

**CITY OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
ADOPTED MOTIONS - OCTOBER 16, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING
ROUTE ONE SOUTH BUSINESS PARK DISTRICT AMENDMENTS
CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Motion # 1: The City Council hereby finds that the amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 102, Zoning, Chapter 82, Shoreland, and Chapter 66, General Provisions, that are associated with the establishment of the Route One South Business Park District that the Council adopted at its meeting of October 16, 2018, are fully consistent with and in basic harmony with the amendments that the City Council adopted at its meeting of April 17, 2018 to the City 2009 Future Land Use Plan that is part of the City Comprehensive Plan. The Council references the finding made in its position statement dated October 16, 2018 and the text of the April 17, 2018 adopted amendments to the Future Land Use Plan (Comprehensive Plan). **Council vote on this Motion was 5-0.**

Motion # 2: The City Council hereby finds that the amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 102, Zoning, Chapter 82, Shoreland and Chapter 66, General Provisions, that are associated with the establishment of the Route One South Business Park District that the Council adopted at its meeting of October 16, 2018, are in basic harmony with and generally consistent with the City 2009 Future Land Use Plan that is part of the City Comprehensive Plan as such was adopted at that time. The Council references the finding made in its position statement dated October 16, 2018, and the 13 pages of quotes from the Comprehensive Plan in support of this determination of general consistency and basic harmony. **Council vote on this Motion was 5-0.**

The Council's adopted Finding and Consistency Determination with the Comprehensive Plan for the Route One South Business Park District, including the Attachment to said Consistency Determination associated with the above motions are attachments to these motions.

**BELFAST CITY COUNCIL - ADOPTED FINDING
CONSISTENCY DETERMINATIONS WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
ROUTE ONE SOUTH BUSINESS PARK DISTRICT**

William Kelly, City Attorney, in a memorandum to the City Council dated October 9, 2018, recommended that the City Council make Findings and a Motion regarding two issues:

- 1) whether the proposed package of Zoning Ordinance amendments relating to the Route One South Business Park Zoning District are consistent with Amendments made to the Comprehensive Plan in April, 2018 (Council vote of April 17, 2018), and
- 2) whether the group of Zoning Ordinance amendments relating to the Route One South Business Park Zoning District are consistent with the 2009 Comprehensive Plan (Future Land Use Plan).

The City formally entered this memorandum into the written record for the public hearing that the Council conducted as part of the October 9, 2018 Second Reading for amendments to the Route One South Business Park District, and referenced said inclusion in the record at the hearing.

The Council, in adopting this statement, notes that it has reviewed and considered the following:

- 1) the 2009 adopted Future Land Use Plan and Comprehensive Plan;
- 2) the Recommendation from the Belfast Planning Board to the City Council that the Board adopted on September 12, 2018 regarding Consistency of (with the Comprehensive Plan) the Route One South Business Park District that the Acting Chair of the Board and Director, Code and Planning, presented to the City Council at the regular Council meeting of September 18, 2018;
- 3) the revisions to the Future Land Use Plan that the Council adopted at its meeting of April 17, 2018 regarding the establishment of the Route One South Business Park District, including public comment (verbal and written) that was offered on this proposal at the Council public hearings conducted on March 20 and April 17, 2018;
- 4) the public record (verbal and written) for the Council hearings conducted on September 25 and October 9 regarding the Route One South Business Park District;
- 5) public comments offered to the Council during the open to public section of regular Council meetings that the Council conducted between mid-February 2018 and October 16, 2018 regarding the Nordic Aquafarm proposal and the establishment of the Route One South Business Park District;
- 6) direction to the Council provided in the memorandum dated October 9, 2018 to the Council from William Kelly, City Attorney; and
- 7) information provided to the Council at the Council's October 16 meeting regarding the request for a Finding and Motion regarding Consistency by City Attorney provided by the Director, Code and Planning and the City Manager.

The Council, having considered all of the above, makes the following Findings and makes the following Motions in support of said Findings.

FINDING # 1. The City Council finds that the amendments to City Ordinances regarding the establishment of the Route One South Business Park District are fully consistent with the amendments to the 2009 Future Land Use Plan (Comp Plan), as such were adopted by the City Council at its meeting of April 17, 2018.

William Kelly, City Attorney, requested that the Council review the proposed Ordinance amendments that apply to the Route One South Business Park District that the City Council adopted on April 17, 2018 in the context of the amendments to the 2009 adopted Future Land Use Plan (Comprehensive Plan).

The Council finds that the specific purpose of the April 17, 2018 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan was to establish formal policy direction in the 2009 Future Land Use Plan to explicitly support the expansion of the boundaries of the Business Park area and to foster the development of a major land based salmon aquaculture farm and associated industrial uses proposed by Nordic Aquafarms. The amendments resulted in an expansion of the boundaries of the Business Park area (Mathews Brothers property) identified in the 2009 Future Land Use Plan to include property owned by the Belfast Water District and Sam Cassida. The Mathews Brothers property is 38 acres in size and the land to be added to the Business Park area is about 60 acres in size. The Mathews Brothers property has supported large scale industrial uses for over 30 years and the purpose of the Business Park area was to promote the development of such uses to benefit job creation.

The Council, in pursuing the Ordinance amendments and accompanying amendments to the Future Land Use Plan, specifically noted that it had entered an agreement with the Belfast Water District to purchase about 24 acres of District owned land located immediately adjacent to the lower reservoir of the Little River on the Belfast side of the reservoir, and an additional 16 acres of land on the Northport side of the reservoir. The Council pursued the purchase of these lands to protect the Little River Trail and the Little River, a goal that is identified in the Critical Natural Resources section of the Comprehensive Plan. The land area the City is purchasing is 250 feet deep along the banks of the reservoir and includes land located in the Resource Protection District of the Shoreland Zone. This purchase also effectively reduces the amount of new area in the Route One South Business Park District that could be developed for aquaculture and industrial uses from about 60 acres to 40 acres.

The Council also noted that the City has often amended its Comprehensive Plan to try and achieve maximum consistency between City 'policy', the Comprehensive Plan (Future Land Use Plan), and Ordinance amendments (laws) that the City is considering adopting. The April 17, 2018 amendments were enacted to best achieve this intent.

FINDING # 2. The City Council finds that the amendments to City Ordinances regarding the establishment of the Route One South Business Park District are in basic harmony with and are generally consistent with the 2009 Future Land Use Plan (Comprehensive Plan), as such was adopted in 2009.

William Kelly, City Attorney, requested that the Council review the proposed Ordinance amendments that apply to the Route One South Business Park District in the context of how said amendments are generally consistent with policy direction identified in the adopted 2009 Future Land Use Plan (Comprehensive Plan), and the City's 2012 Comprehensive Plan.

The City Council reviewed direction identified in the 2009 Future Land Use Plan in making its finding of consistency. The Council referenced the section of the Plan entitled: "HOW TO USE THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE FUTURE LAND USE PLAN OF THE BELFAST

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN", reference pages 4-5 of the Introduction to the Land Use Plan. This section includes statements such as:

- "As such, while the '*policies*' identified in this Plan are often very descriptive, persons should expect that some of the specifics or details contained in the land use area descriptions **may change** (*emphasis identified in adopted Plan*) as the City moves forward in implementing the Plan through the process of preparing Ordinance proposals and amendments, conducting public hearings on these amendments, and choosing to adopt or not adopt the proposals."
- "It is recognized that there is flexibility regarding the specifics of this Plan that may be reconsidered when '*laws*' are prepared, and it is anticipated that changes may occur."
- "Overall, future users of this document should consider the following when preparing Ordinances (*'laws'*) to implement the '*Policy*' direction provided in this Plan."
 - 1) "This Future Land Use Plan provides solid '*policy*' direction regarding the main purposes of each of the identified 20 Land Use Areas, but it should be recognized that there is flexibility in preparing Ordinance language to implement this '*policy*'."
 - 2) "This flexibility would apply but is not necessarily limited to '*policies*' such as the boundaries of proposed land use areas, the range of uses allowed (*emphasis added*), and recommended lot size, density and setback requirements."
 - 3) "... Also, events may unfold which may cause the City to re-think proposals in this Plan (*emphasis added*)." Thus, it is understood that this ongoing public process and debate may result in changes being made to the specific recommendations in this Plan."

In reviewing the above direction, a 'How to Manual' that was clearly laid out in the 2009 adopted Future Land Use Plan, the Council finds that it was anticipated that the City may need to consider changing situations, varying approaches and the specifics that were laid out in the adopted Plan when the City considered adopting amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Further, the Council finds that the proposal to expand the boundaries of the Business Park area on Perkins Road that is identified in the adopted 2009 Plan to include the additional area now being proposed to include in the Route One South Business Park District is supported by a general application of policies identified in the adopted Future Land Use Plan and Comprehensive Plan. The Council specifically relied upon the following.

First and foremost, the area to be included in the Route One South Business Park Zoning District is located immediately adjacent to the current Industrial IV Zoning District (Mathews Brothers property), that is identified in the 2009 Future Land Use Plan as a Business Park area. The Mathews Brothers property has actively been used for an industrial use for over 50 years and has been zoned for industrial uses for over 30 years (City did not have zoning for this area prior to 1985). The net effect of the amendments to the Route One South Business Park Zoning District is to expand the boundaries of an existing Zoning District to include an additional 40 - 60 acres of land which could be used for aquaculture and industrial purposes. While the 2009 Plan did

not anticipate or specifically speak to this potential expansion of district boundaries, the expansion of existing zoning district boundaries to include adjacent lands is one of the most frequent requests for zoning ordinance amendments that municipalities are often asked to consider.

The Council offers several recent examples of when the City openly chose to change the boundaries of land use areas identified in the adopted 2009 Plan. All of these examples occurred in 2014 when the City considered the adoption of Ordinance amendments associated with implementation of the Land Use Plan. In 2014, the City worked to implement policy direction in the Land Use Plan for the six proposed zoning districts located in the overall 'Inside the Bypass area'. Boundary changes included:

- Expand the size of the Downtown Commercial zoning district to include properties that previously were zoned only for residential uses (Residential 1).
- Include an area in a residential only area (Residential 1) that was intended to also allow hospital and professional office uses (Residential 3).
- Include an area in Residential 2 that allowed agricultural uses, rather than Residential 3 that also allowed hospital and health care uses.

The Council specifically makes notes of these City actions, because all involved areas that were located adjacent to a different zoning district; the same principal that the Council is following in considering the current amendments to the Route One South Business Park District. Said another way, the likelihood that a 'policy' Plan, particularly one that dates to 2009, best identifies the boundaries of all Zoning Districts (laws) is not all that realistic.

Secondly, the 2009 Future Land Use Plan included the area subject to the expansion of Zoning District boundaries for the Route One South Business Park District as being located in the Rural Road Class 2, Outside Rural area. Some of the goals for this overall Rural Road Class 2 area were to promote traditional resource industries and to balance such with land preservation. The Council specifically found that the City will be purchasing 24 acres adjacent to the lower reservoir of the Little River on the Belfast Side of the reservoir, and an additional 16 acres on the Northport side of the reservoir. This public purchase will benefit long-term preservation of this critical natural resource area, which is consistent with the purposes of the Outside Rural area. Further, this purchase is consistent with a statement identified in the description for the Business Park Land Use Area (2009 Plan) which is to protect the 250 foot wide area next to the Little River.

Third, while many uses identified in the 2009 Future Land Use Plan as examples of allowed uses for the Rural Road Class 2 area were smaller in scale, others could have greater impacts, including:

- Activities that could consume a significant amount of land; for example a school. The campus for Belfast High School is over 26 acres in size.
- Activities that are industrial in nature, such as boat building, storage and repair.
- Activities could have significant environmental concerns and require permitting by the City and the Department of Environmental Protection, such as gravel pits or septage disposal, treatment and spreading operations

In addition, persons who spoke at the public hearings in opposition to the rezoning raised concerns about how Nordic Aquafarms would be removing trees in the area. It is specifically

noted that Sam Cassida, the private property owner who owns land in the Route One South Business Park District and who would be selling land to Nordic Aquafarms, currently has a permit to harvest trees, and that timber harvesting (no defined limits) is identified as an allowed use in the Rural Road Class 2 zoning district. Further, some at the hearing suggested that land based aquaculture be regulated as an agricultural use, comparing aquaculture to a large chicken or hog farm (concentrated animal feed operation). Agriculture is similarly identified as an allowed use in the Rural Road Class 2 area. The City Council finds that the portion of the Rural Road Class 2 area that is proposed to be included in the Route One South Business Park District does not expressly prohibit the main proposed use that is the main subject of the Ordinance amendments, land based aquaculture, and that some uses identified as examples of permitted activities for the Rural Road Class 2 area could have significant land use impacts.

The Council also finds that the area to be included in the Route One South Business Park District has many connections to the overall Near Bypass Area identified in the 2009 Future Land Use Plan rather than the Outside Rural area. For example, it immediately abuts Route One and is located near areas that are proposed to be used for very intensive land use activities; Business Park and Route One South Commercial. The Council noted that the Outside Rural area encompasses about 70% of the total land area in Belfast; roughly 25 square miles of 34 square miles. The proposal to include 40 acres of land that would be usable for a land based salmon aquaculture would affect about .0018 of Belfast's total land area. In short, the Council found that expanding the boundaries of the Business Park area identified in the Future Land Use Plan to include the above area to allow a land based salmon aquaculture farm would not have an adverse affect on the overall quantity and quality of the Outside Rural, Rural Road Class 2 area.

The Council also found that land use decisions and amendments to Zoning Ordinances should not be made in isolation; meaning that the Council must consider how granting a specific amendment to the Zoning Ordinance may affect City concerns, such as but not limited to: economic development and job creation and diversification; impact on municipal services; impact on municipal revenues; impact on critical natural resources; impact on recreational resources; impact on historical and archaeological resources; and impact on transportation. All of these issues are addressed in the City Comprehensive Plan. The Council, in considering this Finding referenced statements in the Resource Inventory and Analysis and Goals, Policies and Strategies section of the Comprehensive Plan. Reference the attached document prepared by Joseph Slocum, City Manager, that identifies many of the supporting statements from the Comprehensive Plan.

The Council made a Finding that the proposal to adopt amendments to create the Route One South Business Park Zoning District are consistent with and are in basic harmony with the City Comprehensive Plan, as such was adopted in 2009.

CITY OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
ATTACHMENT TO POSITION STATEMENT ON CONSISTENCY
FOR ROUTE ONE SOUTH BUSINESS PARK DISTRICT
ADOPTED BY COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 16, 2018 (VOTE 5-0)

Information identified in this Attachment was prepared by Joseph Slocum, City Manager, and was presented to the City Council at their meeting of October 16 for their review and consideration.

How is the proposed Zoning Change for the Nordic Project consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Consistent with 2009 Comprehensive Plan

Bill Kelly letter of October 9, 2018

·"the City Council will be required to consider the Comprehensive plan as a whole."

""the Law Court opined that in order to be consistent, the Zoning Amendment "need not perfectly fulfill the goals of a Comprehensive Plan...so long as it strikes a reasonable balance among the municipalities various zoning goals."

"...a municipality may conclude that a rezoning action is consistent with the Comprehensive plan when it is in harmony with some provisions of the plan, even if the action appears inconsistent with other provisions of the plan.

Section 2.1 Vision Statement

P. 1.1 "our overall vision is to maintain and enhance the vitality of Belfast.

"We seek diverse opportunities for residents and business owners to support themselves through work, education and community.

"We seek.... new development that benefits individuals in the community as a whole without burdening City taxpayers.

"We seek... attracting economic development as an employment, retail, civic and cultural center.

" We seek to protect our natural assets

“the City will consider these recommendations in its decision-making including proposals to amend ordinances and to provide municipal services.

“Some well-thought-out ordinance amendments may and probably should ultimately result, but they will each be based upon public participation process subject to a vote at a future City Council meeting

Section 2.2 Public Participation-

P.2 The city will openly acknowledge that the preparation of the final comprehensive plan which is now being presented to the state was not always a smooth, or perhaps more aptly stated a consistent process.

“ In short the city recognize that planning is often an evolving process rather than a static document.

“The Comprehensive Planning Committee initiated work on this plan nearly 10 years ago in 2003.

Section 2.3 Regional Coordination

P.1 “many residents in the surrounding smaller communities are dependent upon Belfast because it is the principal service center for commercial goods and services, medical services and employment opportunities, and is the county seat.

P.2 Economy –

P.2 Belfast is a principal service center community for the labor market area and Waldo County. Most of the regions jobs are located in Belfast. Recommendations have been suggested to retain and expand Belfast own economic activities while retaining as much as possible of the marine, rural and agricultural activities that have been its historic economic base.

P 2. Education

“Also, funding cuts which have occurred principally the state level will limit the amount of school improvements to be made over the planning period and may result in the closing of underutilize facilities.

P.3 Recreation –

“Belfast recreation facilities and opportunities are generally satisfactory for community it size:

Public Facilities and Services

“Belfast provides for most of its own public services unlike many of the surrounding towns that receive police protection for Waldo County Sheriff and state police.

P.3 Natural resources –

“Little River flows between Belfast and Northport and the city line divides Belfast reservoir with Northport. To the extent in a future development might impact the shared water resources, it would be beneficial to include the surrounding towns and planning.

P3, 4“Housing:

“The supply of affordable workforce housing is crucial to the local and regional economy. Belfast has the largest supply of housing, both owner-occupied and rental than neighboring communities including subsidized housing for eligible low to moderate income persons, the elderly and the disabled. However since Belfast is a service center community, property taxes are higher than the surrounding municipalities. Residential development has and often continues to occur in line at farther distances from Belfast, warehousing costs, land, and property taxes are generally lower.

P.4 Regional Recommendations/ Implementation Strategies

“From the Economy Chapter:”

“Consider continuing ongoing funding for the Chamber based upon measurable results like the creation and retention of businesses and jobs in Belfast’s.

“Explore opportunities to participate in meaningful regional economic development efforts.

‘Work with neighboring communities to explore joint opportunities for economic development such as the development of offshore wind technology and concurrent onshore support services.

From the Housing chapter:

“Identify potential nonprofit and for-profit developers and create partnerships to explore and develop housing opportunities, including both the rehabilitation of existing buildings and new construction.

P.5 “From the transportation chapter:

“Update a multiple year Road improvement program to include maintenance, upgrading and rebuilding priorities by year, as well as cost for these projects, for all roads.

“From the Recreational Chapter:

“work with public and private partners to extend and maintain a network of trails for motorized the nonmotorized uses.

Required Topic areas

Section 3.1 Historic and Archeological Resources

“The history of Belfast has been shaped by the natural resources that supported the local and regional economy, including farming, fishing, forestry, commerce and shipbuilding.

Sec 3.1 ,P. 1-6 “Establish/maintain a fund for improvements to be made to city-owned buildings of historic value.

Section 3.2 Water Resources

p. 2 –1 “The purpose of this chapter is to help the city identify, manage and adequately protect its water resources, protect the health of citizens and safeguard the local economy dependent on water resources.”

p. 2.2 “The City believes that the public water supplies and recharge areas are adequately protected overall through the Watershed and Aquifer Protection District; zoning standards which are advocated by the Belfast water district which were enacted in the early 1990s. To date no significant development has occurred within these overlay district areas and the Water District has not identified any problems within its watershed. At present no changes are proposed to the current regulatory standards. The city will rely on the Water District to identify the potential need for other standards. No expansions of public water supply anticipated.”

p. 2-5

“All rivers and streams are class B.

“ Statutory definition of class B waters: class B should be the third-highest classification.

“A. class B waters shall be of such quantity that they are suitable for the designated uses of drinking water supply after treatment; fishing; recreation in and on the water; industrial process and cooling water supply; hydroelectric power generation, except as permitted under title 12 section 403 and navigation; and as habitat for fish and other aquatic life. The habitat shall be characterized as unimpaired.

“B. The dissolved oxygen content of class B waters shall be not less than 7 ppm or 75% of saturation, whichever is higher except that for the period from October 1 to May 14 in order to ensure spawning an egg incubation of indigenous fish species, the seven-day mean dissolved oxygen concentration shall not be less than 90.5 parts per man and the one day minimum dissolved oxygen concentration shall not be less than 8.0 parts per man and identified fish spawning areas. Between May 15 and September 30 the number of Escherichia coli bacteria of human origin in these waters may not exceed a geometric mean of 64 per 100 mL or instantaneous level of 427 per hundred milliliters.

P. 2-6

“C. discharges to class B waters shall not cause adverse impact to aquatic life in that the receiving waters shall be of sufficient quality T to support all aquatic species indigenous to the receiving water without detrimental changes in the resident biological community.

P2-7

Maine DEP monitors water quality on a regular basis. She the water resources appendix for the reports of water quality on little on the goose River (little Mason Pond) Little River and the Passagassawakeag River“

“Public Water Supplies in Belfast-- Jackson Pitt well... Smart Road well.

“Policies

1. to protect current and potential drinking water sources.

Section 3.3 Critical Natural Resources

P3-1 “the purpose of this chapter is to help the City identify, manage and adequately protect its critical natural resources and to safeguard the local economy dependent on these resources.

“Critical Natural resources are defined by the State as those areas in the community comprised of one or more or more of the following: Shoreland Zone... Fisheries and wildlife pursuant to the Maine Endangered Species Act.

P. 3.2 “ The City’s zoning ordinance provisions, including waterfront districts are consistent with the current state law and have been approved by the Maine DEP.

Pg3-2 “the City can work with nonprofit local state and national advocacy groups to acquire property in critical areas for conservation outright or with easements specifically, the following areas should be considered for conservation:... Additional areas along the Little River...

P3.3 ‘work with Coastal mountain land trust to preserve critical natural area

“protecting critical natural resources goes hand-in-hand with several of the key policies of the following chapters of this plan agriculture and forestry, economy, land-use, marine resources, recreation, and water resources.

P3-4 Belfast has no state defined Focus Area of Ecological Significance, no state identified significant freshwater fisheries habitat, no fragile Mountain area and no National Natural Landmark.

“Scenic views include the Little River area near route 1

“... Policies to conserve critical natural resources in the community.

P.3-4 “strategies... Pursue public-private partnerships to protect critical natural resources is through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.

Section 3-4 Agricultural and Forest Resources

P.4-1“Farming is a significant land-use activity, important to the economic well-being of numerous Belfast residents.

P4-2 The rising value of land for residential uses and the increased valuation of land that could be converted to residential use reduce the amount of land farmed in forested property taxes the primary source of revenue from municipal government services. Residential uses are often sought because of

the increased property revenue that they will generate. Importantly, however, residential uses consume significantly more municipal services than do farming and forestry activities.

4.2 The future land use plan, like many current zoning districts, also recognize that many areas of Belfast support a wide range of uses

. As such it is recommended that agricultural activities be allowed in mixed-use commercial zoning districts. The City will also consider policies similar to its domesticated chicken policy for urban areas.

P. 4-4

In the next 10 year planning period, no significant farmland or wood lots are seen as vulnerable to conversion to residential use. ...

P.4-8 “ Include agriculture and commercial forestry operations in local or regional economic development plans.

Section 3-5 Marine resources

5.1 “Access to the ocean and its abundant marine resources has been a staple of the coastal economy of the state of Maine for centuries. Belfast continues to thrive due to its proximity to this vast system.

“Past as well as present uses of the working waterfront Belfast include but are not limited to commercial fishing, aquaculture, rail transportation, marine transportation boatbuilding and repair , and of course recreational opportunities

“The purpose of this chapter is to help the city identify, manage and protect its Marine resources and working waterfront features in order to safeguard the local economy that is dependent on these uses.

Maine State Goal and State Coastal Policies

“To manage the Marine environment and its related resources to preserve and improve the ecological integrity and diversity of marine communities and habitats to expand our understanding of the productivity of the Gulf of Maine in coastal waters and to enhance the economic value of the states renewable Marine resources.

P. 5-2

“To support shoreline management the gives preference to water dependent uses over other uses. To encourage and support cooperative state municipal management of coastal resources.

“To protect and manage critical habitat natural areas of state and national significance and maintain the scenic beauty and character of the coast even in areas where development occurs.

“To restore maintain the quality of our fresh, marine and estuarine waters to allow for the broadest possible diversity of public and private uses

P. 5.5 Coastal access

“ is adequate protected access for commercial fishermen, aquaculture rest and recreational users available?

5-12 policies

“to foster water dependent land uses and balance them with other complementary land uses.

“Consider purchasing permanent easements or fee title to access points of property of critical importance to marine, civic or recreational activities

Section 3.6 Population and Demographics

6.2 “If recent trends continue, the need for housing for the elderly, from independent living to assisted living facilities, will increase.

“Demand for municipal services should increase with the growth in overall population especially for services upon which the elderly are most dependent.

6.3 “Belfast is truly a destination, and the viability of this community depends upon maintaining and enhancing our offerings to seasonal visitors will seeking at the same time to ensure that our traditional way of life and economy are not impinged or overrun as has occurred and some of Maine’s larger resort communities.

“Belfast is a service center community and it is the “Shire Town’ and County seat for Waldo County. Many residents of surrounding towns frequently travel to Belfast to work, to recreate/socialize, to receive healthcare, to shop and to use public services offered in Belfast that may not be offered in their town (eg. Library, swimming pool, dog park). ... Collectively these municipal services result in Belfast spending more per capita than neighboring communities.... Belfast seeks to attract more jobs and businesses that benefit not only the City but also the region as a whole.

Section 3.7 Economy

P. 7.1 “The goal of this chapter is to develop policies that expand the city’s tax base, improve job opportunities for residents needing employment, and encourage overall economic well-being.

“Most of the regions jobs are located in Belfast. Accordingly, commute times for Belfast residents are noticeably lower than for the county as a whole

P. 7.2 the Belfast economy experienced a tremendous loss in 2005 when MBNA sold its operation to Bank of America. MBNA, more th an any other employer help pull Belfast out of the economic malaise it suffered in the late 80s when several major processing plants closed in Belfast.

P 7-3 “The City seeks to maintain and enhance a diversified economic base with expanding job opportunities in various sectors with emphasis on employing local residents, graduates of local schools and attracting new working age residents to the city and region. Diversity in employment opportunities could protect the city from downturns in specific sectors as seen in the past with food processing and more recently with finance.

7.4 “It remains important, nevertheless, that the City and the region’s environment be protected in order to allow for a continuation of fishing and other marine-based activities.

P7.5” the 2012 development of coastal farms, and agricultural processing operation which also intends to provide commercial kitchen space for specialty food makers is indicative of the ongoing importance of agriculture.

“The city and area also appears to be experience a growing interest in agricultural operations.

P7.7 Table 2.3 shows that there are more people below the poverty line in 2010 than in 1999.

P7.9 Table 2.8 shows Belfast has traditionally higher unemployment rates and the rest of the state.

P7.14 Policies:

“ 1.To support the type of economic development activity the community desires, reflecting the community’s role in the region. “ To make a financial commitment, if necessary to support the desired economic development...

P 7.15 “ Goal: Encourage expansion of existing industrial/ job intensive uses and provide opportunities for the attracting of new industrial/ job intensive development.

“Ensure Belfast has sufficient areas that have needed infrastructure to support industrial and job intensive uses.

Analyze the desirability feasibility of creating an expanded or new business Park to meet near-term or long-term needs for economic development.

P. 7.16 Ensure that there is an adequate amount of privately owned land which can be used for industrial and intensive job creation activities.

P. 7-16Downtown Economy : Not relevant

P7-17 Tourism and Creative economy

“promote the natural beauty of Belfast and its opportunities for active outdoor recreation as a means of attracting tourism.

“ Enhance the Emerald necklace and seriesof recreational trails in Belfast and provide information regarding such as a means of encouraging outdoor oriented tourism.

P 7-18 Commercial development

Goal: to promote and strengthen Belfast position as a commercial center for local residents and surrounding communities.

“Identify appropriate locations for larger scale and smaller scale commercial activities. Pursue land use regulations and ensure commercial development is compatible with the character of Belfast.... The adoption of good-quality performance standards is the key.

P 7-19 Overall Land Use

“Consistent with the land-use plan included in this comprehensive plan, to attract, enhance, and support existing and future economic development while minimizing negative impacts associated with incompatible uses. Thus, the city should amend land-use ordinances as necessary to include appropriate provisions regarding permitted and prohibited uses and to identify appropriate areas for commercial/nonresidential development.”

Section 3.8 Housing

P. 8.1 With rising property values and assessments, affordable housing is an ongoing concern for many residents .

Goals to encourage or promote affordable, decent housing opportunities

P.8-2 “That said, the gap between income levels on the cost to construct new multifamily housing adversely affects a developer’s ability to obtain sufficient rental income to support the cost of new construction.

“It is widely understood that Belfast has a significant need for affordable housing.

“Those earning median and moderate (150% of median) incomes are in large part often unable to afford housing in Belfast, and choose to live in one of the communities in which property taxes are often lower. For service Center community to thrive it must be an affordable place for a large portion of the workforce to reside within its borders.

P8-14 “Housing Chapter Policies and Strategies

“to encourage and promote adequate workforce housing to support the communities and regions economic development.

“To seek to achieve at least 10% of all housing built or placed during the next decade be affordable.

“To encourage and support the efforts of local and regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable workforce housing’s needs

P8-17 “ The City should examine the desirability of the City committing public resources including but not limited to tax dollars, to assist in the construction of affordable housing.

Section 3-9 Recreation

P.9.1 “The City’s goal is to preserve, strengthen and advance public recreation opportunities.

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

“ Belfast should look to maintain existing facilities and services.

“Allocating sufficient resources for the ongoing maintenance of all facilities is crucial.

P.9-2 “The City has worked with area land trust, particularly the Coastal Mountain Land Trust regarding the preservation of open spaces and access.

“While the City has not establish a specific open space fund, the City has often committed taxpayer revenues to benefit public access and recreation.

“Drinking water is supplied through groundwater wells not surface waters. Accordingly recreational access to service waters does not threaten public drinking water sources.

P. 9. 6 recreation Policies:

“To maintain/upgrade existing recreational facilities as necessary to meet current and future needs

“ 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 to work with nearby property owners to address concerns.

Strategies

P.9.7“Work with public and private partners to extend and maintain a network of trails for motorized and nonmotorized uses.

“Work with an existing local land trust or other conservation organ decision to pursue opportunities to protect important open space recreational land. “

Section 3-10 Transportation

Goal: “the city’s main goal is to plan for the efficient maintenance and improvement of the transportation system so it can accommodate and well serve existing and anticipated development.

P. 10.8 “Many the City’s existing sidewalks are in poor condition require reconstruction rather than only resurfacing.

P10-11 “a lack of adequate funding to preserve and enhance the state transportation network will impact Belfast along with many other Maine communities of the next 20 years.

P.10-20 “the city canon has encouraged housing development in areas close to existing public and private services so the residents can choose to walk to work rather than drive and so the public transportation with fixed routes becomes more practical sufficient development densities to provide adequate ridership levels.

“The city’s adopted future land use plan recommends encouraging denser residential development and more intense nonresidential development in the following areasthese areas have existing services and are more likely to attract development

P. 10-22 “ the city has reconstructed several of its major streets located within the Route one bypass, such as Miller Street to Northport Avenue, however the total number of streets and rural roads which warrant reconstruction dwarf the available funds.

P. 10-24 Connecting Trails

“We envision initiative funding and maintenance these trails to come from other organizations...”
Support from the city would be in the form of cooperation and planning, letters of support for funding and acknowledgment of the value trails bring to the community.

P.10-29

“The City future land use plan encourages denser residential development and more intense non-residential development in areas which public services are located. The Future Land use Plan use also encourages mixed-use development in many of these areas.

P. 10-30 “Capital improvements plan. Develop or continue to update or prioritize five-year improvement, maintenance and repair plan for local regional transportation system facilities that reflects community, regional and state objectives. Prepare and update a multiyear Road improvement program to include maintenance, upgrading and rebuilding priorities by year as well as cost for these projects, for all roads.

Section 3.11 Public Facilities and services.

P. 11-1 “The goal of this chapter is to plan, finance and maintain an efficient system of public facilities and services that will accommodate the City’s future needs.

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

P. 11.5 of the recommendations in this plan is for the city to consider preparing an overall storm water management plan (similar to the 1995 plan prepared by Olver associates for sewer services) and to commit public funds to making desired improvements. Such an approach will be costly and is a long-term project.

11-9 “ Are the community’s priorities for funding needed improvements reflected in the capital investment plan?... “Yes within the budgetary constraints of taxpayers.

P.11-17 Policies

“To efficiently meet identified public facilities and service needs.

“To provide public facilities and services in a manner that promotes and supports growth and development in identified growth areas.

P 11-18

“Identify any Improvements needed to maintain or upgrade services to accommodate the communities anticipated growth and changing demographics.

“To maintain municipally owned properties, plan for their long-term maintenance and upgrade, ensure that City public facilities and service needs are evaluated annually for possible budgetary adjustment to guarantee plan preparation for future needs.

“Explore the use of tax increment financing to assist in the construction of desired public facilities and target areas.

Section 3-12 Fiscal Capacity and Capital Investment Plan

P.12.1 “Planning and policy decisions must take into account a municipalities ability to make necessary expenditures and the impact that this spending will have on taxpayers. The primary funding source for municipal government is property tax revenue. In order to maintain a consistent mil rate year-to-year, City government must operate in a fiscally responsible manner. Large fluctuations in the tax rate can discourage economic development and spark public outcry. Although the priorities of the City may change from one election-year to another, stable municipal finances are always a fundamental responsibility of local government. It is important for Belfast to handle diligently all yearly expenditures while the same time planning for the City’s long-term objectives. As is the case with any business, the physical assets of Belfast must be properly maintained to Reserve accounts to protect the city’s continued economic health.

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

“Capital investments will continue to be funded to capital reserve fund supported by property tax revenue Citywide.

“The top 10 taxpayers in Belfast paid about 13.65% of taxes in the City collected in 2012.

“ Overall Belfast has a rather diverse tax base.

P. 12-8 “Capital investments are prioritized each year in the budget process based upon the availability of funds and the political will the community.

Section 4. How to use the policy recommendations in the Future Land Use Plan of the Belfast Comprehensive Plan Adopted Future Land Use Plan (10/27/09)

P4 The Future Land Use Plan of the Belfast Comprehensive Plan offers recommendations regarding how land use should occur throughout the City, particularly for the next 10 years. These recommendations are policy statements. These policy statements are intended to serve as the foundation for zoning and other land use regulations and laws identified in the City Code of Ordinances that the City may adopt to implement the Plan's policy statements.

That said, all should recognize the policy statements are not the law or the City Code. As such, while the policies identified in this Plan are often very descriptive, persons should expect that some of the specific details contained in the land-use area descriptions may change as the City moves forward in implementing the Plan through a process of preparing ordinance proposals and amendments, conducting public hearings on these amendments, and choosing to adopt or not adopt the proposals. The purpose of the competency plan is to provide overall policy direction to the community and selected and appointed officials regarding the issues such as land-use.

“it should be recognized that there is flexibility in preparing ordinance language to implement this policy.

“This flexibility would apply to but is not necessarily limited to policies such as the boundaries of proposed land-use areas, the ranges of uses allowed, and the recommended lot size density and setback requirements. It will, however, be critical that the laws the laws that are adopted are consistent and harmonious with the main theme of each land-use area.

The public process associated with preparing these policy recommendations was quite extensive, however, it is recognized that additional public comment will be forthcoming as ordinances (laws) are prepared. It is critical that the City be open to considering future public comment in helping to shape any final proposal. Also, events may unfold which may cause the City to rethink proposals in this Plan.

Thus, it is understood that this ongoing public process and debate may result in changes being made to the specific recommendations in this Plan.