax credit for rehabilitation expenditures between \$50,000 and \$250,000.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Maine Historic Preservation Commission, "Climate Change and Historic Resources", [Maine.gov](https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/protection-and-community-resources/climate-change), last modified 2019, <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/protection-and-community-resources/climate-change>

<sup>35</sup> Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Tax Incentives, <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/tax-incentives>

#### ***Maine Historic Preservation Commission – Certified Local Government Program***<sup>36</sup>

The MHPC also administers a program designed to promote preservation planning and cultural resource protection efforts at the local level that are consistent with state and Federal standards and guidelines. Eligible communities must adopt a historic preservation ordinance and conduct and maintain a survey. Benefits of participation include technical guidance and eligibility for grants. Although currently not a participant in the program, South Portland could consider applying to the program in the future. Certified Local Government communities must:

- Establish a historic preservation ordinance that includes protection for historic properties.
- Create a preservation commission to oversee the preservation ordinance and the program.
- Provide for public education and participation, including nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Conduct and maintain a survey and inventory of historic properties.

#### **Focus Group Takeaways**

Three interviews were conducted where participants were asked about strengths, opportunities, and challenges that the community faces in preserving and protecting the community's historic and archaeological resources. Respondents agreed that the people in the community are the most valuable resource for preserving and increasing awareness of the City's history. Cushing's Point Museum was identified as a great community resource that could serve an important role in Heritage Tourism, but would need additional archival, programming, and exhibit space to fully reach its

<sup>36</sup> Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Certified Local Government Program, <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/protection-and-community-resources/certified-local-government-program>

potential.

A community-wide historic resources survey and an historic preservation ordinance were both identified as immediate needs. The survey would provide an opportunity to better document the City's resources and build on the Willard Neighborhood Survey. A comprehensive historic preservation ordinance would help the community establish clear goals for historic preservation and empower a more effective review of projects with potential impacts on important historic resources.

Participants identified the importance of the role of the Historic Preservation Committee and the need for that Committee to be supported with a stronger ordinance, with clear procedural guidelines, and more technical and professional support.

Feedback from the Historic Preservation Committee suggests that the Committee has a responsibility to research historic sites and make recommendations to the City Council about structures that should receive formal recognition. However, the volunteer group has been unable to advance this goal due to a lack of funding support and access to specialized outside expertise, either in historic preservation or planning.

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Trout Brook Nature Reserve, Source: South Portland Land Trust

# 4. Natural & Water Resources

## Introduction

South Portland has robust natural and water resources, including estuaries, rivers, streams, creeks, brooks, and coastal areas. However, these critical resources are threatened due to the number of impervious surfaces, culvert conditions, non-point pollution sources, and urban impaired streams. The City established shoreland zoning to help protect and control water pollution and has deployed several watershed management plans to identify best management practices (BMPs) and prioritize capital projects. These watershed management plans are critical because they take a regional focus and allow South Portland to partner and address water quality issues that happen beyond the City's boundaries. The City also partners with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection for biomonitoring and the integration of their Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan (2020-2024). South Portland also, in collaboration with the City of Portland, completed the One Climate Future Plan to develop a regional vision for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the resilience of their communities.

Maine's Growth Management Law recommends protecting the quality and managing the quantity of the State's water resources,

including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers, and coastal areas. This also includes protecting the State's other critical natural resources, including wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas. As a coastal community, South Portland has diverse natural and water resources, including marine habitats, fresh and salt-water wetlands, and sand dunes. Maintaining a balance between accommodating growth and redevelopment while preserving and protecting South Portland's natural and water resources remains a priority. Understanding South Portland's environment, its overall impact on the community, and the opportunities and constraints is critical for achieving the City's goals.

## Conditions and Trends

### *Geology*

The geology of South Portland generally consists of the Presumpscot Formation, which is silty clay and minor sand deposited on the sea floor during the late-glacial marine submergence. Due to the abundance of industrial and water-focused industries, there are numerous areas of fill along the coast. Bedrock outcrops are relatively abundant throughout South Portland. Much of the shoreline has exposed, or near-surface, bedrock, and a large portion of the



land has only a thin cover of surficial sediments. Willard Beach is a crescent-shaped pocket beach nestled between rocky headlands. The bedrock in this area is Ordovician in age and is considered folded metamorphic rocks because of the alternating layers of gray rock and white quartzite.

### ***Topography***

South Portland's terrain is generally low-lying, with many filled wetland areas. The highest natural elevation reaches approximately 213 feet (65m) above sea level in the northwestern parts of the City. The average elevation across the city is around 26 feet above sea level. The city exhibits gently rolling coastal topography, with modest rises in the north and west, transitioning to broad, flat lowlands alongside its numerous waterfront areas.

### ***Coastal Dunes***

Coastal dunes provide a natural coastal buffer and protection against wind erosion, tides, storm surge, and high waves. They also provide important ecological habitats for vegetation and wildlife. Willard Beach is one of Maine's few urban beaches. It lies within the bow-like Simonton Cove on the eastern shore of South Portland. Facing east, the beach overlooks the Portland ship channel. Holocene marine sand sits atop a very thin layer of bedrock to form the sand dunes. The beach is a popular regional recreation destination. The coastal dunes at Willard Beach are an important resiliency and ecological asset. The extensive foot traffic and use of the beach for storing, launching, and hauling of boats has prevented some natural dune vegetation from growing. Historically, development has come right up to the dunes, negatively impacting the historic dune profile. Dune vegetation, specifically American beach grass, is sensitive to foot traffic, however, combined citizen and City efforts have raised awareness and provided protective measures to help restore some vegetation. Human impacts, climate change, storm events, and erosion have decreased the coastal dunes. Beach profile monitoring is maintained by faculty and students at Southern Maine Community College on monthly intervals and survey six transects from the dune to the low tide line to monitor sand elevation over time.

A major storm in 2022 brought exceptionally high tides and decimated the coastal dunes at Willard Beach. Significant storms in the winter of 2023-2024 have also taken significant tolls on dunes in the region. The dunes help protect the surrounding community and provide essential habitat. They are also a key line of defense in protecting the wastewater force main that runs along the beach. The Willard Beach Master Plan outlines the short and medium-term plans for dune restoration and protection.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Low-lying areas and floodplains***

Heavily developed and water-adjacent zones, such as the waterfront and marshlands, sit within the 0–10 ft elevation range, making them subject to tidal inundation and potential flooding. Studies by the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership note that with current sea level rises, these low zones face increasing vulnerability over time.

### ***River Basin and Drainage***

South Portland has tidal marshes and small coastline creeks, many of which are found by Spring Point and Back Cove. These areas form low-lying estuarine terrain, typical of Maine's coast, with much of the city's drainage influenced by tidal cycles rather than stream gradients.

### ***Soils***

There are approximately 47 soil types throughout South Portland. The most common soil types are Windsor Loamy Sand, which covers more than 1,045 acres (approximately 13.6%) of the Town, and Scantic silt loam, which covers more than 975 acres (approximately 12.7%).

Windsor Loamy Sand is a sandy loam predominantly found in elevated, well-drained uplands. These soils, formally classified as Windsor series, are typically located on 0–8% slopes in upland areas such as residential neighborhoods built on former glacial

<sup>1</sup> Willard Beach Master Plan, <https://www.southportland.org/our-city/board-and-committees/willard-beach-master-plan-committee/willard-beach-master-plan>

## 4. Natural & Water Resources

outwash terraces (e.g., near O’Neil Street and Riverside Street). The Windsor series features a loamy sand texture throughout the top 0–53 cm, underlain by loose sand (53–165 cm), is strongly acidic, and supports deep root penetration, making it ideal for forests, lawns, and moderate drainage landscapes.

Scantic soils, formed in glacial till, are finer-textures, with better moisture retention than Windsor sands. Suffield silt loam, found along the coast, is a very deep, well-drained soil formed in lakes or marine sediments occurs chiefly along riverbanks, stream corridors, and coastal shoreline zones. Its loamy texture supports varied uses, from light agriculture to natural vegetation. Lamoine series soils although not as widespread through South Portland appear in floodplain and lowland zones adjacent to marshed and streams. The following table summarizes South Portland’s soils.

Soil Type	Drainage Class	Area (Acres)	Percent of Land Area
Windsor loamy sand, 0 to 8 percent slopes	Excessively drained	1045	13.62
Scantic silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Poorly drained	975	12.71
Swanton fine sandy loam	Poorly drained	702	9.15
Saugatuck loamy sand	Poorly drained	597	7.78
Au Gres loamy sand	Poorly drained	558	7.27
Deerfield loamy fine sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	537	7.00
Cut and fill land	Moderately well drained	503	6.56
Lyman-Tunbridge complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, rocky	Somewhat excessively drained	388	5.06
Hinckley loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Excessively drained	296	3.86

Soil Type	Drainage Class	Area (Acres)	Percent of Land Area
Lyman-Tunbridge complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, rocky	Somewhat excessively drained	179	2.33
Lamoine silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Somewhat poorly drained	178	2.32
Elmwood fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	164	2.14
Hinckley loamy sand, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Excessively drained	141	1.84
Buxton silt loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	115	1.50
Windsor loamy sand, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Excessively drained	114	1.49
Scarboro sandy loam	Very poorly drained	112	1.46
Lyman-Abram complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	Somewhat excessively drained	95	1.24
Walpole fine sandy loam	Poorly drained	95	1.24
Lyman-Abram complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very rocky	Somewhat excessively drained	92	1.20
Gravel pits	Excessively drained	91	1.19
Sebago mucky peat	Very poorly drained	71	0.93
Deerfield loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	67	0.87
Biddeford mucky peat, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Very poorly drained	65	0.85
Pemaquid, Todds point, and Damariscotta soils, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Very poorly drained	62	0.81
Limerick-Saco silt loams	Poorly drained	54	0.70

## 4. Natural & Water Resources

Soil Type	Drainage Class	Area (Acres)	Percent of Land Area
Nicholville very fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	48	0.63
Hartland very fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, eroded	Well drained	44	0.57
Suffield silt loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, eroded	Moderately well drained	44	0.57
Windsor loamy sand, 15 to 35 percent slopes	Excessively drained	39	0.51
Suffield silt loam, 25 to 45 percent slopes, eroded	Moderately well drained	37	0.48
Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	34	0.44
Lyman-Tunbridge complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, rocky	Somewhat excessively drained	24	0.31
Hartland very fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	18	0.23
Paxton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Well drained	18	0.23
Merrimac fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Somewhat excessively drained	14	0.18
Nicholville very fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	13	0.17
Hinckley-Suffield complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Excessively drained	12	0.16
Ridgebury fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	Poorly drained	7	0.09
Beaches, sand		6	0.08
Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	6	0.08
Hinckley loamy sand, 15 to 25 percent slopes	Excessively drained	4	0.05
Paxton very stony fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Well drained	2	0.03

Soil Type	Drainage Class	Area (Acres)	Percent of Land Area
Paxton very stony fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	Well drained	2	0.03
Whately fine sandy loam	Very poorly drained	2	0.03
Peru fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	1	0.01
Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	Moderately well drained	1	0.01
Merrimac fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	Somewhat excessively drained	0	0.00

### Scenic Resources

Scenic resources help define a community and celebrate significant landscape features. They are attributes that give a community identity and make a place appealing to live in. These resources include natural views and vistas as well as cultural assets. Key scenic resources include the state-mapped scenic area inventory of Portland Harbor, as well as the historic Bug Light and Spring Point Ledge Lighthouses. Before they were lost to the sea in a storm in the winter of 2023-2024, the historic Fish Shacks near Willard Beach were iconic South Portland scenic resources.

### Rare and Threatened Flora and Fauna

In South Portland, the one species of animal listed as Special Concern under the state Endangered Species Acts is the New England Cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*). The New England Cottontail thrives in early successional forests or thickets which are dominated by dense, shrubby vegetation. These habitats are typically found in young forests, abandoned farmlands, power line corridors, and along railroad tracks.

### ***Critical Wildlife Habitats and Natural Areas***

Critical habitat that supports the New England Cottontail is found in the Northwestern part of the town boundary on the border of Scarborough. According to Beginning With Habitat maps (see maps at the end of this chapter), there are no rare/exemplary natural communities/ecosystems found within the South Portland town borders.

### ***Undeveloped Habitat Blocks and Habitat Fragmentation***

Wildlife abundance and diversity in South Portland depend highly upon large areas of undeveloped land, and habitat corridors that connect these undeveloped blocks. Habitat fragmentation is typically caused by anthropogenic development such as roads, built structures, and altered landscapes. The important links between such large habitat blocks, including the riparian areas along streams and associated wetlands, have become narrower or interrupted and less able to function effectively as wildlife travel corridors between habitat areas.

South Portland contains several undeveloped habitat blocks larger than 100 acres, primarily in the northern and eastern parts of the city. These zones include core blocks spanning upland wooded zones between major roads and extending toward waterfront marshlands. Other core connector zones integrate riparian strips along small streams and drainage ways, facilitating wildlife mobility across fragmented landscapes. One of these habitat blocks reaches the 100-acre threshold with smaller undeveloped block connectors throughout the municipality. Along the coastal parts of town there are several conserved lands and beaches designated as municipal parks for the town, including Willard Beach, Davidson's Beach, Bug Light Park, and Spring Point Ledge Light.

As the city becomes denser and development widens—particularly near commercial zones like the Maine Mall and along I-95/I-295—fragmentation accelerates. This mirrors trends statewide that transportation facilities and adjacent development are the greatest contributors to habitat loss and fragmentation in Maine. South Portland's own road network, especially in western and

central zones, creates clear boundaries around core natural areas, isolating them and compromising ecological connectivity. While occasional instances of seeing wildlife species on smaller undeveloped habitat blocks do occur, overall, as the density of development moves from Tier 1 (undeveloped) to Tier 5 (1-19 acres of connected habitat) over time, the diversity of species decreases.

Aquatic system connectivity is heavily dependent on minimizing fish passage barriers such as dams or undersized culverts. Efforts are underway throughout Maine to improve road-stream crossings and connectivity for wildlife. Well-designed road-stream crossings simulate the upstream and downstream characteristics of the natural stream channel, use natural substrate within the crossing, match the natural water depths and velocities, and are wide and high relative to their length.

The Maine Stream Habitat Viewer, developed by the Maine Stream Connectivity Work Group and convened by the Maine Coastal Program, lists 30 culverts in South Portland. Of these 30 crossings, 5 are listed as a "Barrier" to habitat connectivity and an additional 21 are listed as a "Potential Barrier." There are 3 dams, another crossing type, in South Portland. All 3 dams are listed as a "Barrier" to habitat connectivity.

### ***Invasive Species***

Invasive species pose the second greatest threat to national biodiversity after habitat loss (The National Wildlife Federation, 2023). Out of their native range, these species thrive due to a lack of natural predators and differences in growth cycles that often allow them to begin growing earlier in the spring and later in the fall than our native species. These species also often have other adaptations that allow them to spread quickly or inhibit other species' growth by changing soil chemistry.

Mapped invasive species in Maine in South Portland include Common reed (*Phragmites australis*), Asiatic bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), rugosa rose (*Rosa rugosa*), Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), honeysuckle shrub (*Lonicera* spp), buckthorn

(*Rhamnus cathartica*), glossy false buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*), and green crab (*Carcinus maenas*). The City's Parks Department publishes informational flyers about common invasive species, their location, and how to prevent their spread.<sup>2</sup>

South Portland has also had persistent issues with browntail moth (*Euproctis chrysorrhoea*), an invasive species. While the Town can work to manage invasive species on municipal properties, property owners can also manage invasive species. The Maine Invasive Species Network at the University of Maine and the Invasive Plant Management Program with the Maine Forest Service can support homeowners with the best methods for invasive plant control and eradication on their properties.

### *Surface Waters*

Healthy surface waters (lakes, rivers, estuaries, and oceans) are crucial for ecological, social, scenic, and recreational use. The state has developed classification systems for lakes, rivers, and salt waters. These systems are based on standards for uses such as drinking water supply, fishery habitat, and recreational uses.

### *Rivers and Streams*

Fresh surface waters are classified as AA, A, B, and C in order of decreasing water quality and protection (See Title 38 M.R.S.A. Article 4A for more information). Surface waters are also classified according to Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act by levels of impairment by one or more pollutants. In South Portland, the officially listed streams are generally Class C due to urban influence and pollution.

South Portland is committed to healthy waters within the City and Casco Bay. Land use, municipal operations, and individual users significantly impact water quality within a watershed. The Clean Water Act requires the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (the Maine DEP) to identify waters of the State that fail to meet state and federal water quality standards. The City of South

Portland has five urban impaired streams: Barberry Creek, Kimball Brook, Long Creek, Red Brook, and Trout Brook. Faced with possible regulatory actions, watershed management plans were created as frameworks for planning, implementing, and monitoring watershed management actions to improve water quality. All five of these streams appear on the Maine DEP's Nonpoint Source Impaired Waters Priority List, reflecting issues like bacteria, nutrients, or urban runoff. Anthoine Creek is Class C, and the saltwater portion of Long Creek is SC.

Willard Beach has been listed in Category 5-B (coastal beaches impaired by bacteria) as of June 2024, giving the city access to DEP funding and BMP implementation. Under Maine rules, all freshwater streams are rated AA - C.

### *Ponds*

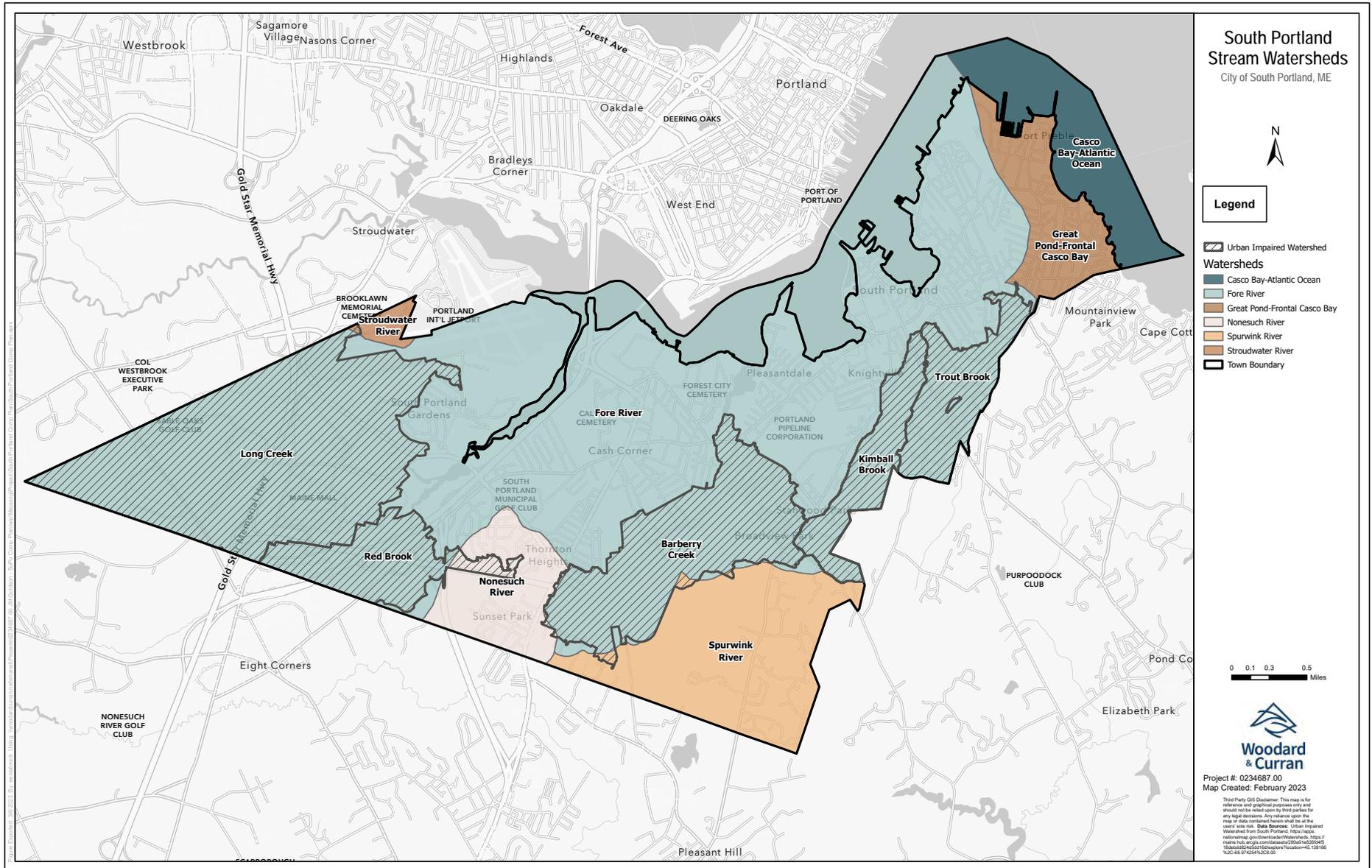
South Portland has numerous ponds that make up its surface water network. The City's primary ponds are Clark's Pond, Mill Pond, Upper Hinckley Pond, Lower Hinckley Pond, and Calvary Pond. The 16-acre Clark's Pond is the City's largest pond and is the terminus of Red Brook and Long Creek before the water enters Fore River and Casco Bay. All of South Portland's ponds are Class GPA, which is the sole classification of great ponds, natural lakes, and ponds less than 10 acres. The Maine DEP sets water quality standards for Class GPA waters.

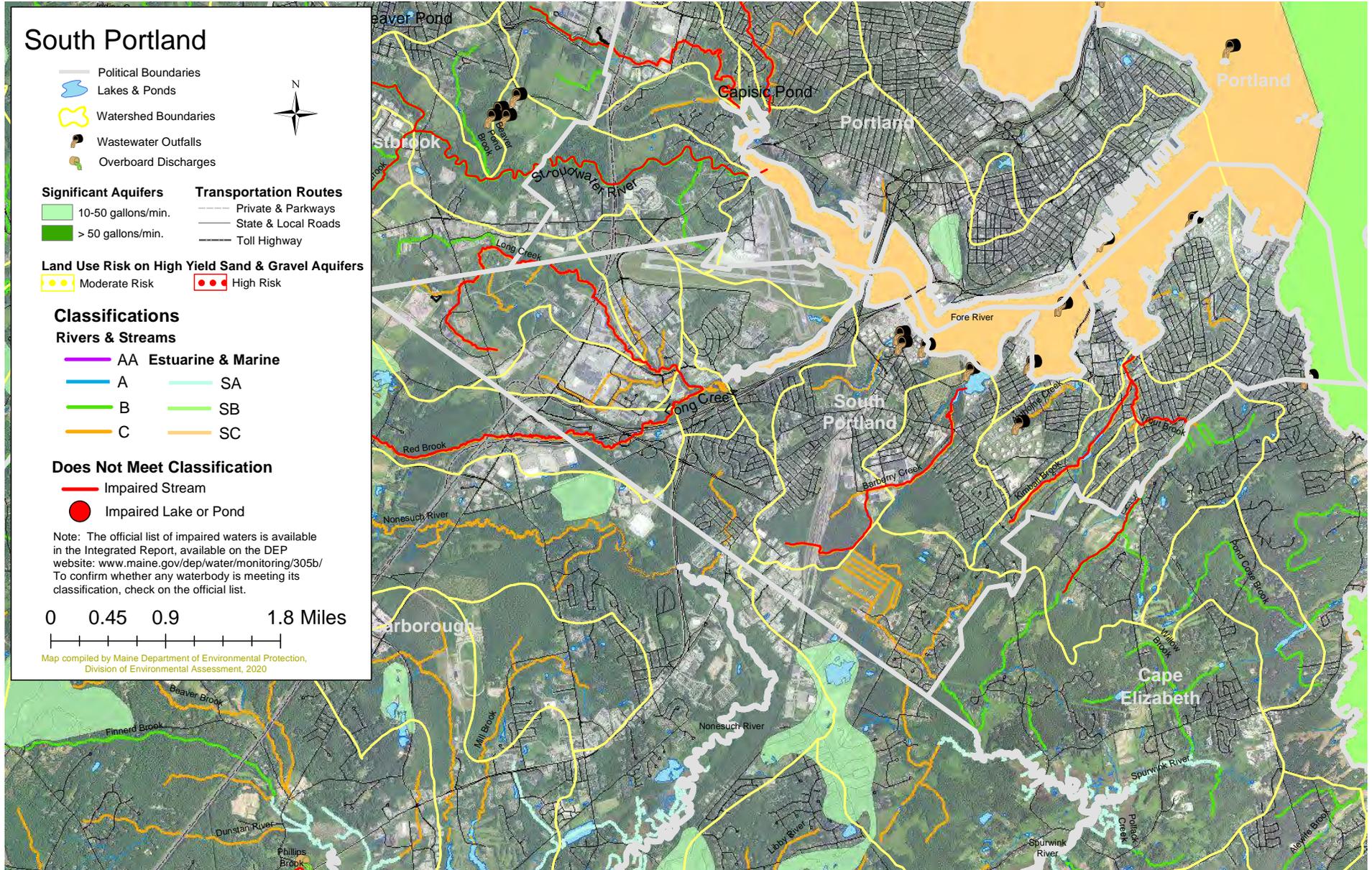
### *Lakes*

South Portland has one waterbody classified as a "Great Pond" (over 10 acres in size). Clark Pond spans approximately 15 acres. Historically, this pond was used for swimming, fishing, boating, and ice production, and was stocked with brook trout until the 1980s. Heavy development in this area occurred from the late 1960's to present, and the pond's watershed has experienced severe environmental impacts including: erosion and sedimentation, phosphorus and pollution inputs, highway runoff, and garbage disposal. Today, the City, South Portland Land Trust, and Long Creek Watershed Management District work to restore and protect Clarks Pond, and new trails have been created around the pond.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.southportland.org/693/Conservation-Corner>

# 4. Natural & Water Resources





### *Watersheds*

A watershed is a defined land area that directs and channels water, rain, and snowmelt, to waterbodies such as creeks, streams, rivers, lakes bays, or the ocean. As the water flows, it impacts people, land, and wildlife in many ways and is critical to the overall health and well-being of communities. Rain and snow that runs off the land often pick up pollutants, which adversely affects the ecology of the watershed and, ultimately, their receiving waterbody. Watershed management is challenging as watersheds tend to cross municipal boundaries and require coordination and partnership.

South Portland is mostly within the Casco Bay Watershed, with a small portion in the south, close to Scarborough, in the Saco River Watershed. The Casco Bay Watershed encompasses 985 square miles from the western mountains near Bethel to the coastal waters of Phippsburg and Cape Elizabeth. The watershed includes 25 percent of Maine's population in its 41 communities, some of which are among the fastest growing in the State. It also comprises 785 islands, islets, exposed ledges, and over 1,350 miles of rivers and streams. The watershed is divided into five sub-watersheds. Fore River Watershed covers most of South Portland and is divided into 14 stream watersheds.<sup>3</sup> Since South Portland is predominantly located in the Casco Bay Watershed, most of the City's runoff ultimately ends in Casco Bay.

### *Barberry Creek Watershed*

The Barberry Creek watershed is in South Portland and is approximately 786 acres. It originates from a wetland at Springfield Terminal Railroad and Maine Central Railroad Rigby Yard. The stream flows through heavily industrialized areas into a wooded area with a capped landfill, then into a residential area and another wetland before flowing through a dammed-up pond, mill basin, into the estuarine Fore River. Three of South Portland's municipal stormwater outfalls discharge into the stream and are regulated under the Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MEPDES) Phase II Stormwater Management permit. The the Maine DEP has identi-

<sup>3</sup> Maine Department of Environmental Protection, <https://www.maine.gov/dep/>

fied the presence of toxic contaminants, impaired instream habitat, increased sedimentation, and low baseflow as significant stressors on the watershed. Various restoration and management strategies were recommended to reduce negative impacts and restore water quality.<sup>4</sup>

### *Trout Brook Watershed*

Trout Brook is in South Portland and the Town of Cape Elizabeth. Through South Portland, the watershed is roughly 0.9 square miles. Trout Brook is a Class B freshwater stream at its headwaters in Cape Elizabeth, but transitions to a Class C freshwater stream at the South Portland city line when it enters the Sawyer Marsh. The stream travels through various land uses, including dense residential, commercial, agricultural, public, and forest land. Currently, no combined sewer overflows (CSOs) are discharging into Trout Brook. Stream habitat and biomonitoring assessments found that Trout Brook did not support the aquatic macroinvertebrates or habitat that should be found in a Class C stream. Polluted runoff from impervious surfaces such as rooftops, parking lots, and roads adversely affects the watershed. The threats to water quality identified during the development of the Watershed Management Plan were streambank erosion, inadequate buffers, yard waste dumping, stream channel alteration, and the resulting degraded habitat, decreased dissolved oxygen, and elevated chloride. The Watershed Management Plan recommends an adaptive management approach that allows continuous monitoring and adjustment as data is reviewed. A series of Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been recommended to reduce negative impacts and restore water quality.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Partnership for Environmental Technology Education and the Maine DEP, Barberry Creek TMDL, 2006, [https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/monitoring/tmdl/2007/barberry\\_ck\\_rep.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/monitoring/tmdl/2007/barberry_ck_rep.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Trout Brook Watershed Management Plan, Cumberland County Soil & Water Conservation District, 2012, [https://www.capeelizabeth.com/media/Archive/news/2012/trout\\_brook\\_plan.html](https://www.capeelizabeth.com/media/Archive/news/2012/trout_brook_plan.html)

### *Kimball Brook Watershed*

Kimball Brook is the most prominent tributary to Trout Brook and originates from a wetland in the southwestern portion of the watershed above Stillman Street. The tributary runs approximately 1.7 miles through a utility right-of-way, a low-density residential area, two ponds in Hinckley Park, a short stretch of woods, and nearly 600 feet of underground culvert. Kimball Brook joins Trout Brook through a culvert on the northern side of the Highland Avenue culvert crossing adjacent to Mahoney Middle School's athletic fields. Water quality issues appear to be a reoccurring abundance of flocculent and iron bacteria in the stream, which smother habitat and food sources. The high levels in the stream could be because of the underlying bedrock, soils, and groundwater that naturally have high iron levels. Continued testing and investigating if human activity is exacerbating the issues are necessary.<sup>6</sup>

### *Long Creek Watershed*

Long Creek Watershed is approximately 3.5 square miles and lies in Portland, Scarborough, South Portland, and Westbrook and encompasses a variety of land uses, including commercial, residential, retail, recreation space, the Eco Maine Landfill, and a portion of the Portland Jetport. Long Creek originates in Westbrook and flows into Clark's Pond, the Fore River, and then to Casco Bay. In South Portland, Long Creek is a Class C stream that does not meet state and federal water quality standards.

The Long Creek Watershed Management Plan was approved in 2009 and amended in 2019. The Long Creek Watershed Management District (LCWMD) is a quasi-municipal special district that implements the Long Creek Watershed Management Plan to improve water quality to meet state water quality standards. The LCWMD was established by an interlocal agreement among the Portland, Scarborough, South Portland, and Westbrook municipalities. As part of the Long Creek Watershed General Permit, landowners pay fees to implement the Long Creek Watershed Management Plan and fund the LCWMD. In the 2021 annual report, it is

<sup>6</sup> Maine DEP, Kimball Brook TMDL Assessment, [https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/monitoring/tmdl/2012/Appendix\\_15\\_Kimball%20Brook.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/monitoring/tmdl/2012/Appendix_15_Kimball%20Brook.pdf)

noted that since the Long Creek Watershed Management Plan was initiated, over one hundred BMPs have been implemented, several stream restoration projects have been completed, and changes in land use regulations have been initiated.<sup>7</sup>

LCWMD also provides additional advocacy and support to special initiatives. MS4 policy updates and Low Impact Development regulation recommendations are being advocated for and coordinated. Alternatives for chloride from road salt are being explored. Large planning and visioning, such as the Maine Mall Transportation Oriented Design with the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) are incorporating water quality measures. LCWMD also participates in the planning review of proposed redevelopment in the watershed.

### *Red Brook Watershed*

The Red Brook Watershed is in the Town of Scarborough, Westbrook, and the City of South Portland. In total, the freshwater stream travels approximately 7.15 miles and terminates in Clark's Pond before going to Long Creek and ultimately to Casco Bay. The watershed includes a one-mile stretch between Interstate-95 and Interstate-295 and flows through a complex mix of land uses such as residential, industrial, retail, and forest land. Red Brook is a Class C stream and does not meet the designated water quality standards. Specifically, it does not meet the designated use for fishing due to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) contamination, and it does not provide for aquatic life due to stream habitat conditions. Sections in South Portland are unstable and showing signs of stress due to alterations to the stream channel and floodplain from the development and construction of highway crossings over the stream. The Watershed Management Plan outlines the monitoring and implementation of BMPs and the coordinated effort between the municipalities to improve water quality to meet standards and build community support.

<sup>7</sup> Long Creek General Permit Annual Report 2022, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6161e0bc73d4a66bd6f79f41/t/6298cc1a0631184b-f79e39d6/1654180893573/Annual+Report+2021+to+DEP.pdf>

### *Wetlands*

Wetlands are identified by the presence of hydraulic soils, hydrophilic (i.e., water-loving) plants, and a high water table for a portion of the year. Wetlands are essential for cleansing water, providing flood control, protecting shorelines from erosion, maintaining stream flows, or supporting wildlife habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency tasked with providing information on the extent and status of the nation's wetland and deepwater habitats and changes to these habitats over time. As part of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's map and monitor America's wetlands to ensure their health and prosperity. Wetlands are located and mapped throughout South Portland. While most wetlands are located along the coastline and streams, there are many types of wetlands in South Portland. These include Estuarine and Marine Deepwater, Estuarine and Marine Wetlands, Freshwater Emergent Wetlands, Freshwater Emergent Wetlands, Freshwater Shrub Wetlands, Freshwater Ponds, and Riverine.

Maine's wetlands are resources of great value to Maine communities, the state, and the nation. All three levels of government have a stake in their continued health and availability. Congress established federal regulatory power concerning wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The 1988 Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) established state regulatory authority over wetlands in Maine. South Portland also regulates non-forested wetlands through its Shoreland Zoning statute<sup>8</sup> and Freshwater Performance Standards.

### *Vernal Pools*

Vernal pools are a specific type of wetland that are seasonal depressional wetlands that occur in glaciated areas and usually occur from winter to spring. They are particularly important because they provide critical breeding habitats for several native amphibian species that, in turn, sustain many other forms of wood-

land wildlife. As summer comes and dries up the pools, baby frogs, little salamanders, turtles, and all their new friends are ready to crawl onto nearby dry land to their fall and winter homes. Vernal pools are an important water feature and can be found throughout South Portland. Urbanization and new development could threaten these areas and therefore vernal pools are protected under site plan review standards.

In 2006, legislation was passed in Maine to regulate significant vernal pools as Significant Wildlife Habitat under the state's Natural Resources Protection Act. In 2007, Maine passed legislation regulating development activities within 250 feet of significant vernal pools. There is one Significant Vernal Pool in South Portland, located behind residential developments to the southeast of the intersection of Highland and Fickett Streets.

### *Groundwater*

Groundwater is water found underground in the spaces between pieces of rock, like sand and gravel, and in the cracks that form in vast layers of solid rocks before landing in an aquifer. An aquifer is a porous layer, such as gravel, sand, or rock where all the cracks and spaces are filled with water. The type of soil significantly impacts an aquifer's ability to recharge. A gravel aquifer in the southwest corner of South Portland yields roughly 15 to 50 gallons of water per minute and extends to neighboring Cape Elizabeth and Scarborough. This aquifer is not critical to South Portland's water supply, but stormwater runoff and land use decisions impact the aquifer and may impact neighboring communities' drinking water systems.

### *Drinking Water*

There are no public water sources in South Portland. The City's drinking water is supplied by Portland Water District.

According to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's database, there are only 12 private wells in South Portland. All the wells are bedrock wells. 1 is commercial, serving the Payne Road Esso Station, and the rest are domestic. 7 out of 11 domestic wells

<sup>8</sup> Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources Protection Act, <https://www.maine.gov/dep/land/nrpa/>

## 4. Natural & Water Resources

are along Fickett Street.

In 2019, the State of Maine passed Maine Public Law 2019 Ch. 158 (An Act to Strengthen Testing for Lead in School Drinking Water) mandating all K-12 schools to test for the presence of lead. Results for local school lead testing programs are presented in parts per billion (ppb) in the figure opposite. Although no level of lead is deemed safe, schools are recommended to stop using any fixtures with lead concentrations of 4 ppb or higher.

All South Portland’s public schools returned 0 or 1 lead detection, with average lead levels at 0.5 or lower. The private Greater Portland Christian School and Holy Cross School had lead detected in at least 1 sample in higher quantities, with average lead levels above the recommended level of 4ppb.

### **Water Quality**

Maine DEP’s Biological Monitoring Program assesses the health of rivers, streams, and wetlands by evaluating the composition of resident aquatic benthic macroinvertebrates and algal communities. The Maine DEP tests for macroinvertebrates and wetlands of the City’s urban impaired streams every five years. The Biological Monitoring Program assesses the health of a water body based on the amount and types of aquatic macroinvertebrates and algae living in a water body there are. The amount and types of macroinvertebrates and algae living there change when waterbodies are polluted or disturbed. For example, a polluted stream will often lack pollution-sensitive organisms like mayflies and stoneflies and will have more pollution-tolerant organisms like snails and leeches.<sup>9</sup> City staff also conduct routine water quality monitoring for several of the City’s urban impaired streams as part of the watershed management plans.

The 2003 Urban Streams Project found Trout Brook and Barberry Creek to be biologically and chemically impaired, classified as Class C when they should have been B. The Long Creek Watershed Restoration Project, launched in 2007, works across municipalities

School	# Samples	# lead detections	Average lead level (ppb)
Center for Autism and Development Disorders	0	N/A	N/A
Portland Kids Academy	0	N/A	N/A
Waldo T. Skillin Elementary School	35	1	0.1
Memorial Middle School	7	0	0.5
Greater Portland Christian School	10	1	4.6
Dyer Elementary School	22	0	0.1
South Portland High School	34	0	0
James Otis Kaler Elementary School	25	1	0.4
Daniel F. Mahoney Middle School	9	0	0.2
Frank I Brown Elementary School	25	0	0
Holy Cross School	3	2	5.4
Dora L. Small Elementary School	25	0	0

(South Portland, Portland, etc.) to install stormwater controls and meet water quality standards.

Numerous local and regional plans also exist to identify and eliminate pollution sources in South Portland. The City passed a Landcare Management Ordinance in 2020 with pesticide and fertilizer use restrictions. The City’s Combined Sewer Overflow Program and Abatement Plan oversees and monitors the City’s Combined Sewer Overflows, which are governed by state and federal regulations. CSO discharges directly to nearby surface waters during heavy rain events and must be minimized to protect surface water quality. In May 2022, the Maine DEP granted approval of the City’s CSO Facilities Plan Update and was commended by the Maine DEP for “laying out a targeted CSO abatement plan that will address the highest priority CSO concerns, while simultaneously allowing the City to upgrade sewer infrastructure that has reached the end of

<sup>9</sup> Maine Department of Environmental Protection, <https://www.maine.gov/dep/>

its service life.”<sup>10</sup>

As required by the City’s MS4 General Permit, the City’s Stormwater Management Plan, which includes an Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Plan, describes how the City will implement BMPs to meet the six Minimum Control Measures (MCMs). The six MCMs are Education/Outreach Program, Public Involvement and Participation, Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program, Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control, Post-Construction Stormwater Management in New Development and Redevelopment, and Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operators.

Maine DEP’s Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan was issued in 2020. Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution significantly impacts Maine’s lakes, rivers, streams, and marine waters. Unlike pollution from point sources, such as industrial and sewage treatment plants, NPS pollution comes from many diffuse sources. It is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground and picking up natural and human-made pollutants, such as fertilizer, road salt, sediment, oil, and bacteria along the way. Eventually, these contaminants end up in waterbodies where they can threaten drinking water supplies, cause algal blooms, diminish recreational activities, and endanger aquatic habitats. The Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan outlines goals and approaches for protecting and restoring water quality statewide and at the Watershed level. Article 15 of the South Portland Zoning Code (Sec. 27-1536)<sup>11</sup> outlines performance standards that recognize the impact of development activities on water quality, with the intent of these standards to ensure necessary controls are put in place for the protection of water quality.

### *Water Resources Protection*

The South Portland Water Resources Protection Department is

<sup>10</sup> 2021 State of Casco Bay Sixth Edition, <https://indd.adobe.com/view/2f-8cb7b4-5b37-4c50-8c4e-5aa0c92e1fa4>

<sup>11</sup> City of South Portland Code of Ordinances, 2023, Chapter 27 Zoning, [https://www.southportland.org/files/6516/7580/1788/CH\\_27\\_-\\_Zoning\\_with\\_New\\_TOC\\_format.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/6516/7580/1788/CH_27_-_Zoning_with_New_TOC_format.pdf)

responsible for protecting and improving local water resources, including the various ponds and streams, the Fore River, and Casco Bay. The Water Resources Protection Department is made up of three divisions: the Treatment Systems Division, Collection Systems Division, and Engineering. The Water Resources Protection Division recently upgraded its asset management program and software in 2015. This allows cross-division coordination, efficient maintenance and tracking, predictive maintenance diagnostics, capital planning prioritization, and work order management.

### *Collection Systems*

The Collection Systems Division is primarily responsible for the City’s underground infrastructure, which includes sewer and storm drains, and is also responsible for the City’s Stormwater Management Plan. Stormwater is rain or snowmelt that runs over impervious surfaces such as streets, parking lots, driveways, and roofs. All properties and infrastructure with impervious surfaces generate stormwater runoff. Because of South Portland’s urban landscape, impervious surfaces are abundant. Stormwater not only inundates the City’s combined sewer system, but stormwater picks up pollutants as it flows into local surface waters. These pollutants can include sediment, nutrients, toxins, salt, bacteria, and debris, leading to impaired water quality in local surface waters. Per the Clean Water Act, South Portland’s separate storm sewer system (MS4) is allowed to discharge runoff into water bodies but must comply with permit regulations for storm runoff. The storm sewer system in South Portland includes roads, curbs and gutters, ditches, catch basins, storm drains, outfalls, and pipes connecting these features. The City’s Stormwater Management Program Plan identifies specific minimum control measures. The Water Resources Protection Department implements the City’s Stormwater Management Plan, serves as the point of contact with Maine DEP, inspects and maintains all municipal stormwater and sewage infrastructure, ensures pollution prevention measures are followed at the Division’s maintenance garage, ensures erosion and sedimentation control measures during construction and maintenance activities, identifies potential pollution sources and works to eliminate them, trains City staff to minimize pollution, reviews

site plans for erosion and sedimentation control measures and post-construction stormwater control measures, and ensures compliance with construction and post-construction stormwater management requirements. In 2009, the City established Stormwater Management Performance Standards, which are intended to serve as a resource for new development or redevelopment on smaller projects less than an acre.

Beyond pollutants, stormwater discharges also have negative impacts on stream hydrology, flow, geomorphology, and habitat. The fast-moving stormwater introduces unnatural circumstances impacting stream profiles and potentially pushing excess sediment around. Continued monitoring and implementation of BMPs are important to minimizing the impacts stormwater discharges have on streams.

### *Stormwater Runoff*

Stormwater runoff is caused by the runoff of rainwater and snowmelt along impervious surfaces, such as roads, driveways, and rooftops. This runoff carries sediment, bacteria, nutrients, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, oil, grease, and other pollutants into surface waters. As Maine continues to see an increase in rainfall intensity due to climate change, the threats of stormwater runoff to surface waters will be an increasing concern. Intense precipitation in a short period of time cannot infiltrate into the ground and thus causes more surface erosion and may carry additional pollutants into nearby waterbodies.

### *Septic Systems*

Septic systems can pose a serious threat to water resources. Systems located directly adjacent to bodies of water will inevitably have the greatest impact on water quality. Septic system malfunctions can cause leaks that expose local water resources to elevated levels of nutrients and bacteria, impacting their health and recreational value. These malfunctions can easily go unnoticed, with leaks occurring underground and traveling to waters via groundwater. The travel time and filtration of bacteria and nutrients is highly dependent on the underlying soil type, with shallow

to bedrock soils providing minimal filtration. There are no known issues with septic systems in South Portland.

### *Treatment Systems*

The Treatment Systems Division is responsible for the City's wastewater management and the operations and maintenance of the wastewater treatment facility. The wastewater treatment facility treats wastewater before being discharged into the Fore River, and ultimately Casco Bay. The effluent discharged must meet strict state and federal water quality guidelines. The wastewater treatment plant first uses a mechanical process to remove large inorganic materials, a biological process to remove organic materials, chemical and mechanical sludge dewatering, and finally, additional chemicals to disinfect the effluent. The two main byproducts are dewatered sludge and effluent discharged to the Fore River. The current capacity is 9.3 million gallons daily, treated with a peak flow of 22.9 million gallons daily.

Maine DEP approved the City's Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Plan in 1994. The City has since identified and implemented projects to reduce CSO discharges from 200 million gallons in 1994 to approximately 8.7 million in 2019. The most recent CSO Facilities Plan was developed in 2009, revised in 2011, and outlined a 12-year implementation schedule. This plan specifically targeted eliminating or reducing overflows generated from a two-year, 24-hour storm event. Various plant upgrades have been implemented or are in the works and include upgraded electrical, aeration upgrades, and automation. In May 2022, a CSO Facilities Plan Update was approved by the Maine DEP, which included updating a hydraulic model to incorporate the completed abatement projects, better represent current conditions, and improve the predictability of future abatement options for the remaining CSOs.

The Industrial Pretreatment Program prevents the discharge of pollutants from non-domestic sources that could interfere with the operation of the wastewater treatment system, cause the wastewater treatment plant to violate its effluent discharge permit, contaminate the sludge, pass through the system into receiving waters or the atmosphere without adequate treatment, pose a health

threat to sewer workers, or otherwise be incompatible with the system. To achieve this, the City has established uniform industrial pretreatment standards.

In addition to other resiliency-focused fortifications, the force main running along Willard Beach is at risk because of the recent coastal dune destruction. There is currently a restoration project of the coastal dunes that will aid in protecting this critical infrastructure.

### *Nutrients and Dissolved Oxygen*

The most common limiting nutrient in freshwater is phosphorus; this means that the addition of phosphorus is the most significant limiting factor for expanded growth of many plant and algae species. As the algae dies off and decomposes, excessive microbial activity consumes dissolved oxygen and can result in low oxygen conditions throughout the ecosystem. Algae blooms can also be caused or exacerbated by warm water temperatures. These blooms may become more frequent in the future as climate change brings stronger storms (and therefore increased stormwater runoff) and rising air and sea temperatures to South Portland. In addition to the environmental impacts of algal blooms, some species produce toxins which can be harmful to human health. In freshwater, these are known as Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). HABs are typically caused by cyanobacteria, a bacteria that releases toxins that can cause rashes, nausea, diarrhea, and in severe cases death.

The Hinckley Park ponds has experienced HABs, caused in part by soil erosion. During these blooms, pet owners are advised to keep their pets out of the water. The City is growing native plants along the ponds shorelines to try to prevent erosion, and working to determine whether upstream sources of phosphorous, such as runoff and fertilizer, are contributing to the problem.<sup>12</sup>

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12 Wight, Patty. "South Portland Warns of Algae Blooms in Local Ponds That Are Dangerous to Dogs." Maine Public, July 18, 2023. <https://www.mainepublic.org/health/2023-07-18/south-portland-warns-of-algae-blooms-in-local-ponds-that-are-dangerous-to-dogs>.

### *PFAS*

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (also known as PFAS or forever chemicals) are widely used and potentially harmful chemicals that do not break down in the environment. The effects and impacts of these chemicals are still not fully understood, but studies have shown that exposure can lead to harmful health effects such as increased risk of cancer, hormone disruptions, and developmental delays in children. PFAS can be found in several household products, firefighting foams, cleaning products, and more. Another potential source of PFAS is sludge and septage spread as fertilizers. The State of Maine issued a number of permits for these spreads, primarily in the 1980s and 90s.

Following a 2019 Executive Order by Governor Mills establishing a Task Force to study the effects of PFAS prevalence in Maine, surface water samples are monitored for PFAS at Sprague Energy's detention pond and the South Portland Wastewater Treatment facility. There are no mapped sludge sites in South Portland.

### *Shoreland Zoning*

The City established an overlay district two hundred and fifty feet from the upland edge of a coastal wetland and the upland edge of a shoreland freshwater wetland. It also mapped Shoreland Resource Protection Overlays Subdistrict for areas where development would adversely affect water quality, productive habitat biological ecosystems, or scenic and natural values. Article 13 of the South Portland Zoning Code outlines the Shoreland Overlay Districts with the purpose of preventing and controlling water pollution, protecting fish spawning grounds, aquatic life, bird, and other habitats, as well as protecting buildings and lands from flooding and accelerated erosion, and to preserve shoreland freshwater and coastal wetlands. The shoreland zoning dictates performance standards and district requirements, including land uses, space and bulk regulations, and other development factors that could impact waterways.

In addition, all land areas in the Stream Protection Overlay Subdistrict within areas of special flood hazards require floodplain

management approval. Approvals from the Planning Board and Code Enforcement Officer are required for any activity or land use regulated in a Shoreland Zoning District.<sup>13</sup>

### **Resilience**

In 2020, in collaboration with the City of Portland, South Portland completed the One Climate Future plan, which among other things, outlines South Portland's intent of updating the City's zoning code and development review process to ensure that all future development enhances the resilience of the City. All new buildings and development sites must help to minimize the collective impact of climate hazards in the City from sea level rise, intense storms, and higher temperatures, as well as help to protect and strengthen community and ecosystem assets that contribute to resilient cities. South Portland has committed to managing for the intermediate scenario of 1.48 feet of sea level rise by 2050 and 3.84 feet of sea level rise by 2100. In addition, for critical infrastructure, the City will also prepare for the high scenario of 3.38 feet by 2050 and 8.72 feet by 2100. South Portland has committed to adopting resilience zoning overlays as one mechanism to advance the City's resiliency objectives.<sup>14</sup>

## **Local and Regional Planning Efforts**

### ***One Climate Future Plan***

In 2020, the Cities of Portland and South Portland worked together to complete a climate action plan titled the One Climate Future Plan. The plan focuses on building more sustainable and resilient communities. It provides steps to meet aggressive carbon reduction goals, grow a circular economy, build community resilience, and create more just and equitable cities. The plan's goals around ecosystem resilience aim to strengthen biodiversity, connectivity, and habitat health.

<sup>13</sup> City of South Portland Code of Ordinances, 2023, Chapter 27 Zoning, [https://www.southportland.org/files/1216/8910/4583/CH\\_27\\_\\_Zoning\\_with\\_New\\_TOC\\_format.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/1216/8910/4583/CH_27__Zoning_with_New_TOC_format.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> One Climate Future Plan, 2020 [https://www.oneclimatefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/OneClimateFuture\\_FinalJan2021\\_Downsized.pdf](https://www.oneclimatefuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/OneClimateFuture_FinalJan2021_Downsized.pdf)  
South Portland Comprehensive Plan

### ***Willard Beach Master Plan***

The City completed a Willard Beach Master Plan in the Spring of 2023. The Willard Beach Master Plan is a community driven vision that aims to enhance the resiliency and health of this essential community resource through private and public partnership, while ensuring the beach remains accessible to all. The Master Plan outlines five goals:

- Protect and Restore Natural Resources
- Mitigate Poor Water Quality
- Improve Beach Access
- Ensure Infrastructure is Resilient and Enhances Beach Character
- Acknowledge and Engage the Cultural History

Each of the five goals outlines a series of strategies in targeted action plans for implementation to achieve the vision. In all, there are 64 strategies. The action plans provide a summary of each strategy, the responsible party, time frame, priority, and cost.

### ***Casco Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan***

The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership maintains the Casco Bay Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the region. The Plan was first written in 1996, subsequent to the 1990 designation of Casco Bay as an estuary of national significance, and is periodically updated. The current 3/4/2024 Draft Plan has been approved by CBEP's Management Committee and awaits EPA approval. The plan's actions for South Portland and other Casco Bay communities are structured around 4 goals:

- Protect, restore, and enhance the key habitats that sustain ecosystem health of Casco Bay and its watershed;
- Address the cumulative water quality impacts of human activity in the Casco Bay Watershed;

- Engage communities and provide information and tools to support decisions to protect and restore Casco Bay;
- Mobilize knowledge and resources to support regional collaboration and action on behalf of Casco Bay, the watershed, and our communities.

### ***Land Conservation***

Beginning With Habitat identifies 9 permanently conserved parcels in South Portland (see maps at the end of this chapter):

- Davidson's Beach (3 acres, public access easement)
- South Portland Municipal Boat Ramp (3 acres, fee owned)
- Willard Beach (3.5 acres, fee owned)
- Spring Point Ledge Light (.76 acres, fee owned)
- Bug Light Park (8.8 acres, fee owned)
- High Street Right-of-Way (.32 acres, fee owned)
- Thomas Knight Park (1.5 acres, fee owned)
- Portland Street Pier (1.2 acres, fee owned)
- Strip of land on the border with Portland near the Hilton Garden Inn. (6 acres, fee owned)

The local land trust in South Portland is the South Portland Land Trust (SPLT.) SPLT is dedicated to creating and supporting trails, open space protection, and acquisition of priority open spaces in South Portland. SPLT manages the Trout Brook Nature Preserve, Dow's Woods Nature Preserve, Sawyer Marsh Properties, and partners with the City to manage Sawyer Park. SPLT also manages many of the City's trails, including the Armory Trail, Red Brook Trail, Mt Vernon Street Trail, and South Branch Trail.

### **Focus Group Takeaways**

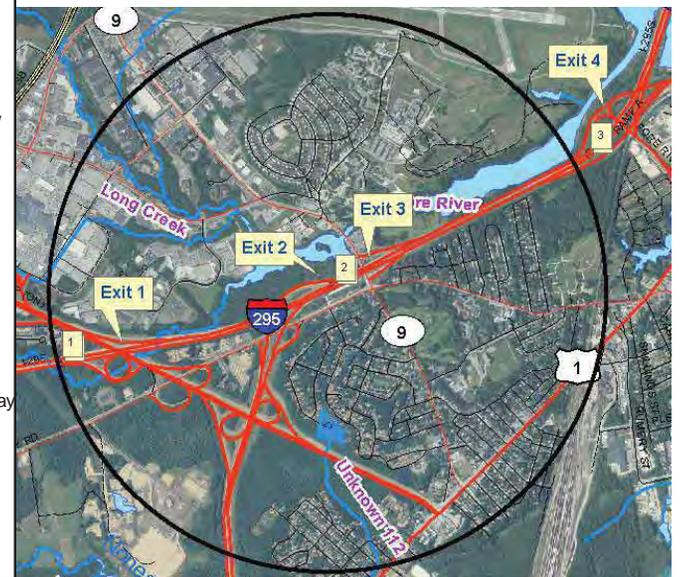
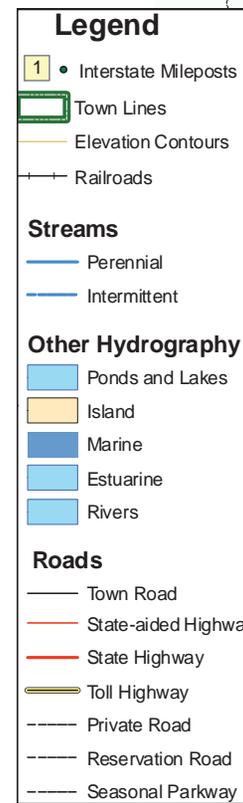
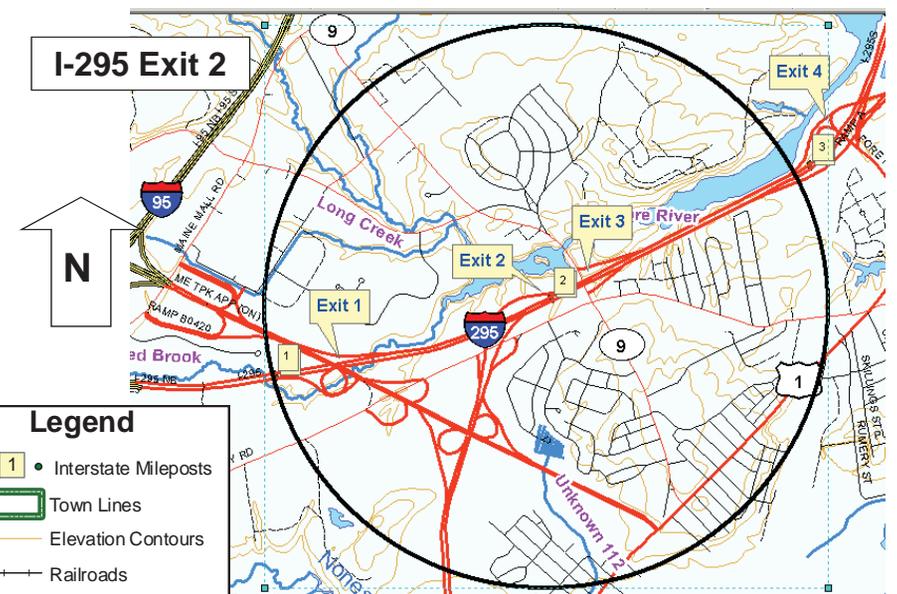
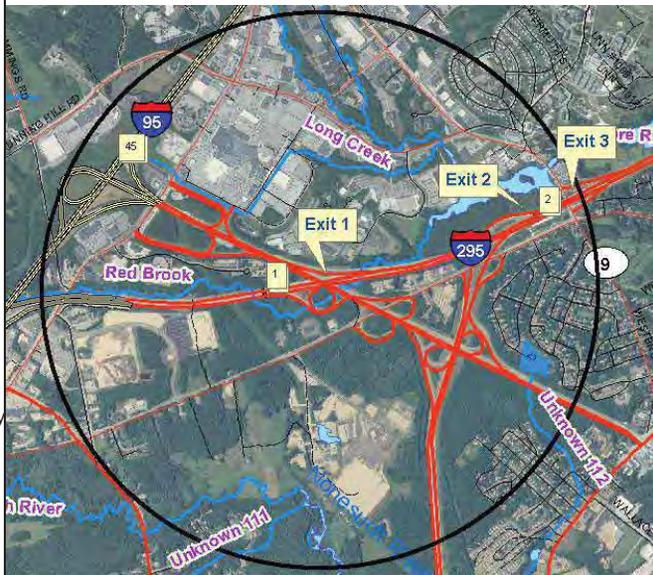
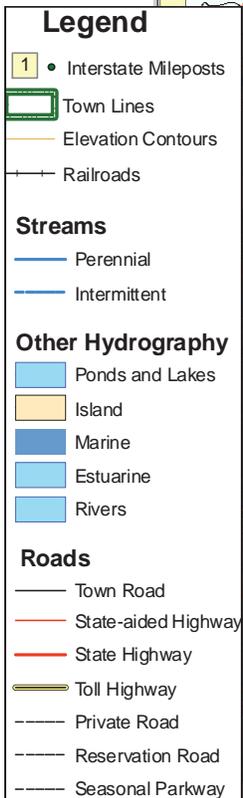
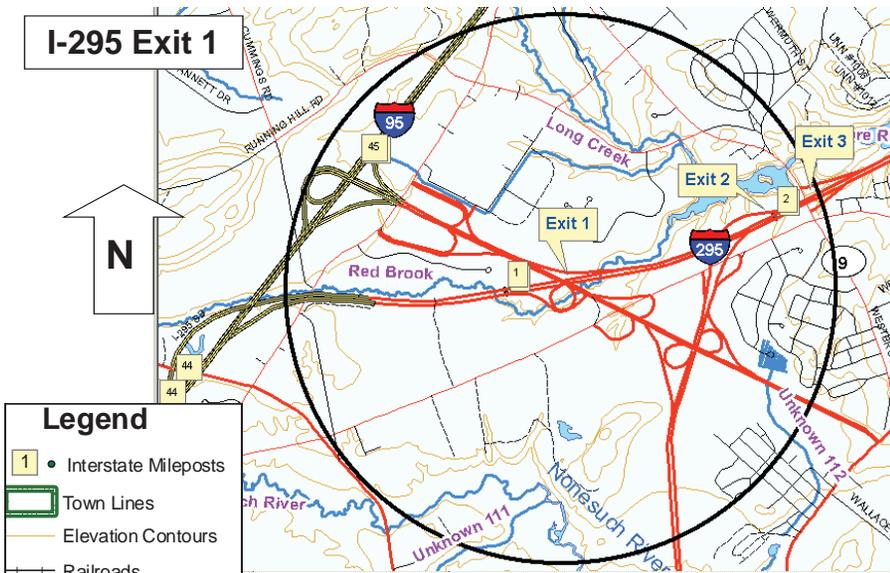
Focus groups were conducted to receive feedback from the South Portland Comprehensive Plan

community. Interviewees shared about South Portland's Water Resource Protection responsibilities and recent project for the City's treatment plan, collection systems and pump stations. The emphasis of these upgrades was to continue providing adequate and critical public service, but also to address combined sewer outfalls and water quality issues. They discussed the City's coordinated and cross-department asset management system that was recently implemented. They also provided an overview of the City's five urban impaired streams and the quasi-governmental Long Creek Watershed Management District. Interviews explored concerns about the condition of culverts and the amount of impervious surfaces contributing to non-point source pollution. Interviewees also discussed the various Watershed Management Plans, implementation projects to address water quality and the various partners committed to protecting the City's natural and water resources.

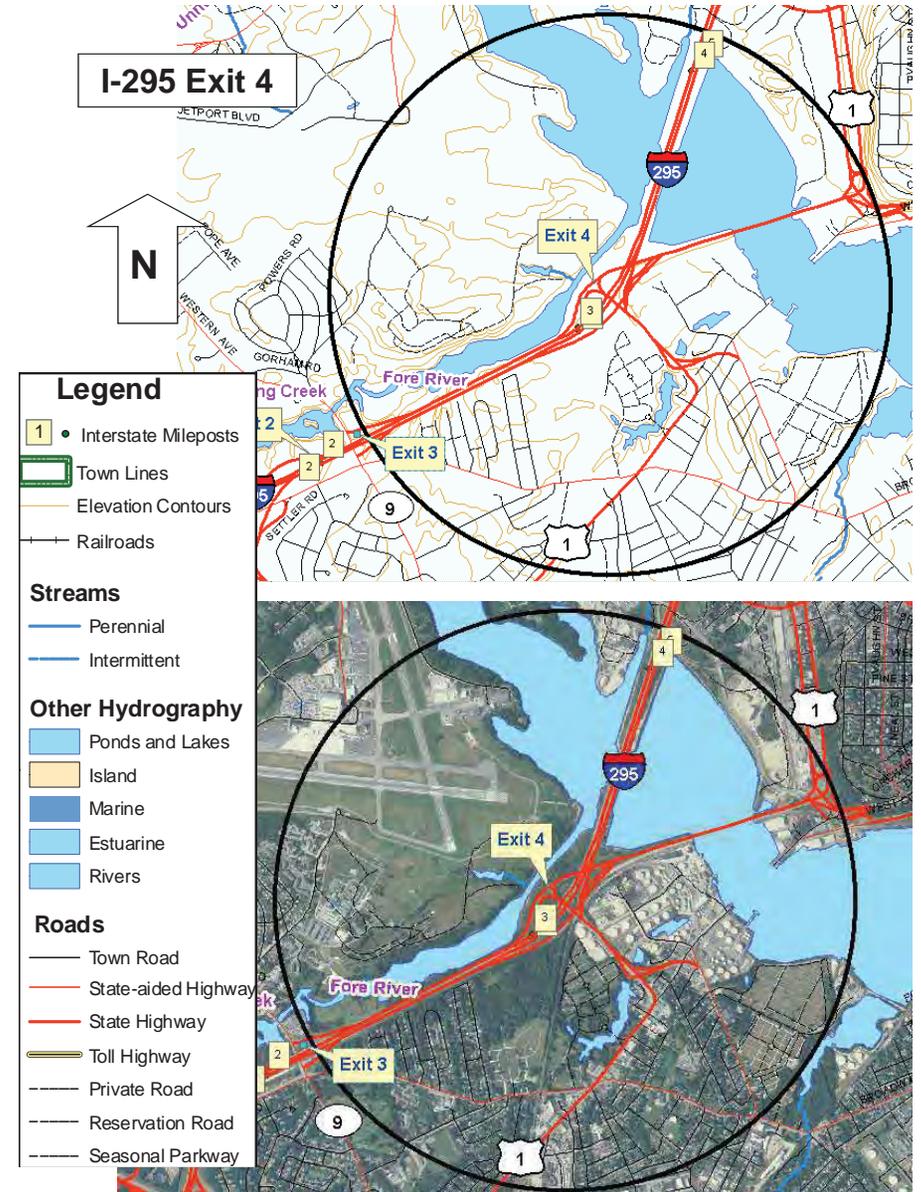
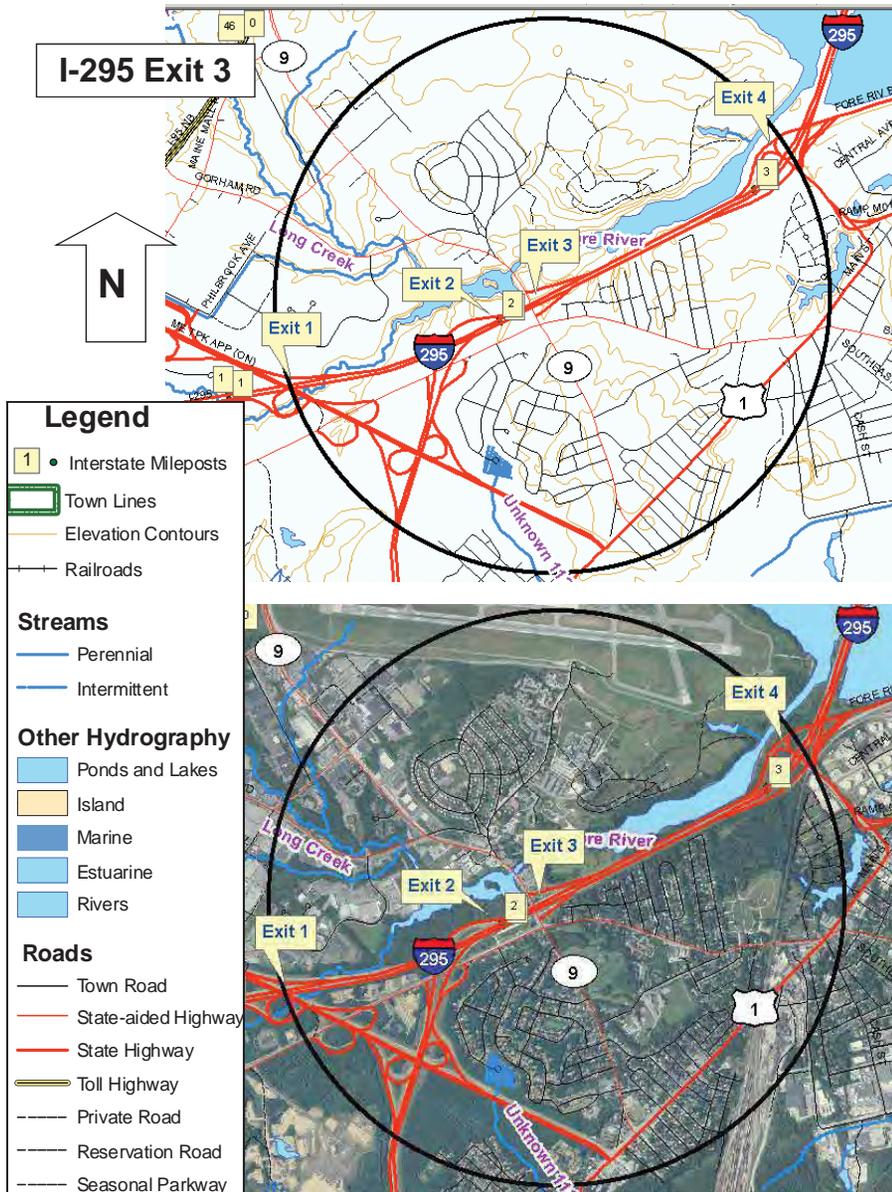
### ***Streams At Risk For Impairment - Turnpike***

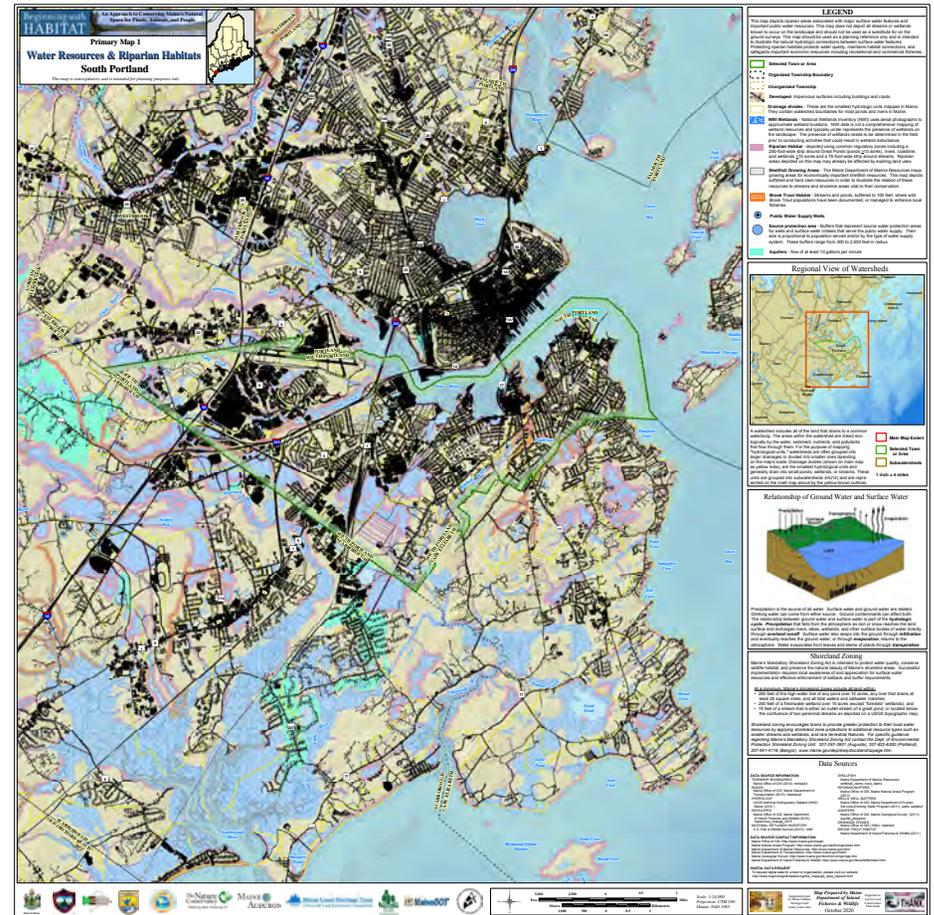
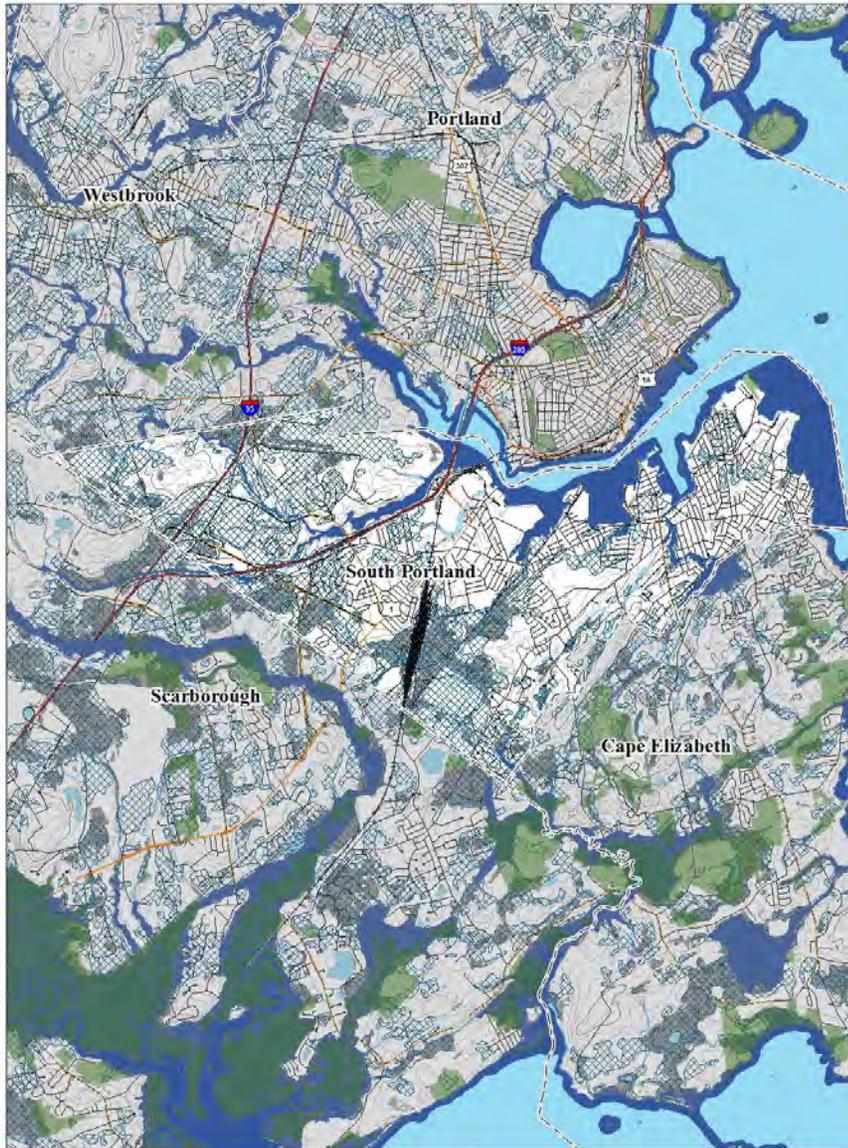
Due to their location near I-295 exits and the likelihood of exit-related development in their watersheds, the small streams within the circles on maps of the following two pages may be at risk of current or future impairment. When intense development occurs near small streams, they are often greatly impacted and their water quality and habitat can become impaired. In particular, Red Brook, Nonesuch River, Long Creek, and unnamed brooks (labeled 111 and 112 on the maps) are at risk if there is intense development off of the exit and in their watershed and therefore they may be good candidates to proactively protect.

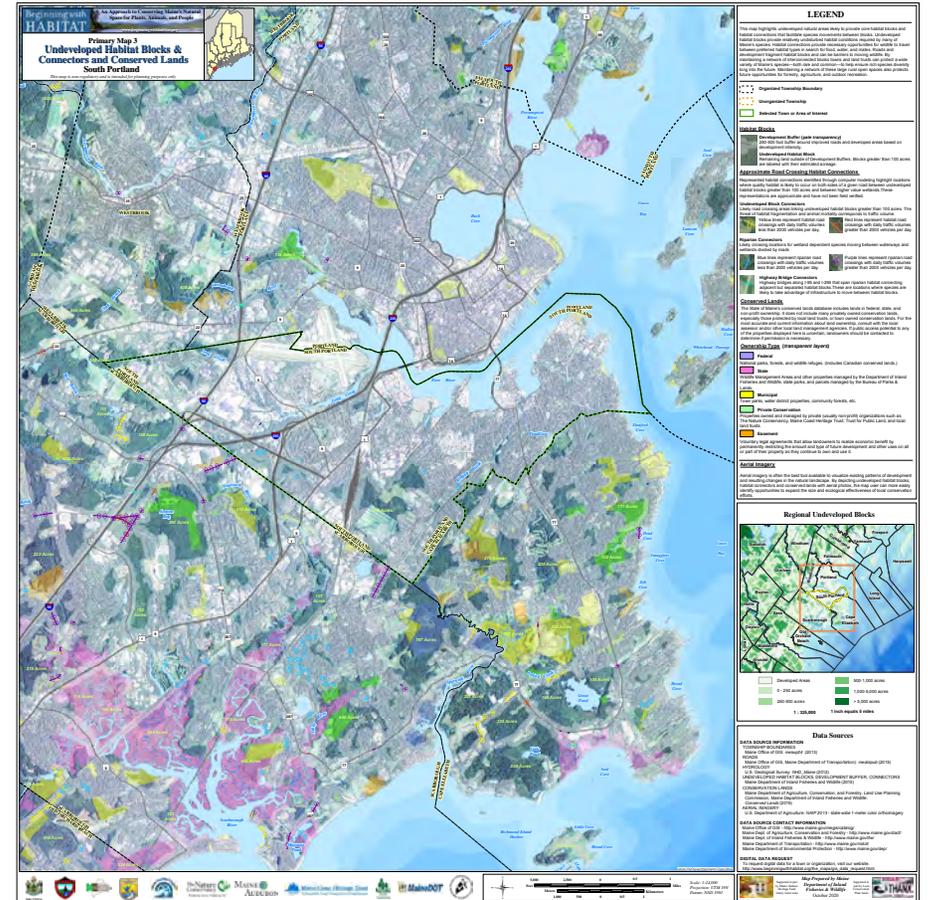
## 4. Natural & Water Resources

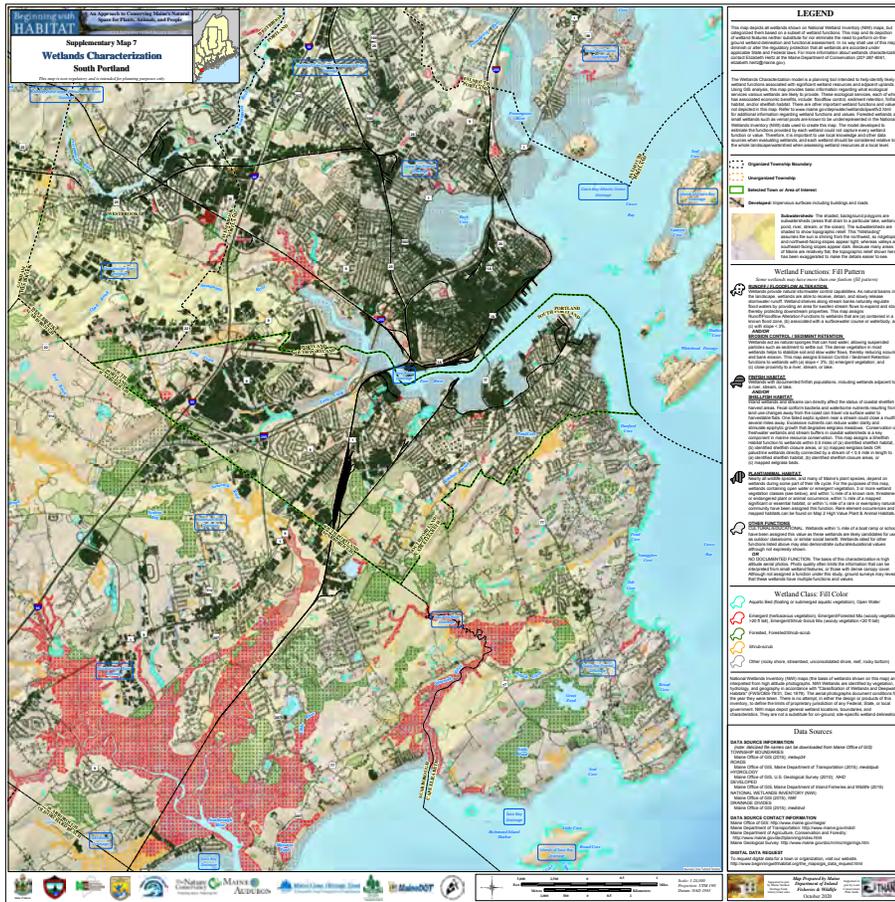


## 4. Natural & Water Resources









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South Portland Farmers Market - Source: City of South Portland

Agriculture and forestry are not significant components of South Portland's economy. However, the City strengthens regional farms through farmer's markets, agricultural delivery pick-up locations, and other pop-up farm vendors. South Portland's zoning regulations allow small-scale urban agriculture operations within City limits, including chicken coops and beekeeping.

## Inventory and Analysis

### *Current Use Tax Programs*

There are two parcels enrolled in the State's current use tax programs:

- 1299 Highland Ave (Map 59 Lot 8). Owned by Philip Roberts, 5.61 acres out of the total 6.89 acre parcel are shown as Field Crops.
- 876 Highland Ave (Map 38 Lot 54). Owned by Janda Farm, LLC. Of the 17.96 acres, 7.5 acres are under Pasture and 10 acres are under Hardwood.

### *Agriculture In South Portland*

Although largely an urban community, South Portland's land use regulations allow farmers' markets, small-scale agricultural uses, and pre-existing farms. There are no critical rural areas in South Portland.

#### *Keeping of Farm Animals*

Chapter Three, Article Five of the Code of Ordinances provides standards for keeping small farm animals. This is permitted use in the RF, A, and AA zoning districts with a requirement for an annual permit. Keeping farm-type animals, including horses, ponies, cattle, pigs, and fowl, are prohibited in most other districts.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Land use regulations support regional farms and pre-existing farms*

The following regulations govern farming activities and farmers' markets.

- General purpose farming is allowed in Rural Residential District RF

<sup>1</sup> South Portland Code of Ordinances Chapter 3: Animals and Fowl [https://www.southportland.org/files/3616/7942/2882/CH\\_03\\_Animals\\_and\\_Fowl.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/3616/7942/2882/CH_03_Animals_and_Fowl.pdf)

- Pre-existing farms are permitted in the Residential District AA
- Farmers' Markets are permitted on City-owned property in the Residential AA and the Residential A Districts.
- Farmers' Markets are permitted in most residential and commercial districts, including Residential G and the Village Residential, Village Commercial, Suburban Commercial, and General Commercial, with a Special Exception approval of the Planning Board.

Pre-Existing Farm is a special designation in the Zoning Ordinance that enables existing farms not located within a farm zoning district to operate as conforming uses, to preserve property rights, and to promote the public benefit of open space. In 2012, four farms carried this designation. Today, most of these have been converted into other land uses. There is an existing sheep farm (17 Peary) on Broadway.

### *Regulations for Domesticated Chickens<sup>2</sup>*

Chapter Three, Article Two of the Code of Ordinances permits keeping domesticated chickens with an approved permit application. Regulations enable residents to keep six female chickens non-commercially per lot to limit the potential adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. Regulations require that chickens be kept in an enclosure and in a manner that will not disturb the use or enjoyment of neighboring lots due to noise, odor, or other adverse impacts.

### *Regulations for Beekeeping<sup>3</sup>*

Chapter Three, Article Three of the Code of Ordinances also permits the keeping of bees with an approved permit application. Regulations allow persons to keep an appropriate number of bees while limiting the potential adverse impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. Before issuing a permit under this article, beekeepers must register with the Maine Department of Agriculture under

<sup>2</sup> South Portland Code of Ordinances Chapter 3: Animals and Fowl [https://www.southportland.org/files/3616/7942/2882/CH\\_03\\_Animals\\_and\\_Fowl.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/3616/7942/2882/CH_03_Animals_and_Fowl.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

7 M.R.S.A. § 2701. Colonies are limited based on the size of the lot and must be maintained in a manner that does not cause unhealthy conditions or interfere with the normal use or enjoyment of any property in the vicinity by humans or animals.

South Portland currently has two beekeepers registered with the State Department of Agriculture.

### ***South Portland Agricultural Land***

The National Soil Survey defines Prime Farmlands as land with the best physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is also available for these uses. The land could be in cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forest land, or other land, but not urban built-up land or water.<sup>4</sup> Although a large section of the land in the City is designated as "Farmland of Statewide Importance" by the State of Maine, almost all that area has been developed for residential, commercial, industrial, or other non-agricultural use (see map at the end of this chapter).

### ***Forestry In South Portland***

Regulations for forest management activities, timber cruising, timber stand improvement, pruning, regeneration of forest stands, and other similar or associated activities, exclusive of timber harvesting, are primarily addressed through shoreland and floodplain regulations in the Zoning Ordinance. The South Portland Parks Department manages trees on public property and in parks. There are no large forests under management.

### *Timber Harvest in South Portland*

South Portland is an urban community with minimal timber harvesting. Forestry is not a significant economic activity. The Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry tracks timber harvesting throughout the state. Data is compiled from end-of-the-year landowner reports to the Maine Forest Service. The table on the following page a summary of timber harvest information.

<sup>4</sup> Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry: Determining Prime Farmland Soils and Soils of Statewide Significance. <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/resources/docs/prime-farmland-determination-guidelines-v6.pdf>

Year	Select harvest, acres	Shelterwood harvest, acres	Clearcut harvest, acres	Total Harvest, acres	Change of land use, acres	Number of active Notifications
1993-1995	50	75	5	130	0	5
1996-1999	No harvests reported					
2000-2005	0	0	0	0	36	6
2006-2014	No harvests reported					
2015-2018	53	0	9	62	13.8	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>49.8</b>	<b>17</b>

Dow’s Woods Nature Preserve, a 9.3-acre woodland area across the street from the South Portland High School complex.<sup>7</sup>

***Farm Drop Site***

Several businesses and organizations provide a service aggregating, marketing, and distributing Maine foods from family farms. They works with farmers to connect them with customers at pick-up locations throughout the state. They seek to serve the goals of their farm partners and the broader interests of Maine’s agricultural community. Product offerings include various produce, meat, dairy, and pantry goods grown and produced in Maine. South Portland has a drop site throughout the community.

***Farmers Markets***

South Portland hosts a farmer’s market every Sunday from 10 AM-2 PM. The summer market runs from mid-May through October and is hosted at the South Portland City office parking lot. The winter market runs from November through April and is hosted at the Community Center.<sup>8</sup>

**Community Farming Activities**

***Community Gardening***

The City’s Parks Department oversees a citywide community garden program. The program has 34 plots, which South Portland residents can rent for \$25 annually. Plots are available on a first-come, first-served basis.<sup>5</sup> The Parks Department also manages the City’s urban tree canopy and other shrubs and plantings that are in the public right-of-way.<sup>6</sup> In 2019, the City published its most recent Open Space Plan, which included a recommendation to hire a City Arborist.

The Parks Department frequently partners with the South Portland Land Trust, a non-profit organization focused on open space protection, trail building, and land stewardship. Since the organization’s inception, South Portland has conserved 399 acres of land. Notably, the South Portland Land Trust holds the easement for the

5 City of South Portland, “Urban Forestry and Community Gardens,” <https://southportland.org/departments/parks-recreation-aquaticspool/parks-department/urban-forestry/>

6 *ibid.*

7 South Portland Land Trust, “Dow’s Woods Nature Preserve,” <https://www.southportlandlandtrust.org/dows-woods-nature-preserve>

8 Maine Federation of Farmers’ Markets, “South Portland Winter Farmers’ Market,” <https://mainefarmersmarkets.org/market/south-portland-winter-farmers-market/>

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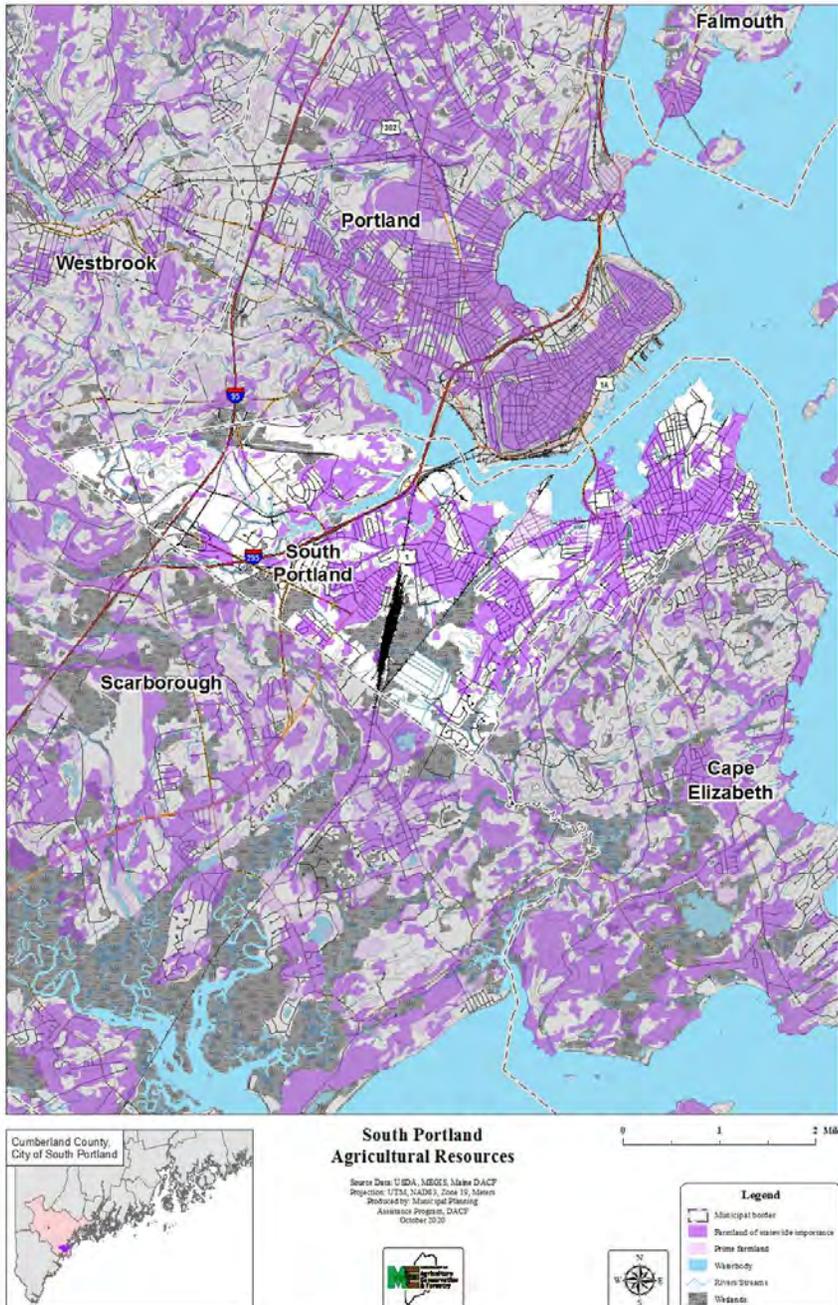
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Willard Beach, a City-owned recreation area with a long history as a working fisherman's beach. Two historical fishing shacks (right center) were destroyed during a storm in the winter of 2023-2024; they had been all that remained of once busy fishing operations on Fisherman's Point. Source: South Portland Parks Department

South Portland's coastline is a diverse mix of industrial working waterfronts, academic institutions, residential neighborhoods, and open spaces that provide public access to the water. South Portland has an active boating community, and the navigable waters of South Portland are very busy with a range of vessel sizes and types. The Board of Harbor Commissioners manages the waters for the Harbor of Portland, Maine. To maintain the level of boat traffic and support public, private, and commercial activities, the Board of Harbor Commissioners has recommended dredging in key areas. In addition, there are many programs and partners committed to water quality monitoring, minimizing point source pollution, and protecting marine-related resources. Even though South Portland's waterfront is currently focused on cargo, fuel, and transport rather than fishing and harvesting, the protection and health of Casco Bay are critical to Maine's fishing and shellfishing industries and the holistic health of the South Portland Community.

## **Inventory and Analysis**

### ***State Background***

Maine's Growth Management Law recommends the protection  
South Portland Comprehensive Plan

of the state's marine-related resources and facilities, including ports, harbors, commercial mooring, commercial docking facilities and related parking, and shellfishing and worming areas from incompatible development, and promotion of access to the shore for commerce and the public. Initially, South Portland developed as an industrial maritime trade and travel center in southern Maine. Today, South Portland's coastline is a patchwork of the City's industrial working waterfront, institutions, communities, and open spaces that connect the City to the water. South Portland has approximately 15 miles of coastline, primarily characterized by rocky headlands, estuaries, tidal flats, sand dunes, and engineered industrial edges.

### ***Department of Marine Resource***

The Department of Marine Resources is established to conserve and develop marine and estuarine resources for communities and facilitate and enforce commercial and non-commercial marine licensing. South Portland falls within the Maine Department of Marine Resources Growing Area WI, Growing Area Section P9. Due

to pollution and water quality, it is unlawful to dig, take, or possess any clams, quahogs, oysters, mussels, or whole or roe-on scallops from the shores, flats, and waters.<sup>1</sup> This therefore limits the fishing and harvesting industry potential in South Portland until water quality is sufficiently addressed. Maine is one of the only U.S. states that has an active marine worm population. The worms are used as bait by recreational fishers all over the world. The Prohibited Area P9 does not restrict marine worm harvesting and digging for worms in the intertidal flats is permitted with proper licenses.

### ***Marine Water Quality***

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection's (Maine DEP) Maine Healthy Beaches Program (MHB) works with City staff to collect bacteria samples twice a week from Memorial Day to Labor Day at Willard Beach. The program is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health (BEACH) Act of 2000. Water quality is monitored, and advisory and closure signs are posted at the beach entrance or on the lifeguard stands if there is a public health risk. Current Beach Status is posted online at the MHB Dashboard by the Maine DEP.<sup>2</sup>

In the past two decades, marine water quality monitoring efforts have been conducted in Casco Bay by the State of Maine, Friends of Casco Bay, and other partners and collaborators of Casco Bay Estuary Partnerships (CBEP) since 1993. Friends of Casco Bay (FOCB) is a non-profit marine advocacy organization dedicated to the bay's health. They have four seasonal monitoring sites in South Portland, another three in Portland, and one continuous monitoring station at the Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) Pier. Key indicators being tracked include chlorophyll, dissolved oxygen, water temperature, water depth, sea level, Secchi depth (water clarity), turbidity, and pH levels. These key indicators determine the health of a water body, its ability to support ecosystems, and any

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1 Maine Department of Marine Resources Growing Area WI Map, 2022, <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/sites/maine.gov.dmr/files/closures/WIMaps.pdf>

2 Maine Healthy Beaches Dashboard, 2023, <https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/beaches/beach-status.html>

potential public health risks.

In 2021, the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership's sixth edition of the State of Casco Bay report was released. The report states, "on the whole, Casco Bay continues to be remarkably healthy as it enters the 2020s, compared to many other U.S. estuaries, a testament to the dedicated efforts of many individuals and organizations. Yet major changes are underway that warrant a timely response to protect the Bay and the many people whose livelihoods and quality of life depend on it."

### ***Commercial and Non-Commercial Fishing & Harvesting***

South Portland, combined with Portland, makes up the Port of Portland, the largest of Maine's three major ports. The Port of Portland predominantly provides cargo and passenger terminals with a limited focus on commercial fishing. On the Portland side, recent plans for a 120,000-square-foot waterfront cold-storage warehouse have been underway to meet the refrigerated cargo demand of Maine's growing food, beverage, and biopharmaceutical industries. On the South Portland side, the Port of Portland predominantly focuses on support uses and petroleum distribution. The character of the Port of Portland is structured for the distribution of goods and people, and there is little commercial fishing activity in South Portland. The Maine Department of Marine Resources reports that only eight Commercial Fishing Crew licenses and six Commercial Fishing Single licenses were issued in 2019.<sup>3</sup> This is similar to the 2012 Comprehensive Plan reporting of less than 10 Commercial Fishing permits in 2008.

Harvesting licenses are also minimal and reflect the industrial and cargo focus of the working waterfront. In 2019, only 22 commercial lobster and crab harvesting licenses were administered, as compared to the 42 non-commercial lobster and crab licenses administered.<sup>4</sup> This is similar to the 2012 Comprehensive Plan findings of 44 non-commercial lobster and crab licenses but shows a decrease in commercial lobster and crab licenses from 34 in 2008

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3 Maine Department of Marine Resources, <https://www.maine.gov/dmr>

4 Maine Department of Marine Resources Data Request Form, <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/science/data-and-maps>

to 22 in 2019.

There are marine resource habitats to support fishing and harvesting in South Portland. There are some patches of marine worm habitats along the Fore River. Marine worms are typically a sign of a healthy ecosystem and are often used as bait by recreational fishers. Diggers harvest the worms from intertidal mud flats during low tide. There are also eelgrass beds along Willard Beach and areas to the east. These form underwater habitats, are food sources, and provide protection and coastal resilience. Significant wading bird habitats also exist along Long Creek, the Fore River, and the Casco Bay shoreline from Bug Light to Willard Beach and beyond.<sup>5</sup> Wading bird habitats are typically a sign of ecological health and reflect the health of their prey, surrounding water, soil and air.

**Harbor Management**

The navigable waters of South Portland, combined with Portland, are managed by the Board of Harbor Commissioners for the Harbor of Portland, Maine. This Board is made up of two appointees from Portland, two appointees from South Portland, and one appointee from the Governor of Maine. The Board of Harbor Commissioners regulates navigation and commerce within Portland Harbor. They outline boating laws, harbor pilotage, and mooring information and administer a range of resources. The Harbor Commissioners employs a Harbor Master to oversee the Rules and Regulations. The Harbor Commissioners most recent Rules and Regulations for the Port of Portland were adopted in 2000 and revised in 2018. These rules include items such as mooring regulations, drug and alcohol policies, speed and wake regulations, locations of anchorages and slips, and essentially define how South Portland’s waters are used.

Access to some areas has begun to be a concern for the Harbor Commissioners, and the area has dredging needs. In 2024, the dredging project for Portland Harbor was finally funded, after

<sup>5</sup> Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Beginning with Habitat, <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/wildlife/beginning-with-habitat/index.html>

years of work by the Board of Harbor Commissioners for the Harbor of Portland, the City of Portland, the City of South Portland, and the State of Maine. The areas of concern have not been dredged in more than 70 years and contain several feet of toxic sediment. These issues make certain parts inaccessible for boats or interfere with docking and other waterfront operations. In South Portland, all five private marinas and an area west of the boat ramp in front of the Yard South property have been identified as in need of dredging. The project is expected to take several years.

**Waterfront Land Uses**

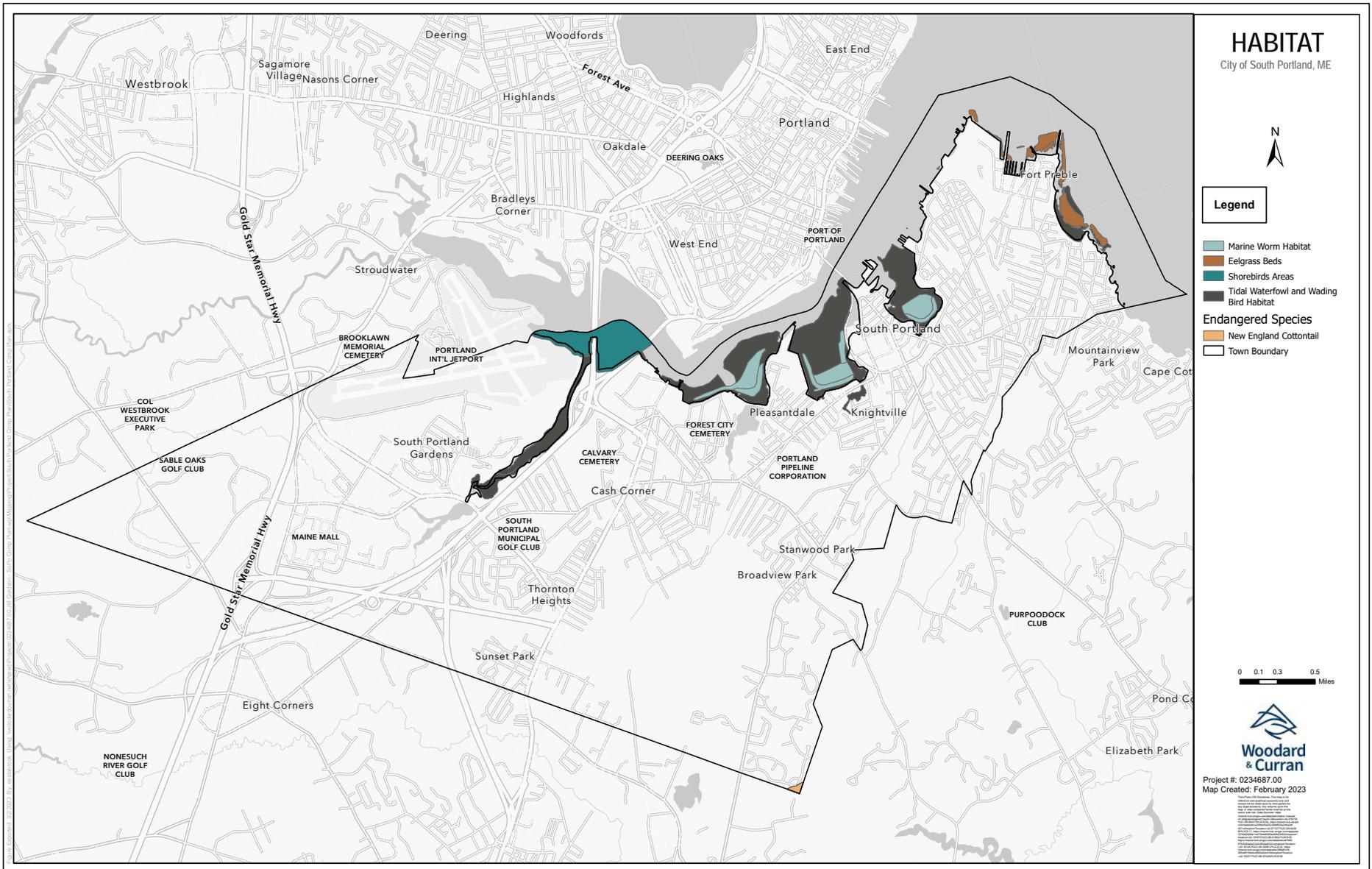
South Portland has a long history of utilizing its waterfront for housing and supporting industry. Originally, a village developed at Cushing’s Point, but the area was taken by eminent domain to focus on shipbuilding and servicing, including key World

War II Liberty ships at the site of Bug Light Park. At Bug Light Park, there’s a monument dedicated to the early residents and the loss of

License Type	# Issued
Aquaculture (AL)	1
Commercial Fishing Crew (CFC)	9
Commercial Fishing Single (CFS)	5
Commercial Pelagic and Anadromous Crew (CPC)	2
Demo Lobster (DL)	2
Elver 1 Fyke Net Crew (E1C)	1
Green Crab (GC)	2
Lobster/Crab +70 (LCO)	1
Lobster/Crab Apprentice (LA)	2
Lobster/Crab Class 1 (LC1)	4
Lobster/Crab Class 2 (LC2)	10
Lobster/Crab Class 2 +70 (LC20)	3
Lobster/Crab Class 3 (LC3)	4
Lobster/Crab Non Commercial (LNC)	40
Lobster/Crab student (LCS)	11
Menhaden Commercial (MENL)	1
PASS ELVER 1 FYKE (PELF)	1
PASS ELVER DIP (PELD)	4
Recreational Saltwater Fishing Operator (SWRO)	21

South Portland Marine Licenses, 2023

# 6. Marine Resources



their homes. In addition to shipbuilding, there was a major sardine cannery along the Ferry Village waterfront. Over time the coast evolved to house a variety of industries, especially those to support cargo and the distribution of goods, including petroleum terminals. Industrial uses have changed over time and now account for approximately 18 percent of all waterfront acreage.

Today, South Portland’s waterfront has various commercial, industrial, and public amenities. Per local and state regulations, all properties along the coast are subject to the City’s Shoreland Zoning Overlay regulations and State Shoreland and Resource Protection standards established in The Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act (MSZA).<sup>6</sup> Many of the shoreline and waterfront uses are vulnerable to sea level rise, increased storm events, and climate change. The One Climate Future included a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment that identifies large areas of South Portland’s waterfront that are vulnerable to sea level rise (SLR) and storm surge in the coming decades. The City has committed to plan for the intermediate scenario of 1.48ft of sea level rise by 2050 and 3.84ft of sea level rise by 2100. However, while the City designs and plans for the intermediate scenario, they will also prepare for the high scenario of 3.38ft by 2050 and 8.72ft by 2100. The land use goals for the waterfront in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan were not informed with sea level rise predictions,

Number of Tanks per Operator	
Operator	Number of Tanks
Irving Oil Ltd.	16
Sprague Energy	17
FPL Energy Wyman LLC	5
Penobscot Bay Terminals, Inc.	7
South Portland Terminal LLC	19
Gulf Oil LP	9
Global Companies, LLC	10
Portland Pipe Line Corp.	8
Sprague Operating Resources, LLC	20
Citgo Petroleum Corp.	10

climate hazards, and SLR impacts on industrial areas, petroleum storage, and neighborhoods such as Willard Beach, Ferry Village, Cushing’s Point, Knightville and Millcreek.

There are numerous petroleum storage and distribution facilities and marinas throughout the waterfront of South Portland. Zoning and land use policies for these areas are designated Commercial Areas and do not require or limit use to only working waterfront uses. The 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies maintaining the working waterfront while creating opportunities for increased public access and a mix of uses as a key land use policy.<sup>7</sup>

While it is true that the 2012 Comprehensive Plan identifies maintaining the working waterfront, subsequent policies have prohibited some petroleum activities and sought to limit toxic air emissions. Additionally, One Climate Future identifies fuel oil as having a high carbon intensity and have highlighted various actions to reduce dependency and address local air quality. City Council created the Clean Air Advisory Committee (CAAC) in 2019 to “work with local, state and federal agencies to establish an effective ambient air quality monitoring program to ensure that point source and fugitive emissions from crude oil storage terminals have no undue adverse impact on public health.”<sup>8</sup> The CAAC presented its findings and recommendations to City Council in 2021 at which point the committee was renewed to focus on implementing recommendations.

Zoning is attempting to encourage redevelopment in specific areas to promote a broader ecosystem of uses such as housing, hotels, and commercial to support the diverse waterfront. Resiliency and sea level rise are particularly important given the sensitive environmental impacts of petroleum storage. Likewise, redevelopment with increased standards and resiliency requirements can be challenging.

From the Veteran’s Memorial Bridge to the Casco Bay Bridge, the waterfront is predominantly marine-dependent petroleum facil-

<sup>6</sup> Maine Department of Environmental Protection, <https://www.maine.gov/dep/>

<sup>7</sup> 2012 South Portland, Maine Comprehensive Plan Update with South Portland Open Space Plan- 2019

<sup>8</sup> South Portland Clean Air Advisory Committee 2022 Report

ities. Additionally, Forest City Cemetery also occupies a portion of the coast in this area. There are limited non-industrial uses between the two bridges. In its 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update the city committed to maintaining this area as a working waterfront. Beyond the Casco Bay Bridge to the northeast, the coast is more varied. There are various petroleum storage and distribution facilities in close proximity to residential neighborhoods, the U.S. Coast Guard Station, SMCC, and park spaces. This portion of the waterfront is more diverse than a single large industrial user and is a mix of land uses and users, creating a broader working waterfront that is more susceptible to redevelopment.

### ***Shoreland Zoning***

The City established an overlay district two hundred and fifty feet from the upland edge of a coastal wetland and the upland edge of a shoreland freshwater wetland. It also mapped Shoreland Resource Protection Overlay Subdistrict(s) for areas where development would adversely affect water quality, productive habitat, biological ecosystems, or scenic and natural values. Article 13 of the South Portland Zoning Code outlines the Shoreland Overlay Districts with the purpose, among other priorities, of preventing and controlling water pollution and protecting commercial fishing and maritime industries. The shoreland zoning dictates performance standards and district requirements, including land uses, space and bulk regulations, and other development factors that could impact waterways. In addition, all land areas in the Stream Protection Overlay Subdistricts and within areas of special flood hazards require floodplain management approval. Approvals from the Planning Board and Code Enforcement Officer are required for any activity or land use regulated in a Shoreland Zoning District.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Public Access***

The City is committed to connecting the community to the waterfront and is actively seeking opportunities to increase access. There are several key parks, open spaces, and trailways that

provide public access to the coast. Waterfront parks have been expanded and enhanced over the years. The Open Space Acquisition Committee considers waterfront parcels for resiliency, protection, and access as part of their open space acquisition strategy.

### ***Bug Light Park***

A historic World War II Liberty shipbuilding site, this waterfront park is the eastern terminus of the Greenbelt Walkway. The park offers recreation options and expansive views of Portland Harbor and Casco Bay. It is an 8.78-acre park that offers flexible green space, a walking path, and saltwater fishing. It is also home to the Portland Breakwater Lighthouse, also known as Bug Light, the Liberty Ship Memorial, Cushing's Point Museum, and the South Portland Boat Launch, also referred to as the Fore River Boat Facility. This facility is an all-tide launch amenity featuring twin ramps, a long tie-up float, a portable toilet, and parking. Fees are required to launch boats, but there is free parking for other amenities.

### ***Greenbelt Walkway***

A 5.6-mile off-road pathway meanders through South Portland from the Wainwright Athletic complex to Bug Light and touches many waterfront areas. The trail is open to walking, running, and cycling. This trail also functions as the eastern terminus of the Eastern Trail, a 65-mile multi-use greenway in development from Kittery to South Portland, and the northern terminus of the developing East Coast Greenway from Maine to Florida.

### ***Spring Point Ledge Light***

The lighthouse, Spring Point Ledge Light, sits just outside the Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) campus and provides public tours, shore fishing, mobile restrooms, and mooring. Spring Point Ledge Light is accessed through SMCC and sits at the end of a jetty that extends into the Portland Harbor channel. Visitor parking is limited on the SMCC campus and navigation can be challenging. Student lots are also available for parking. Spring Point Ledge Light

<sup>9</sup> City of South Portland Code of Ordinances, 2023, Chapter 27 Zoning, [https://www.southportland.org/files/1216/8910/4583/CH\\_27\\_\\_Zoning\\_with\\_New\\_TOC\\_format.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/1216/8910/4583/CH_27__Zoning_with_New_TOC_format.pdf)

is managed and maintained by Spring Point Ledge Trust.<sup>10</sup> Access to the Spring Point Ledge Light is next to Fort Preble.

### *Fort Preble*

Built in 1808, the historic fort is located on the SMCC campus. It is named after Commodore Edward Preble and was a military fort throughout the U.S. Civil War, the Spanish American War, World War I, and World War II. It was deactivated in 1947 and sold to the State of Maine in 1952. It became part of the SMCC campus and is enjoyed by campus and Spring Point Ledge Light users and visitors.

### *Spring Point Shoreway Trail*

A 1.6-mile trail that connects Bug Light Park to Fisherman's Point at Willard Beach. The path goes adjacent to the shoreline by Breakwater Marina and through The Southern Maine Community College (SMCC) campus. The Spring Point Ledge Light and historic Fort Preble are easily accessible from this trail.

### *Thomas Knight Park and Boat Landing*

A 1.5-acre park under the Casco Bay Bridge on land previously occupied by the old "Million Dollar Bridge" used to enter South Portland. It offers a pedestrian access ramp to the Casco Bay Bridge for a public access network to and from Portland. The green space provides a variety of open spaces with benches and tables with scenic views of the Portland Peninsula and Portland skyline. The Knightville Boat Landing is located at the park's edge and offers free landing for up to four hours with an honor system for fees afterward. The Knightville Boat Landing is open to all smaller vessels. It supplies sewage pumps for a fee and is open 24 hours daily May through October. Water taxis, fishing vessels, and other small watercraft are welcome to use the landing to pick up and discharge passengers.

### *Willard Beach*

A four-acre sand and pebble beach at the edge of SMCC's campus

<sup>10</sup> Spring Point Ledge Trust, <https://springpointledgelight.org/about/#1618231257696-a43f06ea-d6b3>

on Simonton Cove. As the City's only public beach, it is a popular destination. The public space offers sunbathing, swimming, tidal pools, and scenic views of boats and landscapes. The public space also offers critical public access and dinghy storage for boat owners who keep boats on moorings there. This of all mooring fields shows the economic diversity of boaters in South Portland and is the only mooring field in the city with public shore access. Without diligent maintenance of this historic access by the city, we reduce not only scenic views of boats, but also equity. The Willard Beach bathhouse is open in the summer and provides restrooms, outdoor showers, and a snack shack. There is a 75-car parking lot along Willow Street that offers free parking. Fisherman's Point marks the southern edge of the beach and is an iconic setting of historic seaside shacks. There are public moorings at Loveitts Field as well.

Major storm events have decimated the dunes between Willard Street and Myrtle Avenue. Restoration of the dunes is an ongoing effort to restore natural habitat, protect residents from tides and storms, and further fortify the wastewater force main, which runs beneath the beach. There is also a City-owned pier in Ferry Village that was evaluated for upgrades and sea level vulnerability, however no actions were advanced further due to costs.

The City completed a Willard Beach Master Plan in the Spring of 2023.<sup>11</sup> The Willard Beach Master Plan is a community driven vision that aims to enhance the resiliency and health of this essential community resource through private and public partnership, while ensuring the beach remains accessible to all. The Master Plan outlines five goals:

- Protect and Restore Natural Resources
- Mitigate Poor Water Quality
- Improve Beach Access
- Ensure Infrastructure is Resilient and Enhances Beach Character

<sup>11</sup> Willard Beach Master Plan, <https://viewshed.sharefile.com/share/view/sd5908c60780c4f5ca683c9887d2b4f39/fof80328-b2a0-4cd4-83a6-80480cf0f-ca7>

- Acknowledge and Engage the Cultural History

Each of the five goals outlines a series of strategies in targeted action plans for implementation to achieve the vision. In all, there are 64 strategies. The action plans provide a summary of each strategy, the responsible party, time frame, priority, and cost.

### ***Private Access***

South Portland has several private access points along the water for commercial and recreational waterfront use, including large petroleum terminal facilities, institutional users, and private recreational marinas.

### ***Petroleum Facilities***

Petroleum storage and distribution is a prominent part of South Portland's history, and there are six petroleum companies with active terminals throughout the city. These companies are Sprague, SP Terminal, Global, CITGO, PPLC, and Gulf. These companies store and distribute petroleum products from the shore and rail lines. Most facilities are directly along the coast, but PPLC also has storage tanks further inland in the community. The tanks typically store petroleum products such as heating oil, transportation fuel, asphalt, and industrial use oils.

Emissions from the tanks are regulated by the EPA, and monitoring by the Maine DEP has been ongoing since 2019 through the South Portland/Portland VOC Air Quality Monitoring Project. South Portland's Clean Skies Ordinance prohibits the bulk loading of crude oil onto tankers in South Portland's harbor. The process of loading crude oil, especially crude oil derived from tar sands, is accompanied by the emission of toxic chemicals. EPA findings showed that Global and Sprague exceeded their permitted emissions and led to the creation of the Clean Air Advisory Committee (CAAC) in 2019. The CAAC offers recommendations to the City Council regarding strategies to address the likely sources of air pollution in the city and to monitor air quality. These recommendations were documented in a February 2023 report and outline the following recom-

mendations:<sup>12</sup>

- Move fixed monitoring stations closer to the fenceline
- Take steps to better understand burst emissions
- Partner with researchers on a health study
- Better understand transportation emissions
- Address odor complaints more comprehensively
- Advocate for regulatory changes
- Involve Maine's federal delegation

After a series of challenges by the Portland Pipe Line Corporation and a dedicated public campaign, the appeal to nullify the Clear Skies Ordinance was dropped in 2021 and strengthens the city's ability to protect the environment and maintain safe and healthy communities. In the 2012 Comprehensive Plan, health risks related to tank emissions were not widely known to the community. With increased community familiarity with DEP air emissions permits for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs) associated health risks have come to light and are now a focus of community health and future planning.

### ***Marinas***

South Portland is a water-focused city with a large boating population. Having adequate facilities to properly keep, service, and store boats is a critical need of the community. There are five private marinas and a private yacht club in South Portland. Spring Point Marina, South Port Marine, Breakwater Marina, Sunset Marina, Aspasia Marina, and the Centerboard Yacht Club combined have roughly 900 slips, 139 moorings, and over 16,500 linear feet of berthing. The facilities offer various services, including restrooms, electricity, fuel, water, restaurant, repairs, internet WIFI, laundry, and boat storage. These facilities serve both members and temporary berthing for boats up to 200 feet in length. These marinas are

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.southportland.org/files/2416/8262/6214/CAAC\\_2022\\_Report\\_to\\_City\\_Council\\_-\\_Final\\_Feb\\_2023.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/2416/8262/6214/CAAC_2022_Report_to_City_Council_-_Final_Feb_2023.pdf)

private uses and not available to non-members. South Portland is historically an economically diverse boating community, and the privatization of shore access has constrained boaters' ability to continue that tradition.

### ***Southern Maine Community College Pier***

This 80-acre campus is an important waterfront community anchor located at the historic Fort Preble site. It has a vibrant on- and off-campus population and welcomes the public to enjoy the campus and amenities. The campus includes key waterfront access, scenic vistas, and the Spring Point Ledge Light. In 2022, SMCC completed a Strategic Plan outlining recommendations and priorities, including strengthening student pathways for real-world experience and preparing students for success. SMCC offers pathways for water-focused careers through the Marine Sciences program, providing students with the academic background and applied skills necessary for employment as researchers and technicians in various aquatic and environmental fields. In 2006 SMCC replaced a mid-1800s pier that had fallen into disrepair and was no longer functioning as a learning platform for SMCC's Marine Science academic program. The new 226-foot pier is an important educational resource for the Marine Science program and includes an outdoor classroom and is used for mooring training vessels and handling equipment, materials, and supplies for the school.

### ***US Coast Guard Base***

The U.S. Coast Guard is the Federal Maritime branch of the U.S. military responsible for enforcing federal marine laws. The South Portland base of the Coast Guard is a sub-unit and headquarters of Sector Northern New England, comprising of 19 sub-units and over 1,000 Active, Civilian, Reserve, and Auxiliary personnel. Sector Northern New England has an area of responsibility covering Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and northeastern New York that includes over 5,000 miles of coastline and 11,000 square nautical miles of water. It includes a number of coastal and river cargo ports, cruise ship destinations, and the waters of Lake Champlain. The facilities at the station include two main piers that provide mooring for U.S. Coast Guard vessels and tenders for offshore

ships. There are six vessels stationed at the South Portland Coast Guard Facility. The facility is fenced off and accessed through a security checkpoint. The facility is closed to the public.

### **Focus Group Takeaways**

Focus groups were conducted to receive feedback from the community. Interviewees conveyed a general description of the Harbor Management structure and responsibilities. They explained how rules were implemented and enforced as well as how general observations get relayed to the Board of Harbor Commissioners to be considered for policy updates or special projects. Additionally, prominent water-dependent facilities and users were described with an emphasis on what has changed since the last Comprehensive Plan. Dredging needs were expressed, as well as the need to be responsive to eelgrass habitat for moorings and other climate change-related risks. Interviewees also explored the ideas of public access to the coast and private access, such as SMCC and marinas. Information about various waterfront parks and amenities and additional plans for Willard Beach, a restoration project for coastal dunes, and challenges around finding additional public access were shared.

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SoPo Unite — All Ages All In; SoPo Unite Students. Source: SoPo Unite - All Ages In Facebook

# 7. Population & Demographics

As of the 2020 U.S. Decennial Census, the City of South Portland is home to 26,498 people. Although South Portland saw modest population growth in the decades between 1980 and 2000, the rate of growth has more than doubled in the past two decades. The Office of the Maine State Economist, which publishes population forecasts on a twenty-year timeline, predicts that population growth will continue to occur, however, the rate of growth will decline through 2040.

South Portland's population is younger and has more residents with a bachelor's degree or higher than the state median. Like the state's population, South Portland has also become more diverse. The percentage of South Portland's population who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) grew from 10 to 17 percent between 2010 and 2020. Nine percent of South Portland residents were born outside the United States. Despite those trends, most South Portland residents identify as White (82 percent).

South Portland has a Median Family Income of \$94,694 and is comparable to similar cities in the region. Although the Median Household Income (includes all households not just family households) has grown more slowly than the Area Median Income, poverty levels are lower than in most comparable cities in the region.

South Portland Comprehensive Plan

## Inventory and Analysis

### *Population Growth*

Between 1980 and 2000, South Portland's population experienced minor growth, growing at a total rate of three percent. Since 2000, the City's population has increased significantly; the City's population rose by seven percent between 2000 and 2010 and increased by six percent between 2010 and 2020.<sup>1</sup> Between 2010 and 2020, Cumberland County's population and the State of Maine's population grew at a rate of eight and three percent, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

Maine's State Economist predicts that South Portland's population rate of growth will decline through 2040. South Portland's growth rate is expected to decrease by 2.5 percent between 2027 and 2032, and by 1.3 percent between 2032 and 2037.<sup>3</sup> Historic migration, as well as migration impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, have continued the positive growth rate.

1 United States Census Bureau, 2020, 2010, and 2000 Census of Population and Housing, updated every 10 years.

2 *ibid.*

3 State of Maine, Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Maine State Economist, <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/home>

Should the City continue to grow at the average rate of 6.5 percent every ten years as it has seen since 2000, South Portland could reach 30,000 residents by 2040.

The population can be affected by both the birthrate and migration into the community. In the 1990s, Cumberland County saw a large share of population growth resulting from a strong birth rate (natural change resulting from more births than deaths). That trend began to shift in the 2000s. Since 2010, 93 percent of the region’s population growth was from net in-migration with net natural change turning negative (i.e., more deaths than births) in 2019 and 2020.<sup>4</sup>

The recent declining trend in natural population change is largely attributable to the age profile of the county, affecting both birth and death rates. As an area’s population grows older, most of its population ages out of childbearing years and eventually into higher mortality age groups. Thus, without new household formation and replacement population via net in-migration, the number of deaths will eventually outnumber new births in the region. The birth rate (i.e., number of births per 1,000 residents per year) in the Portland-South Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) peaked in 1990 at 15.04. Since then, the birth rate has steadily declined to its current low of 8.84.<sup>5</sup>

**Seasonal Population**

South Portland does not have a significant seasonal population. Less than 7% of housing stock is vacant which includes seasonal as well as other unoccupied units. This is more than it was in 2000 when it was less than 3%. However, there is more business activity in the summer than other seasons due to tourism in the region.

**Daytime Population**

South Portland is a service center with many large employers, and

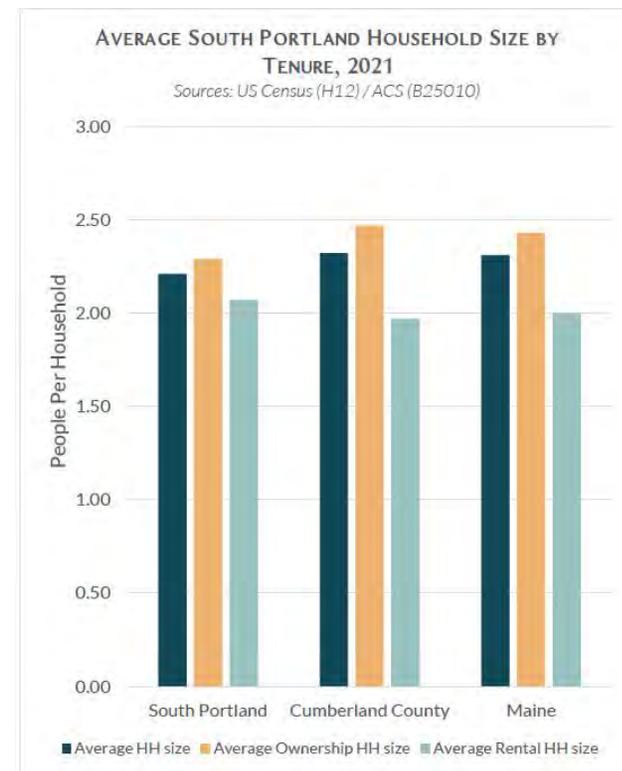
4 Crane Associates Inc., “Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy”, May 16, 2022, [https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/\\$file/Att.1-FinalHousingReport\\_05.20.2022.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/$file/Att.1-FinalHousingReport_05.20.2022.pdf) Components of Population Change, U.S. Census Bureau

5 *ibid.*

the Maine Mall and Jetport are regional destinations. More than twice as many people commute into the city for work than leave the city for work elsewhere (about 13,000 net influx daily). The bus service runs expanded service during work hours to accommodate the added demand.

**Household Size and Composition<sup>6</sup>**

In 2021, the United States Census Bureau reported that South Portland had an average household size of 2.21 persons per household (PPH). The household size is slightly lower than that of Cumberland County and the state of Maine.

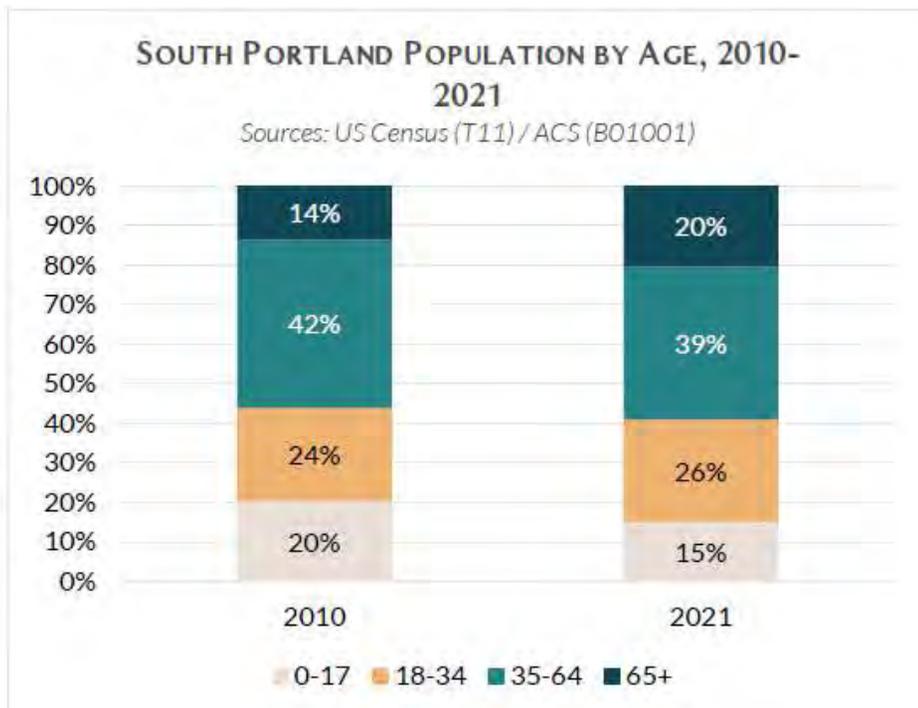


6 United States Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, <https://www.census.gov/data/developers/data-sets/acs-5year.html>

While there were no reported changes in average household size at the county and state level in the past decade, South Portland experienced a slight decline in average household size between 2010 (2.24 PPH) to 2021 (2.21 PPH).<sup>7</sup>

Although the City's average household size shrunk, the total number of households increased by seven percent. Cumberland County also experienced a seven percent growth in total households, while the total number of households within the state increased by two percent. The housing chapter (Chapter 7) in this report will expound on the relationship between population trends and housing demand.

### Changing Demographics

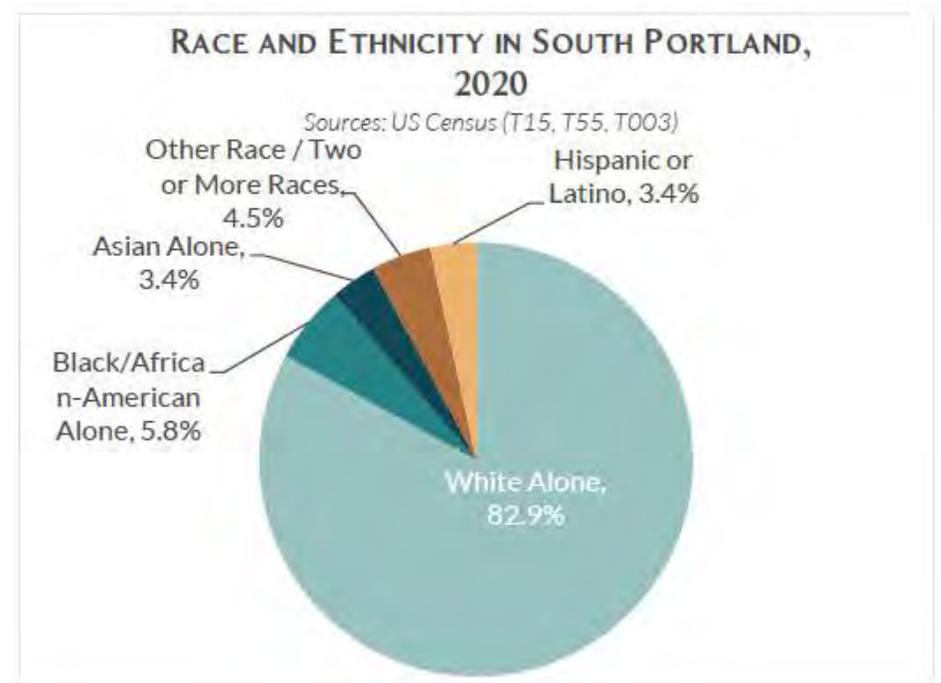


7 <sup>ibid.</sup>  
South Portland Comprehensive Plan

### *South Portland population is younger than the state population as a whole.*

South Portland's population is slightly younger than the State's, with 41 percent being 34 years or younger. With a median age of 43, the largest age group in South Portland is residents ages 35 to 64, at 39 percent.<sup>8</sup> The second largest age group is young adults, ages 18 to 34 (26 percent). Children, ages 0 to 17, comprise the City's smallest age group at 15 percent of the total population. This is four percentage points lower than the county and state percentages (19 percent). Older adults, 65 years and older, are the second-smallest age bracket at 20 percent. Overall, the breakdown of South Portland residents by age closely follows County and State trends.

### *South Portland is becoming more diverse.*

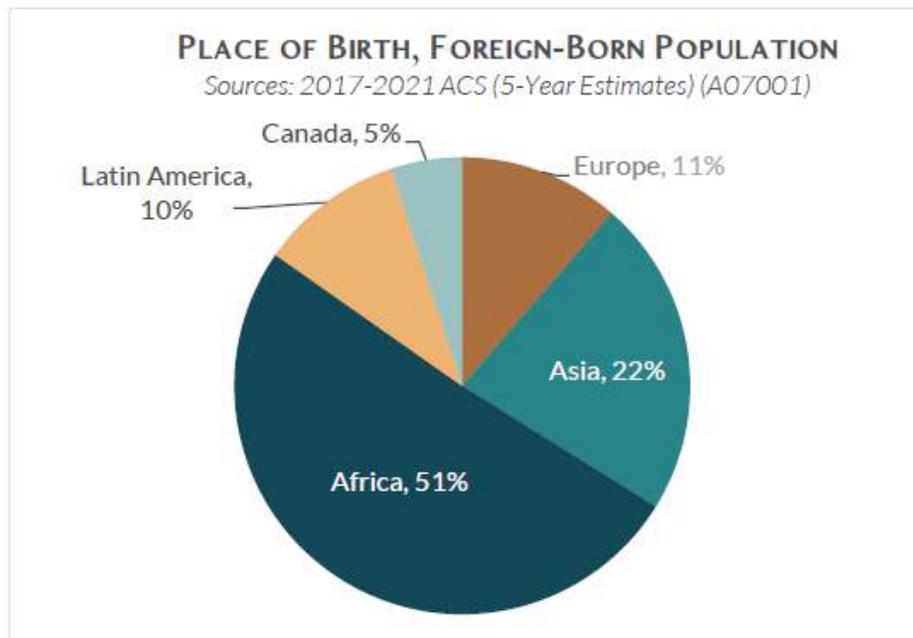


8 United States Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey, B25007  
Inventory Chapters | A-65

## 7. Population & Demographics

Most South Portland residents identify as white (82 percent), however, the percentage of South Portland's population who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) grew from 10 percent to 17.1 percent between 2010 and 2020.<sup>9</sup> In the same period, South Portland's population who identify as white declined by two percent. These demographic changes indicate that South Portland is becoming more diverse. As a percentage of the population, the growth in South Portland's BIPOC population is comparable to that of the County and State's growth rates.<sup>10</sup>

***Nine percent of South Portland residents were born outside the United States.***

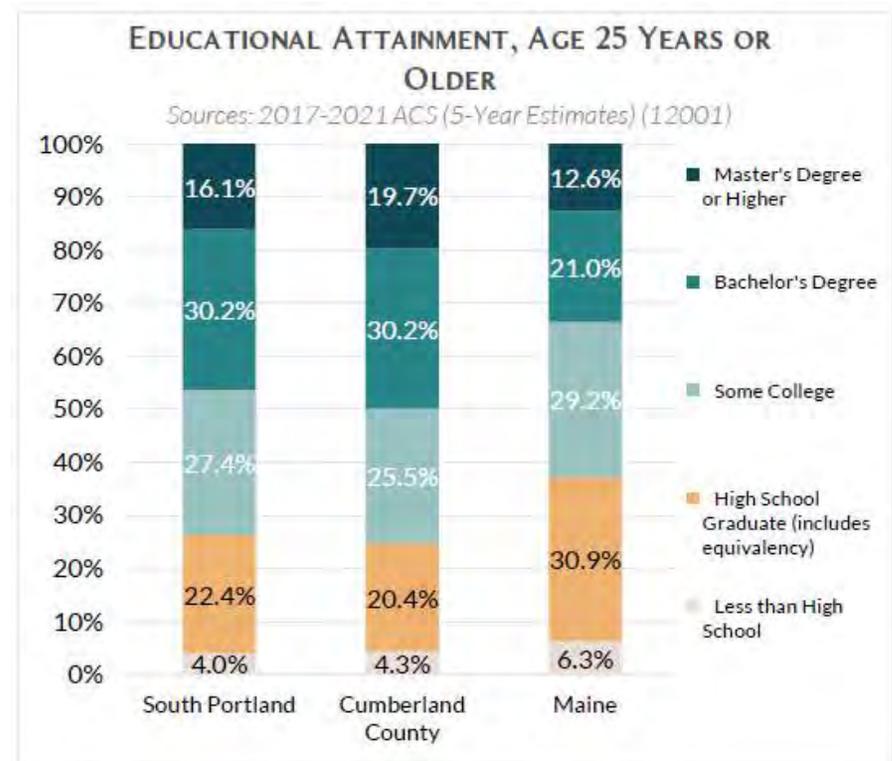


About 2,318 residents are foreign-born, or nine percent of South Portland's total population. 51 percent of South Portland's foreign-born population immigrated from Africa, particularly Eastern

Africa (especially Somalia), with the following highest percentage of foreign-born residents immigrating from Asia, particularly South-Eastern Asia (especially Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia) and South-Central Asia (especially India). South Portland residents born in European countries account for 11 percent of the foreign-born population, with most immigrating from Eastern Europe. About ten percent of the foreign-born population of South Portland immigrated from Latin America, particularly Central America (especially Guatemala, Mexico, and Honduras).

### Education

***Over one-third of South Portland residents have a bachelor's degree or higher.***



<sup>9</sup> United States Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020, T15, T55, T003

<sup>10</sup> United States Census Bureau (T15, T55, T003).

Educational attainment is measured for South Portland residents aged 25 and older. The largest percentage of residents (30 percent) have a bachelor’s degree.<sup>11</sup> Another 27 percent of South Portland residents have some college education but no degree, and 22 percent of residents have a high school diploma.<sup>12</sup> These educational attainment trends hew closely to educational trends at the County level.

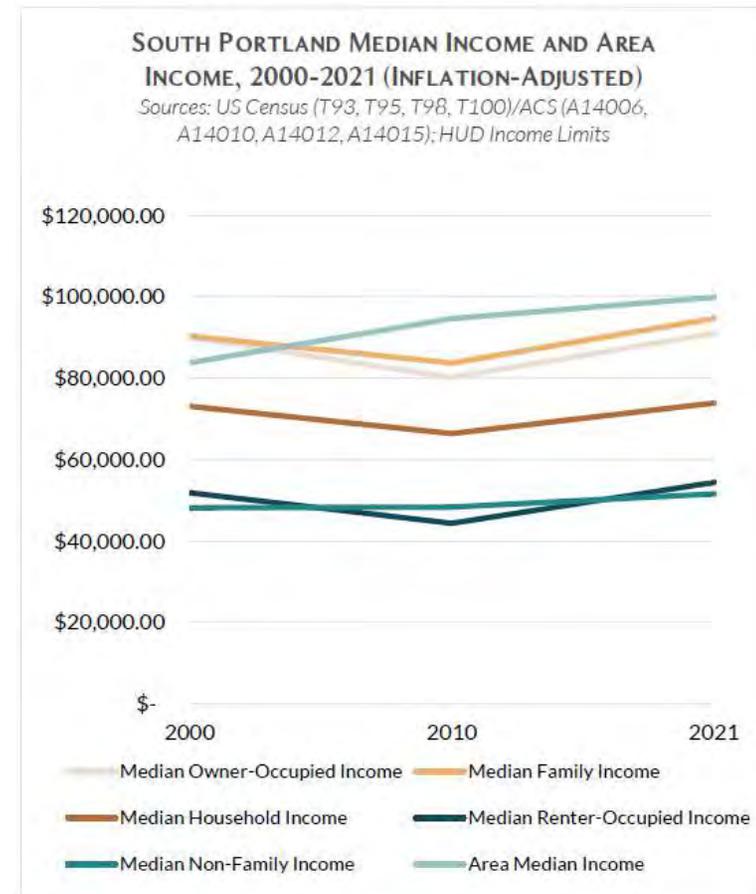
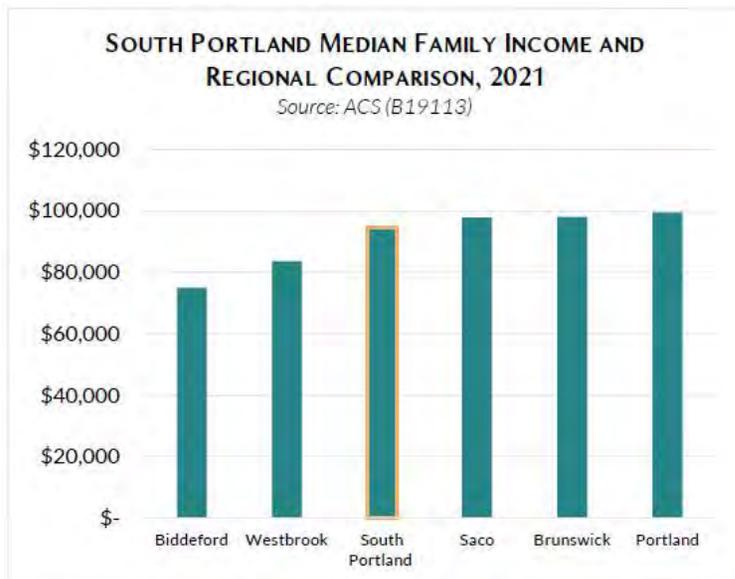
Notably, the percentage of South Portland residents who have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher (46.3 percent) is nearly 13 percent higher than the Statewide average (33.6 percent).

Approximately 16 percent of South Portland residents hold a master’s degree or higher. The remaining four percent of residents have some high school education.<sup>13</sup>

### Income Characteristics

***In 2021, South Portland had a Median Family Income of \$94,694.***

The total income figures reported for all individuals at the same address are called household income. Persons in households who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption constitute family households, and the sum of their incomes is referred to as family income. For South Portland, the Median Family Income is \$94,694. In comparison to neighboring municipalities, South Portland has a lower Median Family Income than Portland, Brunswick, and Saco and a greater Median Family Income than Westbrook and Biddeford.



11 United States Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey, 12001.

12 *ibid.*

13 *ibid.*

**South Portland’s median household income increased faster than the Area Median Income, but still remains 35 percent lower.**

A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit, whether familiar or not, and includes people living alone.<sup>14</sup> The median family income is typically higher than median household income as family households tend to have more people, and more of those members are in their prime earning years. Nevertheless, household income is important to include as it better captures data related to younger and older individuals who often have lower incomes.<sup>15</sup>

South Portland’s median household income is \$73,899 (adjusted for 2021 dollars),<sup>16</sup> up 11 percent from 2010.<sup>17</sup> In the same decade, the Area Median Income (AMI) for the Portland, ME HUD Metro FMR Area grew just six percent to \$99,900.<sup>18</sup>

While South Portland’s median household income increases almost twice as much as the AMI between 2010 and 2021, South Portland’s median household income remains roughly 35 percent lower than the AMI.

South Portland households make less money than the area average. This discrepancy is most apparent for renter-occupied households and non-family households, which earn roughly half that of the AMI.



14 United States Census Bureau, Subject Definitions, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/subject-definitions.html#-family>

15 Moody’s Analytics: FAQ: U.S. - Family income vs. household income by Karl Zandi, <https://www.economy.com/support/blog/buffet.aspx?did=932EB-FA8-D905-4945-A5D5-D02D98113FA4>

16 United States Census Bureau, Quick Facts, South Portland City, Maine, Last Modified July 1, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/southportlandcitymaine/PST045221>

17 Adjusted for inflation, United States Census Bureau (T93, T95, T98, T100)/ACS (A14006, A14010, A14012, A14015)

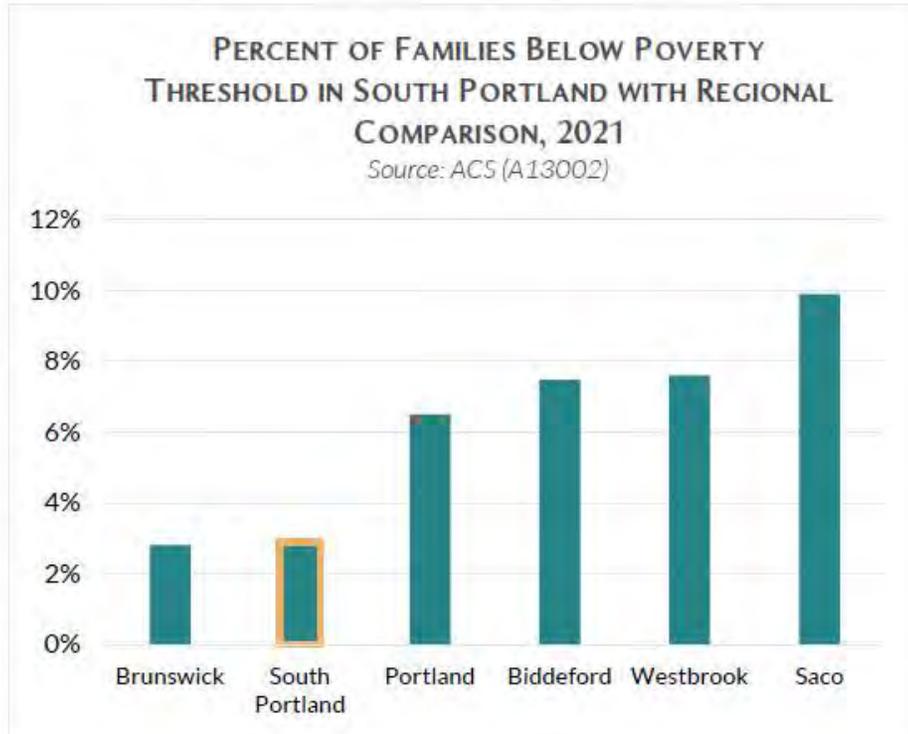
18 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, South Portland Median Family Income, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>

**Poverty levels are lower than in comparable regional cities.**

Despite South Portland household income being lower than that of the State and County, the poverty rate is lower in South Portland compared to other regional cities. Roughly three percent of South Portland’s families (188 families) live below the poverty threshold. Poverty threshold is determined by the size of family unit and measured on a national average.

While fewer South Portland families fall below the national poverty

threshold than surrounding communities, more than half of South Portland households earned less than \$75,000 in 2021 (51 percent).



A14012, A14015).

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State of Maine, Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Maine State Economist, <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/home>.

United States Census Bureau (T1/ACS A00001).

United States Census Bureau (T15, T55, T003).

United States Census Bureau (T93, T95, T98, T100)/ACS (A14006, A14010, South Portland Comprehensive Plan



South Portland's eastern "downtown" Millcreek and Knightville neighborhoods look out toward Casco Bay. Source: South Portland Economic Development Department

## 8. Economy

South Portland is a City of over 26,000 residents on the coast of Maine.<sup>1</sup> Just south of the port city and popular tourist destination in Portland, South Portland benefits from this regional hub of economic activity and tourism. The City is actively engaged in economic development planning. The City's Economic Development Department, which includes a full-time director as well as three staff, focuses on maintaining and growing a diverse tax base and positioning South Portland for success in the global marketplace. The City is also a member of the Greater Portland Council of Governments Economic Development District and partners with the Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce.

To better understand the economic activity in the City, this chapter provides a detailed inventory of existing conditions for those living and working in South Portland. The chapter offers empirical evidence of the socioeconomic makeup of the City's population and trends in the labor force. The analysis also covers employers in the City, providing an overview of industry trends and commuter patterns.

### Inventory and Analysis

#### *History*

South Portland's earliest European settlements centered on fishing and trading. The local economy developed around the shipbuilding industry in the mid-and late-1800s. Ferry Village, Knightville, and Turner's Island were home to commercial businesses that emerged during this period to support the shipyard activity, and neighborhoods and infrastructure developed to support the growing population working in these industries. During World War II, South Portland's shipyard were centers of its economic activity. At its peak the Todd-Bath Iron Shipbuilding Corp employed more than 30,000 people. The shipbuilding industry declined after World War II ended.

Post-war, South Portland became a bedroom suburb of Portland, with new subdivisions, and developed a significant retail economy. The Mill Creek shopping center, built in the 1950s, was the first strip mall built in Maine. In the late 1960s, the construction of the Maine Mall on the site of a former pig farm marked the start of a major transition in the western part of South Portland: from a rural, agrarian landscape to the large commercial center

<sup>1</sup> Population based on US Census Bureau ACS 5-year estimates, 2017-2021.

that exists today. Western South Portland is also home to large manufacturing facilities including Texas Instruments and ON Semiconductor.

The City is also home to industrial uses including the Portland-Montreal Pipe Line. The Port of Portland is the northernmost oil port in the United States, and South Portland has over 120 oil storage tanks. South Portland's Rigby Yard is the largest railroad yard in New England.

The City's traditional downtown of Knightville/Mill Creek includes both local businesses and chain stores in historic mixed-use buildings and modern strip mall development. The downtown has suffered since the re-routing of the Casco Bay Bridge reduced traffic to the area, but recent investment and planning efforts continue to improve its potential. Home occupations are not a significant part of South Portland's economy.

**Socioeconomic and Labor Force Conditions of South Portland Residents**

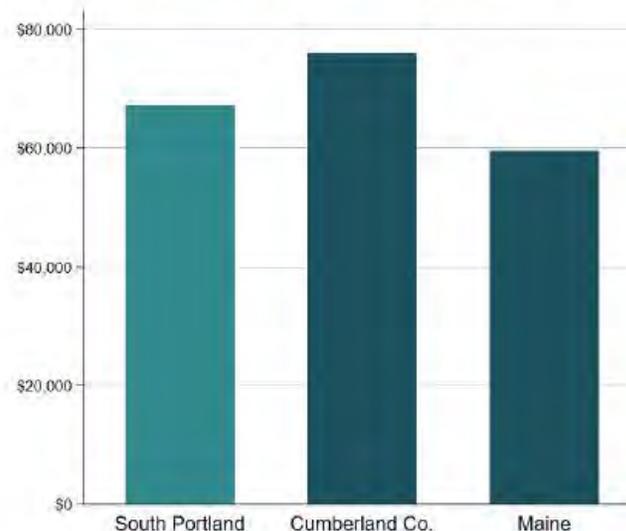
*South Portland has a higher median income and lower poverty rate than the state.*

As seen in the following figure, the median household in South Portland earns about \$67,200 per year. Notably, this amount is about \$9,000 lower than Cumberland County's median income of over \$76,000, and \$5,400 lower than the Portland-South Portland Metro area (not shown in the figure). At the same time, these areas, including the City of South Portland, earn substantially more than the median household in the state (\$59,500). South Portland also has a substantially lower poverty rate than Maine (6.9 percent compared to 11.1 percent in the state). Despite Cumberland County's relatively high median household income, the county has a higher poverty rate than South Portland (8.3 percent). This result indicates a fairly large spread of income inequality in the county.

*South Portland has high educational attainment relative to Maine.*

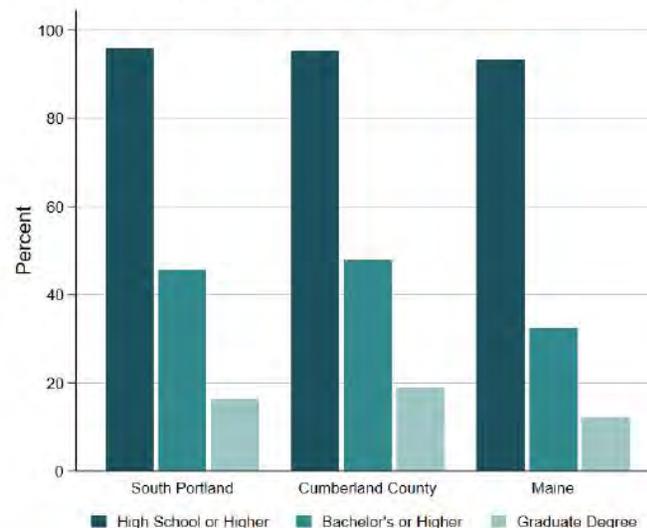
A slightly higher portion of South Portland residents earned a high school degree or higher than Mainers overall (96 percent compared to 93.3 percent in the state). South Portland Comprehensive Plan

**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2016-2020 5-year

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2016-2020 5-year

pared to 93 percent). This difference becomes more pronounced when considering bachelor’s degree attainment (45 percent in the City compared to 32 percent in the State). Over 16 percent of South Portland residents also earned a graduate degree, compared to about 12 percent in Maine. In comparison to the County, South Portland has a slightly (one percentage point) higher share of high school-educated residents but a lower share of residents with a bachelor’s degree (45 percent compared to 48 in the County) or graduate degree (16 percent compared to 19 in the County).

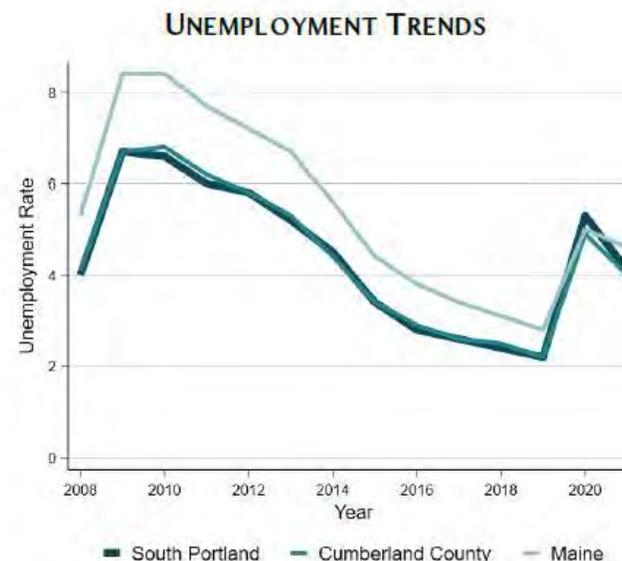
*Unemployment in South Portland increased during the Great Recession and (to a lesser extent) the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Employment in South Portland had a peak of 14,500 people in 2018 and remained high in 2019 (14,400 people). Employment of South Portland residents fell in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, when only 13,500 residents were employed (94 percent of pre-COVID employment). By 2022, employment in the City had somewhat recovered, totaling about 14,100 people (about 98 percent of pre-pandemic levels).

Like the rest of the country, Maine experienced relatively high unemployment following the Great Recession in 2008 and 2009 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 (see figure below). During the first of these unemployment increases, the City of South Portland and Cumberland County fared better than the state. The unemployment rate in the county and City remained below the state level until the pandemic in 2020. That year, the unemployment rate in South Portland exceeded the state’s (5.3 percent compared to 5.0 in the state). However, the unemployment rate in the State, County, and City remained below the national annual unemployment rate in 2020, which exceeded 8 percent.<sup>2</sup> In 2021, the County and City recovered more quickly than the State (4.0 and 4.1 percent unemployment compared to 4.6 in Maine).

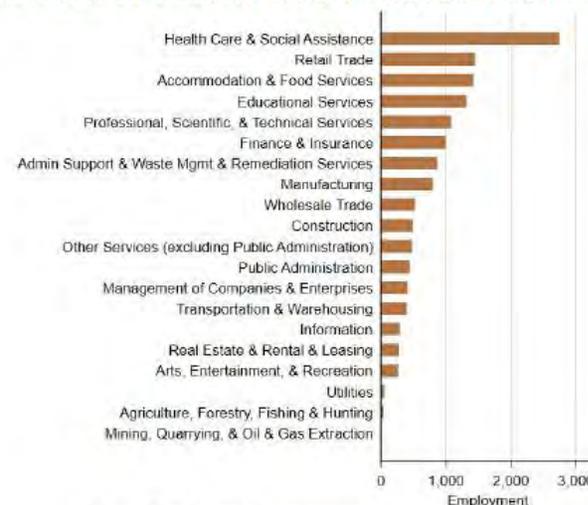
**Economic & Industry Trends of Employers in South Portland**

This section discusses trends and existing conditions of businesses, non-profits, and government entities established in South



Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI)

**EMPLOYMENT OF SOUTH PORTLAND RESIDENTS BY INDUSTRY**

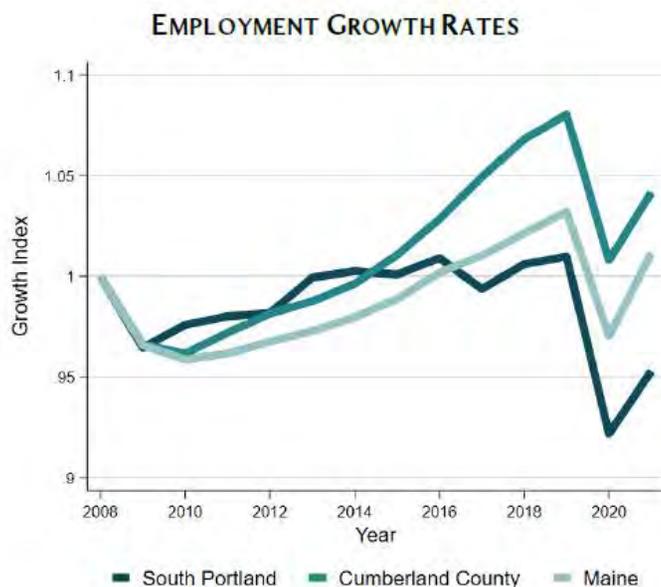


Note: The figure above presents data for 2019.

Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, On The Map, Inflow/Outflow Analysis, <https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/>

<sup>2</sup> Annual Unemployment Rate U.S. 2022” n.d.

Portland and those working there. South Portland is home to a variety of employers across a range of industries. Employment is spread throughout the small City, with hubs of activity around the waterfront areas, busy roadways such as Main Street/Route 1



Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI)

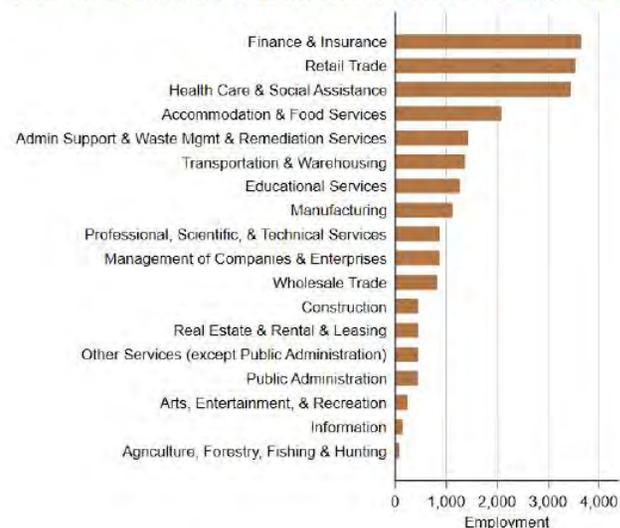
and Broadway, and retail Maine Mall on the west side of the City.

*South Portland falls behind state and county employment growth rates.*

Employment at establishments based in South Portland has fluctuated over time. In 2008, about 23,800 people worked in the City. Employment fell during the Great Recession and then recovered over the next decade. In 2020, employment fell by about 2,100 people during the COVID-19 pandemic (from 24,100 in 2019 to 22,000 in 2020). Since then, employment has recovered somewhat, with about 22,700 people working in the city in 2021. In the third quarter of 2022, employment in the City totaled 22,600.

As seen in the following figure, the City struggled during economic downturns and fell behind the county and state’s employment growth rate. Employment stayed relatively stagnant in South Portland between 2013 and 2019, while the County and State saw steady growth. Both the County and State saw a smaller relative

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH PORTLAND



Note: The figure presents data for 2021.

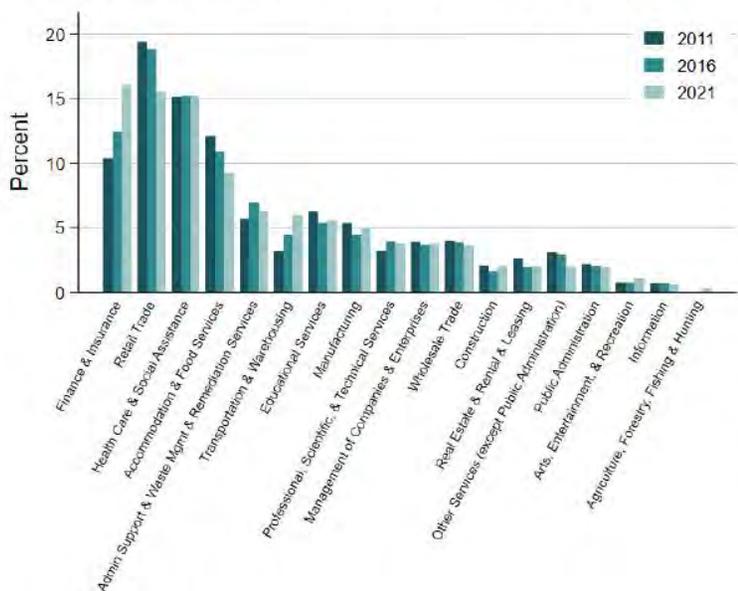
Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI)

decline in employment during the pandemic, allowing them to recover quicker than South Portland.

*About 19 percent of South Portland residents work in the healthcare and social assistance sector.*

For residents of South Portland, healthcare and social assistance is the largest employer (over 2,700 employees). This sector accounts for about 19 percent of the total employment of the City’s residents. The retail trade, accommodation and food services, educational services, and professional, scientific, and technical services sectors are also relatively large, each employing over 1,000 residents.

**EMPLOYMENT SHARES BY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH PORTLAND**



Note: The figure presents data for 2021.  
Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI)

About 16 percent of the jobs in South Portland are in the finance and insurance sector.

As seen in the figure on the following page, the finance and insurance sector is the largest employer in South Portland, with about 3,650 employees (16 percent of total jobs in the City). Employment in this sector is driven by several large firms, including Unum-Provident Life Insurance Company, which employs 2,800 people throughout Cumberland County.<sup>3</sup>

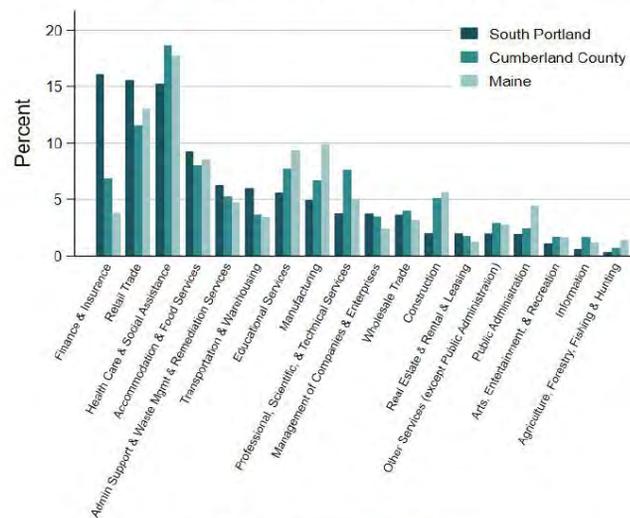
The retail trade and healthcare and social assistance sectors also have over 3,400 employees, accounting for over 15 percent of total employment. The 1 million square foot Maine Mall in South Portland, which hosts about 120 retail stores, contributes to the high employment in retail trade in the City. However, employment at the mall, and in the retail sector in general, is in decline as e-commerce continues to grow. Hannaford Supermarkets and Distribution in

3 City of South Portland, Maine, Official Website: South Portland's Top Employers. n.d., <https://www.southportland.org/departments/economic-and-community-development/cdbg-entitlement-requirements/>

South Portland also contributes 720 employees to the retail trade sector. South Portland also has over 1,000 jobs in the manufacturing industry. Many of these jobs are at two large semiconductor manufacturing establishments, Texas Instruments (about 460 employees) and Diodes Inc. (about 430 employees).<sup>4</sup>

Comparing employment in South Portland businesses to employment of South Portland residents (in the section above) demonstrates that the City serves as a regional hub for businesses. As seen in the graph above, showing employment of residents, relatively few South Portland residents work in the finance and insurance, and retail trade sectors compared to the total number of jobs in these sectors. Less than 1,000 residents work in finance and insurance, and about 1,400 residents work in retail trade (and some of these residents work in jobs outside of the City). Therefore, many workers in these sectors commute to South Portland to fill

**EMPLOYMENT SHARES BY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH PORTLAND, CUMBERLAND COUNTY, AND MAINE**



Note: The figure presents data for 2021.  
Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI)

4 City of South Portland, Maine | Official Website: South Portland's Top Employers" n.d. and Hall 2022

the jobs.

*The share of employment in finance and insurance has grown.*

The industry mixes in South Portland have shifted over time. The figure above shows that employment in the finance and insurance industry increased from 10 percent in 2011 to 16 percent in 2021. At the same time, employment in retail trade declined from 19 percent in 2011 to 16 percent in 2021. This downward trend in the sector is partly due to the rise of e-commerce. The accommodation and food services sector has also been on a downward trend and was similarly impacted by the pandemic. The employment share in the industry shrunk from 12 percent in 2011 to nine percent in 2021.

*South Portland has a relatively high share of jobs in the finance and insurance, and retail trade sectors.*

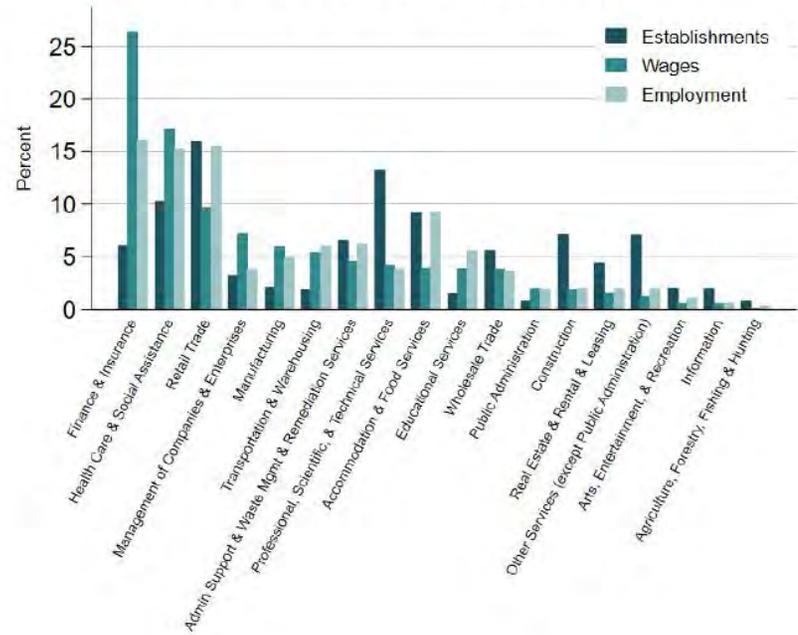
South Portland has a high share of workers in the finance and insurance, and retail trade sectors relative to the County and State. Alternatively, a relatively high portion of workers in the county and state are employed in healthcare and social assistance, educational services, manufacturing, and construction.

“Location quotients” can be used to compare the relative concentration of jobs in each sector in the City versus the State. This metric divides the City’s percentage of workers in a particular industry by the State’s percentage of workers in that sector. Comparing South Portland and the State’s ratio of workers in the finance and insurance sector yields a location quotient of over four, indicating high industry concentration in the City.

*Wages are relatively high in finance and insurance and management but low in retail trade and accommodation and food services sectors.*

The figure opposite shows the share of establishments, wages, and employment in each sector, shedding light on the relative concentration of these factors. As seen in the figure, the finance and insurance industry accounts for over a quarter of the City’s total wages but only about 16 percent of employment, an indicator of relatively high wages. At the same time, the finance and insurance

SHARE OF ESTABLISHMENTS, WAGES, AND EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH PORTLAND

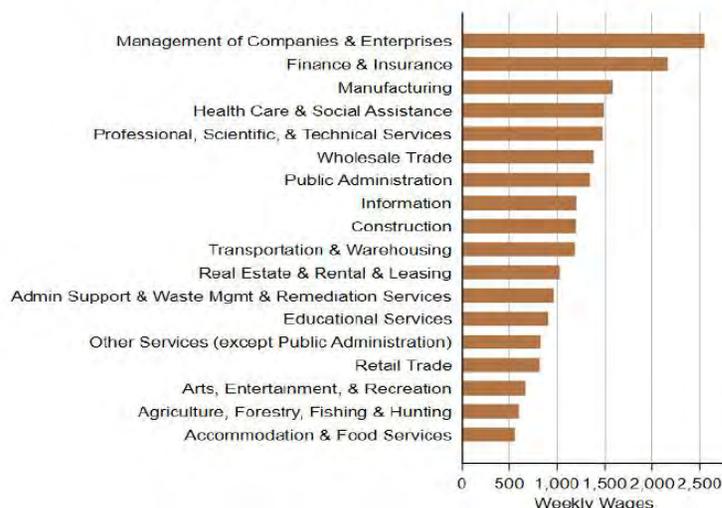


Note: The figure presents data for 2021.  
Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI)

industry only accounts for six percent of the City’s establishments, indicating that a few larger firms in the City employ a relatively large number of people (as discussed above, employment in the sector is driven by a few firms, including WEX and Anthem/Blue Cross Blue Shield). Alternatively, the retail trade and accommodation and food services sectors have a high portion of employment relative to their share of total wages, indicating low-paying jobs. The retail trade and professional, scientific, and technical services sectors account for the largest share of establishments in the City (16 and 13 percent, respectively).

*The finance and insurance industry, the largest employer in South Portland, pays high wages.*

WAGES BY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH PORTLAND



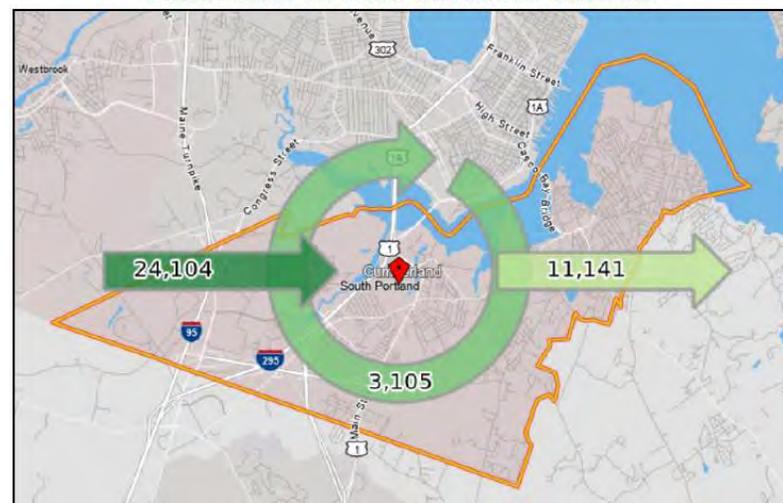
Note: The figure presents average weekly wage data for 2021.  
Source: Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI)

The figure above shows that average weekly wages vary substantially by sector. The management of companies and enterprises sector offers the highest wages. On average, the industry pays employees over \$2,540 per week (over \$130,000 annually). The finance and insurance industry, which account for the most jobs in the City, also pays its workers relatively high wages (\$2,160 per week on average, approximately \$112,000 annually). Alternatively, the accommodation and food services sector pays employees the lowest wages on average (about \$550 per week, under \$29,000 annually).

Tourism

Tourism plays an important role in South Portland’s economy and supports many hospitality, restaurant, retails, waterfront, and recreational businesses. The City has invested in the Greenbelt and Eastern Trail to support tourism, and has created opportunities for tourism related businesses to continue operating, including the Downtown and Maine Mall TIFs. South Portland has a dedicated Economic Development office, and is exploring the development

COMMUTING PATTERNS IN SOUTH PORTLAND



Note: The figure presents data from 2019  
Source: US Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, OnTheMap Inflow/Outflow Analysis 2019

of a tourism improvement district. The City permits and regulates short-term rentals.

Commuting Patterns

South Portland is a hub for regional employment.

South Portland serves as an employment hub for surrounding areas. As seen in figure above, about 13,000 more people commute into the city for work than travel out of the City each day. In total, over 27,000 people work in the City. Almost 90 percent (24,100 of 27,200) of South Portland workers commute in from surrounding areas. About 14 percent of South Portland workers commute from Portland. At the same time, relatively few residents stay in South Portland for work. Of the roughly 14,200 working residents in the City, only about 22 percent (3,100 workers) are employed in South Portland, with Portland as the most common work location for residents (37 percent).

***Infrastructure***

The City expects to invest in increased capacity for utilities in growth areas. Both public and private contributions are expected to meet this need. Utilities will need to be maintained and upgraded to support growth.

***Economic Development***

South Portland's Economic Development department promotes healthy and balanced growth, including both large industrial and commercial businesses and supporting walkable downtown areas. The City is guided by a 2015 Economic Development Plan: *Positioning South Portland for Balanced and Healthy Growth*.

South Portland extensively uses TIFs (see chart on next page) to support development. All of South Portland's TIFs encourage development in growth areas. The City is currently developing development impact fees for sewer and transportation improvements. The City also has had a Brownfield assessment grant program for the past 6 years, and has just been awarded 1 million for a clean up revolving loan fund.

Existing commercial and industrial areas can support increased development. Existing buffering, stormwater, exterior lighting, and noise standards protect surrounding land uses and can be further enhanced.

**Focus Group Takeaways**

South Portland is a hub for regional economic activity, with particularly high employment in the finance and insurance sector and other industry job concentrations in retail (led by the Maine Mall), technology and semiconductors, machining and metal fabrication, and other industrial warehousing, transportation, and distribution activities. The strong business base in South Portland helps the city maintain relatively affordable residential property taxes and provides strong amenities and services (e.g., parks and community centers). At the same time, the City has trailed behind employment growth benchmarks relative to the State over the past decade. The

City boasts a robust set of freight and transport infrastructure, including marine, freight rail, and pipeline connections that may be underutilized and well-positioned for growth and/or transition. One example is Turner's Island with its working waterfront location and freight rail infrastructure.

South Portland TIF Districts

TIF	Start Date	Expires	Expenditure Categories Include
Brick Hill	2004	2029	public education, public safety, permanent housing development loan fund, facilities outside district required due to district (sewer, stormwater, street amenities, fire station)
Long Creek	2000	2032	traffic improvements in mall area, land acquisition for economic development in mall area, snow removal, Long Creek Watershed improvements, fiber internet, downtown development
Cummings Road	1997	2924	municipal infrastructure, economic development, GIS, downtown marketing and development, environmental improvements
One Wallace Ave	1998	2029	municipal infrastructure, environmental improvements, working waterfront improvements
ON Semiconductor	1995	2025	municipal infrastructure, economic development support, downtown marketing and economic development, hotel and conference center, fiber internet
Downtown TIF	2007	2035	municipal infrastructure, economic development, GIS, downtown marketing and development, environmental improvements
Jared TIF	2007	2035	municipal infrastructure, economic development, downtown marketing and development
Hannaford TIF	20007	2035	municipal infrastructure, economic development, GIS, downtown marketing and development, fiber internet
Transit TIF	2010	2039	municipal infrastructure

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## 9. Housing

Thornton Heights Commons, formerly the site of a church and school, was redeveloped as a mixed-use and mixed-income housing development. The 42-unit development was completed in September 2021 and is home to a combination of affordable housing, project-based voucher, and market rate units, as well as retail spaces. Sources: Drew Johnson, *The Forecaster*; Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) “Brownfields Success Story” Portland Economic Development Department

South Portland’s housing stock is a mix of single-family homes and multi-family buildings. While the modal housing style is single-family, this variety differentiates South Portland from suburban communities like Cape Elizabeth while being less urban than the Portland Peninsula.

As described in Chapter 6, Population and Demographics, the average household size has declined slightly in the past decade, reflecting emerging demographic trends and an increase in householders ages 65 and older living alone. Despite steady growth in housing production, affordability continues to challenge many householders. About 30 percent of households earning less than 80 percent of the area median income (AMI) are cost-burdened. Approximately half of these households are severely cost-burdened (spending more than 50 percent of their gross income on housing costs). Renters and extremely low-income households are the most cost-burdened of all households. Rental costs have risen steadily from 2012, when the median gross rent was \$980, to 2020, when the median gross rent was \$1,465. This represents a 49 percent increase in rental housing costs outpacing the modest 11 percent increase in household income for approximately the same period.

South Portland leads in median gross rent compared with other cities in the region. Between 2015 and 2021, the South Portland median home sales price rose 56 percent while the median gross rent rose 40 percent.

### Inventory and Analysis

#### *Population Growth*

Over the last two decades, the City of South Portland has seen moderate but steady growth. Since 2000, the City’s population has increased from 23,163 in 2000 to 26,498 in 2020.<sup>1</sup> The 2020 Census identified a six percent increase in population since 2010. This is slightly lower than Cumberland County but twice the population growth statewide for the same period. Housing unit inventory has increased by eight percent since 2010, keeping pace with Cumberland County, which saw a seven percent increase in housing units for the same period.

<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau, 2020, 2010, and 2000 Census of Population and Housing, updated every 10 years, <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/2020-population-and-housing-state-data.html>

POPULATION AND HOUSING UNITS WITH REGIONAL COMPARISON

Year	South Portland			Cumberland County			Maine		
	2010	2020	Change	2010	2020	Change	2010	2020	Change
Population	25,002	26,498	6%	281,674	303,069	8%	1,328,361	1,362,359	3%
Housing Units	11,484	12,422	8%	138,657	148,178	7%	721,830	737,782	2%

Sources: US Census (T1, T72, T55, T68), ACS (A00001, A10001)

**Household Size and Composition**

Total households increase, but the average number of household members declines.

In 2021, 56 percent of all households in South Portland were family households. This demographic group is comprised of married couples with children, married couples without children, and single parents with children. Of the family households, 50 percent are married couples without children. Householders under the age of 65 and living alone account for 40 percent of non-family households, followed closely by householders over 65 living alone.

The total number of households has risen from 10,877 in 2010 to 11,672 in 2021, representing an increase of 7 percent. This growth rate is similar to that of Cumberland County, which experienced an 8 percent growth rate for the same period. Although the total number of households continues to see moderate growth, there were no reported changes in average household size at the County and State level in the past decade. South Portland experienced a slight decline in average household size between 2010 (2.24 PPH) to 2021 (2.21 PPH).<sup>2</sup> Based on this increase over the past 11 years, we can project a comparable increase over the next 11 years.

In 2022, the City conducted a Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy prepared by Crane Associates Inc. The study identified a nationwide shift impacting household size for both owner-occupied and rental units.

<sup>2</sup> Crane Associates Inc., “Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy”, May 16, 2022, [https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/\\$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report\\_05.20.2022.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report_05.20.2022.pdf)

*Offsetting the decline in housing demand caused by the aging “baby boom” population is the trend towards decreasing household size. There are fewer persons per household today than in the past in owner-occupied units. Renter-occupied units are countering this trend by increasing in average household size by about 22% over the last decade. This shift could be explained by an increasing share of renters aged 35-64 years, the prime age for raising children. Similarly, there is a growing share of homeowners aged 65 to 84 years, which typically have fewer people per household.<sup>3</sup>*

**Housing Characteristics**

Most housing units are single-family.

Single-family units have historically dominated housing stock in the City. In 2010, about 62 percent of the total housing units were single-family units. In 2022, single-family units (one unit detached and one-unit attached) still account for 64 percent of all units.

Compared to other jurisdictions in Cumberland and York County, the total percentage of single-family units exceeds that of Portland,

<sup>3</sup> Crane Associates Inc., “Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy”, May 16, 2022,

Westbrook, and Biddeford but is comparable to Saco and Brunswick.

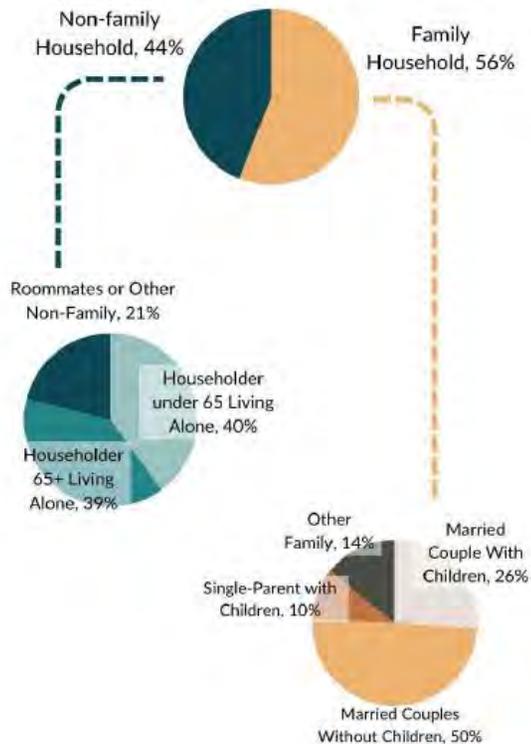
**SOUTH PORTLAND HOUSING UNITS BY TYPE**

	2010		2021		Change
1 Unit Detached	6,612	57%	7,223	58%	9%
1 Unit Attached	624	5%	712	6%	14%
2-4 Units	2,295	20%	2,189	18%	-5%
5-9 Units	439	4%	420	3%	-4%
10-49 Units	903	8%	810	7%	-10%
50+ Units	660	6%	1,046	8%	58%

Source: ACS (B25024)

**SOUTH PORTLAND HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE, 2021**

Sources: US Census (T58, T59, PCT18)/ACS (A10008, A10009, A10025)



South Portland has a greater percentage of renter-occupied units when compared with county and state.

South Portland has had consistent differences in the occupancy rates between owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing. In 2021, 64 percent of housing units were owner-occupied, and 36 percent were renter-occupied compared to 2010, when 61 percent were owner-occupied, and 39 percent were renter occupied. Compared with the County and State percentages, South Portland has a greater percentage of renter-occupied units.

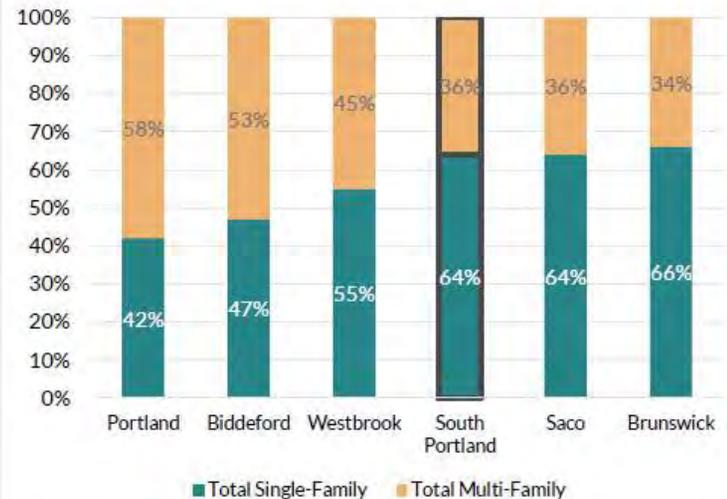
*Housing Issues*

The 2022 housing assessment study found the biggest housing concern in South Portland is the unmet need for housing across all income levels with an acute need for affordable and workforce housing.

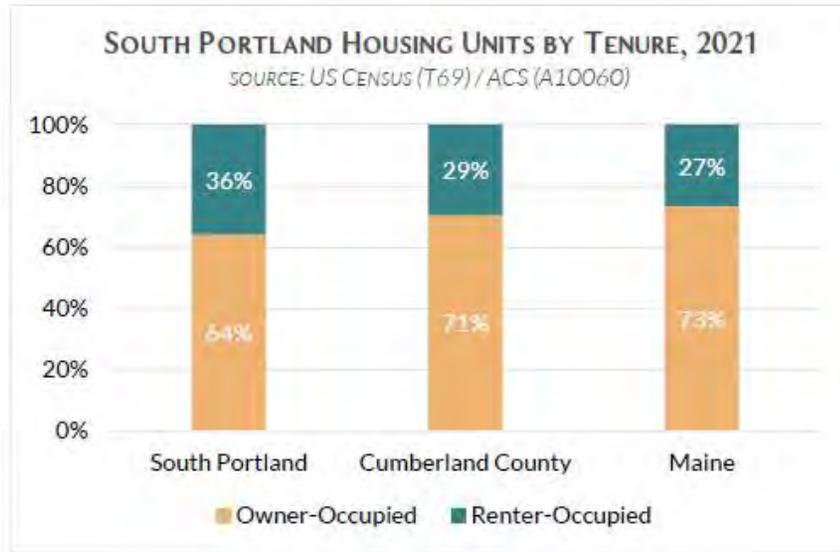
The City does not have a significant issues with substandard housing. However, as a coastal community, the City recognizes the

**SINGLE VS. MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN SOUTH PORTLAND WITH REGIONAL COMPARISON, 2021**

Source: ACS (B25024)



need to improve the resilience of existing and future housing in anticipated flood risk areas.



**Housing Costs**

*Median home sales costs have risen sharply since 2015.*

Home sales prices remained steady between 2005 and 2015 but increased sharply in recent years. This increase was consistent across all housing types, including bungalows, capes, one and two-story homes, and raised ranches.<sup>4</sup> Between 2015 and 2021, the median home price rose 56 percent from \$256,704 (inflation adjusted) to \$400,000.<sup>5</sup>

**MaineHousing estimates that two-thirds of South Portland households could not afford the 2021**

<sup>4</sup> Crane Associates Inc., “Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy”, May 16, 2022, [https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/\\$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report\\_05.20.2022.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report_05.20.2022.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> MaineHousing, Maine State Housing Authority, 2022 Homeownership Housing Facts and Affordability Index for Maine, <https://www.mainehousing.org/data-research/housing-data/housing-affordability-indexes>

**Median Home (67 percent).**

*Homeownership opportunities are low for lower-income households.*

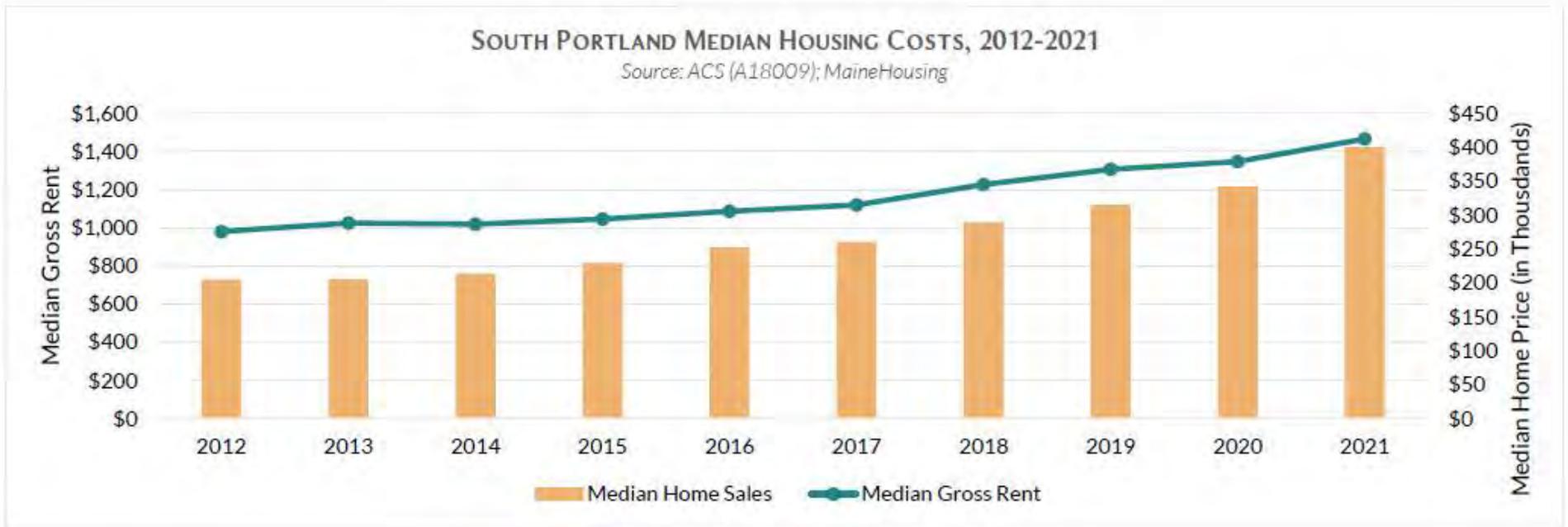
Households making less than \$50,000 a year have limited opportunities to purchase a home, although this group of income earners accounts for 32 percent of the population. Households with incomes of \$50,000 or less account for only 25 percent of all owner-occupied units. Households with incomes of \$50,000 or less account for about 53 percent of all rental unit occupants. MaineHousing estimates that a household would need to earn more than \$107,000 per year to afford the 2021 median home price, or \$51.75/hour for a single-income household.



*Rental costs are high in South Portland.*

Rental costs have risen 49 percent since 2012 when the median gross rent was \$980. In 2021, the median gross rent was \$1,465. Most South Portland rental units are available at a monthly rent between \$1,000 to \$2,000, impacting demand for more affordable units.<sup>6</sup> South Portland leads in median gross rent when compared with other regional cities.

<sup>6</sup> Source: 2017-2021 ACS (5-Year Estimates) (A18009)



**Between 2015 and 2021, the South Portland median home sales price rose 56 percent while the median gross rent rose 40 percent.**

**Housing Affordability and Cost Burden<sup>7</sup>**

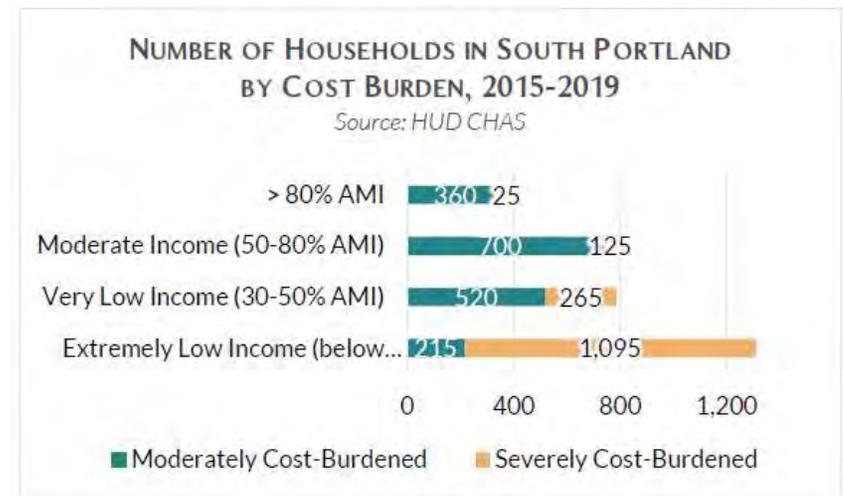
30 percent of households with incomes at 80 percent or below the Area Median Income (AMI) are cost-burdened.

A household is determined to be “cost burdened” when more than 30 percent of a household’s income goes to rental housing costs (including rent and utilities) or owner housing costs (including mortgage payments, utilities, taxes, and insurance). A household is determined to be severely cost-burdened when more than 50 percent of the household income goes to housing expenses.

In South Portland, 30 percent of households earning less than 80

percent of the area median income are cost-burdened, approximately half of which are severely cost-burdened.

Between 2015 and 2019, 61 percent of low-and-moderate income (LMI) renters were cost-burdened households compared with 39



<sup>7</sup> Maine State Housing Authority, Household Income by Tenure, <https://mainehousing.org/policy-research/housing-data>

percent of LMI homeowners.

*Rental housing is becoming less affordable.*

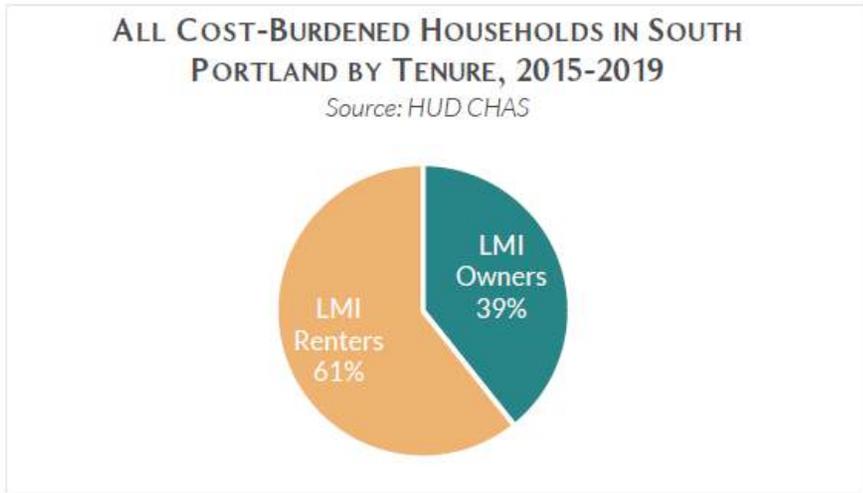
In 2010, the median income household could afford the median two-bedroom apartment in South Portland. By 2020, that was no longer the case. The MaineHousing rental affordability index fell from 1.05 to 0.75 in those ten years, meaning that the median household only makes 75 percent of what it needs to make to afford the median two-bedroom rent (including utilities). This change was driven primarily by the increase in median rents for two-bedroom apartments from \$985 to \$1670 in those ten years. According to MaineHousing, 64.8 percent of households in South Portland could not afford the median two-bedroom apartment in 2020, up from 46.8 percent in 2010.

ability index had fallen to 0.55. In 2022, a household income of just under \$150,000 would be needed to afford the median-priced home, and 80.1 percent of households cannot afford that home. In 2010, the income required was \$66,855, when 62.7 percent of households were unable to afford a median-priced home.

*Homelessness in South Portland*

According to the 2022 statewide Point in Time Count, of the 2,009 persons that were counted accross the state, 194 persons stated that Cumberland County was their last permanent residence. This represented the most people of any county in Maine. In 2022, more than 800 individuals were being housed in hotels in South Portland. The utilization of hotels increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>8</sup>

The City of South Portland does not currently operate any homeless shelters within the jurisdictional boundaries, nor does any other agency or non-profit entity within the City. The City of Portland operates the City of Portland Homeless Services Center, coordinating placement at the seven homeless shelters (listed in the following table) operated within the City.<sup>9,10</sup>



*Homeownership is also becoming less affordable.*

Similar trends have occurred in the ownership market, though that market has been less affordable for some time. In 2010, the MaineHousing ownership affordability index was 0.81, meaning that the median household earned 81 percent of what was required to afford the median-priced home. By 2022, the ownership afford-

City of Portland Family Shelter	Family
City of Portland Oxford Street Shelter	General - Adults
Milestone	Substance Abuse - Men
Preble Street - Elena's Way	General - Adults
Preble Street - Florence House	General - Women
Preble Street - Joe Kreisler Teen Shelter	Youth
Through These Doors	Domestic Violence

<sup>8</sup> February 7, 2023, Portland Press Herald, <https://www.pressherald.com/2023/02/07/south-portland-poised-to-allow-hotels-to-house-shelter-guests-for-two-additional-months/>

<sup>9</sup> MaineHousing – Housing Reports - 2022 Point in Time Count Survey, [https://www.mainehousing.org/docs/default-source/housing-reports/2022-point-in-time-survey---statewide.pdf?sfvrsn=1aa68615\\_7](https://www.mainehousing.org/docs/default-source/housing-reports/2022-point-in-time-survey---statewide.pdf?sfvrsn=1aa68615_7)

<sup>10</sup> Maine Housing, <https://www.mainehousing.org/programs-services/homeless/emergency-shelters>

Data surrounding individuals and families experiencing homelessness regularly undercount the true population given the complexities in capturing this information.

*An estimated 100 individuals whose last permanent address was 04106 accessed shelters between 2019 and 2020.*

**Affordable Housing Needs<sup>11</sup>**

*South Portland has an affordable housing gap.*

In 2022, the City conducted a Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy that evaluated current housing stock, housing type, affordability, availability, and projected need. The Housing Needs Assessment estimated the demand for housing available for households with incomes between 60 percent and 120 percent AMI for 2020, 2025, and 2030. According to the study, the City currently has an affordable gap for housing units of more than 2,200 units (1,419 ownership units and 785 rental units). By 2030, this gap is projected to increase by 20 percent to be an affordable gap of more than 2,600 units.<sup>12</sup>

*Housing Needs to 2030*

The following tables show the projected gaps in ownership units and rental units in 2030. There is projected to be a gap of 1,760 ownership units and 863 rental units for households below 60 percent of the area median income and a gap of 2,817 ownership units and 608 rental units for households below 100 percent of area median income.

Overall, housing demand in the City is expected to increase by 540 year-round units by 2030 (or at an average annual rate of 54 year-round units per year). This would work out to a need to pro-

City of South Portland-Estimated Affordable Gap for Owner Units, 2030				
% of Median Household Income	<60%	60% to 100%	100% to 120%	>120%
Median Household Income	\$70,912	\$118,186	\$141,823	
Affordable Price [Excludes Transportation Costs]	\$184,343	\$331,037	\$405,106	
Estimated Unit Demand	1,892	1,605	784	2,807
Estimated Unit Supply	131	548	697	5,712
Affordability Gap in Units (Demand minus Supply)	1,760	1,057	87	
<b>Cumulative Demand</b>	<b>1,892</b>	<b>3,497</b>	<b>4,281</b>	<b>7,088</b>
<b>Cumulative Supply</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>7,088</b>
<b>Cumulative Gap</b>	<b>1,760</b>	<b>2,817</b>	<b>2,905</b>	

City of South Portland-Estimated Affordable Gap for Renter Units, 2030				
% of Median Household Income	<60%	60% to 100%	100% to 120%	>120%
Median Household Income	\$38,201	\$63,669	\$76,403	
Affordable Rent [Excludes Transportation Costs]	\$955	\$1,592	\$1,910	
Estimated Unit Demand	1,590	984	511	2,205
Estimated Unit Supply	727	1,239	1,062	2,263
Affordability Gap in Units (Demand minus Supply)	863	-255	-550	
<b>Cumulative Demand</b>	<b>1,590</b>	<b>2,574</b>	<b>3,086</b>	<b>5,291</b>
<b>Cumulative Supply</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>1,966</b>	<b>3,028</b>	<b>5,291</b>
<b>Cumulative Gap</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>58</b>	

Source: Crane Associates Inc., "Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy," May 16, 2022.

City of South Portland-Estimated Affordable Gap for Owner Units, 2030				
% of Median Household Income	<60%	60% to 100%	100% to 120%	>120%
Median Household Income	\$70,912	\$118,186	\$141,823	
Affordable Price [Excludes Transportation Costs]	\$184,343	\$331,037	\$405,106	
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<b>Cumulative Supply</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>7,088</b>
<b>Cumulative Gap</b>	<b>1,760</b>	<b>2,817</b>	<b>2,905</b>	

Source: Crane Associates Inc., "Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy," May 16, 2022.

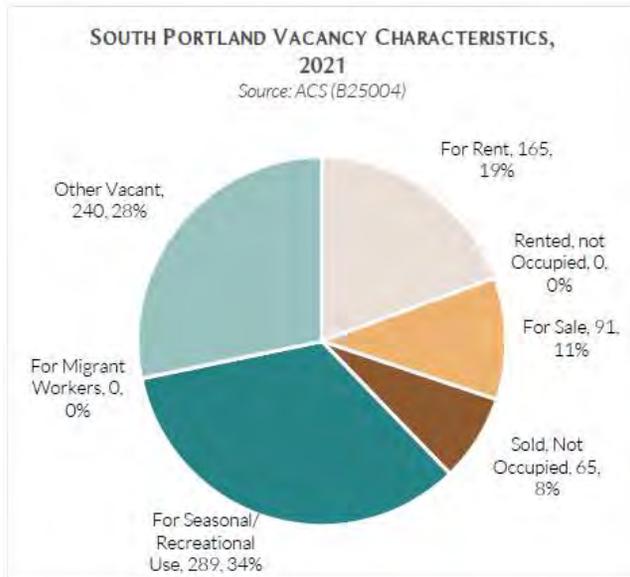
duce new housing units at a rate of 0.45 percent per year. By 2030, the cumulative affordable gap for owner-units, between 60 percent and 120 percent AMI will be 2,905 units. The Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy Report called for greater regional coordination and an increase in housing production both locally and in neighboring communities.

11 Crane Associates Inc., "Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy", May 16, 2022, [https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/\\$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report\\_05.20.2022.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report_05.20.2022.pdf)

12 *ibid.*

**Vacancy Characteristics and Seasonal Use**

In 2021, South Portland had a seven percent vacancy rate, higher than the six percent vacancy rate of Cumberland County. About 34 percent is attributable to seasonal and recreational use, and a smaller percentage may be attributable to short-term rentals (rentals leased for less than one month).<sup>13</sup>



In response to growing concerns over short-term rentals, the City passed an ordinance prohibiting vacation rentals in all residential zones in 2019. The 2019 ordinance limits non-hosted short-term rentals to commercial and mixed-use zoned areas. A snapshot of one short-term rental platform identifies an estimated 25 to 35 units available in South Portland for short-term rental during June 2023.<sup>14</sup> Local ordinance requires that short-term rentals be regis-

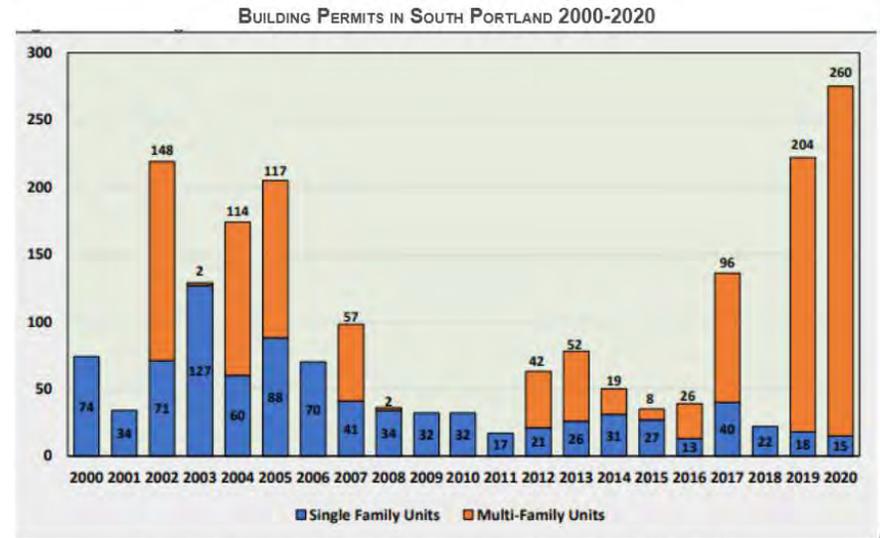
13 ACS Estimates reflect a sixty-month average. Seasonal/recreational housing units, which may be vacant several months of the year, comprise the largest subset for this reason.

14 South Portland, Airbnb, [https://www.airbnb.com/s/South-Portland--ME/homes?adults=1&place\\_id=ChIJW0d\\_oaSbskwr\\_P3HMJqiGXU&refinement\\_paths%5B%5D=%2Fhomes&checkin=2023-06-02&checkout=2023-06-06](https://www.airbnb.com/s/South-Portland--ME/homes?adults=1&place_id=ChIJW0d_oaSbskwr_P3HMJqiGXU&refinement_paths%5B%5D=%2Fhomes&checkin=2023-06-02&checkout=2023-06-06)

tered with the City. As of the writing of this report, the City had 54 registered hosts with two applications pending.<sup>15</sup>

**Permitting and Regulatory Context**

South Portland has seen a strong surge in permitting of multi-family housing, while single-family unit permitting has seen a slight decline. Multi-family permitting has increased by 113 percent since 2017.<sup>16</sup>



Source: Crane Associates Inc., Figure 2.3 "Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy," May 16, 2022.

**Regulatory Limits to Multifamily Housing**

In 2021, the Greater Portland Council of Governments released a study on Multifamily Housing & Land Use Regulation.<sup>17</sup> This report was designed to answer the question of how much land in the

15 Licensing Administrator-City of South Portland, Maine

16 Licensing Administrator Data February 2023- City of South Portland Maine

17 Greater Portland Council of Governments and Levine Planning Strategies, Multifamily Housing & Land Use Regulation, January 2021, <https://www.gpcog.org/DocumentCenter/View/1633/Multi-family-housing-and-land-use-regulation-report-by-Jeff-Levine>

region allows multifamily (including two-family) development. In answering that question, the study looked not only at the basic use allowances in communities' zoning ordinances, but also regulatory requirements that might discourage or prevent multifamily development.

This study found that while two-thirds of the land in the Metro Regional Coalition area allowed multifamily housing as a use, in practice, it was highly feasible in just five percent of the land area. Another five percent of the land allows multifamily with some additional limits. Over half the land permits multifamily development but places so many other limits on development that it will unlikely occur at any scale.

*In South Portland specifically, no land was identified that allowed multifamily development with few limits. Just over 1/5 of the land allowed multifamily development with some limitations, and 3/4 of the land did not permit multifamily housing.<sup>18</sup>*

**Housing Needs Regulatory Assessment<sup>19</sup>**

The 2022 South Portland Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy included a full regulatory scan focused on zoning barriers to affordable housing. The consultants recommended an overhaul of the Zoning Ordinance and provided specific recommendations. These regulatory changes should be considered to encourage all housing development, particularly below-market affordable and workforce housing. Also recommended was amending the development standards of Single Family Zoning Districts to expand allowances beyond single-family housing types.

- Increase allowable densities to meet the City's demand for

housing.

- Remove minimum parking standards.
- Incentivize Accessory Dwelling Units
- Expand housing typologies and density clusters to create more compact neighborhoods, transit-oriented development, and mixed-use developments.
- Allow for more housing typologies and alternative housing construction methods.

**Regulatory Changes Under Consideration<sup>20</sup>**

The South Portland City Council has taken action on the cost of rental housing and the provision of homeless services. The Council has adopted a form of rent stabilization for rental properties of 15 or more units. In addition, the City Council adopted a Zoning amendment to allow shelters for persons experiencing homelessness. The size of the shelter permitted would depend on the location. Shelters with a capacity of 100 people would be permitted in the vicinity of the Maine Mall and the Portland Jetport. Shelters for up to 39 people would be allowed in the Mill Creek area, and small-scale shelters for up to eight people experiencing homelessness would be permitted in any residential area.

**Affordable Housing Initiatives**

*South Portland Housing Authority*

The South Portland Housing Authority was established in 1943 to provide housing for families that moved to the area to support industry related to the war effort.<sup>21</sup> The South Portland Housing Authority manages and operates nine public and affordable housing developments providing over 908 affordable housing units and manages the distribution of 389 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers.

18      ibid.

19      Crane Associates Inc., "Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy", May 16, 2022, [https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/\\$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report\\_05.20.2022.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/me/sport/Board.nsf/files/CF9GZQ46438A/$file/Att.%201%20-%20Final%20Housing%20Report_05.20.2022.pdf).

20      Considerations as of April 2023 when this document was drafted.

21      South Portland Housing Authority, About, <https://spha.net/about/>

Public & Affordable Housing	Housing Units
St. Cyr Court	346 (22 handicap accessible)
Hazard Towers	100 (10 handicap accessible)
Landry Village	100 (5 handicap accessible)
Scattered Sites	50 (5 handicap accessible)
Ridgeland Gardens	96 (2 handicap accessible)
Ridgeland Estates	44 (4 handicap accessible)
Mill Cove	80 (8 handicap accessible)
Adam Court	82 (10 handicap accessible)
Betsy Ross House	10 (all handicap accessible)

Source: South Portland Housing Authority, About. <https://spha.net/about/>

*Affordable Housing Committee*<sup>22,23</sup>

The Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee was created by the City Council on March 21, 2016, and was tasked with reviewing key issues affecting affordable housing, specifically in the rental market. The Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee worked with various agencies, developers, and neighboring municipalities to coordinate a regional and local response to housing affordability and availability. In 2016, the Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee completed its work analyzing the economic and regulatory environment and recommended 26 actions and policies for consideration in its final report.

In 2019, the City created an Affordable Housing Trust Fund to pay for initiatives proposed by the Affordable Housing Committee,

<sup>22</sup> City of South Portland, Affordable Housing Committee, <https://www.southportland.org/our-city/board-and-committees/affordable-housing-committee/>

<sup>23</sup> City of South Portland, Affordable Housing Committee, “Report to City Council”, July 8, 2016, [https://www.southportland.org/files/4514/7155/1582/AHC\\_Final\\_Report\\_20160708\\_v1.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/4514/7155/1582/AHC_Final_Report_20160708_v1.pdf)

including loan programs for low-income housing tax credits.<sup>24</sup> The Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee has adopted an Affordable Housing Trust Fund Operations Manual. The purpose of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Operations Manual is to establish the priorities for the expenditure of funds from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund in accordance with ordinance guidelines. The Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee was made a standing committee and meets monthly to continue its work on advancing affordable housing initiatives.

**Focus Group Takeaways**

City staff and local experts appreciate the municipality’s political process and its desire for housing production to further rent stabilization efforts. Its accessibility to education, local attractions, and community was noted as a strength, but barriers to creating a widely accepted plan that offers opportunities and solutions to housing development and affordability were also mentioned. A lack of available land, zoning, design and fee requirements, and the cost of building act as barriers to construction and are major challenges to addressing housing needs.

Although there are challenges, the participants also highlighted opportunity areas that exist in the City, such as the City’s possible intent to augment the State density program, which would allow for an expanded affordability range up to 120 percent of the area median income. Other opportunities noted for housing include zoning overlays providing for adaptive reuses, and multifamily housing where it is currently not allowed, as well as the flexibility that modular homes offer for affordability and speed of construction. In general, participants expressed the need for funding, accessible review and zoning processes, as well as support in identifying housing opportunity zones. Neighborhood opposition to projects like Thornton Heights Commons creates barriers that participants hope will diminish with support for an expanded affordable housing overlay, more so than LD 2003 allows.

<sup>24</sup> Portland Press Herald, South Portland OKs affordable housing fund, historic preservation rules, <https://www.pressherald.com/2019/07/18/south-portland-oks-affordable-housing-fund-historic-preservation-rules/>

## Housing - References

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Father-Daughter Dance, Source: South Portland Parks and Recreation Facebook

In South Portland, the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront (PRW) oversees most of the City's parks and open spaces, including recreational programming for all ages, two community centers, and 400 acres of parkland. The South Portland Land Trust (SPLT) supports open space and trail acquisition and maintenance. Neighborhood distribution of open space access is more prevalent in the City's eastern half, with the Mall/Airport neighborhood and parts of Ligonias and Highland lacking walkable access to open space. The PRW Department and SPLT are actively working to increase park access and thwart invasive species, though they lack funding and capacity to fully meet the City's open space and recreation needs. New ideas, like the reconfiguration of the City's athletic facilities and making the City a sports tourism destination, are strong opportunities to increase revenue and further advance the City's open space goals.

## Inventory and Analysis

### *Open Space and Recreation Areas*

Approximately five percent (400 acres) of South Portland's total land is currently used for open space and recreational purposes, with one park for every 1,245 residents in South Portland and approximately 15.1 acres per 1,000 residents.<sup>1</sup> South Portland has almost twice the national average of parks and an additional five acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.<sup>2</sup> That said, the City falls in the lower quartile (25th percentile) for residents per park and the median quartile (50th percentile) for acres per 1,000 residents when compared to municipalities within the same jurisdiction population bracket, of which South Portland is on the lower end (20,000 to 49,999 residents).

<sup>1</sup> Calculation based on 2020 U.S. Census population of 26,498 residents, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/2020-census-results.html>

<sup>2</sup> The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) 2022 Agency Performance Review states that across the United States municipalities typically have one park for every 2,323 residents and 10.4 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents., <https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/2022-nrpa-agency-performance-review.pdf>

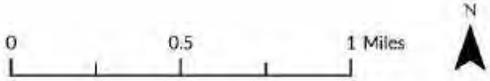
CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND - OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

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- MaineDOT Airports
- Lighthouses
- Airport Trails
- Bike/Pedestrian Network
- Park/Recreational
- Maine Dry Beach
- Maine Beach Shoreline
- Boat launch



Sources: MaineGeoLibrary, ArcGIS

The City owns 735 acres of the total land area, suggesting that open space and recreational land make up more than half of all City-owned land. According to the City's 2019 Open Space Plan, South Portland's open space inventory includes the following:

- Parks and schools (375 acres) — Land area that is managed as parks and schools; designation does not denote City ownership
- Protected land (115 acres) — Conservation protections are assigned through two mechanisms:
  - ◆ Conservation easements (30.5 acres)
  - ◆ Maine Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) (84.5 acres)
- Cemeteries (200 acres) — Privately owned areas that offer limited passive recreation
- Trails (12.4 miles) — Public access paths that provide recreational walking and bicycling opportunities

The 2019 Open Space Plan for the City of South Portland, Maine identifies 34 parks and school facilities; these include:

1. Anthoine Creek Park
2. Bug Light Park & (Bug Light Boat Launch×)
3. Bug Light Park (South End)
4. Dyer School Recreation Facilities
5. Elm Street Pocket Park≠
6. Firefighter's Memorial Park
7. Ge Erskine Park
8. Hamlin School Common Area and Community Garden
9. High/Sawyer Park
10. Hinckley Park×
11. Jordan Park
12. Kaler School Recreation Facilities
13. Legere Park
14. Legion Square Park

15. Lincoln School Recreation Facilities
16. Mahoney Middle & Brown Elementary Recreation Facilities
17. Memorial Middle Recreation Facilities
18. Mill Creek Park
19. Pierce Street Park
20. The Piggery (115 Summit Terrace)
21. Pine Street Ballfields
22. Pope Preserve+
23. Redbank Community Park
24. Santo "Sam" DiPietro Memorial Park×
25. Sawyer Park\*
26. Skatepark≠
27. School Street Park
28. Skillin Elementary Recreation Facilities
29. Small Elementary Recreation Facilities×
30. South Portland High School Recreation Facilities
31. South Portland Municipal Golf Course×
32. Stanley Lincoln Cox Preserve≠
33. Thomas Knight Park
34. Trout Brook Nature Preserve\*
35. Wainwright Recreation Complex+
36. Wallace Avenue Wetlands Acquisition from American Steele≠
37. Wilkinson Community Park+
38. Willard Beach and Fisherman's Point

\*×+Parks and Schools marked have conservation protections through Conservation Easements (\*), LWCF(×), or Deed Restriction (+).

≠ Denotes open spaces/park land not included in 2019 Open Space Plan but added through community review of inventory chapter.

**Trails**

There are 16 formal trails in South Portland, adding up to 12.4 miles of trails in the City.<sup>3</sup> Trails marked with an asterisk (\*\*) are managed by the South Portland Land Trust (SPLT), Trails marked with (++) are directly connected to the Greenbelt Walkway, which functions as the northern end of the Eastern Trail.

1. Armory Trail\*\*++
2. Casco Bay Bridge Multi-Use Path
3. Clark’s Pond Trail\*\*
4. Dow’s Woods Trail\*\*
5. Greenbelt Walkway
6. Hinckley Park Trails
7. Long Creek Trail\*\*
8. Main Street Multi-Use Path
9. Mill Cove Walkway
10. Mount Vernon Street Trail\*\*
11. Red Brook Trail\*\*
12. South Branch Trail\*\*
13. Spring Point Shoreway++
14. Thomas Knight Park Trail
15. Trout Brook Nature Preserve Trail\*
16. Veteran’s Memorial Bridge Multi-Use Path

The South Portland Land Trust (SPLT) is a non-profit organization that works collaboratively with the City to increase trail connectivity and steward trails and open spaces. Created in 1987, the SPLT owns six properties and holds twelve easements across the City today.

<sup>3</sup> There are numerous informal trails providing connectivity within and between neighborhoods.

**Water Access**

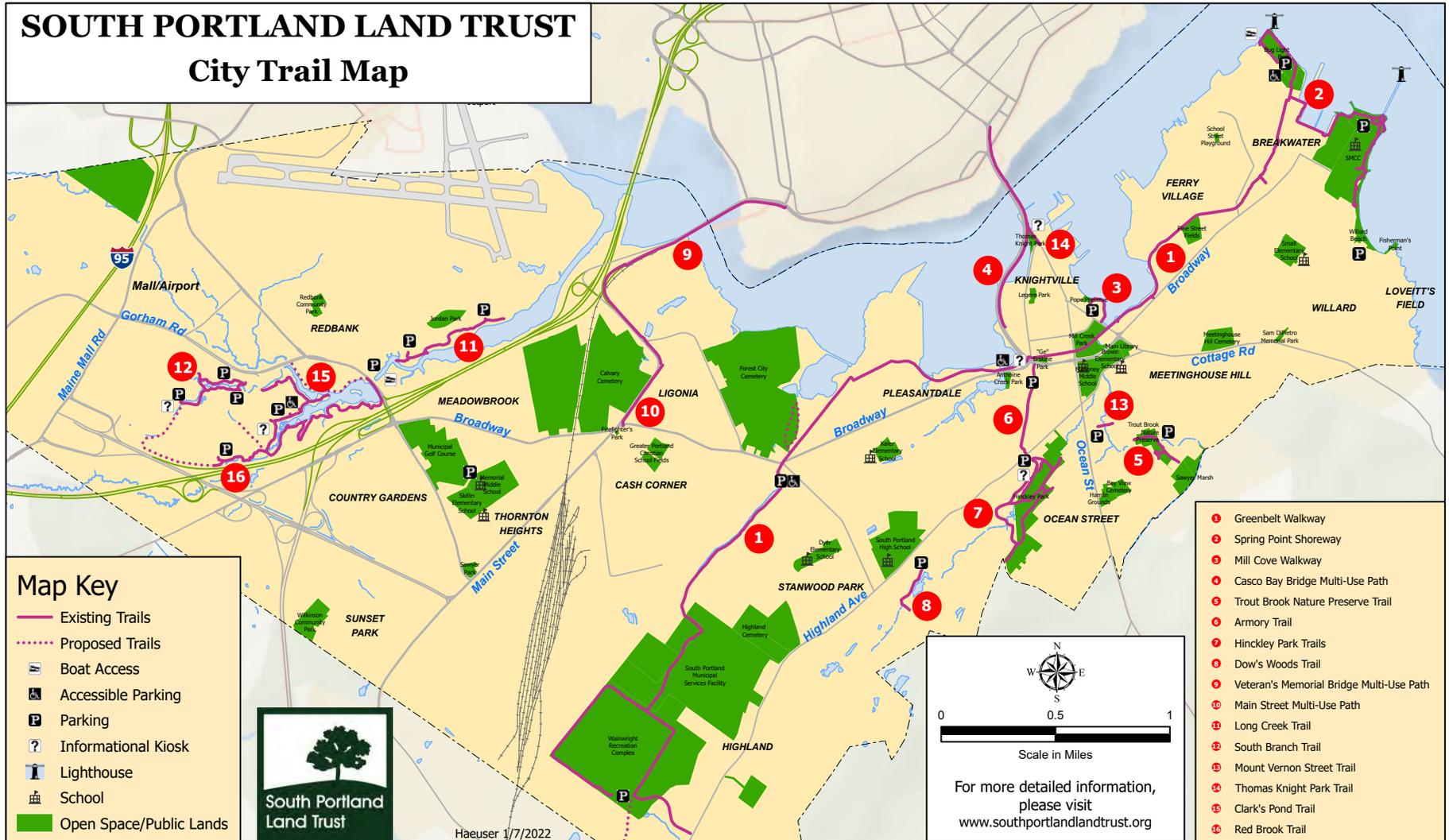
South Portland has a wealth of water bodies, most of which have adequate public access. The table details water bodies and their access.

Waterbody	Public Access
Clarks Pond	Inadequate
Long Creek (salt water)	Inadequate
Long Creek (freshwater)	Inadequate
Mill Creek Park	Adequate
Hinckley Park	Adequate
Petrlik Conservation Area (Kimball Brook)	Inadequate
Dows Woods	Adequate
Trout Brook	Adequate
Thomas Knight Park	Adequate
Willard	Adequate
Fisherman’s Point	Adequate
Bug Light Park	Adequate
Davidson Beach	Adequate
Yerxa	Adequate
Anthoine Creek	Adequate
Barberry Creek (freshwater)	Adequate
Barberry Creek (salt water)	Inadequate
Mill Cove	Adequate
Red Brook	Adequate
Unnamed freshwater ponds at Transfer Station	Inadequate
Spurwink Creek	Adequate

**Recreation**

The South Portland PRW Department offers a robust range of programming and events for all residents, from preschool to older adults. Popular programs include youth and adult swim lessons, recreational basketball leagues, adult fitness classes, summer camp, before and after school care, open swim and gym times, and learn-to-ski programs. Additionally, the Recreation Department operates the Teen Center, Senior Center, Municipal Golf Course, and new Skate-park. Popular events include a Father/Daughter Dance, Spring-fest, Youth Triathlon, Concerts in the Parks, Outdoor Movies, a 4th of July event, National Night Out, Art in the Park, a Car Show, and a Hallow-

een Event. Financial assistance is available through an in-house



scholarship program that aids lower-income families in participating in recreation programming and events.

In addition to public resources, South Portland has private groups and organizations that offer recreation for the City's residents; some examples include the Boys and Girls Club, youth and adult sports leagues, and fine and performing arts classes.

South Portland residents have a multitude of parks, trails, school facilities, and recreational areas to enjoy. Many of these facilities offer amenities like biking and walking trails, parking, ADA access, and restrooms. The following pages provide more detail on which amenities are available at which locations.<sup>4</sup>

### **Accessibility**

#### ***Roughly 85 percent of South Portland's residential parcels fall within one-quarter mile of park/recreational lands.***

Almost half (46 percent) of South Portland's total land area is within one-quarter of a mile from open space. Using US-Route 1/Main Street as a division point, residents in the City's eastern part have far greater access to open space. In contrast, the City's western half lacks the same connectivity to open space. Wherein the western half includes denser housing structures surrounded by commercial and industrial uses, the City's 2019 Open Space Plan identified this disproportionate access with recommendations to improve connectivity and increase open space in the City's western side as a main priority. When looking at only proximity to residential use, however, the map tells a different story. The Mall/Airport does continue to have red areas (furthest from park and recreation lands) but so do the south eastern parts of Highland and Stanwood Park.

<sup>4</sup> Based on information available through the South Portland Parks Finder and City website, <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a8cb2a5aadcf4cfcb25d528b19159390&extent=-7832160.8462%2C5404719.7726%2C-7813815.9594%2C5413596.0225%2C102100>

### **Local Capacity**

In addition to the PRW Department, various current and former City Boards and Committees have impacted Open Space and Recreation in South Portland since the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update. The current City Boards and Committees that continue to support these resources include:

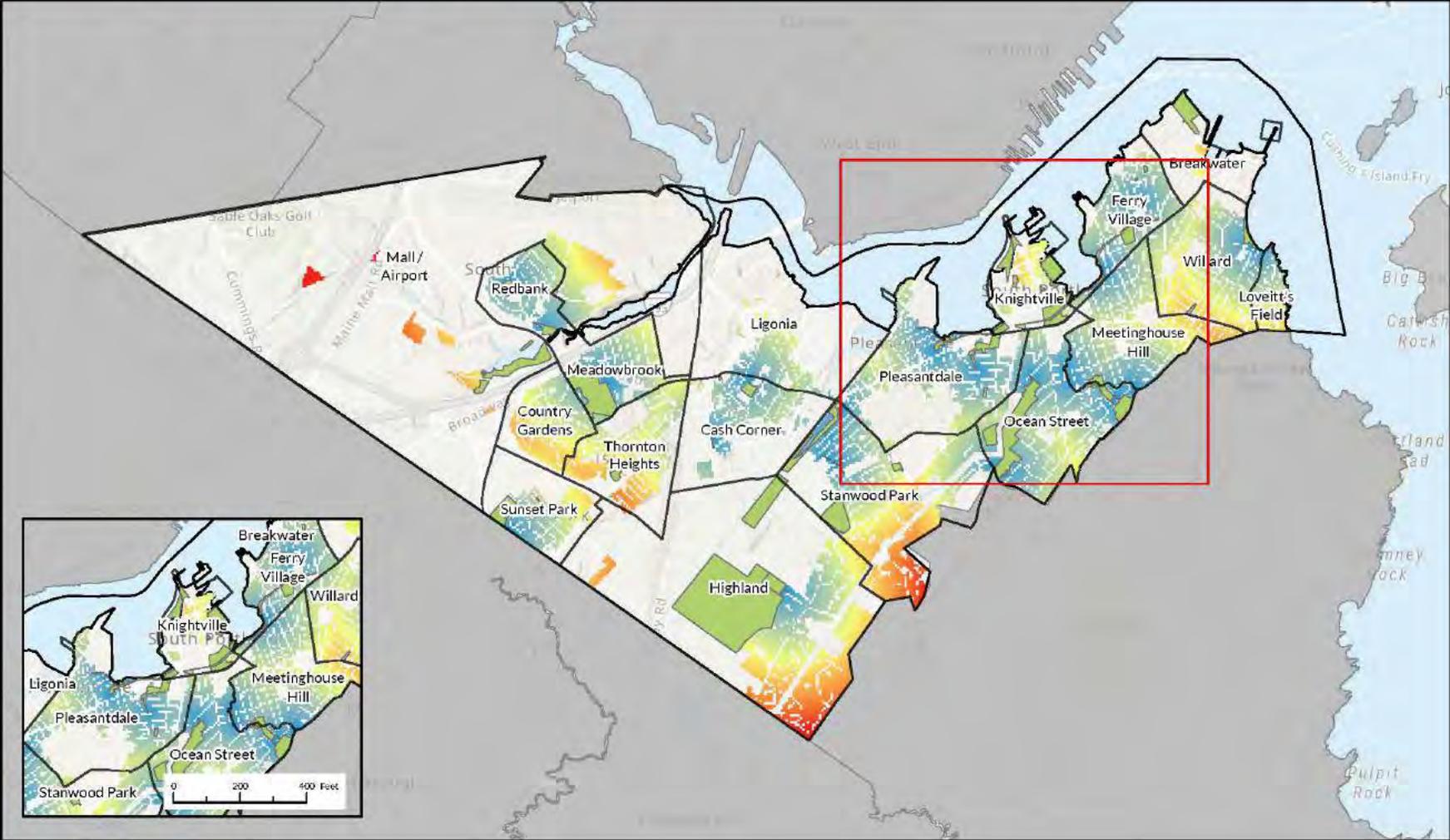
- Bike-Pedestrian Committee
- Comprehensive Plan Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Dogs and Public Spaces Advisory Committee\*
- Fertilizer Working Group\*
- Land Bank Revision Committee\*
- Landcare Management Advisory Committee
- Open Space Acquisition Committee
- Open Space Implementation Committee\*
- Open Space Committee\*
- Skate Park Committee (Ad-hoc)\*
- Willard Beach Master Plan Committee (Ad-hoc)\*
- Wainwright and City Fields Master Plan Committee (Ad-hoc)\*

\*Boards and Committees marked with an asterisk (\*) expired between the 2012 Comprehensive Plan and the current drafting of this inventory.

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND - DISTANCE TO PARK AND RECREATION

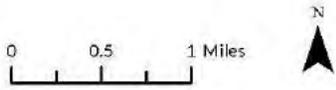
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- Park/Recreational
- Neighborhoods
- Farthest to Park
- Closest to Park

85.31% of residential parcels fall within one-quarter mile of park/recreational uses.



Sources: MaineGeoLibrary, ArcGIS

Year	State Economist Projection			Projection assuming 1.5% growth		
	Population	Parks per 1,000 Residents	Acres per 1,000 Residents	Population	Parks per 1,000 Residents	Acres per 1,000 Residents
2023	25,165	1,311	15.9	25,391*	1,300	15.8
2028	24,756	1,333	16.2	25,772	1,280	15.5
2033	24,247	1,360	16.5	26,159	1,262	15.3
2038	23,626	1,396	16.9	26,551	1,243	15.1

\* 2023 Projection assumes prorated 0.9 percent growth from 2020.

### ***Projected Need***

State projections for South Portland suggest the City will have 24,756 residents by 2028, 24,247 residents by 2033, and 23,626 residents by 2038. If forecasts prove accurate, South Portland’s current inventory will continue to fall above 2022 national averages but remain in the lower quartile of municipalities with similar jurisdiction populations. These findings also ring true if South Portland continues to grow by the 1.5 percent every five years average it has seen in the last decade, indicating the current inventory will continue to serve the City through 2038. While overall acreage may be adequate, open space properties may need to be better distributed throughout the city to meet park access goals. The City continues to seek opportunities for increasing open space despite limited developable properties. The table above details South Portland’s projected population and park needs.

Access to traditional open space is not under threat. The city is active in acquiring and preserving open space resources. The community approved a \$4.5 million bond for open space acquisition in the last 3 years. The city has implemented open space protection measures in ordinance and charter for increased protections.

### ***Amenities***

South Portland’s Department of Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront maintains a variety of facilities with varying amenities and programmatic offerings. The tables on the following pages detail South Portland’s recreation facilities and programs.

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND PARK & RECREATION FACILITIES

Park Name	Baseball	Basketball	Biking Trail	Boat Access	Community Garden	Drinking Water	Parking	Electrical Outlets	Garden	Golf	ADA Accessible	Natural Area	Off Leash Area
Anthoine Creek Park											X		X
Bug Light Park				X			X	X			X		X
Santo "Sam" DiPietro Memorial Park								X			X		
GE Erskine Park						X			X				
Firefighter's Park											X		
Fisherman's Point											X		X
High School Park											X		X
High and Sawyer Street Park		X									X		X
Hinckley Park			X		X		X				X	X	X
Jordan Park													
Legere Park		X					X				X		X
Legion Square							X				X		
Meeting House Hill											X		
Mill Creek Park							X	X	X		X		
Pierce Street Park											X		X
Pine Street Ballfields	X												
Pope Preserve													
Redbank Community Center		X				X	X	X			X		X
Sawyer Park											X		X
School Street Park											X		X
S. Portland Municipal Golf Course										X			
S. Portland Community Center		X					X	X			X		
Thomas Knight Park							X	X			X		X
Trout Brook Nature Preserve												X	
Willard Beach						X	X				X		X
Wilkinson Community Park	X	X											
Wainwright Recreation Complex	X		X										
Yerxa Park											X	X	X

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND PARK & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES CONTINUED

Park Name	Picnic Area	Picnic Pavilion	Playground Equipment	Playfield	Restroom	Skate Park	Soccer Field	Softball Field	Tennis Court	Lighthouse	Volleyball Court	Ocean View	Walking Trail
Anthoine Creek Park												X	
Bug Light Park	X			X	X					X		X	X
Santo "Sam" DiPietro Memorial Park				X									
GE Erskine Park													
Firefighter's Park													
Fisherman's Point												X	
High School Park				X									
High and Sawyer Street Park													
Hinckley Park													X
Jordan Park													
Legere Park			X	X									
Legion Square													
Meeting House Hill													
Mill Creek Park	X												X
Pierce Street Park			X										
Pine Street Ballfields													
Pope Preserve													
Redbank Community Center	X	X	X	X	X								
Sawyer Park			X	X									
School Street Park			X										
S. Portland Municipal Golf Course													
S. Portland Community Center					X								X
Thomas Knight Park												X	X
Trout Brook Nature Preserve													
Willard Beach			X		X							X	
Wilkinson Community Park		X	X										
Wainwright Recreation Complex							X	X					X
Yerxa Park												X	

**10. Recreation**

There are also a variety of recreational offerings at schools across South Portland.

Park Name	Baseball	Basketball	Community Garden	Parking	Handicap Accessible	"Natural Area"	Pickleball Court	Playground Equipment	Playfield	Running Track	Soccer Field	Tennis Court
Dyer School Recreation Facilities				x				x	x			
Hamlin School Common Area and Community Garden*			x	x		x			x			
Kaler School Recreation Facilities				x				x	x			
Mahoney Middle *				x					x		x	
Memorial Middle Recreation Facilities		x										
Skillin Elementary Recreation Facilities				x				x	x			
Small Elementary Recreation Facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
South Portland High School Recreation Facilities				x			x			x	x	x
Brown Elementary Recreation Facilities	x			x				x	x			
South Portland Middle School		x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	

\* Hamlin School is now used as a municipal facility, but the recreation areas remain. Mahoney Middle School is in progress of being converted to a municipal facility as of 2025.



## Recent Planning Efforts

In the time that has passed since the former Comprehensive Plan Update, South Portland has undertaken several planning processes related to Open Space and Recreation.

### *Wainwright Farm and City-Wide Athletic Fields Master Plan*

In 2019, the City of South Portland began a Master Planning process for the Wainwright Farm Recreation Complex and other City Athletic Fields. This process included a needs assessment and resulted in conceptual design options for the identified properties (i.e., Wainwright Farm Recreation Complex, South Portland High School Complex, Memorial Middle School Fields, and Mahoney Middle School Fields).

### *Open Space Plan for South Portland, Maine, 2019*

Seen as the foundation for informed-decision making on Open Space action, this Plan was created with the oversight of the Open Space Planning Committee. The Plan was ultimately adopted as Appendix Q to the 2012 Comprehensive Plan. The Open Space Plan included five main goals and 18 strategies, including:

- GOAL 1: Protect Existing Open Space
  - ◆ Tiered protection system for City-owned lands
  - ◆ Maintain a geospatial database of existing public lands
  - ◆ Establish an open space zoning district
- GOAL 2: Acquire Additional Open Space
  - ◆ Private property acquisition guidelines
  - ◆ Acquisition and conservation methods
  - ◆ Partnership opportunities
- GOAL 3: Preserve and Enhance Natural Resources and Wildlife Habitat
  - ◆ Natural resource mapping
  - ◆ Support efforts in natural resource protection
  - ◆ Recognize the role of open space in climate resiliency
  - ◆ Hire a City Arborist

- GOAL 4: Improve Connectivity and Access to Open Space
  - ◆ Improve Open Space Access
  - ◆ Improve Open Space Connectivity
  - ◆ Strengthen planning partnerships
- GOAL 5: Finance the Protection and Acquisition of Open Space
  - ◆ Revisions to Land Bank Ordinance
  - ◆ Expand financial strategies

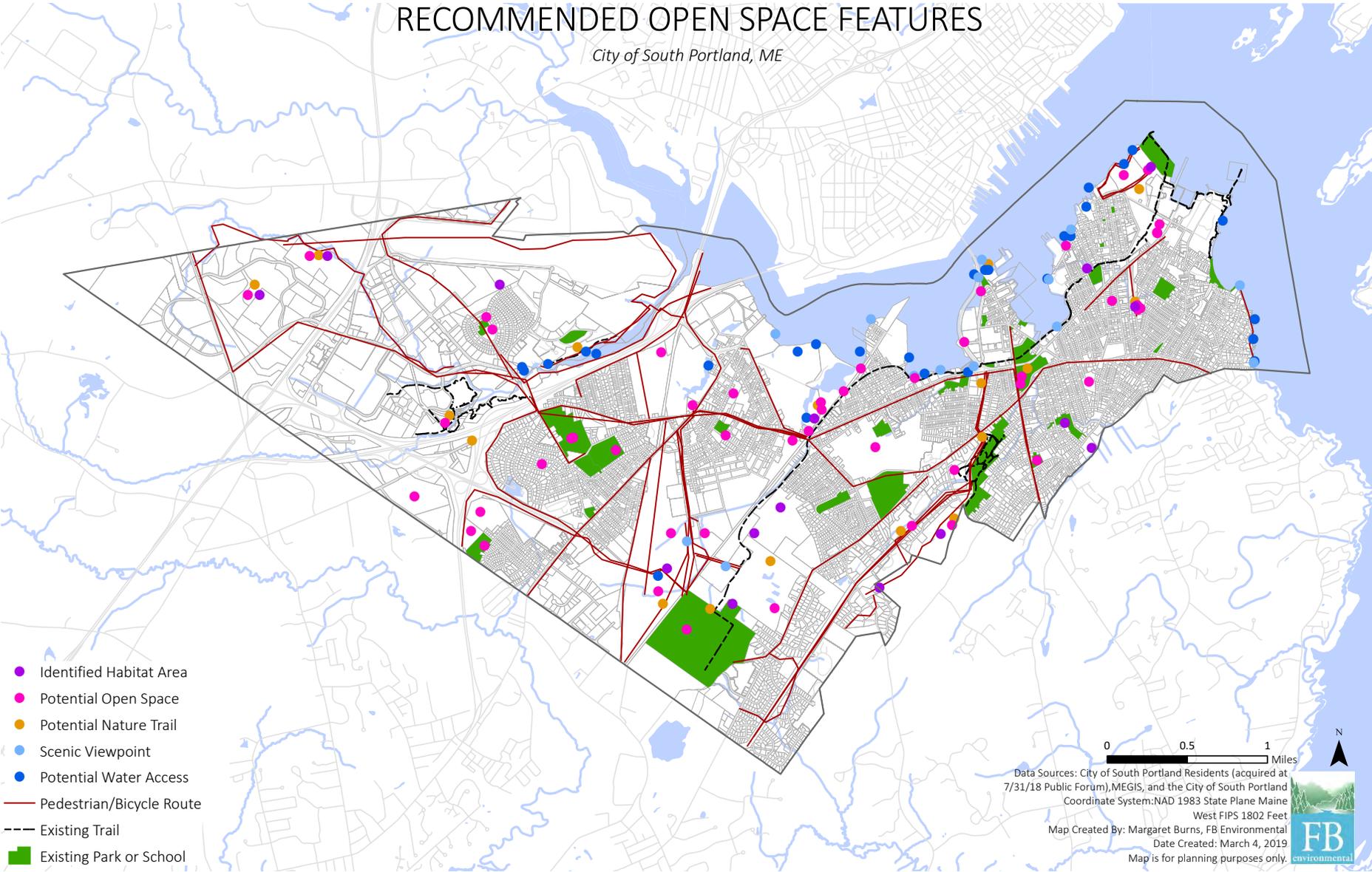
## Focus Group Takeaways

Focus groups were conducted to receive feedback from the community. Local open space and recreation experts took pride in the City's expansive catalog of parks and trails, while noting South Portland lacks equitable neighborhood distribution. Participants reported a perceived increased use of open spaces and heightened interest in conservation while sharing that broader education about the City's conservation actions might alleviate resident concerns. With park and facility upgrades, participants felt South Portland would be well suited to host athletic tournaments and encourage sports tourism. Funding and staffing capacity are the two main challenges for the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Waterfront. It was noted that the Parks Department regularly picks up municipal tasks and duties outside the purview of their department, which significantly affects their capacity. Stagnant staffing mixed with additional maintenance needs and the City's pesticide and herbicide ordinance, which requires the Parks Department to hand-weed open spaces, has become a challenge. It is unsustainable to continue expanding facilities without expanding the Parks Department's capacity.

Other concerns included safety in parks and on trails as the City sees a rise in unhoused community members. The City's lack of affordable housing has pushed an increasing number of people to live in parks and on trails. The impact of this adds additional maintenance needs for City staff and challenges residents' ability to trail walk and enjoy parks. Additionally, participants shared that there is a need for more storage space at community centers and parking at different locations, including the Golf Course (which could also use a practice area).

# RECOMMENDED OPEN SPACE FEATURES

City of South Portland, ME



## Recreation - References

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City Bus, Source: South Portland Transportation Department City Bus Service Website

# 11. Transportation

The City of South Portland's transportation system has accommodations for a variety of roadway users, including walking, biking, transit, and driving. The City's compact land use pattern (especially in the east), the Greenbelt Walkway, the METRO Bus Service and Mill Creek Transit Hub, and the existing sidewalk network also serve as strengths upon which access and connectivity for people traveling in a variety of ways can be expanded. These existing design characteristics, assets, and resources will help the City overcome challenges, including heavy reliance on automobiles for personal conveyance (73 percent of commuters are driving alone to work) and lack of alternative east-west roadway connectivity, both of which create congestion along the Broadway corridor during peak travel times. Additionally, the City has a sprawling land use pattern in its west end, which significantly impacts the desirability of walking and biking.

The City faces constraints from roadways with narrow rights-of-way, making it difficult to add multimodal facilities, and to allow for development that is likely to add vehicular congestion if alternative types of access are not considered. Additionally, the City faces staffing shortages for roadway maintenance and tracking programs. Despite these challenges and constraints, the City has committed to several initiatives, policies, and programs that provide an

opportunity to improve access and connectivity for people using all modes of transportation. These include the creation of the Street Design Technical Manual, the Electrify Everything Program to provide support for increasing utilization of electric vehicles (EVs) and ebikes, and recent multimodal improvements on Cottage Road, Broadway, and Westbrook Street. There are also opportunities for collaboration between the City, the School Department, METRO Bus Service, and neighborhood groups to improve education and awareness of transportation programs and resources.

## Inventory and Analysis

The City of South Portland has a multimodal transportation system, with accommodations for drivers, bicyclists, walkers, and transit riders across approximately 160 miles of roadways, 74 miles of sidewalks, 17 miles of bicycle facilities, and 154 bus stops.

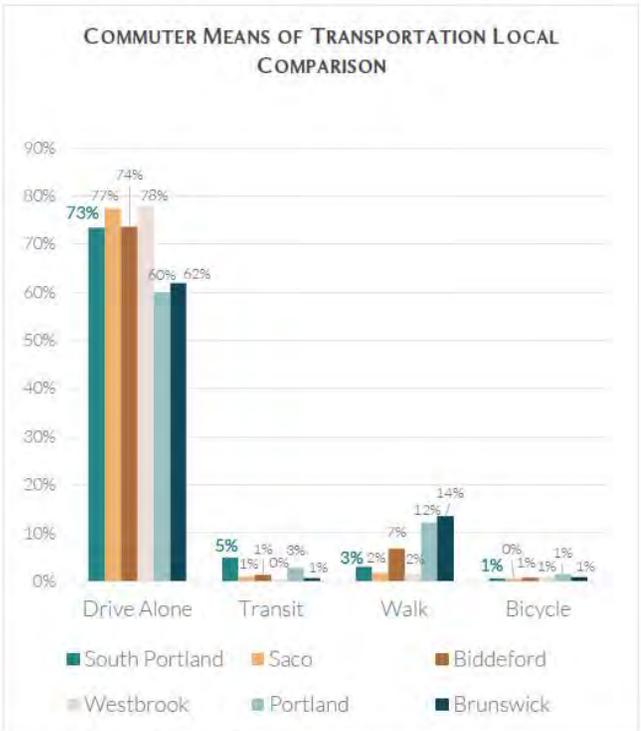
While the City's transportation network has accommodations for all modes, most people currently travel by car. Approximately 73 percent of South Portland residents commute to work by driving alone, as shown in the chart below. This is just under the State average of 75 percent, but higher than both the City of Portland and Cumberland County. Meanwhile, South Portland residents com-

mute by transit (approximately five percent of workers) at a higher rate than other local jurisdictions as well as the State as a whole. Opportunities exist to further increase the transit mode share with improved multimodal connections to transit, and increased accessibility and amenities at bus stops.

**Roadways**

The roadway network in South Portland connects residents to both local and regional destinations, including schools, hospitals, recreational activity areas, and job centers. Broadway serves as the primary east-west connection within the City, connecting a series of primarily residential neighborhoods in the eastern end of the City with several commercial and industrial centers that become more extensive the further one travels toward the western end.

*Functional Classification*



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-year 2017-2021

Roads and highways are classified based on the type and level of service they provide to vehicles. These include local roads that provide direct access to areas such as homes and businesses and collector roads that connect local roads to arterials, which allow faster speeds and connect vehicles to regional destinations. The table below lists the total miles for each roadway classification in the City, showing that most South Portland roads are local.

*Road Maintenance and Workplan*

South Portland Road Classifications		
Functional Classification	Roadway Length (miles)	Percentage of Roadway
Local Road	98	61%
Major Urban Collector	26	16%
Minor Arterial	28	18%
Other Principal Arterial	3	2%
Principal Arterial and Other F&E	6	4%
Total	160	

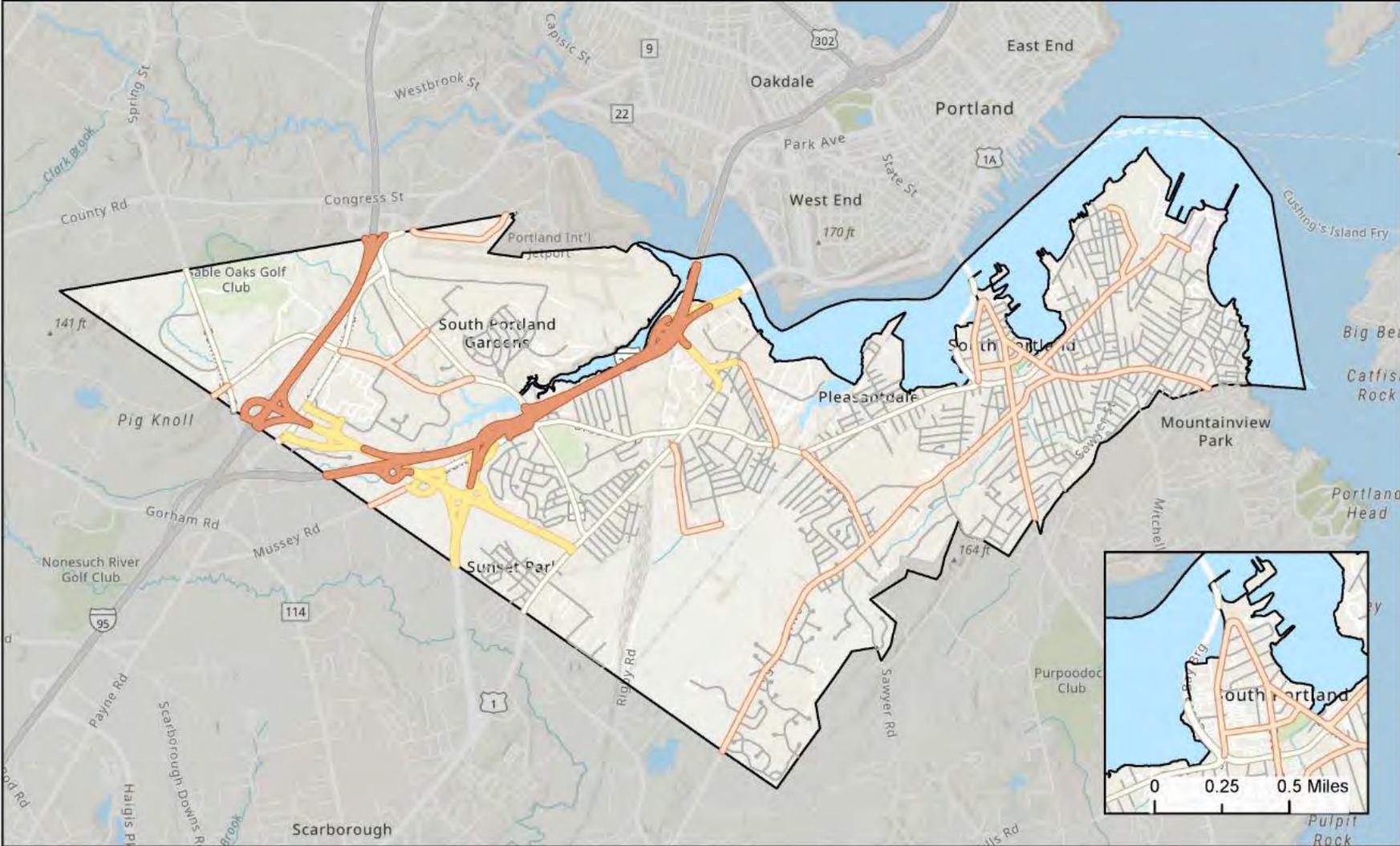
South Portland is designated as an “urban compact” municipality under Maine law due to its population size and developed character. This designation means that the City, rather than the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), is responsible for the routine maintenance of state highways within the compact area. That includes snow plowing, pothole repair, signage, and general upkeep. MaineDOT defines compact areas using a standard measure: continuous structures located within 200 feet of each other along at least 0.25 miles of roadway. These boundaries are periodically reviewed and updated through coordination with the municipality.

Because South Portland maintains the state highways in its urban

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND - ROAD CLASSES

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

J M GOLDSON



- Interstate
- Other Freeway
- Arterial
- Collector
- Local



Sources: Maine Geo Library, ArcGIS

compact area, routine maintenance on those roads does not appear in MaineDOT’s Three-Year Work Plan. However, larger capital improvement projects—such as major paving, resurfacing, or bridge rehabilitation—are still the responsibility of MaineDOT and may be included in the Work Plan. South Portland works closely with MaineDOT and the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) to prioritize these projects and align them with local needs.

South Portland/MaineDOT 3-Year Work Plan (2025-2027)			
Project Scope	Location	Funding Type	Estimated Project Cost
Bridge Painting	I-295 NB Ramp Over PTRR Bridge #65	Federal / State	\$300,000
Bridge Painting	Railroad Overpass Bridge #6198	Federal / State	\$400,000
Bridge Painting	Ramp S4P Bridge #1376	Federal / State	\$1,400,000
Mill and Fill	Route 703	Federal / State	\$6,275,000
Bridge Painting	SP2 BR#1377	Federal / State	\$1,300,000
Safety Improvements	Heads Up – Broadway Pedestrian Improvements	State / Local	\$1,310,565
Mill and Fill	Maine Mall Rd	Federal / State	\$1,535,000
New Construction	Multiuse Path	Federal / Local	\$2,750,000

This division of responsibility has significant implications for budgeting and coordination. South Portland must allocate local funds to maintain compact roads, while relying on state and regional collaboration for larger-scale improvements. The compact designation also provides predictability for residents and helps

MaineDOT focus its resources on non-urban areas and major arterials.

*Infrastructure Conditions/Management*

The City surveys the physical condition of roads and scores pavement condition on a scale of 0 to 100 based on a metric called the Pavement Condition Index (PCI). Based on the 116.5 miles of roadway last evaluated, over half of South Portland’s roads are rated 70-100, indicating they do not require maintenance or only require low-cost preventative maintenance. Just under half, 44 percent of roads, are marked for rehabilitation, which includes pavement milling and overlay to extend the life of the pavement and avoid more costly reconstruction. Only 1 percent of roads (1.7 miles) are rated below 40 and would benefit from reconstruction. The following table summarizes the pavement conditions and level of maintenance required as of May 2022.

South Portland Pavement Conditions			
Maintenance Type	Roadway Length (miles)	PCI Range	Percentage of Roadway
Defer Maintenance	16.6	90-100	14%
Preventative Maintenance	47.1	70-89	40%
Rehabilitation	51.1	40-69	44%
Reconstruction	1.7	1-39	1%
Unpaved	0.1	0	0%
Total	116.5		

Source: City of South Portland, Street Scan GIS data (2022)

Specific areas within the City that need roadway rehabilitation are the eastern section of Broadway from Route 77 to Cushing’s Point, Cottage Road from Highland Avenue to the Cape Elizabeth boundary, Evans Street from Broadway to Highland Avenue, Westbrook Street from Broadway to Main Street, and the extent of Gorham Road, Preble Street, and Running Hill Road. Several local streets

that connect to arterials and collectors are also in need of rehabilitation, especially in the City’s eastern neighborhoods.

When streets are resurfaced, they are placed on a regularly-updated street moratorium list for five years. The City requires a special permit and an additional fee to excavate streets on the moratorium list.

*Bridges*

South Portland and Maine DOT provide regular inspections and maintenance on the 31 bridges throughout the municipality. Maine DOT is responsible for all of the bridges other than Bridge 0329 which is maintained by the railroad company.

In Maine, the Sufficiency Rating (SR rating) is a numerical score ranging from 0 to 100 used to assess the overall condition and functionality of a bridge. It is calculated using a standardized federal formula that evaluates key factors including structural integrity, serviceability (such as load capacity and alignment), and essentiality for public use (including detour length and average daily traffic). Bridges are inspected regularly by the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT), and the SR rating helps prioritize maintenance, rehabilitation, or replacement needs. In general, bridges with a sufficiency rating below 50 are considered for replacement, while those with ratings between 50 and 80 may qualify for rehabilitation. This rating system helps MaineDOT and federal agencies allocate funding and resources effectively to maintain safe and reliable bridge infrastructure across the state.

*Policies and Design Standards*

South Portland Bridges			
Bridge ID	Bridge Name	Material	SR Rating (Condition)
1376	RAMP SP4	4 - Steel continuous	52
6281	I 295 / FORE RIVER	4 - Steel continuous	91.6
6555	I295 RAMP OVER PTRR	4 - Steel continuous	80.8
6284	I-295 RAMP 5 / RED BK	3 - Steel	96.5
6532	I295 SB / WESTBROOK STREET	3 - Steel	90.3
0341	MILL CREEK	1 - Concrete	49.4
6449	I295 NB EXIT 3 RAMP	3 - Steel	89.9
1502	SB US1 CONNECTOR / SR703	4 - Steel continuous	77.9
6257	US1 CONNECT SB/ BROADWAY	3 - Steel	91.1
6258	RT 1 CON SB / I-295	4 - Steel continuous	92.8
6198	RAILROAD OVERPASS	4 - Steel continuous	81.8
3675	LONG CREEK	1 - Concrete	88.1
6256	US1 CONNECT NB/ BROADWAY	4 - Steel continuous	92
6249	I 295 / WESTBROOK STREET	3 - Steel	87
5900	CASCO BAY	3 - Steel	85.1
6272	NB US1 CONNECTOR / SR703	4 - Steel continuous	77.9
6182	WEST BROADWAY	4 - Steel continuous	77.3
6285	I-295 NB/ RED BROOK	3 - Steel	50
5060	SKUNK HILL O.P.	1 - Concrete	87
2020	ANTHOINE CREEK	1 - Concrete	64.3
6219	LONG CREEK #2	1 - Concrete	53.2

South Portland Bridges			
6283	I-295 RAMP 7 & 5 / RED BK	3 - Steel	86.4
6273	I 295 NB / SR 703	4 - Steel continuous	78.9
6534	I295 SB / FORE RIVER PORTLAND	4 - Steel continuous	90.6
0369	RUNNING HILL ROAD	4 - Steel continuous	74.7
6450	PAYNE ROAD / S.R. 703	4 - Steel continuous	93
0329	BROAD-WAY UNDER-PASS	3 - Steel	n/a
0370	S PORTLAND INTER-CHANGE	4 - Steel continuous	98.5
1513	I295 SB / STATE RTE 703	4 - Steel continuous	74.2
6282	I-295 SB/ RED BROOK	3 - Steel	78.8
1377	RAMP SP2	4 - Steel continuous	82.7

The City of South Portland Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23, regulates the design, construction, and maintenance of public and private roads. Additionally, the City adopted a Complete Streets Policy in October 2017, which establishes the City's commitment to designing streets that are safe and accessible for users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and transit riders. To further its commitment to Complete Streets and safe and accessible street design, the City has developed a Street Design Technical Manual, to achieve a more coordinated approach to street design and connected road networks. The manual includes roadway design standards for different street types to address the needs of all roadway users and to support the City's land use goals.

The City's One Climate Future (OCF) Plan, published in 2020, is a joint plan between the City of South Portland and the City of Portland that developed a regional vision for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving resiliency of the cities, including the

regional transportation network.<sup>1</sup> As the City develops and updates policies for transportation such as access management, intersection design, complete streets, public transit, transit-oriented development (TOD), transportation demand management (TDM), parking, and bike accessibility, it will be important to ensure they align with relevant sections of the OCF Plan to further support goals for reducing emissions and improving resiliency.

### Traffic Volumes and Operations

The City has a variety of land use mixes, ranging from residential, to commercial, to industrial, interspersed across its neighborhoods. These land uses result in different types of traffic generators and travel behavior in specific areas. Commercial uses, primarily in the area of the Maine Mall, are the primary traffic generators in the western part of the city. Interstate 95 (I-95) and Interstate 295 (I-295) connect regional traffic to the area via state highways, major collector roads, and minor arterial roads. Western Avenue, Gorham Road, Maine Mall Road, and Running Hill Road provide access to commercial and industrial land uses west of I-295 – the City's primary job center. The Maine Department of Transportation and the City of South Portland are planning to reconfigure southbound access to I-295, adding a new on-ramp at Exit 4 to improve vehicular connectivity in the area. Retail in the Maine Mall area generates weekend traffic, while offices generate morning and afternoon weekday traffic during typical commuting hours. The map following this subsection shows the City's traffic patterns and job centers, highlighting the heavier traffic volumes along Broadway and at the western end of the City on both sides of I-95, where high-volume roadways connect to job clusters.

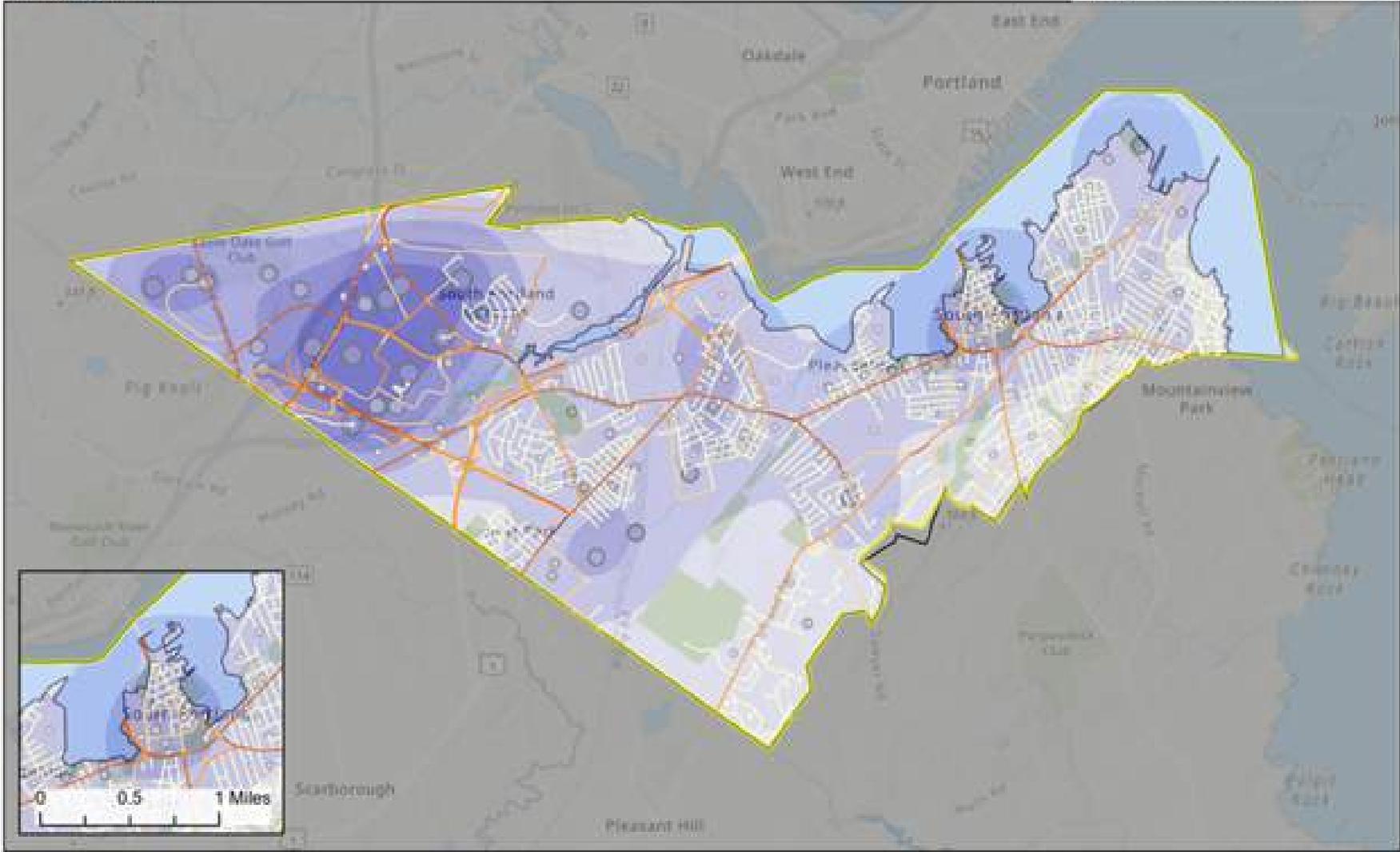
High traffic volume at intersections can often lead to a high number of crashes. Creating a safe and comfortable roadway network is critical for all modes of travel to protect the health and well-being of users and enhance multimodal safety conditions so that people feel comfortable using alternative modes, such as walking and biking. Existing crash data from the Maine Department of Transporta-

<sup>1</sup> PACTS, Highland Avenue Connector Road Study (2001), [https://www.southportland.org/files/7816/7725/3357/Crosstown\\_Connector\\_Study\\_03.2001.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/7816/7725/3357/Crosstown_Connector_Study_03.2001.pdf)

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND - TRAFFIC AND JOB DENSITY

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

J M GOLDSON



Sources: US Census On The Map tool  
AADT from Maine DOT

tion helps understand specific areas where safety enhancements may be necessary. High crash intersections include Broadway and Westbrook Street, Gorham Road and Maine Mall Road, Broadway and Cottage Road, and Broadway and Main Street.

The primary east-west connection within the City is Broadway, an arterial that runs from the border with Scarborough in the west to Cushing's Point in the east and connects the City's more densely populated eastern section with the primarily commercial and industrial western section. The more neighborhood-oriented eastern end of the City has a higher potential for shifting driving trips to walking and biking trips due to its residential density, its proximity to local destinations (including Bug Light Park, Willard Beach, Southern Maine Community College (SMCC), and neighborhood retail), and its connection to Portland via the Casco Bay Bridge.

A potential second east-west connector, originally identified in the 2001 Highland Avenue Connector Road Study and referred to as the "Crosstown Connector," would provide enhanced east-west access and redundancy. The previously identified connector would cross a railroad right of way to connect the Main Street (Route 1) and Broadway intersection to Highland Avenue and the City's Municipal Services Facility via Rumery Street, as shown in the map following this subsection. The Crosstown Connector would also provide a key connection between Highland Avenue and Broadway as an alternative to the current connections via Evans Street and Anthoine Street and provide more equitable access to the Wainwright Athletic Complex. Following extensive environmental and traffic analysis, the City Council voted to pause further investigation into the roadway as the estimated costs far exceeded the potential traffic improvement to nearby roadway congestion. Future study into the Crosstown Connector is possible but will likely depend on increased development, which may generate more traffic demand and result in more community benefit for the investment into the new roadway connection.

Notable links to surrounding cities and towns include connections to Portland via the Casco Bay Bridge (State Route 77), the Veterans' Memorial Bridge, I-95, and I-295; Cape Elizabeth via Cottage Road and Ocean Street; and Scarborough via the Scarborough Connector (State Route 701), Broadway, Maine Mall Road, Main Street, and Highland Avenue.

Schools are also significant traffic generators, with one high school and soon one middle school serving students throughout the whole City. South Portland High School is located on Highland Avenue, a major collector road that serves as a primary east-west thoroughfare. With the fall 2023 opening of the new middle school, combining students from the existing Memorial Middle School and Mahoney Middle School, there is expected to be increased traffic at the location of the new school on Wescott Road in the Thornton Heights neighborhood, particularly in the morning and afternoon peak periods. Considerations for alternative modes connecting to the new middle school, especially walking and biking, will be critical to ensure students can safely and comfortably get to and from school, while reducing vehicle trips and neighborhood congestion.

Additional future traffic generators include planned redevelopment in the Cushing's Point area and continued growth of SMCC in the Fort Road area, especially within the eastern section of the Broadway corridor. The Cushing's Point Transportation Study details recommendations to improve multimodal infrastructure along the east Broadway corridor between the Casco Bay Bridge and Cushing's Point to accommodate potential future development in the range of 500-1,000 new dwelling units near Bug Light Park. Recommendations include improved traffic signal efficiency, operational and bus stop improvements for Bus Service, bicycle and pedestrian facility upgrades, potential ferry service from Cushing's Point to and from Portland, potential on-demand microtransit services, and implementing a TDM program to incentivize mode shift from single-occupancy vehicles to more efficient and sustainable modes. An additional opportunity could include the addition of express bus service between urban centers such as Portland's Old Port and Knightville with University of Southern Maine and SMCC to incentivize the use of transit for students in order to reduce vehicular congestion.

The Portland International Jetport is another major traffic generator in the City's western end and is partially located within City limits, including the main runway. While the terminal entrance and parking are in the City of Portland, the airport can be accessed

from South Portland via Jetport Boulevard from Western Avenue or through the METRO bus service.

*High Crash Locations*

A High Crash Location (HCL) is designated by a methodology that provides a statistical way to compare different intersections in the City, and to compare intersections in South Portland with other intersections throughout the state. An HCL is defined as a location that has eight or more traffic crashes and a Critical Rate Factor (CRF) greater than 1.00 in a three-year period. The CRF is the ratio of the actual crash rate at an intersection or road segment to the statistically calculated critical rate, which is based on the severity of accidents and how the design of that intersection or road section compares with similarly designed places around the state. For the 2022-2024 reporting period, there were 21 HCLs in South Portland.

*Parking*

South Portland High Crash Locations				
Intersection / Road Segment	Total Crashes	Percent Injury	Fatalities (FARS)	Injuries
Int of BROADWAY HUNTRESS AV ORLANDO ST	9	11.1	0	1
Int of BROADWAY RAMP D0238	21	42.9	0	15
Int of ARMORY ST BROADWAY	10	30	0	3
Int of ENTRANCE CHILIS DAYS INN Z RD MAINE MALL RD RAMP A0420 RAMP C0420	30	46.7	0	16
Int of BROADWAY WESTBROOK ST	55	21.8	0	14
Int of COTTAGE RD HINCKLEY DR	10	10	0	1

South Portland High Crash Locations				
Int of MAIN ST SKILLINGS ST	16	13.3	0	2
Int of BROADWAY MAIN ST	36	29.4	0	15
Int of BILLY VACHON DR ROUTE 1	14	21.4	0	3
Int of PHILBROOK AV RAMP E	9	22.2	0	3
Int of INTERSECTION BEST WESTERN MAIN ST ME TPK APP OFF ME TPK APP ON	38	21.1	0	10
Int of CUMMINGS RD, RUNNING HILL RD TL - Scarborough, South Portland	12	25.0	0	4
Int of MAIN ST THORNTON AV Int of CARIGNAN AV MAIN ST	15	13.3	0	2
Int of I 295 NB RAMP OFF TO VETERANS BRIDGE Int of RAMP OFF TO VETERANS BRIDGE VETERANS BRIDGE	17	41.2	0	9
Int of BROADWAY LAKE ST Int of BROADWAY EVANS ST	8	12.5	0	1
Int of ENT MALL PLAZA ENT TO ASPEN DENTAL MAINE MALL RD Non Int MAINE MALL RD	25	12.0	0	5

South Portland High Crash Locations				
Int of ENT TO MALPLAZA ENT TO SHOPMALL GORHAM RD Int of GORHAM RD MAINE MALL RD RUNNING HILL RD	9	11.1	0	1
Int of MAIN ST SKILLINGS ST Int of BROADWAY MAIN ST	9	44.4	0	4
Int of CROSSOVER INTERSTATE RD I 295 NB Int of I 295 NB RAMP OFF TO VETERANS BRIDGE	17	35.3	0	10
Int of DEVEREAUX CIR WESTBROOK Int of WEMUTH RD WESTBROOK ST	14	0.0	0	0
Int of I 95 RAMP ON FROM MAINE MALL RD PAYNE RD Int of ME TPK APP ON RAMP ON FROM MAINE MALL RD PAYNE RD RAMP ON FROM MAINE M	34	35.3	1	14

Public parking is free throughout the City, providing limited barriers for automobile access and incentives to driving. In general, the supply of public parking is thought to meet, if not exceed, the demand for parking, making it easy for drivers to find parking near their destinations.<sup>2</sup> However, there are reported parking shortages in high-traffic areas at popular times of the year, including in the Willard Beach area during the summer and in the Knightville area along Ocean Street. Performing parking inventory and utilization studies in specific areas would enable the City to document the

<sup>2</sup> As mentioned in the Comprehensive Plan Transportation Focus Group (February 7, 2023)

location of public available parking, assess usage of the parking supply, and develop strategies to more effectively balance supply with demand, including by reducing the subsidy on free parking to less than 100 percent. In areas with lower parking demand, there may be opportunities to repurpose parking lots or on-street parking for more efficient and ecological land use and curb space. For example, the City could evaluate through a formal parking study whether all available public parking in Mill Creek is necessary to meet demand or whether parking can be consolidated through shared parking agreements to promote a more inviting pedestrian environment and a “park and walk” commercial district within Mill Creek and Knightville. Future garage parking in busy commercial areas such as Mill Creek and the Maine Mall has been discussed in recent years as a way to help catalyze investment and redevelopment. The Mill Creek Master Plan (2015)<sup>3</sup> presents strategies related to parking that could be advanced through a formal parking study.

Additional regulations to protect residential access to on-street parking could be necessary for areas with a high demand for parking, such as Willard Beach. Overall, balancing the demand for parking with the parking supply is important to ensure an optimized transportation system that will reduce vehicular congestion and promote economic development.

The City’s Code of Ordinances (Section 27-1556)<sup>4</sup> details the minimum off-street parking requirements for each land use. Given the potential oversupply of parking citywide and its effects on sprawl and induced traffic congestion, the City could consider updating the ordinance to eliminate or further reduce parking minimums where feasible. This could help support local economic development, reduce the barriers to building affordable housing, and promote more sustainable modes to driving.

<sup>3</sup> City of South Portland, Mill Creek Master Plan. <https://www.southportland.org/our-city/board-and-committees/comprehensive-plan-committee/draft-mill-creek-master-plan/>

<sup>4</sup> City of South Portland Code of Ordinances, Section 27-1556 (c) (October 4, 2022), [https://www.southportland.org/files/1216/8910/4583/CH\\_27\\_\\_Zoning\\_with\\_New\\_TOC\\_format.pdf](https://www.southportland.org/files/1216/8910/4583/CH_27__Zoning_with_New_TOC_format.pdf)

Maine DOT maintains a Park and Ride off of Exit 45 on Interstate 95 along State Route 702.

**Walking and Biking**

The City has a network of existing facilities, including sidewalks, crosswalks, multi-use paths, bike lanes, accessible curb ramps, curb extensions, and accessible signals, which provide access to key destinations and support walking and biking throughout the City. An overview of the existing walking and biking networks, planned improvements, and notable gaps is shown in the following map. The City is supported by advisory groups and advocacy organizations, including the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee and the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, who work with the City to make improvements to the local and regional active transportation networks.

**Pedestrian Infrastructure**

South Portland has approximately 74 miles of sidewalks, with a more robust sidewalk network in the more densely populated eastern part of the City. The most pedestrian-oriented parts of the City are Mill Creek / Knightville, Willard Square, Cottage Road, and Main Street, which have sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian-scaled streetlights, and other amenities that make them more comfortable and safe for pedestrians.

Pedestrians also have access to trails and multi-use paths, including the Greenbelt Walkway, which spans 5.6 miles and connects Bug Light Park at the City’s eastern end to the Wainwright Athletic complex on the southern end of the City near the Scarborough border. There is also the Clark’s Pond Trail and multi-use paths connecting to Portland on the Casco

Sidewalk Conditions in South Portland		
Condition Score	Miles	Percent of Total
Best (1)	19.64	26%
Moderate (2-3)	38.8	52%
Worst (4-5)	13.62	18%
Not Scored	2.19	3%
Total	74.2	

Source: City of South Portland, Street Scan GIS data (2017)

Bay Bridge and the Veterans’ Memorial Bridge.

Sidewalk conditions are summarized in the table. While sidewalks are at least partially present in all neighborhoods, there are notable gaps where sidewalks are missing or in poor condition, including portions of Broadway, Cottage Road, Maine Mall Road, and Gorham Road.

**Bicycle Infrastructure**

The City has approximately 17 miles of existing bicycle facilities, offering varying levels of connectivity, comfort, and separation from vehicular traffic. On-street bicycle facilities include dedicated bike lanes (e.g., portions of Broadway and Highland Avenue) and multi-use paths (e.g., Westbrook Street).

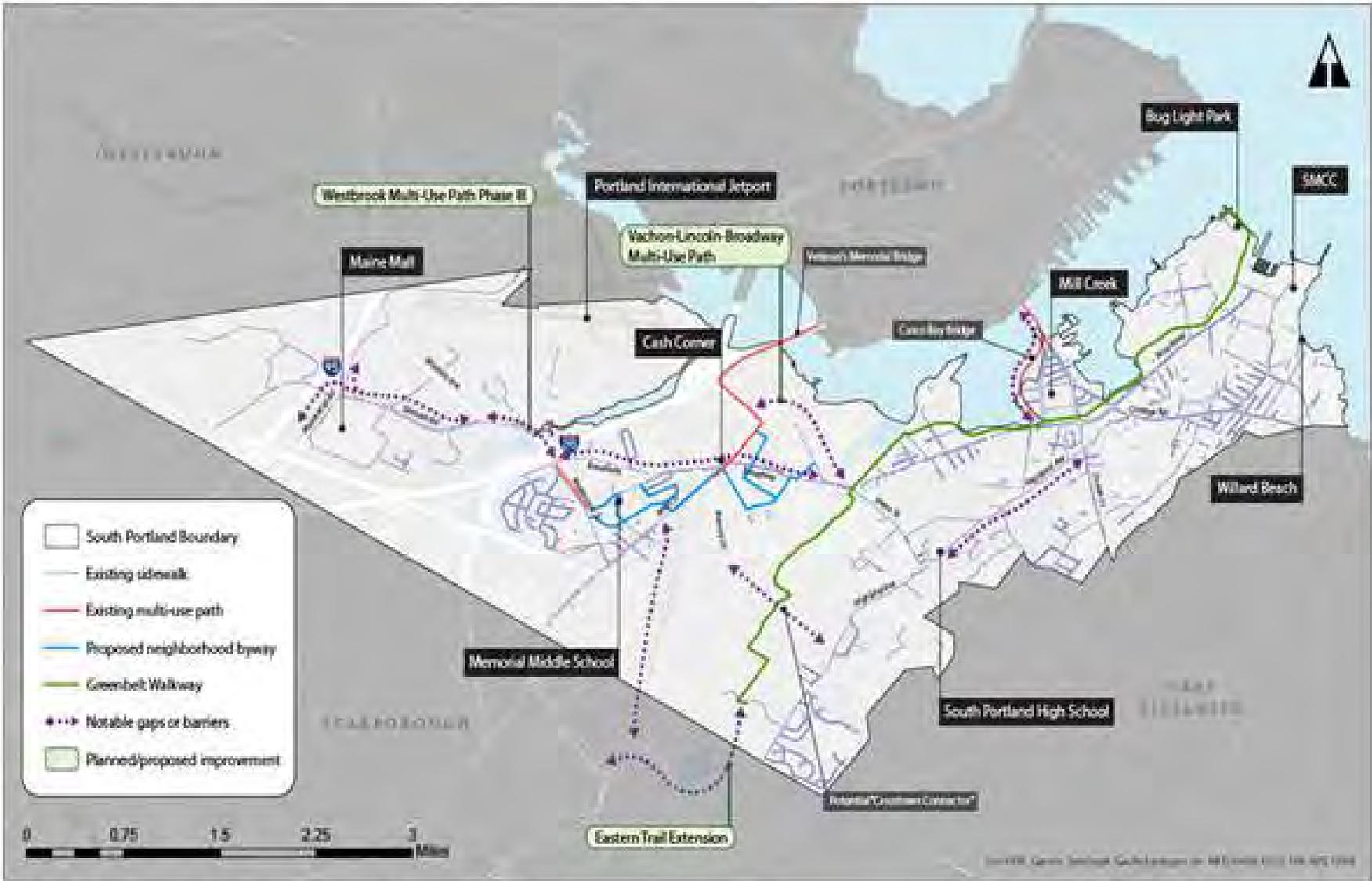
The longest bicycle facility is the multi-use Greenbelt Walkway, which is physically separated from vehicular traffic for most of its extent and connects several local points of interest and neighborhoods within the City’s eastern side, including Bug Light Park, Mill Creek Park, Knightville, and Pleasantdale. The Greenbelt Walkway also provides regional bicycle connections. It is the eastern end of the both the Eastern Trail, a 65-mile multi-use trail that connects the City of South Portland to Kittery, Maine,<sup>5</sup> and the East Coast Greenway, a network of walking and biking trails that stretches over 3,000 miles from Maine to Florida.<sup>6</sup>

A future off-street bicycle facility will be the planned Eastern Trail extension project, referred to as the “Close the Gap” project. This will result in 16 miles of continuous off-road trail connecting from Bug Light Park to downtown Saco, Maine, bypassing the existing 1.6 mile on-street segment between South Portland & Scarborough.

**Bike and Pedestrian Improvements**

<sup>5</sup> City of South Portland, The Greenbelt Walkway, Accessed January 2023. <https://www.southportland.org/departments/parks-recreation-aquatics/pools/parks-department/parks-trails-beaches/greenbelt-walkway/>.

<sup>6</sup> East Coast Greenway, About the East Coast Greenway, Accessed May 2023. <https://www.greenway.org/about/the-east-coast-greenway>



South Portland Comprehensive Plan - Bicycle and Pedestrian Assessment (Phase 1)  
South Portland, ME  
March 2021

Figure 1: South Portland Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

Several recent projects have contributed to a safer and more connected bicycle and pedestrian network. These include Main Street’s “complete streets” reconstruction from Westbrook Street to Mardale Avenue; new sidewalks, curb extensions, and crosswalks on Cottage Road; traffic calming measures on Broadway, and a new multi-use path on Westbrook Street. There are also several ongoing and planned projects that will help improve the pedestrian and bicycle network in the City, including additional sidewalk and crosswalk improvements on Cottage Road, an extension of the recently completed Westbrook Street multi-use path, the extension of the Greenbelt Walkway to close the existing gap in the Eastern Trail, and the Vachon-Lincoln-Broadway multi-use path, which will connect the Greenbelt Walkway with the Veterans’ Memorial Bridge and Portland’s extensive trail network, closing an important gap in the local bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure network. More details can be found in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Assessment (Phase 1) completed as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

### ***Public Transportation***

The City of South Portland was formerly served by its own South Portland Bus Service (SPBS) which now merged with METRO Bus Service. Transit is also supported by advisory groups and advocacy organizations, including the Transit Advisory Committee and the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG).

The Mill Creek Transit Hub, at the corner of Ocean Street and Thomas Street in Mill Creek, is the primary transfer point between routes, with real-time bus arrival times and maps located inside the indoor waiting area. Routes 24A and 24B provide east-west bus service between the office parks and retail off Running Hill Road and Cummings Road west of I-95, the Maine Mall, Cash Corner, Mill Creek / Knightville, and Downtown Portland. Routes 24A and 24B provide more circuitous routes, with an approximate travel time of 65-70 minutes between the Mill Creek Transit Hub and the Maine Mall. Route 21 connects key destinations within the City’s eastern part, including Willard Square, Southern Maine Community College (SMCC), Ferry Village, Bug Light, and Mill Creek/Knightville, with Downtown Portland. With Route 21 parallel to the Greenbelt Walk-

way along Broadway, there are numerous opportunities to connect to transit via walking or biking.

South Portland is also served by Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit (BSOOB), which provides service to the Maine Mall. METRO operates two bus routes that serve the Maine Mall – Route 3 (between Portland, Westbrook, and South Portland) and Route 5 (between downtown Portland, the Portland International Jetport, and the Maine Mall). BSOOB operates one route, Route 60/Green Line, which connects the Maine Mall to Portland, Scarborough, and Saco. Additionally, the Regional Transportation Program (RTP) provides ADA Complementary Paratransit Services to residents of Portland, South Portland, Falmouth, and Westbrook who cannot use METRO because of a functional limitation.

The City is in the process of upgrading bus stops according to recommendations from the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) Transit Stop Access project, which developed an inventory of the region’s bus stops, assessed their accessibility and conditions, and prioritized stops for improvements in 2018. The improvements are anticipated to be constructed in 2023 and 2024.<sup>7</sup>

While South Portland residents have access to several transit services, including ADA-accessible paratransit, current transit service across the four transit operators prioritizes geographic coverage of transit rather than speed and frequency of service. While this provides the City’s residents with transit mobility across a wide geographic area, there are long bus headways and travel times, making buses not a desirable option for many trips. Through improved regional collaboration among transit agencies, the City’s transit services could be further optimized to better serve commuter trips. The Transit Together study, led by the GPCOG, presents recommendations for more frequent bus service, better connections, and an enhanced rider experience, which could lead to more efficient and desirable bus service in the City.<sup>8</sup> In the future, the

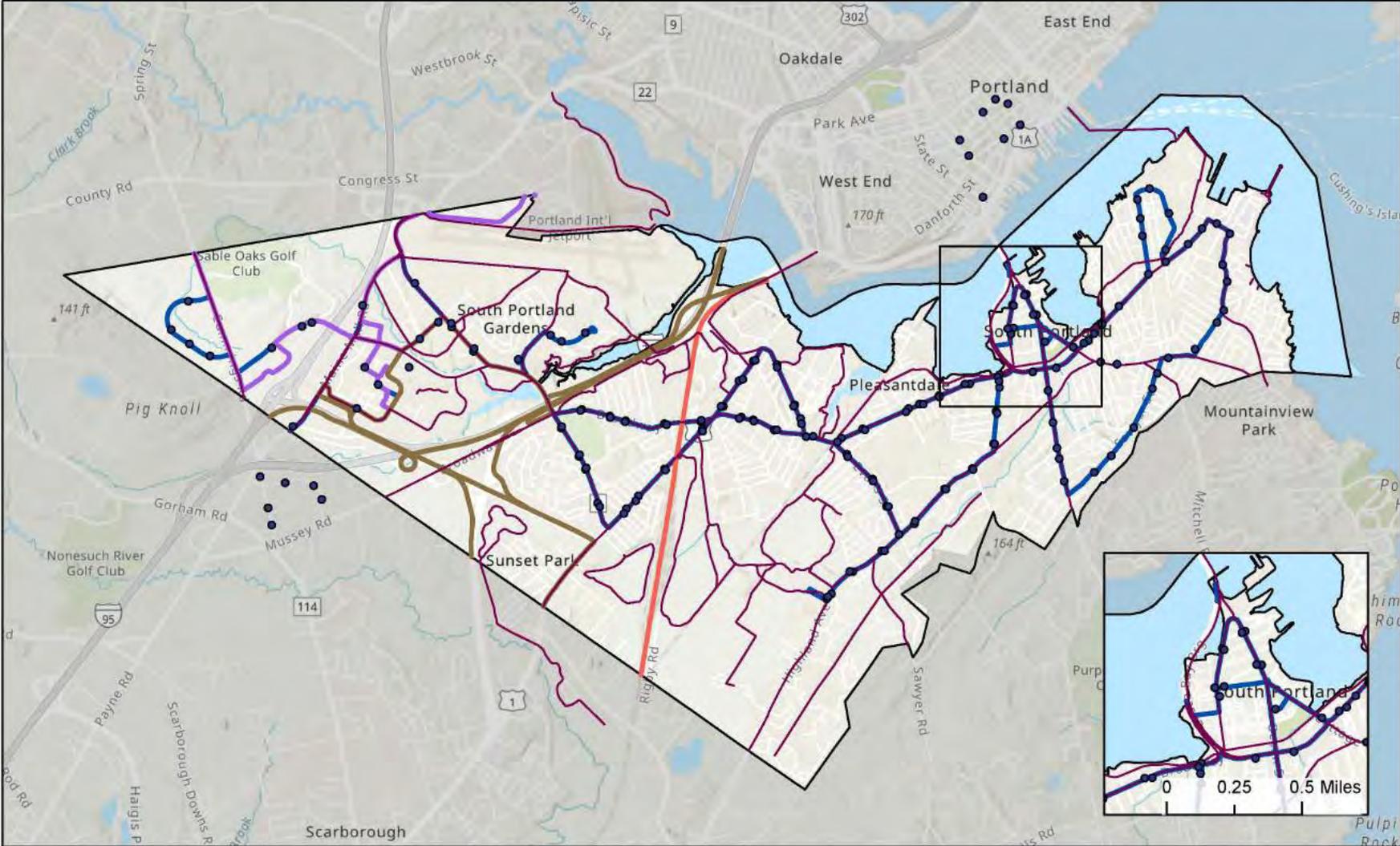
<sup>7</sup> PACTS, Transit Stop Access Project (2017-Present), <https://www.gpcog.org/DocumentCenter/View/354/2018-Transit-Stop-Access-Project-Phase-1-Report-PDF>

<sup>8</sup> GPCOG, Transit Together study (2022-Present), <https://www.transitto->

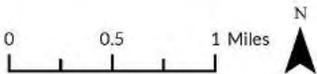
CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND - EXISTING TRANSPORTATION

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

J M GOLDSON



- Bus Stops
- Bike Facilities SP
- Transportation Agency
- BSOOB Transit
- METRO
- NNEPRA
- SPBS



Sources: Maine Geo Library, ArcGIS

City could work with regional transit agencies and explore potential improvements to the system, including opportunities for bus rapid-transit and electric buses to improve transit service and advance goals from the One Climate Future plan.

### *Rail*

There are currently no passenger rail stations in the City; however, the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority (NNEPRA) runs Amtrak's Downeaster service through South Portland, which connects from Boston to Brunswick, Maine. This service stops at the Portland Transportation Center, located over the Fore River from South Portland via I-295, about a 1.5 mile walk or bike ride from South Portland border via the Veterans Memorial Bridge and Portland's Fore River Parkway Trail. The Portland Transportation Center is also served by METRO buses and Concord Coach bus lines and has substantial public parking.

There are approximately 5.8 miles of active railroad lines in South Portland that are critical to regional freight and passenger rail service. One line, approximately three miles in length, runs from the South Portland/Scarborough border along the side of Rigby Yard, and ends at Turner Island at the water's edge. The second line, approximately 2.75 miles, runs from the South Portland/Scarborough border through Rigby Yard, Calvary Cemetery and eventually crosses the Fore River and enters Portland. This line carries the Amtrak Downeaster passenger train, which connects Portland to Boston. In addition, there are approximately 45 miles of side track in South Portland, with the majority located in Rigby Yard, with a few miles of siding on Turners Island and the Rolling Mills area. Side tracks primarily serve as service, maintenance, car storage, and switching areas. Rail continues to play an important role in the servicing of the freight to and from industrial and commercial facilities in South Portland. Moreover, rail service is essential to existing marine-rail cargo terminals in South Portland, such as Turners Island, to facilitate the movement of freight between rail and barge/ship. Some of the most significant of rail facilities and sidings in the Portland region are located in the Rigby Yard area of

South Portland, which CSX Rail purchased from Pan Am Railways in 2022. CSX's acquisition, approved by the Surface Transportation Board through a public hearing process, includes a requirement for significant upgrades to modernize the Rigby Yard facility and other segments of the acquired rail network to improve safety, resilience, and efficiency of operations. Beyond the required investments, CSX has submitted applications for rail-adjacent economic investment at Rigby Yard and will continue to be an important actor in the logistics and distribution sector of the city and regional economy. Although the Amtrak Downeaster does not stop in South Portland, residents can access stops in both Portland and Saco. Furthermore, due to its location in the City, Rigby Yard continues to be an important potential partner for improving the interconnectivity of the community from east to west, and north to south.

### *Water Travel*

Public ferry services do not currently serve South Portland. Within the last few years, private operators have attempted to provide evening and weekend service during the summer months, with stops at several South Portland marinas and the public boat launch, but the service was not well advertised. The Cushing's Point Transportation Study evaluated the feasibility of implementing a ferry service between South Portland and Portland to mitigate the potential increased traffic volumes due to proposed redevelopment in Cushing's Point. The report found that the potential ferry service would be more of an amenity than a transit solution, replacing approximately 150 to 200 vehicle trips a day that otherwise would have used Broadway. Further feasibility and environmental analysis are needed to determine the viability of the ferry service to provide this connection.

### *Airport*

The Portland International Jetport (PWM) is owned and operated by the City of Portland, but part of the property, including the main runway, is in South Portland. The two cities collaborate on airport operations, airspace and noise management, and an ongoing initiative to expand parking.

### ***Regional Planning***

South Portland participates in regional transportation planning with the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS), and the METRO bus. Recent plans include *Connect 2050*, *Transit Together*, and the *Maine Mall Transit Oriented Development Plan*.

### **Focus Group Takeaways**

A Focus Group of local subject matter experts was held to obtain feedback on existing conditions, issues, opportunities, and future priorities for getting around South Portland. Key opportunities and strengths include enhancing connections to physical assets such as the existing Greenbelt Walkway and improving the Casco Bay Bridge connection to Portland for active transportation users. Plans, programs, and resources such as Vision Zero and Complete Streets, “Electrify Everything”, the regional transit system, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, can help support getting around South Portland by modes other than private vehicles. Key challenges to overcome include lack of east-west roadway connectivity, which creates congestion on existing corridors, low density development patterns, especially on the western side of the City, narrow rights-of-way of City Streets and aging street infrastructure, and staffing and funding shortages at transit agencies.

### **Transportation - References**

City of South Portland and Greater Portland Council of Governments. Cushing’s Point Transportation Study. 2022.

City of South Portland Department of Transportation. <https://www.southportland.org/departments/bus-transportation/>.

City of South Portland. The Greenbelt Walkway. Accessed January 2023. <https://www.southportland.org/departments/parks-recreation-aquaticspool/parks-department/parks-trails-beaches/greenbelt-walkway/>.

Comprehensive Plan Transportation Focus Group Meeting (February 7, 2023)

Greater Portland Council of Governments. Transit Together Study. 2022-Present.

PACTS, Transit Stop Access Project (2017-Present)

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System. Highland Avenue Connector Road Study. 2001.



South Portland City Hall Sign, Source: South Portland Website

## 12. Public Facilities

Maine's Growth Management Act recommends planning for, financing, and developing an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development. South Portland's growth and transformation over the years has a significant effect on the demands placed on public services, infrastructure, and facilities. In general, municipal services and facilities are challenged to meet existing need. Updates and enhancements will be required to meet changes in population and demographics. Furthermore, certain public facilities are at risk from climate change, are out of compliance, and/or have inefficient performance due to aging assets. Many infrastructure upgrades are planned or have been completed to address these vulnerabilities and issues. Towards this aim, South Portland utilizes an asset management program across its departments to track existing facilities and infrastructure. South Portland's existing and future needs for general government facilities, public safety (police, fire, and emergency medical services), public works and school facilities vary by facility. This chapter presents an inventory of existing public facilities and the results of a citywide Facilities Assessment Study, which presents opportunities to capitalize on public assets and utilize existing facilities more efficiently. Within the Facilities Assessment Study it was identified that many departments have

space needs and various buildings have become available for repurposing. While many of the City's public facilities are in Growth Areas, some local schools, sewer infrastructure, and other assets are located outside of Growth Areas. However, planned facility expansions and investment are intended to serve development in South Portland's Growth Areas as shown in the Future Land Use Map in Part I.

### **Inventory and Analysis**

#### ***Facilities Assessment Study***

In 2023, a citywide Facilities Assessment Study was completed to examine the physical conditions, operations, sustainability performance, resiliency, and future needs of all public facilities. In addition to providing a summary of existing conditions and a general overview of public facilities, this section provides a summary of key findings and recommendations from the Facilities Assessment Study. The full report can be referenced for detailed breakdown of each facility.

#### ***Public Safety***

##### ***Police Department***

The South Portland Police Department is made up of three groups. The Patrol Division group, the Investigative and Support Services group, and the Administrative Support group. The Patrol Division is the largest division and consists of five patrol teams, animal control, and traffic management. The Investigative and Support Services is made up of detectives, technical services, and Public Safety Communications Personnel. Administrative Support includes administrative assistants, records, information support, and mechanical support. The South Portland Police Department partners where possible with regional partners to provide cost-effective and shared services. Technical services, including the identification, collection, preservation, and analysis of physical evidence, are now handled by the regional crime lab in Portland, Maine. Additionally, dispatch services are a joint effort between the cities of South Portland and Portland, ensuring efficient communication and response times between the departments.

The South Portland Police Department is located on Broadway next to the Central Fire Station. Its current gross square footage (gsf) is 17,070. The Facilities Assessment Study concluded that the police station has code and space deficiencies, deferred maintenance needs, a lack of effective heating, cooling, ventilation, and electrical systems, and several other inefficiencies. Additionally, the assessment found that the police station is operating at a 40 percent space deficit and has a programming and space need for 28,420 gsf to operate more efficiently. The City is exploring options to enhance the efficiency of its facilities, including combined spaces that would reduce costs and meet long-term programming needs.

The City of South Portland operates a Communications Center responsible for dispatching services to the police, fire, and emergency response departments. This center serves as a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for all 911 calls, radio dispatch, and business inquiries related to emergency services. The dispatch team consists of more than 15 trained and certified staff members who operate 24 hours a day. Their certifications include EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatcher), CTO (Certified Teletype Operator), and E911 (Enhanced 911 Course). Weekly dispatch logs are made public and record call date and time information, type of call, location of

incident, responding officer, and the nature of the call.

### *Fire Department*

The Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical services to the community, covering over 13 square miles of a mix of industry, commercial, institutions, and residential structures. The department is staffed with 71 full-time firefighters and paramedics, supported by 34 paid on-call firefighters. The Department has a Chief, a Fire Inspector, and an EMS supervisor, who work Monday-Friday, and 4 Deputy Chiefs. The Deputy Chiefs work on shifts as duty chief as well as overseeing different programs such as Fire Prevention, Code Enforcement, Training, and Personnel. While the South Portland Fire Department staffing levels are adequate, they are stressed. Specifically, EMS calls have been on the rise with struggles to keep up with the increased demand. While the current average call response time is about 5 minutes, the City will need to ensure that staffing for fire and emergency services grows with the needs of the community.

South Portland has two historic Call Stations across town that still house active limited teams and engines. The Willard Engine and Ladder Company was established in 1892, with the existing structure being built in 1949. It began as a horse drawn unit but was one of the first motorized fire response units in South Portland. The Willard Hose and Ladder Company is located on Pillsbury Street and now houses Engine 42 and Ladder 42, providing response to a range of emergencies in South Portland, Cape Elizabeth and the City of Portland. This Call Station is not adequate to meet the needs of the easternmost section of South Portland. The Thornton Heights Engine Company Six was established in 1923 and the current building on Union Street was constructed in 1939. It merged with Pleasantdale Engine Company Three due to the decline in membership at both companies. Thornton Heights Engine Company Six now includes Engine 46, one of the largest regional Industrial Foam Engines to protect against Aircraft incidents at the Portland International Jetport as well as the oil terminals.

In addition to the two call companies there are three fire stations across South Portland, the Central Fire Station, Cash Corner Fire

Station and the Western Avenue Fire Station. The Central Fire Station, built in 1950, is home to the Fire Department’s administration offices. It is located next to the Broadway Police Station, centrally located to the oil facilities, and has a foam transport trailer for specialized situations.

The Facilities Assessment Study found that the Central Fire Station is operating at a 22 percent space deficit and has a programming and space need for 31,645 gsf. The Cash Corner Fire Station on Main Street in the Cash Corner neighborhood was built in 2020 and is the largest and newest facility. The Western Avenue Fire Station was constructed in 2002 and is in close proximity to the Maine Mall. Some HVAC improvements were undertaken to address underperforming systems, significantly improving operating efficiency. The department conducts special training and has specialized equipment to properly protect against incidents from petroleum terminals and oil storage tanks as well as the nearby Portland International Jetport.

*Emergency Management Agency*

Currently the community’s emergency response system is adequate. The Fire Department is responsible for Emergency Management within the City. The Fire Chief serves as the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Director and is responsible for organizing and instituting the City’s Emergency Operations Plan. The plan outlines preplanning activities, response, and mitigation efforts. The Emergency Management Leadership Team (EMLT) is comprised of leadership from Police, Fire, Public Works, Finance, Parks and Recreation, and City Hall staff.

There is cooperation between the EMLT, industrial partners, and the Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency. Through this partnership, plans have been designed and instituted, and training has been conducted to ensure emergency preparedness. The City’s website has a wealth of emergency preparedness resources, including links to emergency preparedness materials from county, state, and federal agencies for residents, information on shelter locations, the City’s All Hazards Emergency Plan, evacuation information, and more.

**Public Works**

South Portland Public Works is a citywide service dedicated to comprehensive planning, constructing, and maintaining the City’s infrastructure. South Portland Public Works addresses street and sidewalk maintenance, street sweeping, snow plowing, debris removal from storm basins, street light bulb replacement, traffic signal and pedestrian crosswalk light malfunctions, and rubbish and recycling collection oversight. In 2017, a new consolidated Public Works Facility was completed and houses Public Works, Parks, and Transportation departments, as well as fleet maintenance and winter operations materials and vehicles. The department also maintains and operates the City’s Transfer Facility on Highland Avenue, which is only for the use of residents of South Portland.

**School Facilities**

According to Maine Department of Education, the total enrollment of South Portland Schools typically falls between 3,100 and 2,800 students across eight public schools. Enrollment numbers are generally stable with a drop of approximately 3% over the past 10 years (2015-2025). Kindergarten through fifth grade Elementary Schools include Frank I Brown Elementary, Dyer Elementary, James Otis Kaler Elementary, Dr. Waldo T. Skillin Elementary, and Dora L Small Elementary. In addition to fourteen regular classrooms, the building also houses academically gifted services, instructional

<b>2023-2024 Student Enrollment by School</b>	
Frank I Brown Elementary	235
Dyer Elementary	196
James Otis Kaley Elementary	220
Dr. Waldo T. Skillin Elementary	339
Dora L. Small Elementary	260
Mahoney Middle School	424
Memorial Middle School	388
South Portland High School	1019
<b>TOTAL 2023-2024 ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>3,081</b>

support, ELL services, reading and math interventionists, counseling providers, technology integrators, and multiple special area classes. Recently pre-K has also been incorporated in elementary schools based on available space and resources.

The South Portland Middle School is a new \$69.3 million middle school that was recently completed in 2023 and opened for the 2023/2024 school year. This new Middle School combined and replaced the former Memorial and Mahoney Middle Schools. South Portland Middle School now houses approximately 800 students from fifth through eighth grade from the two former Middle Schools and could accommodate an increase of capacity by 15 percent should they need to add more classrooms. The school offers core classes, art, STEM, physical education, music digital literacy, and foreign language classes as well as a range of services for students' needs. The state-of-the-art facility includes sustainable features such as solar panels on the roof and south-facing wall, as well as a geothermal well system hidden under the athletic field, a larger gym, and larger music spaces. With this new school, the city will have Mahoney available for repurposing while Memorial was demolished (more details provided below).

Ninth through twelfth grades are accommodated in South Portland High School. The high school is located on Highland Avenue and serves approximately 1,000 students. The high school was recently renovated in 2015, including a 137,000-square foot renovation and a 174,000-square-foot addition. Improvements included an overall refresh, a new cafeteria, a kitchen, a library, classrooms, labs, and administrative space. Upgrades to the associated mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems were also addressed. Site work included upgrades to utilities, a 338-space parking lot, seven new tennis courts, and new playing fields with lighting.

The School Department actively participates in the Greater Sebago Education Alliance. This regional collaboration includes both formal mutual aid agreements and less formal joint purchasing or coordination programs. In addition to potential cost savings, the collaboration provides access to enhanced programming, shared technical assistance and services. To enhance efficiency and cost-effectiveness, the City and School Department continue to South Portland Comprehensive Plan

explore opportunities for regional collaboration of facilities and service delivery.

### ***Other Public Facilities***

#### *City Hall*

The South Portland City Hall, located at 25 Cottage Road, is an approximately 15,506 gsf three-story wood-framed building, constructed in the late 1800s. Improvements were made to the building in 2013-2014, which included added insulation, a new asphalt shingle roof, and new siding. More recently, electric heat pumps were added to the building. The Facilities Assessment Study found that the building lacks automated fire protection or mechanical ventilation, its hot water boilers are nearing the end of their useful life, its domestic hot and cold water is not compliant with modern energy codes, and its heating and cooling systems are not integrated. The building's mechanical systems also do not comply with the city's net zero goals. Additionally, City Hall is operating at a 29 percent space deficit and has a programming and space need for 21,900 gsf to operate more efficiently.

#### *Assessing Office*

The assessing office is next to City Hall and is a single-story building with approximately 1,500 gsf that was constructed in the mid-1950s. The Facilities Assessment Study found that the building's roof is reaching its full life expectancy and needs replacement, there is no automated sprinkler system, its mechanical systems are not in compliance with current ventilation standards, and its mechanical and heat systems are not compliant with city net zero goals. The Assessing Office is operating at a 25 percent space deficit and has programming and space needs for 1,988 gsf.

#### *Library*

The South Portland Library has two facilities: the Main Library, located at 482 Broadway, and the Branch Library, located at 155 Wescott Rd. The Main Library is a 2-story, approximately 19,095 gsf building built in 1907. This library is the primary location housing most of the collections and offering most of the Library's pro-

grams. Similar to deficiencies found at other public facilities, the Facilities Assessment Study found that the Main Library has no automated fire protection, its hot water boilers, mechanical, and heat systems are not efficient and not in line with City energy goals, the hot water pumps and HVAC system are beyond their useful life the plumbing fixtures are approaching their useful life, its control systems are outdated, and the electrical distribution system is beyond its useful life and is increasingly subject to maintenance and reliability challenges. The Main Library's lighting system also needs replacing. Additionally, the Main Library operates at a 39 percent space deficit and has a programming and space need for 31,949 gsf.

The Memorial Branch Library is a small library on the City's western side. It is a shared space with the Municipal Golf Course Pro Shop. There is a limited collection, and it provides some programming for small groups. The Memorial Branch Library was built in 1977 in conjunction with the City's purchase of the Larry Rowe golf course.

The South Portland Electric Tool Library (SPETL) is open two days a week and provides electric lawn tool rentals such as lawn mowers and leaf blowers to residents who are 18 or older with an active South Portland library card.

### *City Planning, Codes, Economic Development, and Sustainability Office (Former Hamlin School)*

The former Hamlin School, located at 496 Ocean Street, is approximately 12,508 gsf and was originally an Elementary School; however, the school closed in 2004 and has since been repurposed for the City Planning, Codes, Economic Development, and Sustainability offices. The facility remains antiquated and is not energy efficient, with aged building spaces that are insufficient or not intended for the current user. Heat pumps were installed throughout the building as an interim measure to improve building energy usage and staff comfort. The Facilities Assessment Study found that the former Hamlin School operates at a 14 percent space surplus, with programming and space needed for only 10,704 gsf. This programming space need assumes that the current hardcopy document

storage can be digitized; thus, freeing up space that could be utilized more efficiently.

### *Former Mahoney Middle School*

As stated above, a new \$69.3 million middle school has been completed, which combined and replaced Memorial and Mahoney Middle Schools. With this new school, the City would be able to repurpose the existing Mahoney building. For the former Mahoney Middle School, the Facilities Assessment Study found no observed structural deficiencies; however, depending on its future use, significant modifications would be needed. Prior to repurposing, this school's boilers, HVAC system, and electrical distribution systems are beyond their useful life and would need upgrading or replacement. Other facility deficiencies include limited mechanical ventilation systems, the kitchen is not National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)-compliant, plumbing systems and fixtures need modernizing, the lighting system needs to be replaced with LED lighting technology, and its mechanical and heat systems are not compliant with the city's net zero goals.

### *Red Bank Community Center*

The Red Bank Community Center is located at 95 MacArthur Circle West and has a full-sized gym, full kitchen, activity room, and outside pavilion. It was constructed in 1997 and, in 2016, was evaluated for the expansion of its programs. A preliminary design was developed; however, it was cost-prohibitive to implement at the time. The Red Bank Community Center operates South Portland's Teen Center, which is a free program for South Portland residents in grades 6-12. The Teen Center operates Monday through Friday from 2:30-6:00 PM. The Community Center is also available to rent to outside groups.

### **Medical Facilities**

Local and regional health care facilities and social service programs meet the needs of the community, but gaps in services are present. South Portland residents receive medical services from

Maine Medical Center and Mercy Hospital in Portland. These campuses house approximately 1200-bed full-service medical centers offering emergency, inpatient, and outpatient care. Both hospitals also have diagnostic and therapy centers on campus and throughout the community, including offices in South Portland. Additionally, private companies provide various medical, dental, optical, and social service assistance within the community.

The City’s Social Services Departments assist residents in need by connecting them with regional low-cost and no-cost health care facilities. Maine state law requires all municipalities in Maine to have a designated Local Health Officer (LHO). The Local Health Officer has a broad range of responsibilities based upon the type of community they serve. The LHO is responsible for reporting community health concerns to the Maine Centers for Disease Control. It also works to enforce and investigate unhealthy dwellings. In South Portland, there is a designated code enforcement division as well as a full-time health inspector. The Social Services Department administers the General Assistance Program - a State program designed to assist eligible residents with basic necessities.

**Infrastructure**

*Water Resource Protection*

The Water Resource Protection Department is responsible for protecting and improving local water resources, which include local ponds and streams, the Fore River, and, ultimately, Casco Bay. The Department is divided into three main divisions: Treatment Systems, Collection Systems, and Engineering.

*Wastewater Treatment Systems*

South Portland’s wastewater system has been upgraded periodically over the last 30 years to increase capacity, reduce combined sewer outfall events, and increase capacity. The wastewater system serves the entire city. The City continues to upgrade and maintain the system to support the needs of the community.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Treatment Systems Division handles the wastewater treatment facility’s operation and maintenance and

Facility	Address	Current GSF	Needs Assessment GSF	Delta
City Hall	25 Cottage Rd.	15,506	21,900	-29%
Hamlin School	829 Sawyer St.	12,08	10,704	14%
Assessing Building	41 Thomas St.	1,500	1,988	-25%
Library	482 Broadway	19,348	31,949	-39%
Former Mahoney School	240 Ocean St.	93,090	N/A	N/A
Police Station	30 Anthoine St	17,070	28,420	-40%
Central Fire	684 Broadway	24,800	31,645	-22%

2023 Facilities Needs Assessment Matrix

it’s 31 pump stations to ensure residential, commercial, and industrial wastewater is adequately treated before being discharged into the Fore River and ultimately Casco Bay. The wastewater treatment plant was constructed in 1977 and designed to have a capacity of 5.5 million gallons per day (MGD). The most recent major upgrade took place in 1995, which increased the plant’s design capacity to 9.3 MGD, handling a peak flow of 22.9 MGD. A pump station moves wastewater when gravity mains are inadequate, especially in cases where water needs to be moved from a low-lying area to higher ground. Sewer pump stations are equipped with a large underground receiving tank, a wet well to collect the wastewater, and an electric pump and force main lifts the water upwards. These are critical infrastructures to keep wastewater moving to the wastewater treatment plant. Because these are so important, maintenance and resiliency are critical issues for the City. South Portland has upgraded and fortified approximately six pump stations in the last ten years and added automation and instrumentation upgrades for pump stations. The Treatment Systems Division also ensures that the City’s major industries do not discharge in excess and compromise the proper functioning of the wastewater treatment

facility.

The Maine DEP approved the City's Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Plan in 1994. The City has since identified and implemented projects to reduce CSO discharges from 200 million gallons in 1994 to approximately 8.7 million in 2019. The most recent CSO Facilities Plan was developed in 2009, revised in 2011, and outlined a 12-year implementation schedule. This plan specifically targeted eliminating or reducing overflows generated from a two-year, 24-hour storm event. Various plant upgrades have been implemented or are in the works and include upgraded electrical, aeration upgrades, and automation. In May 2022, a CSO Facilities Plan Update was approved by the Maine DEP, which included updating a hydraulic model to incorporate the completed abatement projects, better represent current conditions, and improve the predictability of future abatement options for the remaining CSOs. South Portland's sanitary district extension policy is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and any new development requires plan review which includes infrastructure review for level of service, compliance, and impact fees. Sewer lining projects at Cash Corner, Cornell Street, Coolidge Ave., and Ridgeland Ave. were also constructed in 2024.

As discussed in Chapter 7, housing needs are changing and more multi-family housing units are needed to accommodate South Portland's affordable housing needs. The Water Resource Protection Department has identified that the wastewater upgrades were made with South Portland's projected and changing growth in mind and the current facilities and system have capacity available for anticipated future developments. Future developments are reviewed to ensure the city can accommodate additional infrastructure loads and each project works closely with the Water Resource Protection Department to evaluate impacts and address necessary infrastructure upgrades.

Pump stations, stormwater capture, and pipe networks are common in the flood zones and are critical for maintaining an active waterfront. Over time, the City has invested in necessary upgrades and hardening and most infrastructure is protected for current storm events and 100-year flood events. South Portland has South Portland Comprehensive Plan

upgraded and fortified approximately 6 pump stations in the last 10 years and added automation and instrumentation upgrades for pump stations. Despite addressing resiliency concerns for infrastructure overtime, the system still sees vulnerabilities. In addition to other resiliency-focused fortifications, the force main running along Willard Beach is at risk because of the recent coastal dune destruction. There is currently a restoration project of the coastal dunes that will aid in protecting this critical infrastructure.

The Collection Systems Division is primarily responsible for the City's underground infrastructure, which includes sewer and storm drains. This includes TV inspections, pipe cleaning, construction, and equipment maintenance. The Collection System Division uses closed circuit TV to inspect and track pipe condition using a geographic information system (GIS) and works with the City's asset management software. Every sewer hole, catch basin, and pipe is catalogued with a unique identifier, however, elevation data and other associated attributes are needed to allow the Division to maintain the sewer and stormwater assets efficiently. The Collection System Division is responsible for cleaning pipes and related structures, such as catch basins, to ensure proper functioning. The City has a hydraulic vacuum truck that uses a high-powered jet spray to convey pipe sediments to downstream sewer holes and catch basins, which is then removed from the system. Infrastructure conditions and maintenance are recorded in the GIS-enabled asset management system. The Collection System Division uses the information gathered from closed-circuit television (CCTV) inspections and cleaning. The Collection Systems Division also repairs and replaces portions of the sewer and stormwater systems to ensure proper functioning. The Division also installs grey and green stormwater treatment systems in the public rights-of-way. The Collection System Division includes a skilled construction crew and keeps and maintains 53 pieces of heavy non-stationary construction and maintenance equipment and vehicles. The Collection Systems Division is also responsible for compliance with state and federal regulations that pertain to minimizing the adverse effects of polluted stormwater runoff into local water resources and is also responsible for the City's Stormwater Management Plan.

The storm sewer system in South Portland includes roads, curbs and gutters, ditches, catch basins, storm drains, outfalls, and pipes connecting these features. The City's Stormwater Management Program Plan identifies specific minimum control measures. The Water Resources Protection Department implements the City's Stormwater Management Plan, serves as the point of contact with the Maine DEP, inspects and maintains all municipal stormwater and sewage infrastructure, ensures pollution prevention measures are followed at the Division's maintenance garage, ensures erosion and sedimentation control measures during construction and maintenance activities are followed, identifies potential pollution sources and works to eliminate them, trains City staff to minimize pollution, reviews site plans for erosion and sedimentation control measures and post-construction stormwater control measures, and ensures compliance with construction and post-construction stormwater management requirements. In 2009, the City established Stormwater Management Performance Standards, which are intended to serve as a resource for new development or redevelopment on smaller projects less than an acre.

The Clean Water Act requires municipalities to comply with municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4) permit regulations, which have been established to minimize the harmful effects of polluted stormwater runoff and improve local water quality. To achieve this, the City's Stormwater Management Program Plan identifies specific minimum control measures that must be implemented over ongoing five-year permit periods. There are six minimum control measures that are required to be implemented. They include public education and outreach, public participation and involvement, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site runoff control, post-construction runoff control, pollution prevention, and good housekeeping. The City's Stormwater Program Management Plan describes how each of these minimum control measures will be implemented over the five-year permit period.

While there is confidence in wastewater capacity of the system during normal dry circumstances, wet weather impacts are a major concern. South Portland is required by law to meet strict State and Federal water quality guidelines. Since South Portland

has a combined sewer and storm system, the City experiences increased peak flows during rain events and is unable to treat all discharges. Therefore, reducing the CSO events is a priority to meet the requirements and reduce financial penalties. The majority of the system upgrades are to be able to increase capacity and reduce the CSO discharges. The City has worked hard to reduce CSO discharges from 200 million gallons in 1994 to approximately 8.7 million gallons in 2019. The most recent CSO Facilities Plan was developed in 2009, revised in 2011, and outlined a 12-year implementation schedule. This plan specifically targeted eliminating or reducing overflows generated from a 2-year, 24-hour storm event. Various Plant upgrades that have been implemented or in the works. Precipitation in 2023 was measured at 56.7 inches, higher than the historical average of 48.12. Particularly during December 2023 and January 2024 storms brought 10.95 inches of precipitation compared to 5.56 inches the previous year. This increased precipitation put tremendous stress on the existing stormwater infrastructure. Stormwater management and reducing impacts from new developments will be a critical to South Portland's future growth.

The Engineering Division is responsible for overseeing the City's planning, design, and construction of various projects specific to the City's stormwater and combined sewer and wastewater infrastructure. The division also oversees the City's Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Program, which is governed by state and federal regulations. Some of the City's underground system of sewer and stormwater pipes discharge directly to nearby surface waters during heavy rain events. These discharges, collectively referred to as CSOs, must be minimized to protect surface water quality. The Engineering Division team is committed to minimizing combined sewer outfall discharges and protecting surface water quality. To that end, the division partners with agencies and other departments to address resiliency concerns and incorporate green infrastructure. The City's CSO Facilities Plan, which was updated in May 2022, provides strategies for reducing CSO discharges in compliance with the Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MEPDES) permit and Waste Discharge License. The Engineering Division also provides engineering support services to other municipal

departments.

### *Subsurface Wastewater*

Septic tank waste disposal is pumped and moved by licensed haulers to the wastewater treatment plant or other licensed facilities. A licensed site evaluator must design and permit any septic system to ensure they meet minimum standards of the Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules. Currently there are no major issues or concerns regarding septic tank waste in South Portland.

### *Drinking Water*

South Portland drinking water is provided by Portland Water District (PWD), an independent utility district that serves 11 Greater Portland communities with water service. Water is treated and piped from Sebago Lake and runs throughout South Portland. The PWD works in collaboration with South Portland Public Works but all maintenance, repairs and capital projects are handled by PWD. PWD serves nearly the entire city, apart from 12 properties served by individual wells. There are 11 domestic wells and 1 commercial well in South Portland (see Natural & Water Resources chapter for more information.) Currently, the City is adequately serviced and no public water supply expansions are anticipated. South Portland's public water supply extension policy is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and any new development requires plan review which includes infrastructure review for compliance and level of service.

### *Solid Waste*

The solid waste management system is meeting current needs of the city. Trash collection is contracted out to a vendor and hauled to ecomaine located in Portland. Ecomaine is a recycling and waste-to-energy plant originally owned by the Cape Elizabeth, Portland, Scarborough and South Portland municipalities and has since grown to a 73-municipality regional organization. South Portland residents are issued one trash barrel and one recycling barrel with strict guidelines for what can be collected. South Portland utilizes a single-sort recycling program, which allows all designated recycla-

bles to be together in the same container and then sorted at ecomaine, encouraging more recycling and less reliance on trash.

South Portland owns and operates a Transfer Station for South Portland residents with valid permit stickers. Stickers are provided by Public Works or from City Hall and are affixed to vehicles to prove residency. In addition to residents, landscape contractors and landlord/property owner permit stickers are available. Commercial use of the facility is not permitted. Only accepted items may be disposed of at the facility and an attendant must approve before discarding items. The facility runs a seasonal Swap Shop that offers a place to shop and discard used items.

Food waste pickup service is available for a fee through private firms. The City provides a reduced rate and free 12-gallon bins for residents interested in receiving the curb-side pickup service. In addition, the City provides 5 drop-off locations for residents to deposit food waste free of charge.

### *Telecommunications and Energy Infrastructure*

Within South Portland there is a range of power and communication services, including three-phase power, telephone, fiber, broadband, and cable. Additionally, several municipal facilities, such as schools, the library, and City Hall, are equipped with wireless services. South Portland's Information Technology Department is responsible for evolving and supporting the City's technology environment. The department supports a robust municipal phone and email system, approximately 100 servers, 300 computers as well as system printers and photocopiers. The department also provides support for the South Portland School Departments network, server, and telecommunications infrastructure. The team manages the fiber connectivity, wireless network and firewall infrastructure. The Information Technology Department works with multiple private telecommunications companies to implement and maintain infrastructure. In 2014, the City of South Portland contracted with Great Works Internet to build and manage an ultra-high speed, fiber optic internet network as part of their commitment to be an inaugural member of Next Century Cities. The Next Century Cities is a bipartisan, city-to-city initiative dedicated to ensuring the avail-

ability of next-generation broadband internet for all communities. The Great Works Internet network is state of the art and provides internet to many neighborhoods but there are still significant gaps in the geographic distribution.

Energy infrastructure is provided by private companies. Central Maine Power is the electric utility for South Portland. This private company work in collaboration with South Portland Public Works but the assets are not South Portland public infrastructure and all maintenance, repairs and capital projects are handled by CMP.

### *Street Tree Program*

South Portland does not have a dedicated street tree program. However, the city does employ a City Arborist to focus on the health, safety, and management of individual trees as well as establish street tree enhancements and tree replacement programs. The city also recently passed the Tree Protection Ordinance in 2023. This ordinance protects against certain tree removals.

### *Capital Improvement Plan*

The City's Capital Improvement Program for 2026-2032 was completed in March 2025 and outlines the estimated costs of needed capital improvements to public facilities and services. It is available online here:

<https://www.southportland.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3424/Fiscal-Year-2026---2032-Managers-Proposed-Capital-Improvement-Program?bidId=>

## Public Facilities – References

The Facilities Assessment Study

HVAC improvements referenced in the Fire Department section

Emergency preparedness resources on the city's website referenced under the Emergency Management Agency section

Student enrollment numbers referenced in the School Facilities section

City energy goals referenced in the Other Public Facilities section

South Portland Comprehensive Plan

The 2016 Expansion Evaluation referenced in the Red Bank Community Center section

The Industrial Pretreatment Program referenced in the Treatment Systems section

The Clean Water Act referenced in the Stormwater Management Program section

The City's Stormwater Program Management Plan referenced in the Stormwater Management Program section

The Combined Sewer Overflow Program and Facilities Plan referenced in the Engineering section

The Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit and Waste Discharge License referenced in the Engineering section

## Public Facilities – Acronyms & Definitions

CCTV- Closed-Circuit Television

CSO - Combined Sewer Overflow

CTO- Certified Teletype Operator

E911- Enhanced 911 Course

EMA - Emergency Management Agency

EMD- Emergency Medical Dispatcher

EMLT – Emergency Management Leadership Team

ELL - English Language Learner

GIS- Geographic Information System

GSF - Gross Square Feet

LHO- Local Health Officer

MGD - Million Gallons per Day

MS4 - Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems

MEPDES - Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

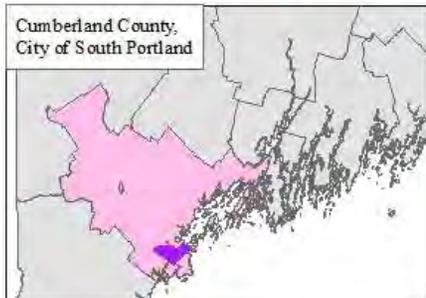
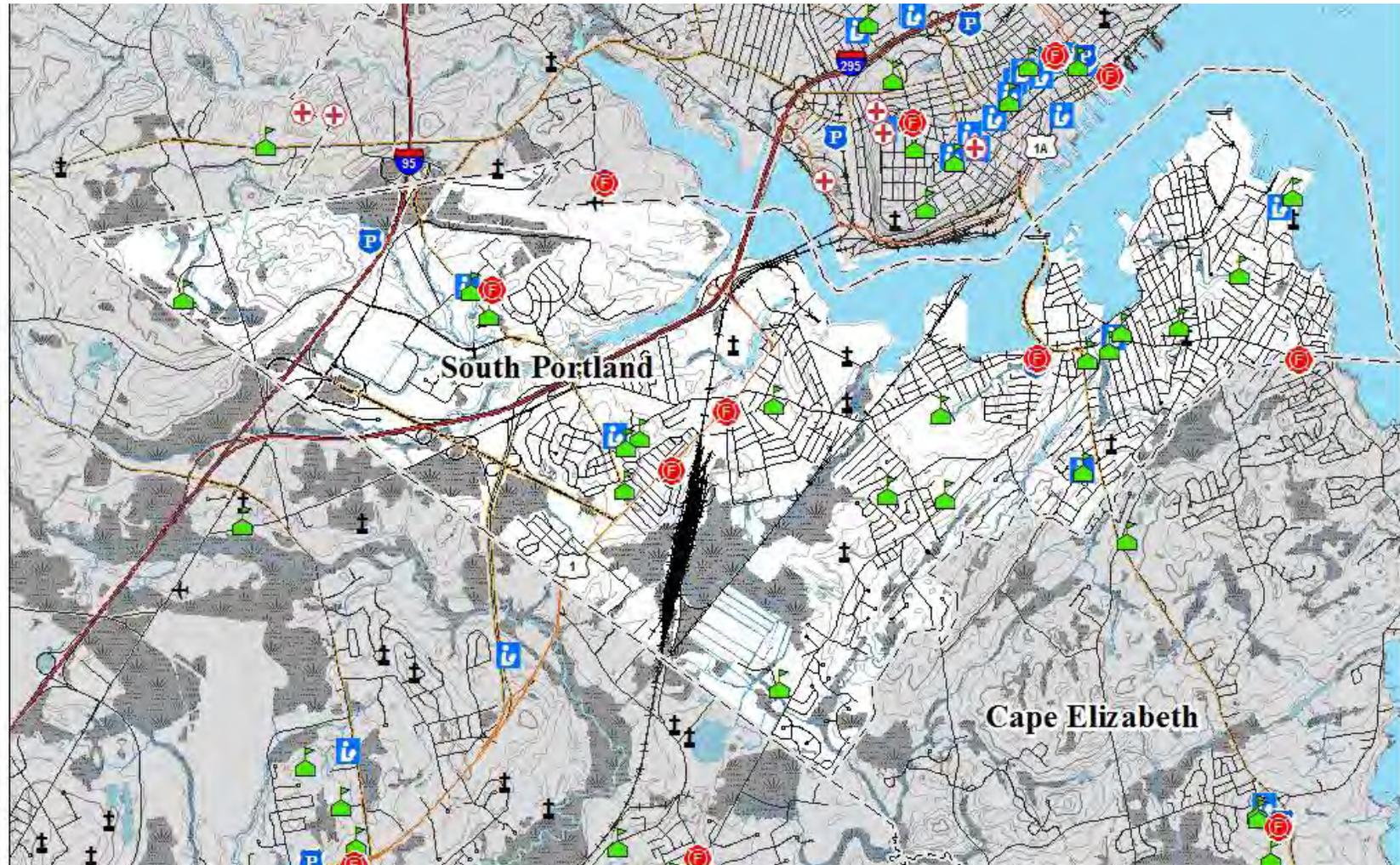
NFPA - National Fire Protection Association

PSAP- Public Safety Answering Point

PWD- Portland Water District

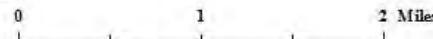
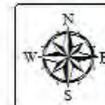
SPETL- The South Portland Electric Tool Library

SRT- Special Reaction or "Tactical" Team



### South Portland Infrastructure

Source Data: USDA, MEGIS, Maine DACF  
 Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone 19, Meters  
 Produced by: Municipal Planning  
 Assistance Program, DACF  
 October 2020



Legend		
	Hospital	
	Fire Station	
	School	
	Police Station	
	Library	
	Cemetery	
	Airport	
	Boat/Launches	
	Municipal border	
	Interstate	
	U.S. Routes	
	State Routes	
	Railroad	
	Waterbody	
	Rivers	
	Rivers/Streams	
	Wetlands	
	Contours 100	
	Contours	



# 13. Fiscal Capacity

Tax Payment Dropbox, Source: WGME, Source: South Portland Website

South Portland has strong financial systems in place for annual budgeting as well as capital planning, which includes maintaining significant cash reserves. This fiscal discipline is shown in the City's high bond ratings (AAA from Moody's and AAA from Standard and Poor's – the highest ratings for municipal bonds.) It is also shown in the City's long-standing commitment to financial planning and transparency, including:

- Regular property reassessments to keep assessed values in line with market values, to keep the property tax process transparent and ensure an equitable distribution of the tax burden, and to ensure that a low assessment value ratio does not negatively impact state aid for the homestead exemption;
- Use of Tax Increment Financing to both plan for future development and limit the negative effects of rising valuation on the City's share of state aid for education and revenue sharing, as well as the City's share of the County tax assessment;
- Capital planning that utilizes a variety of funding sources; and
- Detailed annual audits and financial reports publicly available on the City's website.

The City of South Portland generally provides good, high-quality services for its residents and businesses at a good cost value to taxpayers.

## Inventory and Analysis

### *Local Public Finance*

The City's finances generally consist of two components: an Annual Budget and a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

### *Annual Budgets*

Every year, the City Council approves an annual budget that outlines what the municipality will spend money on (expenditures) and what money is expected to be raised (revenue). Some revenue sources, such as state aid, grants, and federal programs, help offset the local amount of revenue needed. Local sources such as excise taxes, fees, and fines can also help raise revenue.

Once all those amounts are determined, the City must use real estate and personal property tax to pay the balance. Real estate taxes are paid by the owners of each parcel in the city. Personal property (business equipment, furniture, etc) taxes are paid by

business owners. South Portland completed a revaluation in 2021.

*Debt*

According to South Portland’s June 2024 financial report, the City has \$104,876,532 in direct debt. The majority is general obligation debt (\$103,852,568), with \$894,644 in financed purchase debt and \$149,320 in lease liabilities. The state statute limits the amount of general obligation debt a municipality may issue. Total debt cannot exceed 15% of South Portland’s last full state valuation. The latest State Valuation was \$6,697,050,000, giving South Portland a debt margin of \$906,728,438, which is considerably more than current debt. The City has sufficient borrowing capacity should additional funds for capital investments be needed.

*Expenditures Over Time*

As seen in the tables on the following pages<sup>1</sup>, South Portland’s budget increased from \$97.5 million to \$114.1 million in the five years between 2016 and 2021. Major drivers of the South Portland municipal budget in both years were:

- General government operations
- Public Safety
- Public Works
- Education
- Sewer operations

These are typical categories for local budgets in urban communities in Maine. The table below shows how expenditures changed in those five years by category. Categories that grew faster than the overall budget include:

- Public Safety
- Transportation & waterfront

- Health, welfare & social services

During this five-year period, the largest growth by category was seen in health, welfare, and social services. South Portland, like much of the Portland region, has seen an influx of immigrants requiring social services, as well as an increased need for services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Though this category of expenditure saw the highest growth, it did not add more to the budget in absolute terms than did growth in other categories like public safety, education, or general government.

*Revenues over Time*

While expenses increased by approximately 16.7 percent over the five years from Fiscal Year 2016 to Fiscal Year 2021, overall revenues increased by over 21 percent in that same timeframe. Other sources, such as grant funding, helped raise additional revenue.

The following charts show the trends in revenues and expenditures for City services over the past two years (FY2022 and FY2023).

**SOUTH PORTLAND EXPENSES, 2016-2021**

Fiscal Year	2016 (\$1,000's)	2021 (\$1,000's)	Percent Change
General Government	\$13,748	\$15,649	13.83%
Public safety	\$13,001	\$15,538	19.51%
Public works	\$6,874	\$8,029	16.80%
Culture and recreation	\$4,858	\$4,475	-7.88%
Transportation & waterfront	\$1,596	\$1,937	21.37%
Health, welfare & social services	\$522	\$735	40.80%
Education	\$47,943	\$58,136	21.26%
School lunch	\$1,722	\$1,641	-4.70%
Interest on debt service	\$1,328	\$1,382	4.07%
Sewer	\$6,154	\$6,564	6.66%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$97,746</b>	<b>\$114,086</b>	<b>16.72%</b>

*Source: Adapted from Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, City of South Portland (June 30, 2021)*

<sup>1</sup> Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, City of South Portland (for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021), pp. 131-2, <https://www.southportland.org/files/3716/7414/3265/SOUTH-PORTLAND-2021-ACFR-6-30-21.pdf>

### 13. Fiscal Capacity

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND  
 MAINE COMPARATIVE BUDGET PLAN FY2023  
 JULY 1, 2021-JUNE 30, 2022  
 JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023

	FY22	FY23	\$ +/(-)	%
<b>City General Fund Revenues</b>				
Property Taxes	\$ 25,422,624	\$ 28,237,442	\$ 2,814,818	11.1%
Other Local Taxes	3,995,719	3,712,532	(283,187)	-7.1%
Licenses & Permits	907,600	1,096,300	188,700	20.8%
Intergovernmental Revenue	8,319,440	19,445,693	11,126,253	133.7%
Charges for Services	2,366,101	2,402,275	36,174	1.5%
Fines and Penalties	129,200	152,600	23,400	18.1%
Use of Money and Property	631,000	886,000	255,000	40.4%
Other Sources	136,350	3,098,153	2,961,803	2,172.2%
Fund Balance Use (Contribution)	1,200,000	950,000	(250,000)	-20.8%
<b>Total General Fund Revenues</b>	<b>43,108,034</b>	<b>59,980,995</b>	<b>16,872,961</b>	<b>39.1%</b>

Source: FY2023 City Budget, City of South Portland (6/21/22) p. 12

CITY GENERAL FUND BUDGET  
 BY EXPENDITURE CATEGORY COMPARISON FY2022 AND FY2023

	FY22 Adopted	FY23 Proposed	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Personnel	\$ 27,073,195	\$ 29,721,616	\$ 2,648,421	9.8%
Contractual	\$ 5,507,416	\$ 6,105,159	\$ 597,743	10.9%
Services				
Supplies	\$ 2,243,171	\$ 7,721,125	\$ 5,477,954	244.2%
Other	\$ 2,040,205	\$ 8,777,810	\$ 6,737,605	330.2%
Debt	\$ 1,814,667	\$ 2,081,866	\$ 267,199	14.7%
Capital	\$ 1,309,560	\$ 1,332,046	\$ 22,486	1.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 39,998,214</b>	<b>\$ 55,739,622</b>	<b>\$ 15,751,408</b>	<b>39.4%</b>

Source: FY2023 City Budget, City of South Portland (6/21/22) p. x

GOVERNMENTAL TAX REVENUES BY SOURCE  
 LAST TEN FISCAL YEARS (MODIFIED ACCRUAL BASIS OF ACCOUNTING)

Fiscal Year	Property Taxes (b)	Vehicle Taxes	Other (a)	Subtotal	TIF Property Taxes	Capital Project Property Taxes	Total
2012	\$53,525,182	5,037,900	364,869	58,927,951	2,400,433	1,050,000	62,378,384
2013	54,659,082	5,453,056	341,440	60,453,578	2,303,339	1,353,970	64,110,887
2014	56,837,797	5,829,497	350,795	63,018,089	2,334,343	-	65,352,432
2015	59,781,351	6,374,595	359,164	66,515,110	2,452,962	-	68,968,072
2016	60,517,323	7,241,370	379,194	68,137,887	2,485,691	-	70,623,578
2017	61,266,181	7,100,567	351,968	68,718,716	2,469,739	-	71,188,455
2018	62,618,719	7,595,421	344,268	70,558,408	2,579,570	-	73,137,978
2019	65,176,305	7,893,886	364,035	73,434,226	2,795,535	-	76,229,761
2020	67,248,267	6,147,045	374,604	73,769,916	2,910,762	-	76,680,678
2021	69,201,016	7,064,080	395,990	76,661,086	2,641,433	-	79,302,519
2022	68,203,859	6,212,025	404,836	74,820,720	2,877,506	-	77,698,226

(a) Interest and penalties and payments in lieu of taxes.  
 (b) includes property taxes allocated to adult education.

Source: Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, City of South Portland (June 30, 2021), Pg 138<sup>9</sup>

**CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE**  
**Changes in Net Position Last Ten Fiscal Years**  
**(accrual basis of accounting)**

Expenses	Fiscal Year										
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Governmental activities:											
General government	\$10,884,706	\$10,512,718	\$ 11,284,446	\$10,584,081	\$13,747,918	\$13,548,355	\$13,958,497	\$ 11,097,687	\$16,587,038	\$ 15,648,947	\$13,610,118
Public safety	11,883,029	12,030,128	12,553,773	12,766,963	13,000,756	13,344,042	13,857,160	14,378,122	14,715,423	15,538,227	16,888,738
Public works	7,333,922	7,282,274	7,519,818	7,510,853	6,873,549	7,641,727	8,159,709	7,990,357	8,840,505	8,028,758	8,141,159
Culture and recreation	4,849,852	4,333,705	4,431,468	4,440,715	4,587,976	4,372,866	4,938,167	4,911,749	4,762,474	4,474,919	4,958,930
Transportation and waterfront	1,220,037	1,218,546	1,381,048	1,519,381	1,596,383	1,814,621	1,982,271	2,060,680	2,075,168	1,937,271	2,349,034
Health, welfare and social services	321,795	329,143	335,866	369,616	521,834	506,108	559,095	566,904	684,709	735,182	1,001,015
Education	43,451,415	42,854,439	45,825,021	47,485,069	47,943,450	50,058,768	51,900,039	58,243,047	53,789,458	58,136,143	60,054,061
School lunch program	1,591,951	1,547,688	1,681,737	1,693,739	1,721,538	1,803,337	1,820,284	1,885,962	1,797,884	1,640,669	2,310,607
Interest on debt service	853,840	1,761,281	1,464,950	1,436,958	1,328,266	1,695,611	1,272,571	1,100,838	1,273,613	1,382,369	1,952,654
Total governmental activities expenses	81,390,547	81,869,922	86,428,127	87,807,375	91,321,670	94,785,435	98,447,793	97,235,846	104,526,272	107,522,485	111,266,316
Business-type activities:											
Sewer	5,632,254	5,885,557	6,133,807	6,147,313	6,154,095	6,203,347	6,345,116	6,455,769	6,540,614	6,564,090	6,461,378
Total business-type activities expenses	5,632,254	5,885,557	6,133,807	6,147,313	6,154,095	6,203,347	6,345,116	6,455,769	6,540,614	6,564,090	6,461,378
Total primary government expenses	87,022,801	\$87,755,479	\$ 92,561,934	\$ 93,954,688	\$97,475,765	\$100,988,782	\$104,792,909	\$103,691,115	\$111,066,886	\$114,086,575	\$117,727,694
<b>Program Revenues</b>											
Governmental activities:											
Charges for services:											
General government	\$305,479	\$ 514,857	\$ 417,451	\$ 510,092	\$ 831,509	\$ 442,734	\$ 414,864	\$ 414,772	\$ 443,867	\$ 914,546	\$ 890,999
Public safety	1,188,407	1,506,952	1,448,532	1,358,246	1,715,339	2,090,407	1,919,169	1,898,476	2,815,926	2,536,975	2,508,844

### 13. Fiscal Capacity

Public works	200,634	331,600	283,953	300,711	308,979	386,056	242,771	253,305	449,198	332,688	351,645
Culture and recreation	923,531	922,237	922,321	974,204	1,078,408	1,119,989	1,316,027	1,410,321	915,697	922,346	1,637,511
Transportation and waterfront	393,663	418,198	439,386	417,158	389,317	376,949	374,004	375,738	291,494	166,254	209,253
Education	119,035	57,030	37,157	55,695	105,425	126,000	126,463	124,996	125,000	136,500	185,200
School lunch program	559,536	559,536	559,536	559,536	559,536	556,652	639,552	659,174	431,029	40,797	221,176
Operating grants and contributions	12,254,487	10,382,263	12,995,004	13,459,862	13,373,025	14,780,259	15,318,974	14,806,576	17,615,005	24,900,449	24,456,740
Capital grants and contributions	479,280	518,319	1,574,695	382,528	1,917,714	1,783,472	468,032	375,205	334,302	501,471	1,420,388
Total governmental activities program revenues	16,424,052	15,210,992	18,678,037	18,018,032	20,279,252	21,662,518	20,819,356	20,318,563	23,421,518	30,452,046	31,881,756
Business-type activities:											
Charges for services:											
Sewer	5,436,377	5,637,193	5,927,684	5,927,684	5,922,343	6,008,622	6,015,315	6,080,533	5,865,711	6,268,760	6,788,661
Capital grants and contributions	110,000	138,232	-	-	100,000	254,765	-	-	113,954	-	18,100
Total business-type activities program revenues	5,546,377	5,775,425	5,927,684	5,927,684	6,022,343	6,263,387	6,015,315	6,080,533	5,979,665	6,268,760	6,806,761
Total primary government program revenues	\$21,970,429	\$20,986,417	\$24,605,721	\$23,945,716	\$26,301,595	\$27,925,905	\$26,835,171	\$26,399,096	\$29,401,183	\$36,720,806	\$38,688,517

Source: Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, City of South Portland (June 30, 2021), Pg 132<sup>4</sup>

**CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND  
CHANGES IN NET POSITION LAST TEN FISCAL YEARS (CONT.)  
(ACCRUAL BASIS OF ACCOUNTING)**

	Fiscal Year										
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Net (expense)/revenue											
Governmental activities	(\$64,966,495)	(\$66,658,930)	(\$67,750,090)	(\$69,789,343)	(\$71,042,418)	(\$73,122,927)	(\$77,627,937)	(\$76,916,783)	(\$81,104,754)	(\$77,070,439)	(\$79,384,560)
Business-type activities	(\$85,877)	(110,132)	(206,123)	(326,984)	(181,752)	60,040	(329,801)	(375,236)	(560,949)	(295,330)	345,383
Total primary government net (expense)/revenue	(\$65,052,372)	(\$66,769,062)	(\$67,956,213)	(\$70,116,327)	(\$71,174,170)	(\$73,062,887)	(\$77,957,738)	(\$77,292,019)	(\$81,665,703)	(\$77,365,769)	(\$79,039,177)
<b>General Revenues and other Changes in Net Position</b>											
<b>Government Activities:</b>											
<b>Taxes:</b>											
Property taxes, levied for general purposes	\$57,176,484	\$58,939,891	\$59,778,935	\$61,874,477	\$63,183,208	\$64,164,888	\$65,519,757	\$68,265,075	\$70,532,733	\$72,217,939	\$71,392,201
Motor vehicle excise tax	5,037,900	5,453,056	5,829,497	6,374,595	7,241,370	7,100,567	7,595,421	7,893,886	6,147,045	7,064,080	6,212,025
Cable television franchise	185,000	176,253	166,543	151,779	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	100,000	104,050
Unrestricted grants and contributions	4,244,228	4,391,399	4,259,604	4,321,318	4,427,881	4,911,784	4,883,857	5,165,596	6,218,777	7,374,404	8,987,849
Miscellaneous	1,400,096	1,224,458	1,088,123	1,169,599	945,284	986,617	824,864	1,002,266	956,662	710,746	773,866
Gain (Loss) on sale of assets/property	(121,631)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest and investment earnings	751,519	431,930	592,776	581,216	680,112	411,583	407,993	1,578,337	2,506,266	206,351	(940,127)
Transfers	(1,816,658)	(298,992)	(306,075)	(195,242)	(1,856,609)	1,808,295	(3,363,343)	(620,941)	(420,540)	(120,138)	(3,112,160)
<b>Total governmental activities</b>	<b>\$66,856,938</b>	<b>\$70,317,935</b>	<b>\$71,409,403</b>	<b>\$74,277,742</b>	<b>\$74,691,246</b>	<b>\$79,503,734</b>	<b>\$75,988,549</b>	<b>\$83,404,269</b>	<b>\$86,060,963</b>	<b>\$87,553,582</b>	<b>\$83,417,704</b>
<b>Business-type activities:</b>											
Interest and investment earnings	30,143	27,079	30,101	48,777	76,744	79,684	78,264	113,512	78,622	57,836	106,523
Transfers	1,816,658	298,992	306,075	195,242	1,856,609	(1,808,295)	3,363,343	620,941	420,540	120,138	3,112,160
<b>Total business-type activities</b>	<b>1,846,801</b>	<b>326,071</b>	<b>336,176</b>	<b>244,019</b>	<b>1,933,353</b>	<b>(1,728,611)</b>	<b>3,441,607</b>	<b>734,453</b>	<b>499,162</b>	<b>177,974</b>	<b>3,218,683</b>
<b>Total primary government</b>	<b>\$68,703,739</b>	<b>\$70,644,006</b>	<b>\$71,745,579</b>	<b>\$74,521,761</b>	<b>\$76,624,599</b>	<b>\$77,775,123</b>	<b>\$79,430,156</b>	<b>\$84,138,722</b>	<b>\$86,560,125</b>	<b>\$87,731,556</b>	<b>\$86,636,387</b>
<b>Change in Net Position</b>											
Governmental activities	\$1,890,443	\$9,659,005	\$3,659,313	\$4,488,399	\$3,643,828	\$6,380,807	(\$1,639,388)	\$6,487,486	\$4,956,209	\$10,483,143	\$4,033,144
Business-type activities	1,760,924	215,939	180,053	(82,965)	1,801,601	(1,668,571)	3,111,806	359,217	(61,787)	(117,356)	3,564,066
<b>Total primary government</b>	<b>\$3,651,367</b>	<b>\$9,874,944</b>	<b>\$3,839,366</b>	<b>\$4,405,434</b>	<b>\$5,450,429</b>	<b>\$4,712,236</b>	<b>\$4,722,418</b>	<b>\$6,846,703</b>	<b>\$4,894,422</b>	<b>\$10,365,787</b>	<b>\$7,597,210</b>

(a) The business-type activities transfer was a result of sewer pipe infrastructure entered into Public Works but should have been attributed to Water Resource Protection.

Source: Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, City of South Portland (6/30/21), Pg 132<sup>5</sup>

**State Valuation**

As property values increased in South Portland over the past few years, the gap between assessed and market values grew. The state keeps track of that gap, as shown in the table below. This gap was closed through the City’s 2021 revaluation.

**Property Tax Rates**

As outlined above, the real estate and personal property tax is a key component of municipal revenue. It is often called the “remainder tax” because when all the other revenue sources are exhausted, it has to cover what “remains.” In South Portland, the tax rate has not increased excessively in the past five years. In addition, in 2021, South Portland completed a revaluation that adjusted assessments generally up which helped decrease the mill rates.

The increase in the overall amount collected City-wide was just over 15 percent in the past five years, or about three percent per year.

While that decreased rate still likely resulted in increases in total property tax bills due to increased assessments, the ability to keep tax rates well-managed is a sign of stable municipal finances. The FY2022 to FY2023 increase from 14.70 mills to 15.56 mills, a 5.9 percent increase, is on the higher end of recent increases. However, this increase is likely partly due to increased costs largely outside South Portland’s control, as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in the Northeast for Urban consumers increased six percent annually as of January 2023.<sup>1</sup>

Tracking the property tax rate increases with the CPI going back a few years is valuable. Fortunately, this information is included in the FY2023 municipal budget. As shown in the two tables below, the total amount collected in property taxes has generally increased at close to, or even below, the CPI – Urban (Northeast). The differences are even smaller when just the City’s share of the property tax increase is examined.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, [https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/data/consumerpriceindexhistorical\\_northeast\\_table.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/data/consumerpriceindexhistorical_northeast_table.htm)

**Mil Rate**

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX – URBAN (NORTHEAST) VS. SOUTH PORTLAND TAX INCREASES (TOTAL)

Year (FY)	CPI-U NE*	Total Tax Increase	Difference
2021 (FY22)	3.9%	-0.5%	-4.4%
2020 (FY21)	1.3%	2.1%	0.8%
2019 (FY20)	1.6%	3.0%	1.3%
2018 (FY19)	2.2%	0.5%	-1.7%
2017 (FY18)	1.8%	0.9%	-0.9%
TOTALS	11.3%	12.9%	1.6%

\*Percent changes in CPI obtained by comparing the annual average Source: FY2023 City Budget, City of South Portland (6/21/22) p. xiii

SOUTH PORTLAND TAX RATE

Year	Rate (Tax per \$1,000 valuation)
2023	\$15.56
2022	\$14.70*
2021	\$18.50
2020	\$19.10
2019	\$18.50

\*- Revaluation resulted in a lower tax rate due to increased overall valuation Source: City of South Portland Finance Department

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX – URBAN (NORTHEAST) VS. SOUTH PORTLAND TAX INCREASES (CITY SHARE)

Year (FY)	CPI-U NE*	City Tax Increase	Difference
2021 (FY22)	3.9%	-1.7%	-5.6%
2020 (FY21)	1.3%	2.1%	0.8%
2019 (FY20)	1.6%	3.0%	1.3%
2018 (FY19)	2.2%	0.5%	-1.7%
2017 (FY18)	1.8%	0.9%	-0.9%
TOTALS	11.3%	4.9%	6.4%

\*Percent changes in CPI obtained by comparing the annual average Source: FY2023 City Budget, City of South Portland (6/21/22) p. xiii

**CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND  
ASSESSED VALUE AND ESTIMATED ACTUAL VALUE OF TAXABLE PROPERTY  
LAST TEN FISCAL YEARS**

Tax Roll Year	Taxable Real Property		Taxable Personal Property	Total Taxable Assessed Value	Less TIF Property Value	Total Taxable General	Total Direct Tax Value	Estimated Actual Taxable Value (a)	Assessed Value as a Percentage of Actual Value
	Residential	Commercial							
2012	\$1,855,163,100	1,339,392,500	337,351,900	3,531,907,500	149,095,240	3,382,812,260	14.13	3,556,500,000	95.1%
2013	\$1,863,390,300	1,361,640,500	328,347,700	3,553,378,500	139,596,280	3,413,782,220	15.89	3,516,250,000	97.1%
2014	1,871,920,200	1,364,111,100	326,665,500	3,562,696,800	139,781,030	3,422,915,770	16.05	3,537,700,000	96.8%
2015	1,892,251,700	1,379,303,000	329,605,300	3,601,160,000	143,448,080	3,457,711,920	16.42	3,580,100,000	96.6%
2016	1,907,528,200	1,389,683,400	323,423,000	3,620,634,600	142,855,880	3,477,778,720	16.70	3,696,350,000	94.1%
2017	1,894,613,500	1,392,736,100	323,280,800	3,610,630,400	139,533,280	3,471,097,120	16.97	3,738,700,000	92.8%
2018	1,938,556,760	1,374,023,400	328,933,000	3,641,513,160	143,309,419	3,498,203,741	17.25	4,008,050,000	87.3%
2019	1,974,887,460	1,385,473,700	324,903,900	3,685,265,060	151,109,994	3,534,155,066	17.70	4,308,100,000	82.0%
2020	1,991,184,360	1,375,637,400	319,509,800	3,686,331,560	208,057,569	3,478,273,991	18.26	4,622,350,000	75.2%
2021	1,958,911,800	1,349,459,600	314,214,800	3,622,586,200	183,527,837	3,439,058,363	18.86	4,866,700,000	70.7%
2022	2,941,548,800	1,558,449,200	361,957,900	4,861,955,900	311,574,720	4,550,381,180	14.06	5,183,800,000	87.8%

(a) Maine Bureau of Property Taxation, state equalized values.

	Homestead Assessed Values	Homestead Estimated Actual Values	BETE Assessed Values	BETE Estimated Actual Values					
2012	57,960,000	57,960,000	140,425,200	140,425,200					
2013	57,600,000	57,600,000	164,089,100	164,089,100					
2014	57,330,000	57,330,000	196,012,700	196,012,700					
2015	55,810,000	55,810,000	200,539,700	200,539,700					
2016	55,740,000	55,740,000	215,867,700	215,867,700					
2017	82,425,000	82,425,000	218,824,290	218,824,290					

2018	109,660,000	109,660,000	216,832,800	216,832,800				
2019	109,660,000	109,660,000	235,917,900	235,917,900				
2020	109,980,000	109,980,000	276,896,400	276,896,400				
2021	141,225,000	141,225,000	291,500,500	291,500,500				
2022	141,975,000	141,975,000	405,367,000	405,367,000				

Source: Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, City of South Portland (6/30/21), Pg 140?

The following table shows South Portland’s mil rate over the past 5 years.

**Valuation**

2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
\$11.69	\$12.46	\$14.18	\$14.65	\$14.92

The following table shows South Portland’s valuation from the past 5 years of financial reports.

<b>2024</b>	\$6,697,050,000
<b>2023</b>	\$5,847,800,000
<b>2022</b>	\$5,183,800,000
<b>2021</b>	\$4,866,700,000
<b>2020</b>	\$4,622,350,000

**Capital Improvement Planning**

South Portland has a robust capital improvement planning process and publishes a multi-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to

allow for long-range planning. South Portland’s CIP is funded from several different sources:

- General Obligation Bonds or Leasing
- Tax Increment Financing
- General Fund Reserves
- Other Fund Reserves/Surplus
- Grants
- Prior Years’ CIP Balances and Interest
- General Fund

As shown on the following page, the FY23 CIP is funded primarily through grants, fund balance, and other user fund reserves & surpluses. There will be no use of General Obligation Bonds or other borrowing anticipated for FY23 CIP projects. Overall, municipal debt is within the required limits and the Maine Bond Bank limits. This includes South Portland’s share of any external debt.

The City’s Capital Improvement Program for 2026-2032 was completed in March 2025 and is available online here: <https://www.southportland.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3424/Fiscal-Year-2026---2032-Managers-Proposed-Capital-Improvement-Program?bidId=>

### ***Regional Collaboration Efforts***

South Portland has always been interested in working with its neighboring communities on issues of common interest. The City has been active in the Greater Portland Council of Governments. It has also been active in the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland region that is responsible for programming regional transportation funds. The City seeks ways to maximize taxpayer value for services, including potential regional collaborations.

While the City does not generally partner regionally on capital needs, it has joined regional operations efforts. South Portland is part of the Portland Water District. It also collaborated with the City of Portland and the Town of Cape Elizabeth on the Portland Regional Communications Center, which provides Emergency Communications services to the three municipalities. A total of 37 telecommunicators answer 911 and non-emergency calls and dispatch police, fire, and Emergency Medical Services units. The Center receives approximately 60,000 calls to 911 each year.

South Portland participates in the Cumberland County Regional HOME consortium to fund below-market affordable housing in the region. The City also works with Cumberland County on the federal Community Development Block Grant program to fund programs for low- and moderate-income residents.

### **Focus Group Takeaways**

Discussions with City officials outlined an optimistic perspective on South Portland finances. FY2023 was challenging due to the significant influx of people and families requiring social services. However, that was seen as a short-term challenge. Overall, they are pleased with the City's high bond rating and commitment to sound fiscal management.

### **Fiscal Capacity - References**

- City of Portland. "Emergency Communications." <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/452/Emergency-Communications>.
- City of South Portland. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. June 30, 2021. <https://www.southportland.org/files/3716/7414/3265/SOUTH-PORTLAND-2021-ACFR-6-30-21.pdf>.
- City of South Portland. Capital Improvement Program Fiscal Year 2026-2032 <https://www.southportland.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3424/Fiscal-Year-2026---2032-Managers-Proposed-Capital-Improvement-Program?bidId=>
- City of South Portland. FY2023 City Budget. June 21, 2022. [https://www.southportland.org/files/5716/6419/7493/FULL\\_BUDGET\\_BOOK.PDF](https://www.southportland.org/files/5716/6419/7493/FULL_BUDGET_BOOK.PDF).
- United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Consumer Price Index Historical Tables for Northeast." [https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/data/consumerpriceindexhistorical\\_northeast\\_table.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/data/consumerpriceindexhistorical_northeast_table.htm).



Source: South Portland Website

South Portland encompasses an area of about 14 square miles. About 33 percent of the City's land is utilized for residential uses, 15 percent for commercial uses, and 25 percent for industrial uses. The city's western half is home to most of the City's commercial areas but includes industrial and higher-density residential land uses. The eastern half is characterized by residential and industrial land uses and a waterfront area primarily dominated by commercial uses, petroleum product storage, and recreational marinas. The City manages development through site plan and subdivision review and in 2019 implemented a historic preservation ordinance to delay development that might impact historic resources. Shoreland zoning, resource protection, and floodplain management regulations protect natural resources throughout the community.

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) guides zoning and development but currently limits growth in established neighborhoods and directs growth to more undeveloped and outlying areas of the City. Looking ahead to the next 15 years in the Comprehensive Plan update, the City will need to determine which areas can accommodate growth in a desirable way. The City must also consider priority areas for preservation where growth should be limited. The City's infrastructure capacity, land availability, mar-

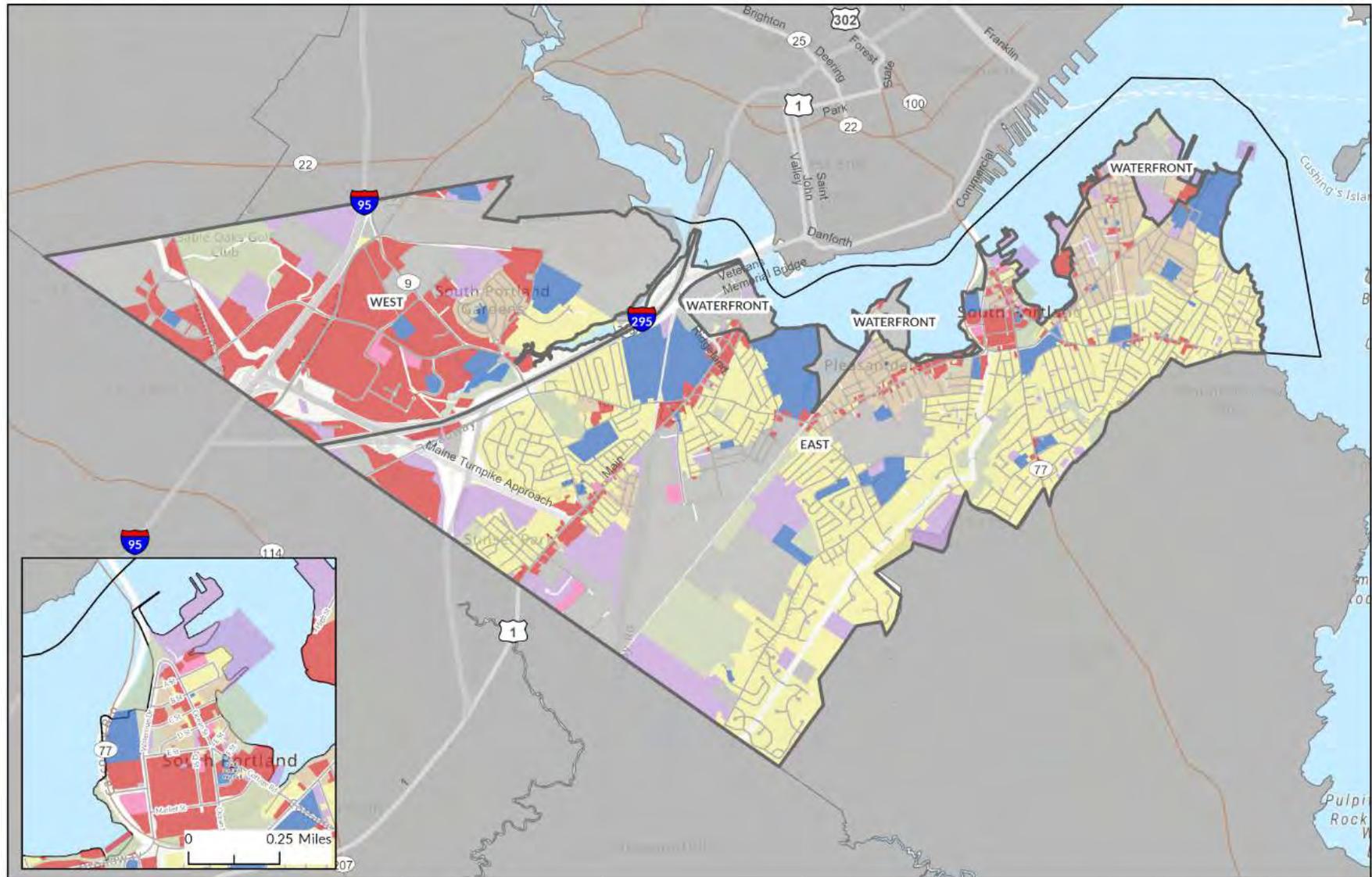
ket conditions, housing needs, and climate action planning will need to inform the choices about where and how to encourage future development and growth. In initial feedback gathered during Phase I of the Comprehensive Plan update process, community members also brought attention to the need to better blend the City's historic industrial/commercial land uses with nearby residential uses to decrease the impacts of noise, traffic, and pollution, and to consider health and environment in future growth area designations and land use policies.

Although a major investment in infrastructure, a new crosstown connector between Broadway and Highland along Rumery Street, could be critical or necessary to achieve the City's long-term land use vision. Allowing mixed-use development in the area surrounding the Maine Mall also provides an opportunity to support Transit Oriented Development while simultaneously bringing positive impacts to that area.

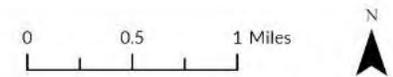
CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND - EXISTING LAND USE

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

J M GOLDSON



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> Commercial          | <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Institutional               |
| <span style="color: gray;">■</span> Industrial         | <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Undeveloped               |
| <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Mixed Use          | <span style="color: tan;">■</span> Residential Multi-Family     |
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Park/Recreational | <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Residential Single-Family |



Sources: Maine Geo Library, ArcGIS

## Inventory and Analysis

### *Maine is a Home Rule State*

In 1969, an amendment to the State constitution delegated broad “home rule” ordinance powers to cities and towns. Cities and towns have the right to enact laws that are municipal in nature and that are not in conflict with state law or any law the State has prohibited from passing. Home rule authority is very important to local government; without it, cities and towns would depend on specific acts of the State Legislature for their governing authority.<sup>1</sup>

### *State Growth Management Program*

Title 30-A, Chapter 187: Planning and Land Use Regulation of the Maine Revised Statutes, introduced in 1989 and most recently updated in 2025, establishes the Growth Management Program. One of the goals of the Growth Management Program is to encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community while protecting the State’s rural character, making efficient use of public space, and preventing development sprawl. Growth Management Program legislation states that every municipality may adopt and amend local growth management programs and that a growth management program must include, a comprehensive plan which analyzes ten-year projections for local growth in population, residential, commercial, and industrial activity; the projected need for public facilities; and the vulnerability of and potential impacts on natural resources.

The Comprehensive Plan must provide a plan that designates areas within the municipality as growth areas and rural areas most typically represented as a Future Land Use Plan. Through the Future Land Use Plan, South Portland has adopted growth and limited growth areas to help the City plan for and guide development and land use decisions.

<sup>1</sup> University of Maine School of Law. Garbrecht Law Library. Maine Town Ordinances. <https://mainelaw.maine.edu/library/collections/maine-town-ordinances/#:~:text=Maine%20has%20been%20considered%20a,powers%20to%20cities%20and%20towns.>

### *State Land Use Polices*

#### *Housing Legislation: LD 2003*

In April 2022, the Governor signed LD 2003 into law. The requirements were set to take effect on July 1, 2023. The goal of the new law is to alleviate the housing affordability issues in Maine by increasing housing opportunities. The new law references the following:

1. Additional units on lots zoned for single-family homes;
2. Accessory dwelling units on lots with existing single-family homes;
3. Standards for parking requirements and terms of affordability for affordable housing; and,
4. 2 and one-half times the currently allowed housing units in growth areas, for developments where most of the units meet standard affordability definitions.

### *General Pattern of Development and Existing Land Uses*

*South Portland land uses are a diverse mix of residential and non-residential uses.*

South Portland encompasses an area of about 14 square miles. The following table summarizes the predominant land uses.

**South Portland Existing Land Use**

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Industrial	1617.99	24.93
Institutional	516.8	7.96
Mixed Use	36.66	0.56
Residential Single-Family	1782.85	27.47
Residential Multi-Family	375.51	5.79
Commercial	970.25	14.95
Undeveloped	665.52	10.26
Recreational	524	8.07

*West of I-295 is a mix of commercial and dense residential.*

Post-war, dense single-family neighborhoods and larger apartment communities characterize the areas west of I-295. Larger apartment developments include Latitude Apartments (built-in 2020/ 6 stories with 256 units), Brick Hill (built in 2018/ 118 units), and Avesta Housing’s development on Westbrook Street (built 2022-23/ 53 units). Predominant land uses in the City’s western half include commercial, industrial, and advanced technology. Much of the City’s commercial development is located west of I-295. This includes the mixed-use area near Brick Hill Neighborhood, the Maine Mall commercial area, and office park development along Gannett Drive and John Roberts Road. The following table summarizes predominant land uses west of I-295.

**South Portland Existing Land Use (West of I-295)**

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Industrial	677.9	35.32
Institutional	94.96	4.95
Mixed Use	14.63	0.76
Residential Single-Family	82.25	4.28
Residential Multi-Family	51.18	2.67
Commercial	699.21	36.43
Undeveloped	149	7.76
Recreational	150.39	7.83

*East of I-295 is a mix of single-family homes, institutional uses, industrial land uses, and a waterfront focused on commercial and industrial uses.*

Residential development east of I-295 is primarily single-family home developments but does include multi-family developments, notably in the Knightville neighborhood. This area also includes Highland Avenue and Main Street. Residential areas along Highland Avenue are primarily large lot single-family homes with an aver-

age lot size of 30,000 square feet. Single-family developments are also present along Main Street, but average lot sizes are smaller at about 10,000 square feet.

Most of the City’s public facilities are also located in the eastern half of the City including the South Portland Municipal Services Facility, the South Portland Transfer Station, and South Portland City Hall. Southern Maine Community College, beach areas, and several parks are in the City’s eastern portion (see Waterfront uses below) as well as most of the City’s schools.

Non-residential development includes commercial areas near US 1 in the City’s southern portion, areas along Waterman Drive, Broadway, and the outer end of Cottage Road from the end of the existing commercial area on Meeting House Hill to the Cape Elizabeth line. Large industrial areas located east of I-295, include the Hannaford Distribution Center, the South Portland transfer station, and the Rigby Yard area along the railway, which ultimately leads to petroleum and other industrial uses at Ligonias and Turner’s Island.<sup>2</sup> The following table summarizes predominant land uses east of I-295.

**South Portland Existing Land Use (East of I-295)**

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Industrial	724.13	17.15
Institutional	421.62	9.99
Mixed Use	21.69	0.51
Residential Single-Family	1697.75	40.22
Residential Multi-Family	303.37	7.19
Commercial	243.03	5.76
Undeveloped	453.06	10.73
Recreational	356.92	8.45

<sup>2</sup> The City’s O’Neil St Public Works maintenance facility is being converted to housing. Public Works activities are being relocated to abut the transfer station.

## 14. Existing Land Use

*Waterfront areas are mostly marine industrial with recreational and institutional land uses located along the eastern waterfront.*

South Portland is a waterfront community. The waterfront has and will continue to play a key role in the future development of the City. The central “working” waterfront includes the Knightville, Pleasantdale, and Ligonía neighborhoods. Zoning is primarily commercial with some areas in the Ligonía neighborhood zoned Residential District A and Residential District G. Industrial land uses dominate much of this area including Gulf, SP, and Sprague oil terminals. In the Knightville neighborhood area, land uses are diverse and include commercial, institutional, and residential land uses.

The eastern waterfront carries multiple zoning designations including Shipyard, Spring Point, and Parks. Neighborhoods along the eastern waterfront include the Ferry Village and Breakwater neighborhoods. Recreational land uses include Bug Light Park, Willard Beach, the City’s boat launch, and several marinas. Southern Maine Community College is also located along the eastern waterfront.

### South Portland Existing Land Use (Waterfront)

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Industrial	215.96	62.19
Institutional	0.22	0.06
Mixed Use	0.34	0.10
Residential Single-Family	2.85	0.82
Residential Multi-Family	20.96	6.04
Commercial	28.01	8.07
Undeveloped	62.24	17.92
Recreational	16.69	4.81

### Residential Land Uses

Single-family land uses continue to be the largest residential land

use category, although over 1200 multifamily units were added between 2012 and 2020.

About 6,432 of the total 13,202 residential units are single-family units, and 5,294 are multi-family units (three units or more).

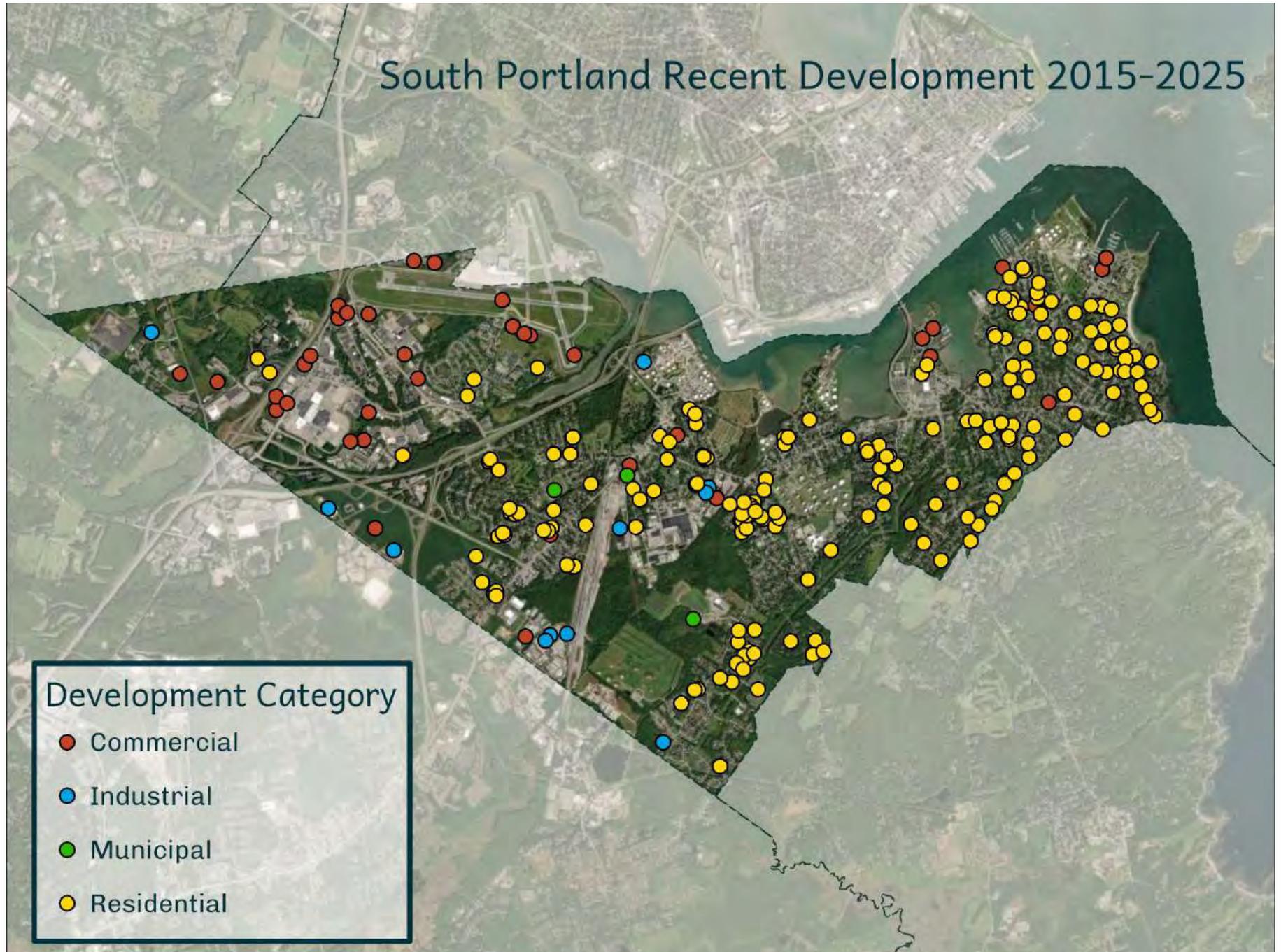
### South Portland Residential Typology, 2020      South Portland Residential Units, 2020

Residential Typology	Units	Percent
Duplex	663	9%
Multifamily 3-10 units	275	4%
Multifamily (more than 10 units)	80	1%
Single-Family	6,432	85%
Single-Family + ADU	75	1%
Total	7,525	

Residential Typology	Count	Percent
Duplex	1,326	10%
Multifamily 3-10 units	1,125	8.5%
Multifamily (more than 10 units)	4,169	31.5%
Single-Family	6,432	49%
Single-Family + ADU	150	1%
Total	13,202	

### Land Use Regulations: Zoning Ordinance

The City manages development through site plans and subdivision review and has implemented a historic preservation ordinance to allow additional time for the review of projects that impact historic resources (See Historic and Archaeological Resources Chapter). Shoreland zoning, resource protection, and floodplain management regulations protect natural resources (where relevant) throughout the community. All development requires approval from either the Planning Board, Code Enforcement Office, or both. The Planning Board generally meets twice a month and Code Enforcement permit review occurs continuously meeting the need for the land use regulation program.



### *Zoning Regulations*

South Portland is divided into seven districts, each with additional sub-districts. The districts are as follows: Residential Districts, Mixed Use/Commercial Districts, Industrial Districts, Residential Conditional/ Contract Zones, Conditional Special Use Districts, Mixed Use, Commercial and Industrial Conditional/Contract Zones, and Shoreland Overlay Districts.

### *Residential Districts*

Residential Districts allow for a variety of densities and dimensional controls. Allowed densities range from one dwelling unit per two acres to conserve the integrity and natural qualities of rural open space to more intensive residential districts, including the Village Residential District, where the purpose is to provide higher density village-like residential areas and where the minimum lot size is 2,500 square-feet for two dwelling units. The largest district by land area is the Residential A zoning district. Residential districts include:

- Residential District AA
- Residential District A
- Residential G
- Rural Residential District RF
- Transitional Residential District RT
- Village Residential District VR
- West End Residential District WR

### *Mixed Use/Commercial Districts*

South Portland has a variety of mixed-use/commercial districts intended to provide a village-like, mixed residential and business area that provide a suitable range of housing, employment, retail, service, public transportation, and recreation opportunities within walking distance of residential. These districts range from those with more limited business/commercial areas, which allow local retail and offices and residential uses permitted in Residential G (approx. 12/acre), to larger, more intensive mixed-use districts,

including Suburban Commercial, which allows for urban residential (multi-family) when it is part of a Planned Development and Commercial which allows heavier commercial and residential at densities no less than ten dwelling units per acre.

Mixed Use/ Commercial districts include:

- Limited Business District LB
- Village Commercial District VC
- Village Commercial – Willard District VCW
- Transitional Central and Regional Commercial District CCRT
- Central and Regional Commercial District CCR
- Commercial District C
- Main Street Community Commercial District MSCC
- Village Extension District VE
- Spring Point District SP
- Suburban Commercial District CS
- General Commercial District CG
- Professional Office District PO
- Broadway Corridor District BC
- Mill Creek Core District MCC
- West End Neighborhood Center WNC
- Western Avenue Commercial Corridor WACC
- Meetinghouse Hill Community Commercial District MHCC

Most of the City's tank farms are zoned commercial. The City is home to six petroleum terminals and approximately 107 petroleum storage tanks. The following is a list of facility operators.<sup>3</sup>

- Sprague
- Portland Pipeline Corporation (PPLC)
- SP Terminal
- Global Terminal

<sup>3</sup> City of South Portland ArcGIS <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=3d276e55a3f94e5aa6c7bac7ab5c3b0b&extent=-70.3092,43.6166,-70.2268,43.6457>

- CITGO Terminal
- Gulf Terminal

### *Industrial Districts*

Industrial districts allow for various uses, from the Light Industrial District, which provides areas for light industrial, airport infrastructure, and the development of airport-related enterprises, and the Industrial Districts, which allow manufacturing, processing, treatment, research, warehousing, storage, and distribution. Industrial Districts include:

- Light Industrial District IL.
- Shipyard District S.
- Industrial District I.
- Nonresidential Industrial District INR.

### *Design Districts*

The City has designated Knightville as a Design Review District where new construction and changes to existing structures are governed by the design standards articulated in Sec. 27-1568 of the Zoning Ordinance. Design standards for commercial and neighborhood centers are also applicable in the following zoning districts.

- The Village Commercial–Willard VCW Zoning District
- The Main Street Community Commercial MSCC Zoning District
- The Village Extension VE Zoning District
- The Broadway Corridor BC Zoning District
- The Suburban Commercial CS Zoning District
- West End Residential WR Zoning District
- West End Neighborhood Center WNC Zoning District
- Western Avenue Commercial Corridor WACC Zoning District

### *Conditional and Contract Zoning*

According to the Maine Revised Statutes, “Conditional Zoning” is a South Portland Comprehensive Plan

process by which the municipal legislative body may rezone property to permit the use of that property subject to conditions not generally applicable to other properties similarly zoned. “Contract Zoning” is the process by which the property owner, in consideration of the rezoning of that person’s property, agrees to the imposition of certain conditions or restrictions not imposed on other similarly zoned properties. Both contract and conditional zoning tools allow for the application of unique regulatory controls on a development site in exchange for a public benefit such as affordable housing.

Article X of the Zoning Ordinance identifies several districts established under the conditional and contract zoning provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.<sup>4</sup>

- Conditional Residential Use District A-1: Purpose: to provide residential areas within the City of South Portland of medium density in a manner that will promote a wholesome living environment while allowing for access to adjacent land in the Non-Residential Industrial District.
- Conditional Shipyard District S-1: Purpose- to provide suitable areas within the City of South Portland of high residential density in a manner that will promote a wholesome living environment for frail elderly and handicapped residents who require congregate housing and/or assisted living services, in areas close to other City services.
- Conditional Residential Use District G-1: Purpose: to provide a residential area within the City of South Portland of moderate and high density in a manner, which will promote a wholesome living environment.
- Contract Residential District G-2: Purpose: to provide residential areas in the City of South Portland of high density in a manner that will promote a wholesome living environment for elderly and handicapped residents.

<sup>4</sup> Chapter 27 South Portland Code of Ordinances <https://www.southportland.org/our-city/code-ordinance/>

South Portland Zoning Districts, Lot Size, and Density

Zoning District	Minimum Lot Size	Net Residential Density
RF	80,000 SF	1 DU per net residential acre
AA	see neighborhood table	2 DU per net residential acre
A	see neighborhood table	4 DU per net residential acre
G	7,500 SF	depends on lot size
VR	2,500 SF	depends on lot size
RT	depends on use	depends on use
WR	5,000 SF	N/A
RC	10,000 SF	8 D U per net residential acre
LB	5,000 SF	non-residential
SP Residential	7,500 SF	17 DU per net residential acre
SP Non-Residential	30,000 SF	N/A
CS	30,000 SF	N/A
CG	30,000 SF	N/A
PO	2 acres	10 DU per net residential acre
CCRT	20,000 SF	N/A
CCR	20,000 SF	N/A
C	10,000 SF	17 DU per net residential acre
VC	2,500 SF	greater of 24 DU per net residential acre or 8 DU
VCW	3,500 SF	13 DU per net residential acre
MSCC	3,500 SF	25 DU per net residential acre
VE	N/A	N/A
BC	N/A	N/A
MCC	N/A	N/A
WNC	N/A	N/A
WACC	10,000 SF	N/A
MHCC	3,500 SF	N/A
IL	30,000 SF	N/A
S	30,000 SF	N/A

(cont.)

Zoning District	Minimum Lot Size	Net Residential Density
I Residential	7,500 SF	17 DU per net residential acre
I Non-Residential	30,000 SF	N/A
INR	30,000 SF	N/A

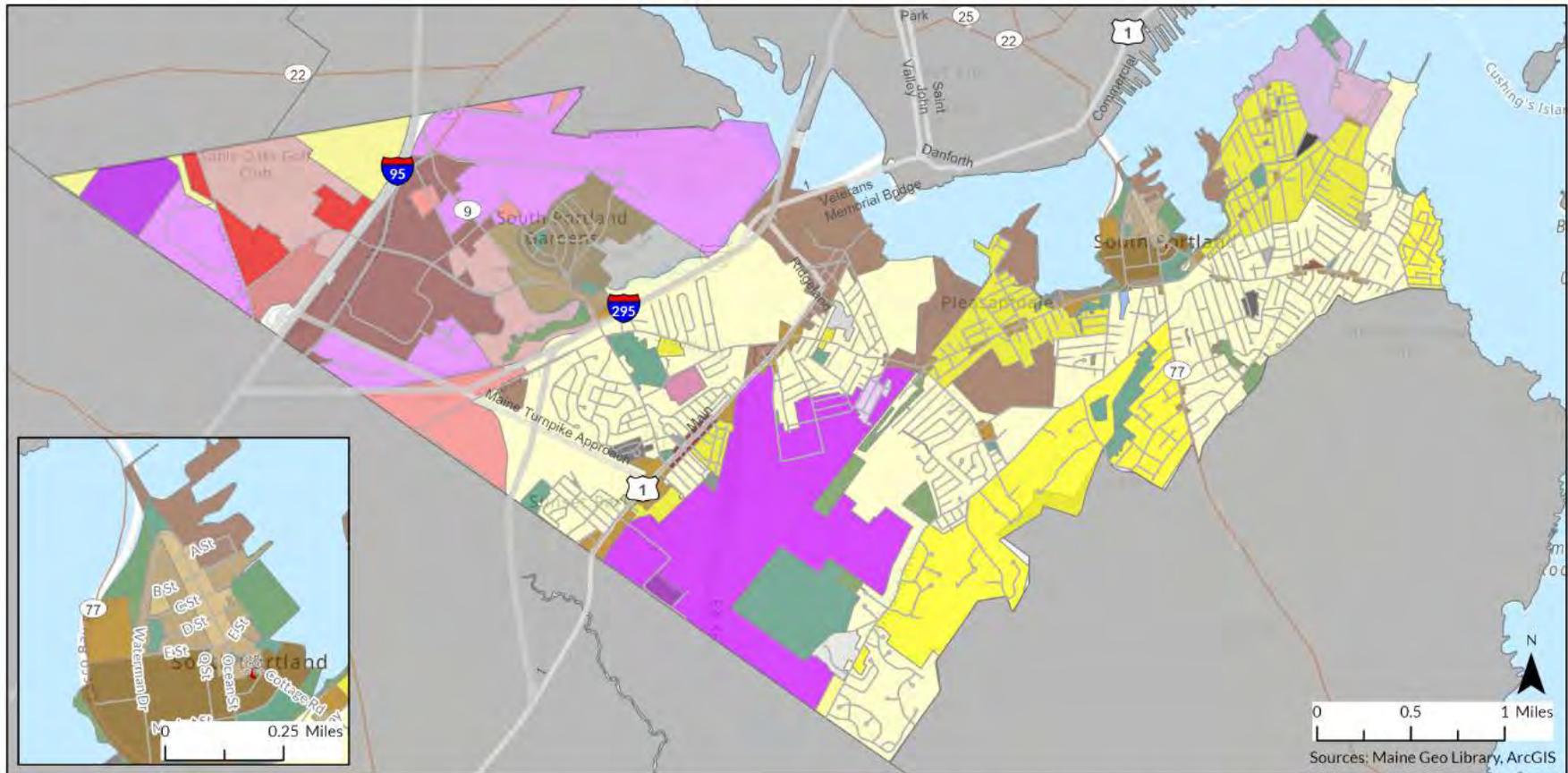
Zone AA and A Minimum Lot Size by Neighborhood

Neighborhood	AA	A
Cash Corner	N/A	8,000 SF
Country Gardens	N/A	12,500 SF
Highland	20,000 SF	12,500 SF
Knightville	N/A	7,500 SF
Ligonیا	N/A	6,500 SF
Loveitt's Field	8,500 SF	N/A
Meadowbrook	N/A	8,500 SF
Meetinghouse Hill	N/A	6,000 SF
Ocean Street	13,500 SF	8,000 SF
Pleasantdale	N/A	6,000 SF
Stanwood park	20,000 SF	7,000 SF
Sunset Park	N/A	7,000 SF
Thornton Heights	N/A	7,000 SF
Willard	N/A	6,000 SF

CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND - ZONING

Prepared by JM Goldson LLC

J M GOLDSON



Sources: Maine Geo Library, ArcGIS

- |   |  |  |                                    |
|---|--|--|------------------------------------|
| Residential District A                                | Conditional Residential District G-1   | Conditional Non-Residential Industrial Municipal Solid Waste Transfer District | Shipyard                           |
| Residential District A-1                              | Conditional Residential District G-2   | Limited Business   | Conditional Shipyard               |
| Residential District AA                               | Conditional Residential District G-3   | Mill Creek Core  | Conditional School District 1      |
| Broadway Corridor BC                                  | Conditional Residential District G-4   | Meetinghouse Hill Community Commercial   | Spring Point                       |
| Commercial  | Conditional Residential District G-5   | Main Street Community Commercial   | Village Commercial                 |
| Conditional Army Zone                                 | Conditional Residential District G-6   | O'Neil Street Park Contract Zone   | Village Commercial-Willard         |
| Central and Regional Commercial District              | Conditional Residential District G-7   | Open Space   | Village Extension                  |
| Transitional Central and Regional Commercial District | Industrial   | Parks  | Village Residential                |
| General Commercial                                    | Light Industrial   | Professional Office  | Western Avenue Commercial Corridor |
| Suburban Commercial                                   | Non-Residential Industrial   | Rural Residential  | Westend Neighborhood Center        |
| Residential District G                                | Conditional Non-Residential Industrial Ecomaine Disposal Facility District 1 | Transitional Residential   | Westend Residential District       |

### *Shoreland Zoning*

Shoreland zoning is an area where state mandates preempt local authority. The Shoreland Zoning Act was passed in 1971. In Maine, the Department of Environmental Protection writes the minimum standards for shoreland zoning ordinances, and municipalities, through local ordinances, must administer and enforce shoreland zoning. Under 38 M.R.S.A. § 435, the City has adopted Shoreland Area Overlay District. The Shoreland Area Overlay District includes:

- All land areas within two hundred fifty (250) feet, horizontal distance, of the upland edge of a coastal wetland, including all areas affected by tidal action;
- All land areas within two hundred fifty (250) feet, horizontal distance, of the upland edge of a shoreland freshwater wetland; and
- All land areas within the Stream Protection Overlay Subdistricts (SP-1, SP-2, and SP-3).

The Shoreland Area regulations also apply to any buildings or structures built on, over, or abutting a dock, wharf, pier, or any other building or structure extending or located below the normal high-water line of a water body or within a coastal or shoreland freshwater wetland.

The Shoreland Area Overlay District includes the Shoreland Resource Protection Overlay Subdistrict and the Stream Protection Overlay Subdistricts.

### *Shoreland Resource Protection Overlay Subdistrict*

The Shoreland Resource Protection Overlay Subdistrict includes areas where development would adversely affect water quality, productive habitat, biological ecosystems, or scenic and natural values, which includes but is not limited to:

- Areas within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of the upland edge of shoreland freshwater wetlands, salt marshes and salt meadows, and wetlands associated with great ponds and

rivers, which have value as waterfowl and wading bird habitat, including nesting and feeding areas.

- Floodplains along rivers and floodplains along artificially formed great ponds along rivers, defined by the 100-year floodplain as designated on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps or Flood Hazard Boundary Maps.

### *Stream Protection Overlay Subdistrict*

The Stream Protection Overlay Subdistrict 1 (SP-1) includes all land areas within seventy-five (75) feet, the horizontal distance of the ordinary high-water line of the following streams or the Area of Special Flood Hazard (100 Year Floodplain) associated with these streams, whichever is greater, as shown on the Official Shoreland Zoning Map:

- Mill Creek
- Kimball Brook
- Trout Brook
- Anthoine Creek
- Barberry Creek
- Gambler's Arm Brook

Except for the Shoreland Resource Protection Subdistrict regulations, uses to those allowed in the underlying zoning district are generally allowed subject to performance standards unless expressly prohibited. The Shoreland Resource Protection Overlay District limits uses to those compatible with resource protection, including passive recreation and emergency services. Performance standards govern minimum setbacks from the shoreline, minimum floor elevations, accessory structures, non-conformances, and buffer requirements.

### *Flood Plain Protection*

Per the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participation requirements, the City regulates development within the floodplain. The Zoning Ordinance provides regulatory standards for all land

areas in the Stream Protection Overlay Subdistricts within Areas of Special Flood Hazard as depicted on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps of the City. Planning Board approval is required for the construction, expansion, or location of buildings or structures, grading, or filling. Applicants seeking a flood hazard development permit must demonstrate that certain requirements have been met, including the requirement that new development will not change the flow of flood or other surface drainage waters. Other standards limit uses allowed in the floodway and the floodway fringe.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has adopted changes to floodplain management rules and new Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) and has developed a model ordinance for local municipal consideration.<sup>5</sup> The City anticipates the adoption of the model ordinance in the Fall of 2023.

### ***Land Use Regulations: Subdivision Regulations<sup>6</sup>***

Chapter 24 of the City's Code of Ordinances governs the subdivision of land. The City has two classifications of subdivisions, both subject to Planning Board review and approval.

- Major Subdivision is a subdivision containing more than four (4) lots or any subdivision requiring any new street extension or the extension of municipal facilities.
- Minor Subdivision is a subdivision containing not more than four (4) lots and not otherwise qualifying for definition as a major subdivision.

Design and construction standards for streets, storm drainage, sanitary sewers, and alteration of freshwater wetlands are included in the governing regulations. Bonding (surety) of all public improvements proposed as part of the subdivision plan is required before recording the subdivision plat at the Cumberland County Registry of Deeds.

<sup>5</sup> Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. Floodplain Management Program. <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/flood/handbook.shtml>

<sup>6</sup> Chapter 24 South Portland Code of Ordinances <https://www.southportland.org/our-city/code-ordinance/>

## **Focus Group Takeaways**

A focus group meeting was held on February 17, 2023. The focus group included Code Enforcement, Planning, and Economic Development staff and Comprehensive Plan Committee representation. The group identified multiple strengths and opportunities. Specific strengths included historic land-use patterns supporting transit-oriented development and the City's parks and open space inventory. Numerous opportunities were identified, including:

- The opportunity to utilize performance-based zoning to address changing land uses;
- The opportunity to strengthen Village Centers; and
- The opportunity to achieve land-use goals with the crosstown connector between Main Street and Broadway.

South Portland's parks and open space inventory was identified as a strength. A change in ownership at Rigby Yard was also recognized as an opportunity for redevelopment, and it was noted that the Gorham Connector might result in land use changes near the Maine Mall.

Challenges identified by the group included the different land uses that are emerging and are difficult to categorize and regulate and the challenges in enforcing the building code for mixed-use development. Industrial uses and their proximity to other uses were identified as a threat to development. Participants mentioned the need for consistent access to open spaces and parks across the City, especially in the West End. Other threats and challenges identified included the loss of industry, the impact of jet noise, and sea-level rise. Updating land use regulations to include design guidelines, updated parking regulations, and addressing unnecessary use separation. One commentator noted that the future land use map is too simplistic and needs to be shaded for intensity.

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Source: South Portland Website

Since 1895, average temperatures in Maine have increased by 3.2°F, and total annual precipitation has risen by roughly 6 inches, or 13%. The Gulf of Maine is warming faster than 95% of the world's oceans, and over the past century sea level along the coast has risen by more than 7.5 inches. Notably, nearly half of that rise has occurred since the early 1990s, with the rate of rise continuing to accelerate. Extreme weather events – such as heat waves, intense rainfall, and damaging storms – are becoming increasingly common across the state.

In January 2024, South Portland experienced significant impacts from two back-to-back coastal storms. These events underscored the growing influence of climate change and sea level rise, which exacerbate impacts from tidal flooding and storm surge. The storms caused widespread damage to the shoreline, buildings, roads, beaches, and dunes. The loss of the iconic Willard Beach fishing shacks in particular spurred renewed community interest in taking a more comprehensive and proactive approach to managing the waterfront and preparing for climate-related risks.

The city faces growing threats from rising temperatures, higher sea levels, and shifting storm patterns—all of which can affect infrastructure, public health, our local economy, and ecosys-

tems. Flooding from sea level rise and storm surge is expected to become more severe and frequent, with some areas that currently flood only during major storms likely to experience regular high-tide flooding by the end of the century. Proactively incorporating climate change into planning and decision-making is essential to ensure the long-term resilience of our community.

Building climate resilience is a complex and ongoing process. South Portland began assessing coastal vulnerabilities as early as 2011, completing a preliminary waterfront assessment in 2012. A citywide climate vulnerability assessment followed in 2019, identifying key infrastructure, geographic areas, and services at risk. The City's One Climate Future plan, developed in partnership with Portland, set forth comprehensive goals and strategies for both mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (strengthening neighborhood, infrastructure, and ecosystem resilience).

This Comprehensive Plan builds on that foundation and aligns with both One Climate Future and the state's climate plan, Maine Won't Wait. It draws on the Maine Climate Council's 2024 Climate Council's 2024 update to the Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine, which reaffirms both the City's and the

state’s sea level rise planning targets. The “commit to manage” target of 3.9 feet by 2100 continues to align with the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA’s) Intermediate end-of-century sea level rise scenario. The “prepare to manage” target of 8.8 feet—aligned with NOAA’s High scenario—is now projected to occur in the 2120s, two decades later than previously estimated.

### *The Evolution of Risk Models*

Most communities have relied almost exclusively on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps to understand coastal flooding risk. However, these maps are based on historical data and do not account for future sea level rise. While they remain a useful reference for some regulatory and insurance decisions, they are insufficient on their own for long-term climate resilience planning.

To address this gap, the City has used more advanced modeling tools to assess flood risk in coastal neighborhoods, incorporating projected sea level rise. These models evaluate flooding during average high tides, the highest astronomical tides, and 100-year storm events. One such tool, developed in 2018 by the Maine Geological Survey, provides a basic visual of how rising seas may inundate low-lying areas. However, it does not simulate dynamic water movement, such as waves, tides, or storm surge.

In 2021, South Portland partnered with the Maine Silver Jackets—a collaboration among the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, FEMA, NOAA, the Maine Geological Survey, and other agencies—to develop a “hydrodynamic model” that simulates flooding from both 10-year and 100-year storm events across multiple sea level rise scenarios. Unlike simpler models, it incorporates a range of complex variables, including tides, storm surge, and wave setup.

This more comprehensive model now underpins several key planning efforts in South Portland, including development of Coastal Resilience Overlay Zoning, a Coastal Resilience Solutions Assessment, and this update to the City’s Comprehensive Plan. While South Portland is incorporating the best available tools to inform

climate adaptation and resilience efforts, there will always be some amount of uncertainty about the exact nature of future conditions. In particular, the timeline for anticipated impacts related to sea level rise are highly dependent on global factors – such as future greenhouse gas emissions and the response of glaciers and ice sheets to global warming. Therefore, the city should adopt planning standards that can address levels of risk, while also factoring in how coastal flooding risk will evolve over time.

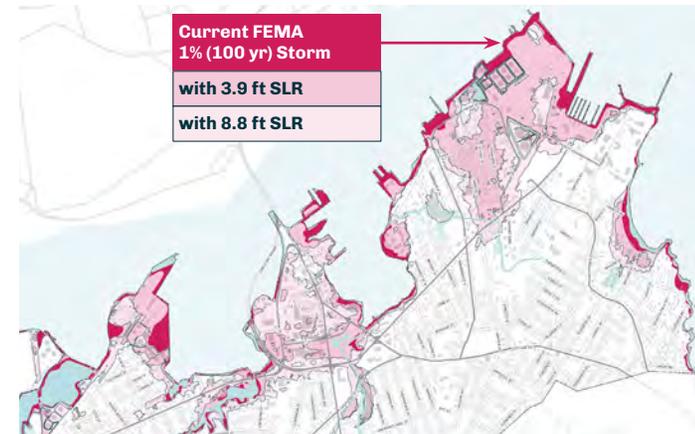


Fig. 1 - Current and Future Inundation With 100 Year Storm

### *Planning Resilience*

South Portland should take a proactive approach by committing to an intermediate level scenario of 3.9 feet of SLR as the city-wide planning standard for all development. This standard represents the “commit to manage” scenario for 2100. South Portland should also adopt the higher 8.8 feet of SLR for all critical infrastructure, assets, and services. This scenario corresponds with the “prepare to manage” scenario for 2120. While there is a very small chance that we would experience this level of SLR by the end of the century it will very likely occur before the end of the next century. Therefore, it is important to prepare now for both the most critical things that cannot be flooded and for those things that will still be in service through the next century. Using these two planning standards ensures that adaptation measures are right-sized relative to the level of risk and scale of potential impacts posed by SLR over time.

## Commit to Manage

### 3.9' Sea Level Rise

The maps on this page show flooding that is projected to occur between 2080 and 2100, with a smaller probability of occurrence around 2080 and a larger probability by 2100.

According to the Maine Climate Council (2024 Science and Technical Subcommittee Update Report): *“Maine’s “commit to manage” sea level rise scenario (1.5 feet by 2050 and 4 feet by 2100, relative to 2000 mean sea level) remains within the statistically likely range of the equivalent sea level rise scenario in updated projections...”*

A “100 year” storm is a storm event that has a 1% chance of occurring annually, or a 26% chance of occurring over a 30 year period.

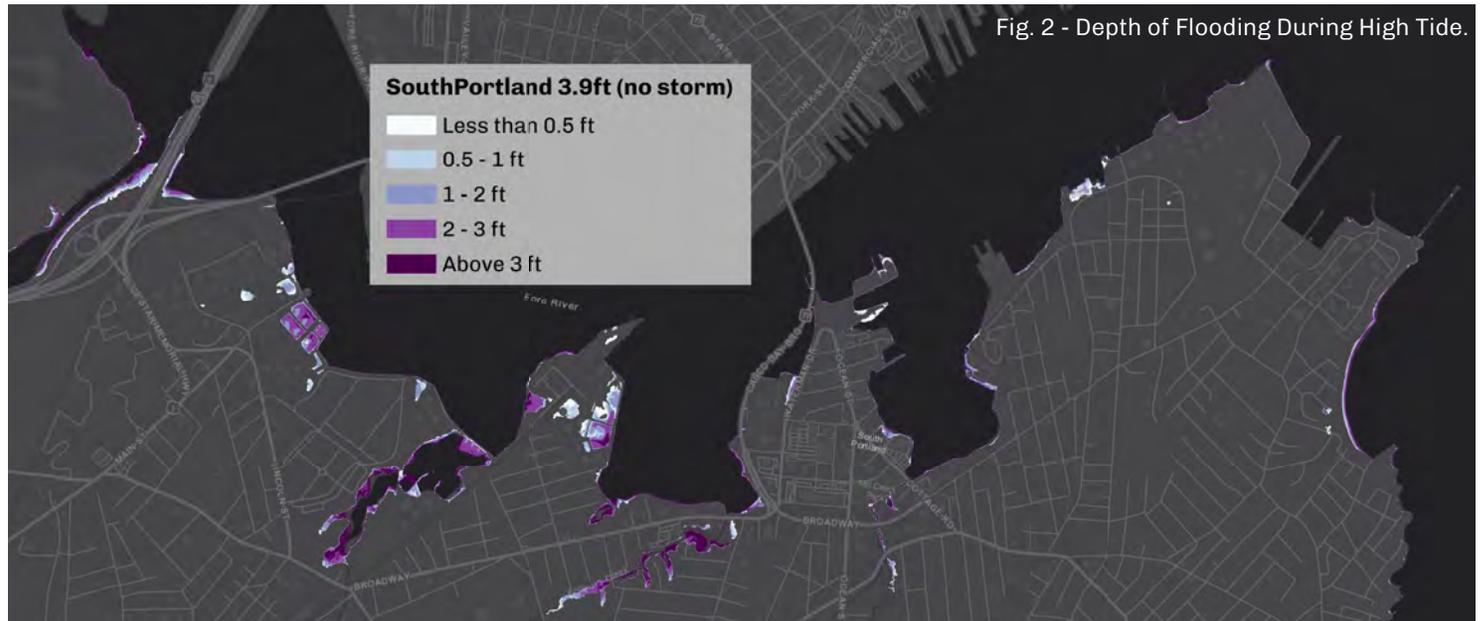


Fig. 2 - Depth of Flooding During High Tide.

The hydrodynamic model shows that the most severe flooding will occur when sea level rise and tides coincide with a 100-year storm, as shown below.

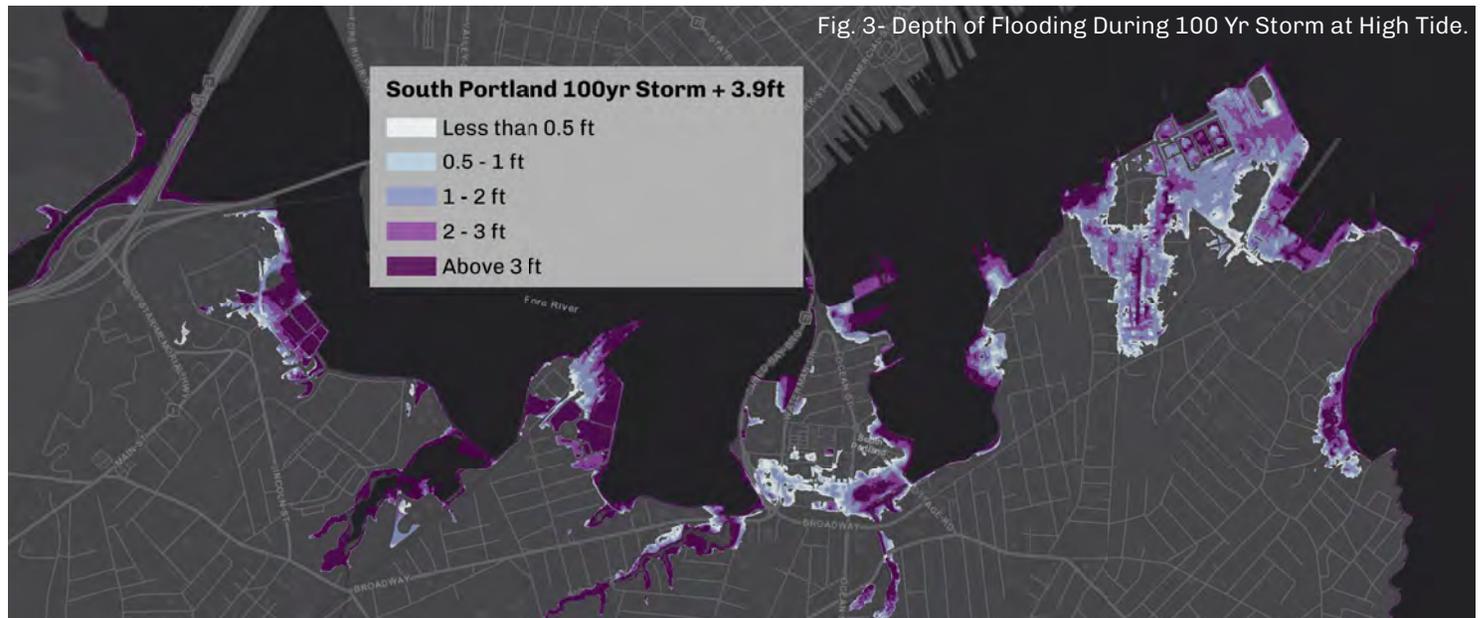


Fig. 3- Depth of Flooding During 100 Yr Storm at High Tide.

## Prepare to Manage

### 8.8' Sea Level Rise

The maps on this page show flooding that might occur between 2120 and 2170, with a smaller probability of occurrence around 2120 and an increased probability by 2170. This “High Scenario” is mostly influenced by global ice sheet instability which is still largely uncertain.

According to the Maine Climate Council (2024 Science and Technical Subcommittee Update Report): *“Updated projections indicate that the timeframe of Maine’s “prepare to manage” sea level rise scenario (3 feet by 2050 and 8.8 feet by 2100, relative to 2000 mean sea level) should be shifted two decades later, to 3 feet by 2070 and 8.8 feet in the 2120s...”*

A “100 year” storm is a storm event that has a 1% chance of occurring annually, or a 26% chance of occurring over a 30 year period.

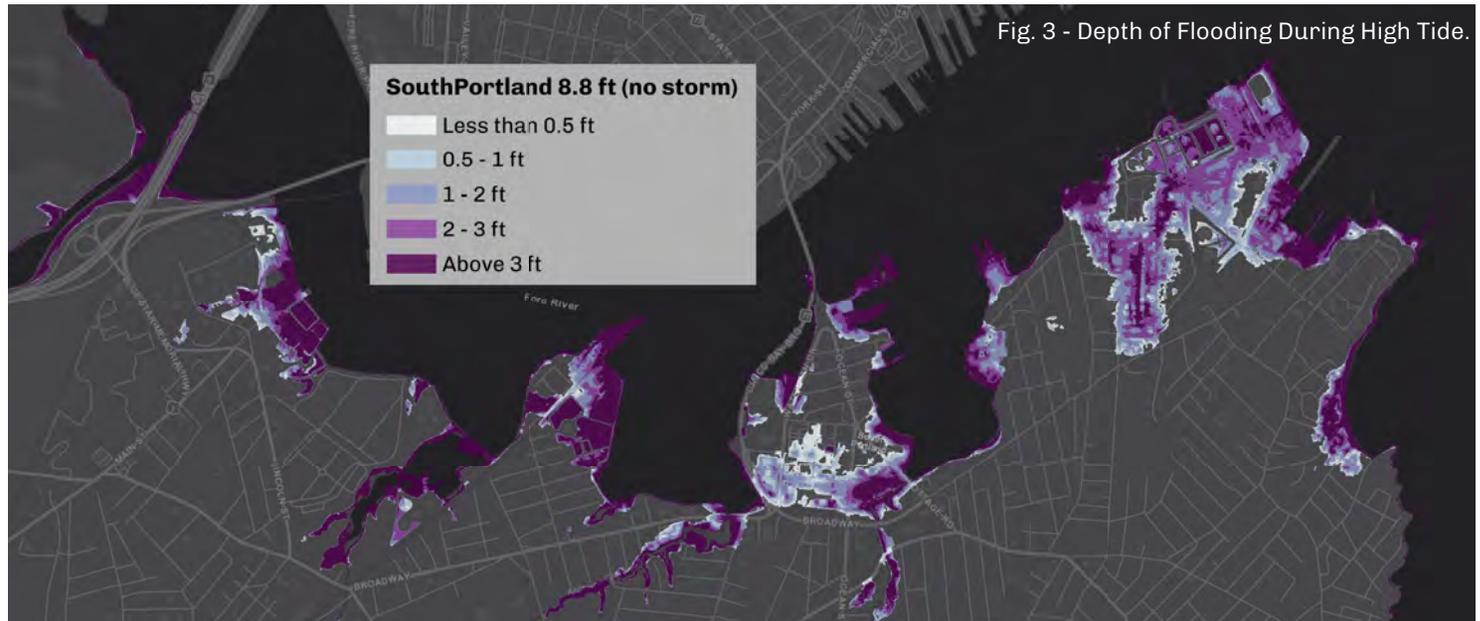


Fig. 3 - Depth of Flooding During High Tide.

The hydrodynamic model shows that the most severe flooding will occur when sea level rise and tides coincide with a 100-year storm.

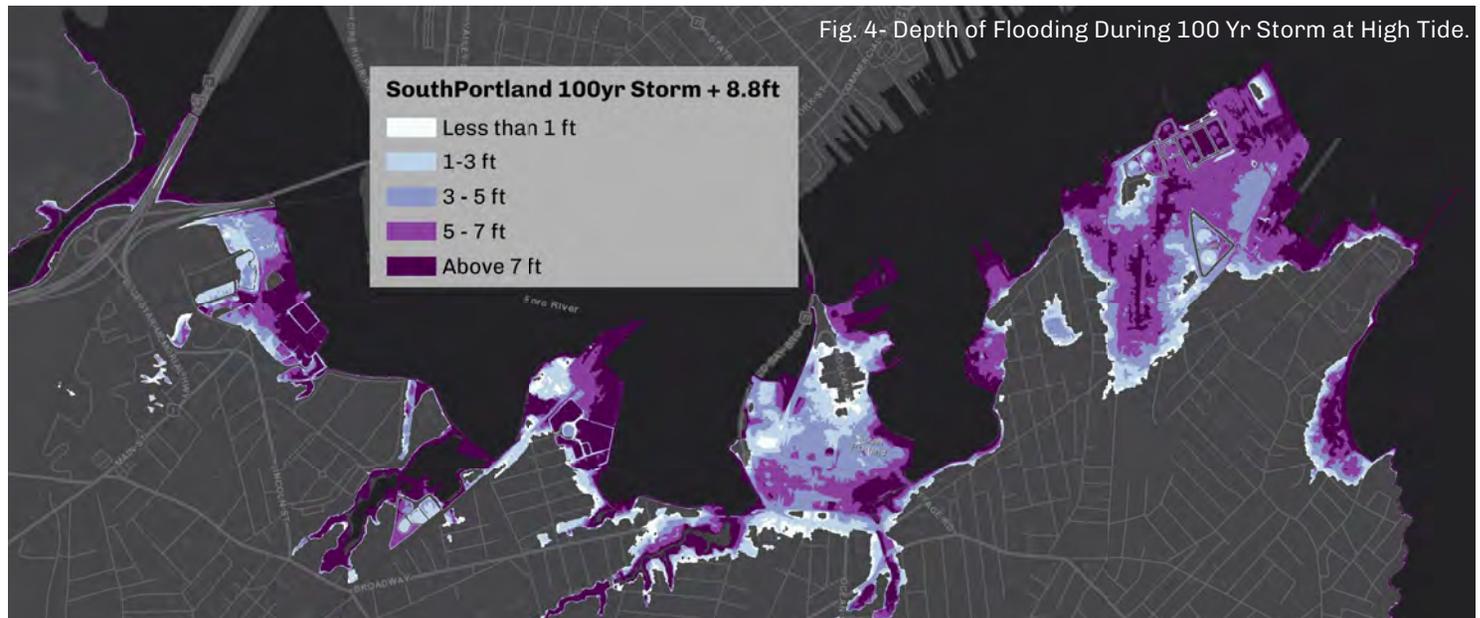


Fig. 4- Depth of Flooding During 100 Yr Storm at High Tide.