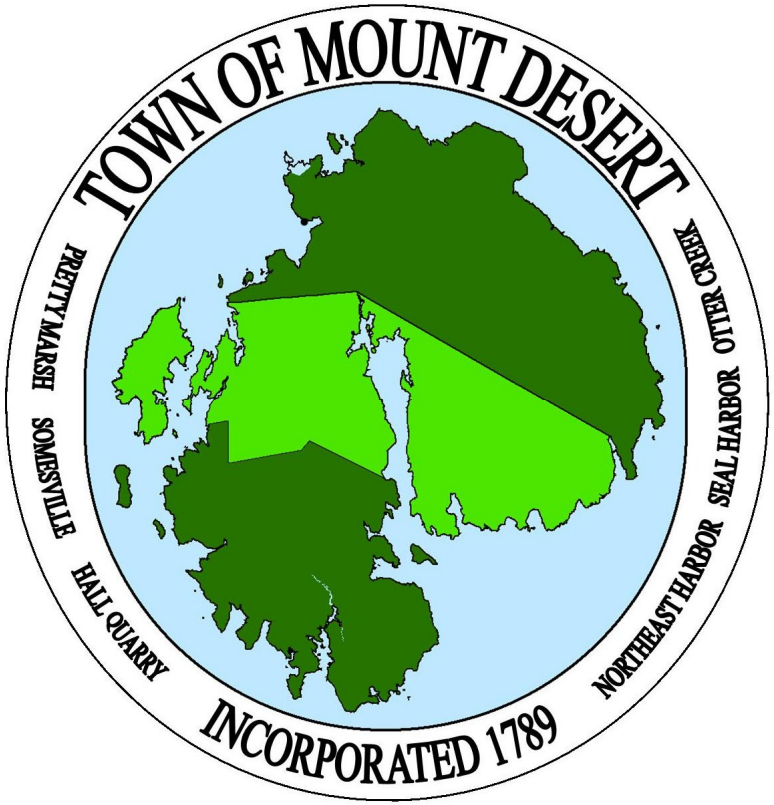
Town of Mount Desert
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Prepared by
The Town of Mount Desert Comprehensive Planning Committee

The intent of this Comprehensive Plan is to promote and sustain a diverse year-round community, by managing change of Mount Desert's principal resources. This effort first recognizes the community's essential attributes, and then builds upon them, fostering an environment that allows the town and its individual villages to thrive. In order to provide for this continuing change within the Town of Mount Desert, five interrelated issues have been equally considered and weighed as a whole:

Community
Economics
Environment
Health & Recreation
Civic Participation

Recognizing that these five issues are integral to the structure of our community, they have been considered closely as each of the Comprehensive Plan's sections has been discussed and developed. These five issues should be kept in consideration of any new initiatives within our community.


TOWN OF MOUNT DESERT
OTTER CREEK
SEAL HARBOR
NORTHEAST HARBOR
HALL QUARRY
SOMESVILLE
PRETTY MARSH
INCORPORATED 1789

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This Comprehensive Plan is an advisory document reflecting the collective desired future of the Town, and is to be used to guide the selectmen; the municipal boards and committees; and the staff in decision-making. Ongoing adherence to the Plan will provide greater continuity with town policy.

The Mount Desert Comprehensive Plan is composed of the following major elements, as consistent with Maine's Growth Management Act: ~ Inventory and Analysis ~ Policies ~ Future Land Use

The **Inventory and Analysis** section describes recent trends, existing conditions, and projections. It also "frames" the debate on the major issues facing the community. This inventory is very detail-oriented and laden with facts and numbers. The inventory frames the major issues, and the Goals & Objectives begin to address them.

The Goals & Objectives are a part of the **Policies** section, which answers the question "now that we have this information, what should we do about it?" This section of the plan also includes information related to regional coordination to document ways that we are working with our neighboring communities already and suggests ways in which efficiencies may be improved. The **Policies** section outlines strategies and recommendations from other sections of the plan and specifies what actions need to be taken, who should do it, and when it should be done.

The **Future Land Use** (FLU) section is a culmination of the Inventory and the Goals & Objectives. Maps corresponding with this section are graphic statements of current use and future policy, identifying "growth" areas into which development will be directed and "rural" areas in which development will be discouraged. The FLU map is the foundation upon which a zoning ordinance is created. Since Mount Desert already has a zoning ordinance, the FLU map reflects currently-existing zoning, and identifies areas that could potentially be rezoned, where borders might be changed, and reflect other recommendations made by the committee.

The **Capital Improvement Strategy** (CIS) is required by Maine's Growth Management Act to help communities plan for the financial cost of growth. This CIS, in its simplest form, will include all of the capital investments that Mount Desert has to make in order to accommodate the projected growth in the community over the next ten years. This CIS includes an estimated cost of each capital investment, possible funding sources, and a timeframe for the investment.

Interpretation of this plan requires careful consideration to the entire document, with issues given equal consideration and weighed as a whole. Future development of ordinances and policy should be consistent with the primary *Goals* stated herein. It is not intended, however, that all of the *Implementation Strategies* be exercised; the plan intentionally provides a range of options for future debate: with the *Goals* forming the "game plan", the *Implementation Strategies* are the "playbook". Any changes to land use ordinances or other ordinances still must be voted on at town meeting after more focused planning and public input. Likewise, any future tax burden for the presented Capital Improvement Strategy requires approval as part of the annual town budget.

Inventory and Analysis

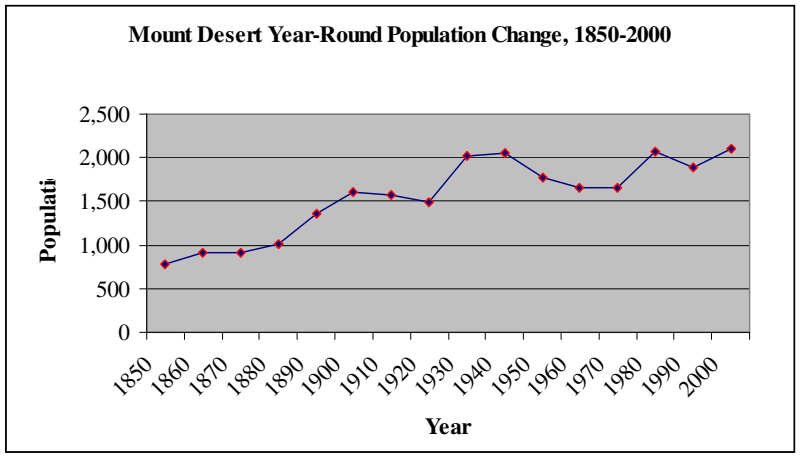
Population:
Who We Are

This chapter provides a profile of Mount Desert's population and demographics and discusses the major trends that are creating change.

Historical Population Growth

Mount Desert's population has fluctuated through the past two centuries. Since the 1840s, a general increase persisted through World War I. After a brief decline, the Roaring 20s and 1930s experienced times of rapid growth. On the eave of World War II, more than 2,000 lived in Mount Desert year-round.

Following World War II, Mount Desert's population began three decades of decline. In 1947, a fire burned more than 17,000 acres of Mount Desert Island as well as hundreds of houses and businesses. This fire, in combination with a nationwide migration from rural areas to the major cities eroded the size of the Town's year round population. By the mid 1970's, the local population was mirroring national household growth patterns, and by the mid 1980's had eventually surpassed the pre WWII peak.



Recent Population Growth, 1990 – 2005

Between 1990 and 2000, the Town's year-round population grew from 1,889 residents to 2,109 residents. This 12% rate of growth significantly outpaced that of the state as a whole and Hancock County. On Mount Desert Island, only Tremont grew faster at 16%. Bar Harbor grew by 9% and Southwest Harbor grew by only 1%.

Between the 2000 US Census and 2004, we estimate that Mount Desert's population has continued to grow. By 2005, our town had an estimated 2,184 year-round residents, indicating a 3.5% increase in population for the first half of the decade. This estimate is based on:

- New housing units: Between January 2000 and May 2007, there were 174 new dwellings constructed within the Town. Approximately 50% of these housing units were constructed for year-round residential use. Over 20% of the

new year-round homes, however, were built by existing residents moving to new locations

Recorded Births and Deaths, 2000-2006							
	2000	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**
Births	15	14	15	25	15	21	18
Deaths	22	37	22	26	25	28	19
Source: Mount Desert Town Records							

- Occupancy rates: In 2000, the Census reported that year-round housing units were 95% occupied. We estimate that this occupancy rate has not changed.

- Average Household Size: The average household size has decreased only slightly since the 2000 Census that reported 2.19 persons per household. In 2004, the estimate average is 2.15 persons per household.

Recent Population Growth, 1970-2000					
Community	**1970**	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**% Change 1990 – 2000**
Bar Harbor	3,716	4,124	4,443	4,820	8.5
Mount Desert	**1,659**	**2,063**	**1,889**	**2,109**	**11.6**
Southwest Harbor	1,657	1,855	1,952	1,966	0.7
Tremont	1,003	1,222	1,324	1,529	15.5
Hancock County	34,590	41,781	46,948	51,791	10.3
Maine	992,048	1,124,660	1,227,928	1,274,923	3.8

By looking at natural population increases or decreases it is possible to determine the amount of population change that is due to net migration into or out of a community. Between 2000 and 2006, there were 123 births recorded and 179 deaths. The number of deaths surpasses the number of births during this five-year period by 56, or approximately 46%. Therefore, our population growth is likely attributed to people moving into the community instead of family growth.

Population Projections

Projecting population change can be difficult, particularly in a community like Mount Desert that has a very large stock of seasonal housing. Population projections in the Town can vary widely depending on the assumptions that are made about future housing trends.

While the growth in our town has been robust in the last two decades, it is not projected to continue for the next decade, and the Town may likely experience a modest population decline: as estimated by the most recent figures provided by the Hancock County Planning Office, the growth rate is projected to decline from 2005 through 2020, to an estimated population of 1995 residents.

Seasonal Population

The seasonal population in Mount Desert is significant, doubling the number of occupied housing and lodging units and driving much of the economy. The seasonal population also supports many of our community organizations, and generally transforms this island of 10,000

into one of the most popular summer recreational destinations on the eastern seaboard. Though peak demand only occurs for a few weeks each year, the seasonal flux creates enormous challenges for the Town to operate its facilities and provide services.

To better understand the impacts of the seasonal population on Mount Desert, we have broken it down into three groups:

- **Seasonal Residents**: Seasonal residents are those that live in the community for two to nine months of the year. These residents function as year-round residents when they are in town – working, shopping, using town facilities and services, and generally participating in the community as year-round residents.

- **Summer Visitors**: Summer visitors are dedicated visitors that enjoy the amenities of the region for extended vacations and intermittent stays. These residents are often also dedicated to the community, but some work elsewhere and therefore don't have the time to fully immerse themselves in the community. Many of these visitors are expected to become seasonal residents in the future.

- **Tourists**: This population is made up of vacationers and day-trippers that visit our community primarily between Memorial Day and Columbus Day. This population typically rents accommodations (either on Mount Desert Island or in the region), although a significant number of this population fills the empty bedrooms of relatives and friends who might be more committed members of the community. On peak weekends, we estimate that this tourist population can add as many as 8,000 people to the community (based on housing units, rooms in inns/hotels, and demand changes in the public utility network).

Household Change

In the past several decades, the composition of the Town's population has experienced several significant changes.

First, the average size of a household in Mount Desert has been decreasing. In 1980, an average of 2.52 persons lived in each household. By 2000, this had reached 2.19 persons. This trend towards smaller households is projected to continue – by 2015 we project that the average household size in Mount Desert will reach 2.10 persons.

The trend towards smaller households is not unique to Mount Desert; household sizes have been decreasing nationwide for the last 40 years. Several reasons account for this trend, including a trend towards single-person and smaller households in the Baby Boom generation, the increased longevity of seniors, an increase in divorce rates, and the trend for younger couples to wait longer before starting families.

This small change in the average household size can have larger implications within our community. For example, between 2000 and 2015, this 0.09 change in the average household size translates into a decline of roughly 90 Mount Desert residents (assuming the number of year-round households stays stable). To make up for these 'lost' residents, an additional 40 occupied year-round housing units would have to be added to the Town's housing stock. Therefore, seemingly small population changes can mask significantly larger

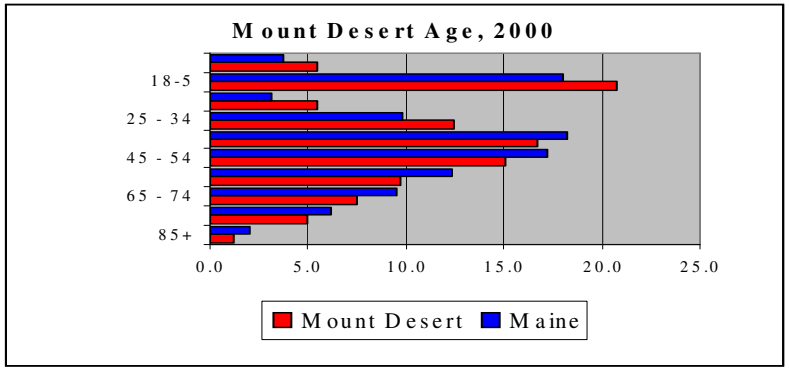
amounts of change in a community's demographic composition and housing unit growth.

Secondly, the number of people living alone in Mount Desert is increasing. In 1990, there were 231 one-person households (27% of total households) in our community. By 2000, this number had increased to 300 (31% of total households). Of these 300 households, 125 were occupied by residents over 65 years of age. This number is projected to increase in the future, as our population ages, and the Town may likely need to participate and adapt changes in services, facilities, and fee schedules that are aligned to this diminishing household size.

Finally, the ratio of family households (two or more related people living together) has remained stable between 1990 and 2000. According to the US Census, there were 566 family households in 1990. Of these, 205 had families with school-aged children. By 2000, the number of family households had increased slightly to 584 family households and the number of families with school-aged children had increased to 228.

% of Households with Children at Home	
Location	**%**
Maine	30.4
Hancock County	28.2
Mount Desert	23.7
Source: US Census	

Although these figures may appear to be low in comparison to Hancock County and the State of Maine, they are still above 20% and might contradict today's conventional wisdom that new families are being pushed out of the community by higher living costs. Nevertheless, we observe that rising house prices seen in Mount Desert in the late 1990's may not have had impact by the time of the 2000 US Census. We project that the ratio of family households to single person households in the community will decline by 2015.



Age Distribution

In 2000, the median age for Mount Desert residents was 43.6 years. Approximately 22% of our residents were under 18 years of age, and only 13% were between 18 and 34 (Figure 5). The baby boom generation – those born between 1945 and 1964 – accounted for 35% of our year-round residents. Residents of age 65 and over accounted for 18% of the population.

We have an older population in comparison to the State overall. The Town's median age is 5 years older than the State. Those under 25 account for approximately 33% of the state's population; in Mount Desert it is 25%. Residents 55 or older account for approximately one-quarter of the state's population; in Mount Desert it is 33%. In addition, our population is growing older. Between 1980 and 2000, our year-round population's median age has increased from 36.0 years to 43.6 years. This trend toward older populations is in part due to national trends, and will likely continue, especially

if more of the Baby Boom generation retires and moves to Mount Desert year-round.

Educational Attainment

Compared to both Maine and Hancock County, the Town of Mount Desert has a significantly lower percentage of residents with less than a 9th grade education and a larger percentage of residents with some college or a Bachelor's degree. At 9.2, the percentage of Mount Desert residents with a graduate or professional degree falls just below Maine's overall percentage of 10.1.

Issues and Implications

1. Population growth has been relatively moderate.
2. There has been relatively significant housing unit growth, creating growing impact on services and upon the landscape.
3. An increasing older population could demand different types of services in the future.

Economy:
Making a Living

Since "rusticators" first began visiting Mount Desert Island in the late 1800's, seasonal visitation has been the main driving force behind our Town's economy. While seasonal businesses dominate the Island's economy, there is also a wide range of other economic activity in which the Town of Mount Desert participates. This chapter describes the Town's economy including an inventory of the local labor force, commuting patterns, and the regional job market. It also discusses current economic trends in the Town and identifies policy issues.

Labor Force and Employment Profile

Our Town's economy is largely based on seasonal visitation. Like most other towns on the island, the number of employed residents in Mount Desert varies greatly from season to season, as does the unemployment rate. For instance, per the Maine Department of Labor, the number of employed persons in the Town in 2006 had a seasonal low in the month of January at 1,086 and a seasonal high in July at 1,376. Similarly, the Town's unemployment rate was 9.1% in January compared to 2.3% in July. Of the 63 largest employers (those with between 5 and 99 employees), 23 are almost entirely seasonal businesses. These include the Town's two largest private sector employees, Asticou Inn and Jordan Pond House, both of which employ in excess of 50 persons seasonally. Many, if not most, of these seasonal jobs are filled by persons who are not residents of the Town of Mount Desert, the State of Maine, or even the United States.

The US Census data upon which the tables in this chapter are based is taken in April, near the seasonal low point in the Town's economic cycle. As such, it likely represents a picture of the "full-time" employment picture of the Town. There are several things to note in these statistics. Firstly, the percentage of persons not in the labor force in the Town of Mount Desert is higher than that of the County and State as a whole. This is likely the result of the large number of retirees living in the Town. Secondly, included in the 1,054 employed persons in the Town are 141 self-employed workers. These include fishermen, construction workers, gardeners, artisans, and those working an assortment of other jobs. At over 13% of the total

Labor Force Statistics, 2000

	Mount Desert		Hancock County		Maine	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
(Persons 16 yrs+)	1,734	100	41,733	100	1,010,318	100
In Labor Force	1,098	63.3	26,826	64.3	659,360	65.3
Civilian Labor Force	1,092	63	26,450	63.4	655,176	64.8
Employed	1,054	60.8	25,034	60	624,011	61.8
Unemployed	38	2.2	1,416	3.4	31,165	3.1
Armed Forces	6	0.3	376	0.9	4,184	0.4
Not in Labor Force	636	36.7	14,907	35.7	350,958	34.7

Source: US Census

number of employed persons (compared to 9% for the State as a whole), they represent an important part of the Town's workforce. Also of note, 128, or 12% were government workers. This probably makes government the largest type of employer in the Town. Finally, compared with Hancock County and the State overall, Mount Desert's unemployment rate is relatively low.

According to the 2000 US Census, a greater percentage of Mount Desert residents are involved in managerial and profession occupations compared to Hancock County and the State. There are fewer people involved in service professions, and production and transportation.

The 2000 US Census shows that a relatively small portion of the Town's population is employed in natural resource-based trades. Fishing, while not at the center of the Town's economic activity as it had been in the past for the region as a whole, appears to have been on the rise in Mount Desert over the past 15 years, and it remains an integral part of the economy that has sustained itself over time and shows the ability to do so into the future.

The percentage of Mount Desert's employed labor force occupied in construction, at 12.3%, is nearly double that of the State. This reflects the large amount of building activity on the Island, particularly of seasonal houses.

Less than 8% of the employed labor force is involved in the retail trade, in comparison to approximately 12% in Hancock County and 13.5% at the State Level. This reflects the fact that the largest local center of retail activity is off Island.

Manufacturing, at 8.1% of the employed work force compared to 14.2% for the state as a whole, does not represent a major source of employment in the Town. Given real estate prices and access to transport, it is unlikely that there will ever be much manufacturing activity in the Town outside of the traditional boat building businesses.

At 11.5%, Mount Desert has nearly double the number of people involved in professional scientific, management, administrative and waste management services than the State overall. This can probably be attributed to the Town's relative proximity to The Jackson Laboratory, the Mount Desert Island Hospital, the College of the Atlantic, and other such entities located in Bar Harbor.

Finally, 13.2% of the employed work force is occupied in either Other Services or Information, close to twice the level for the State as a whole. It is likely that a significant number of the self employed fall into these categories.

Income

A breakdown of household incomes (as reported in the 2000 US Census) is shown below. Of note, 40.5% of Mount Desert's households had incomes of $75,000 or higher. This compares to 31.6% for Hancock County and 33.6% for the entire state. This probably correlates with the relatively high numbers of people whose occupational profile is Managerial and Professional. It may also be influenced by the higher incomes of retirees "from away" who reside in the Town.

The median household income for the Town of Mount Desert in 1999 was $41,321 and the median family income was

$54,375. Both household and family incomes in the Town surpass the State's median figures by more than 10%.

According to the 2000 US Census, only 19 Mount Desert families were below the poverty level in 1999, or 3.2%. This is low in comparison to Hancock County's level of 7.0% for families. There were 11, or 15.7%, of Mount Desert families with female householder (no husband present) at the poverty level compared to 24.9% for Hancock County. For reported individuals, there were 108 individuals in Mount Desert, or 5.1%, compared to 10.2% for Hancock County overall.

Household Income, 2000

Amount	% Mount Desert	% Hancock County	% Maine
Less than 10,000	6.8	10.0	10.3
$10,000-$14,999	5.3	8.1	7.6
$15,000-$24,999	14.0	15.3	14.8
$25,000-$34,999	14.0	15.3	14.2
$50,000-$74,999	17.6	18.6	18.3
$75,000-$99,000	22.7	18.0	19.4
$100,000-$149,000	9.6	7.6	8.4
$150,000-$199,000	6.1	4.9	4.7
$200,000 or more	2.1	1.1	1.1

Source: US Census

Mount Desert Median Income

	1989	1999
Median Household Income	$31,019	$41,321
as % of State median	111.40%	110.40%
Median Family Income	$35,565	$54,375
as % of State median	109.70%	120.40%

Source: US Census

Commuting Patterns

Mount Desert is essentially a bedroom community, and its labor force relies heavily upon neighboring towns for jobs and economic activity. There are a limited number of full-time jobs in Mount Desert, just 668 in 2000 according to the Maine Department of Labor. This is significantly less than in the surrounding communities, 3571 in Bar Harbor, and 1278 in Southwest Harbor. With 37 employees in 2005, the Town government itself was in fact the largest year-round employer in Mount Desert. Reflecting high local real estate prices and other factors, less than half (14) of these Town employees lived in Mount Desert, and 15 commuted from off the island entirely.

As a result, residents in Mount Desert are very closely tied with the economies in the surrounding communities, both in terms of where they work and where they spend their money. In 2000, 80% of the town's residents that were employed worked somewhere on the island. Nearly 400 worked in Mount Desert itself, and another 310 worked in Bar Harbor. Ellsworth

accounted for another 11% of the labor force and Bangor accounted for 3%. The remaining employed residents worked in various communities from Augusta to Winter Harbor.

As people tend to shop where they work, it is likely that residents are also spending much of their money in other towns, particularly in the Greater Somesville area and Otter Creek, where the closest amenities are located in neighboring towns.

There is a modest change in commuting patterns from 1990 when 86% of the employed residents of Mount Desert worked on the island. At that time, 441 residents worked in Mount Desert itself, and only 259 worked in Bar Harbor. Ellsworth accounted for only 7% of the town's employed residents. More Town residents are commuting out of Town for work.

Just as our residents commute to other communities for employment, so do residents of other communities commute into Mount Desert to work. Commuting patterns from 2000 suggest that 41% of the jobs in Mount Desert were filled by non-Mount Desert residents. Since the US Census is taken in April, this data likely understates our connection with these more far-flung communities for a part of every year.

In the last decade, commuters to Mount Desert have changed significantly. Commuters were much more likely to commute from off-island to work in Mount Desert in 2000 than they were in 1990. In 1990, 84% of the employees working in Mount Desert commuted from on the island. In 2000, that was down to 69%. These numbers probably understate the size of the commuting pattern change as they do not reflect the many employees of off-island firms (particularly those engaged in construction and housing repair) that work in the Town on a daily basis. This trend is likely to continue as increasing housing prices force more of the labor force off of the island.

These trends towards more commuters coming into and out of the Town, in conjunction with seasonal tourist traffic flows, will continue to strain the community's transportation network, especially bottlenecks such as the stoplights in Somesville and at the bridge off of the Island. They also stretch parking resources and lead to problems with on-road parking.

Issues and Implications

1. The Town's natural resources attract both visitors and residents to the area resulting in an economy that is primarily seasonal, with lesser economic activity during the winter months. Because of the low year-round population, most businesses cater to tourists; year-round residents frequently have to go elsewhere to meet everyday needs.

2. Mount Desert is highly dependent upon surrounding towns for year round employment activities.

3. The high numbers of residents commuting to other towns on and off the island has led to increased traffic and congestion on the roads, and could be an increasing problem, particularly at key intersections.

4. Growing numbers of retirees "from away" provide an economic boost to year round businesses but also tend to drive up housing prices.

5. While incomes in the Town are relatively high, relative housing costs are even higher due to the impact of

competition for land and housing stock from summer residents.

Housing:
Our Shelter

A house or apartment is more than just shelter. It represents security, privacy, health, community and all the other things we associate with "home." Unfortunately, rising housing costs have created affordable housing challenges for many of our residents, and the higher costs have far reaching implications. It affects the Town's ability to attract business, influences decisions by those who serve the community (such as cashiers, wait staff, police officers, teachers, and others) and cannot afford to live here, and may also determine whether families remain in the community from one generation to the next.

This chapter examines the supply and condition of housing in Mount Desert, considers its affordability in relation to local incomes, and analyzes its availability, especially for lower income households.

Housing Stock, 2003

In 2003, our town had an estimated 2,012 housing units. Approximately 40 % of these housing units were located west of Somes Sound. For analytical purposes, we describe Mount Desert's housing stock based on boundaries determined by the US Census Bureau. The three areas can be roughly defined as the village of Northeast Harbor, the East Side, and the West Side (separated by Somes Sound).

The village of **Northeast Harbor** is bounded to the north by Sargeant Drive and Route 3 and is otherwise surrounded by water. This is the densest housing in Mount Desert with 523 housing units, roughly one-quarter of the town's entire housing stock. Between 1990 and 2003, Northeast Harbor had a net gain of 128 housing units. Not surprisingly, Northeast Harbor's housing is the oldest town wide – the median house age is more than 60 years.

We project that this housing stock is unlikely to expand significantly. Older, dense villages tend to expand their housing stock slowly for three reasons: most lots are already developed; demolitions or conversions from housing to commercial uses are more likely; and older units are often combined to create larger units with more amenities for the modern family. Countering these trends are the large older homes that are sometimes broken into smaller units and condominiums.

Over half of the housing units in Northeast Harbor are now used seasonally. Given the current conditions and scarcity of vacant land, the housing stock in the village is likely to experience only modest growth in the future.

The **East Side** is bounded to the west by Somes Sound and includes the villages of Seal Harbor and Otter Creek. This section of town had one-third of the entire town's housing units in 2003 (or 670 units). Between 1990 and 2003, this section of town experienced a net gain of 67 housing units. This is the second oldest section of town – the median age of the housing stock is 50 years.

Acadia National Park occupies the majority of the land east side of Somes Sound, and much of the remaining land has already been developed. Accordingly, because there is not much land left available for development, the housing stock on the East Side is also unlikely to experience significant growth in the future. Some infill housing is likely in this section of town as older properties are subdivided into smaller lots.

Approximately half of the housing units are used seasonally on the East Side as a whole. In Seal Harbor, 53% of the housing stock consists of seasonal residences. However, Otter Creek is only 33% seasonal, making it one of the more year-round neighborhoods in the Town.

The **West Side** covers the town west of Somes Sound. It includes the neighborhoods of Somesville, Hall Quarry, and Pretty Marsh. This section of town had 817 housing units in 2003, or approximately 40% of the Town's total housing stock. Between 1990 and 2003 this section of town added 141 new housing units. Although it still has some of the oldest homes on the island, overall, is the newest section of town – the median age of the housing stock is 25 years.

We project that the West Side is the most likely to experience significant growth in the future. It has the largest amount of developable land, and is comparatively less expensive than Northeast Harbor or the East Side.

Slightly less than half of the housing units are used seasonally on the West Side as a whole Pretty Marsh has the highest amount of seasonal housing, at 58%. In contrast, Somesville is only 37% seasonal, and Hall Quarry, the most year-round neighborhood in the Town, is only 32% seasonal.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of year-round units increased town-wide. In 1990, 837 housing units were occupied year-round. By 2000, this had increased to 962 units, a 15% increase. The largest increase occurred in Northeast Harbor, which grew by 37%. The East Side decreased slightly, while the West Side increased by 20%.

Housing Occupancy		
	Number	%
Total Housing Units	1,900	100
Occupied Units	962	50.6
Vacant Units	938	49.4
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	883	46.5
Homeowner Vacancy Rate = 1.0 %		
Rental Vacancy Rate = 3.7 %		
Source: US Census		

Occupancy Rate and Tenure

Compared with surrounding communities, our town has a lower percentage of year-round housing units. In Mount Desert, 51% of the units are used year-round. Bar Harbor (81%), Southwest Harbor (74%), and Tremont (65%) all have larger year-round populations.

Approximately 30% of Mount Desert's year-round households are renter households (282 renter households in 2000). Between 1990 and 2000, growth in the number of renter households (29%) outpaced growth in owner-occupied households (10%). The largest renter household increases occurred in Northeast Harbor (59% increase) and on the West Side of the town (45% increase).

Other communities on Mount Desert Island vary in the amount of year-round households that are renter-occupied. In 2000, nearly 40% of Bar Harbor's households rented, while only 21% of Tremont's households rented. In general, renter-occupied households increased at the same rate as owner-occupied households in these communities.

Occupancy Rate and Tenure

Location	Renter-Occupied Units			Owner-Occupied Units			Total Occupied Units, 2000	% Renter-Occupied, 2000
	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000		
Northeast Harbor	56	89	58.9	121	153	26.4	242	36.8
East Side	90	87	-3	233	227	-2.5	314	27.7
West Side	73	106	45.2	264	300	13.6	406	26.1
Mount Desert Total	**219**	**282**	**28.8**	**618**	**680**	**10**	**962**	**29.3**
Bar Harbor	710	823	15.9	1,141	1,319	15.6	2,142	38.4
Southwest Harbor	283	307	8.5	569	592	4	899	34.1
Tremont	121	143	18.2	439	520	18.5	663	21.6
Total, Mount Desert Island	1,333	1,555	16.7	2,767	3,111	12.4	4,666	33.3

Source: US Census

Types of Housing Stock

Nearly 95% of the housing units in Mount Desert are single-family units. Duplexes and units in multi-family structures account for the remaining units. This reliance on single-family units is the pattern across the entire island, although Southwest Harbor and Bar Harbor have slightly larger stocks of duplexes and multi-family units.

Type of Housing Stock, 2000

	Mount Desert	Mount Desert Island	Hancock County	Maine
Single-family	94.4	82.9	90.1	79.4
Duplex	2.6	5.2	2.7	5.6
Multi-family	3.1	11.9	6	14.7
Other	0	0	0.3	0.3
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: US Census

Compared with the Hancock County and the state as a whole, Mount Desert has a very high proportion of single-family housing units and low proportions of duplexes and multi-unit structures. Town data further suggests that new housing units being constructed are almost exclusively single-family units.

There is one trailer park located in the Town of Mount Desert, a seventeen-unit park located within Otter Creek.

Age of the Housing Stock, 2003

According to information reported in Town Records and the 2000 US Census, approximately one-third of Mount Desert's housing stock has been built since 1980. Nearly 40% of the units existing in 2003 were constructed before 1940. This early construction helped shape the character of today's community and, as a result, may offer special opportunities for continued preservation.

Age of Housing Stock, 2003

Year	Number of Housing Units	% of Total
2000 – 2003	112	6
1990 – 1999	280	14
1980 – 1989	303	15
1970 – 1979	251	12
1960 – 1969	132	7
1950 – 1959	140	7
1940 – 1949	53	3
Pre-1940	741	37
Total Units	2,012	100

Source: US Census; Town Records

Mount Desert Housing Authority

The Mount Desert Housing Authority provides housing assistance to elderly, disabled, and low-income families for all of Mount Desert Island. It is managed by a Board of Commissioners and its offices are located in Bar Harbor. The Housing Authority receives its funding from state and federal sources.

The Housing Authority provides two levels of service for those needing housing assistance. It owns and operates 18 one-bedroom apartments for elderly and disabled families, the Maple Lane Apartments. In 2003, these units were filled and there is currently a waiting list for these units.

The Housing Authority also provides rent and utility assistance to approximately 53 low-income families on the island that currently live in apartments throughout the island. In 2003, the cost of this service amounted to nearly $250,000.

Affordable Housing Demand

Affordable housing is an especially difficult challenge in Mount Desert, where demand for new housing is strong and property values are rising rapidly – between 2000 and 2004, the median sale price for existing homes has increased from $146,000 to $480,000 (according to the Multiple Listing Service).

MDI Tomorrow worked with the Mount Desert Community Trust to address the issue of affordable housing demand throughout the four communities of Bar Harbor, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, and Tremont, with the result of the newly created Island Housing Trust. For more information, see resulting reports, titled ***Housing Needs Assessment, 2004*** and the ***MDI Community Housing Action Plan, 2004***.

Major results of these studies include:

- Housing and land prices have appreciated dramatically since the early part of the decade.
- Home prices are no longer affordable for typical first time homebuyer.
- While rental stock has increased, the amount of income consumed in rent has risen dramatically.
- The housing market on the island is shifting more dramatically towards a seasonal and retirement community.
- The demand for year-round housing has grown as more than 1,000 year-round jobs have been created on the island in the last seven years.

The Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) calculates its own affordability index based on whether a community's median household income can afford to purchase that community's median housing unit.

Using their analysis, Mount Desert's median housing unit (which cost $260,000 in 2002) would be affordable to a household that made $85,615 (Table 4). Mount Desert's median household income in 2002 was $46,242. Therefore, the MSHA does not consider the Town of Mount Desert to be an affordable community for its residents.

Issues and Implications

1. For very low, low, and moderate income households, Mount Desert's housing and rental markets are not affordable, and housing prices and rents have been increasing in Mount Desert in recent years. Housing costs are significantly more than even average residents are able to afford.

2. The lack of affordable housing has created problems in attracting a labor force, and has strained the transportation system as more workers move out of town and off the island.

3. Most housing growth is not occurring close to services.

4. Mount Desert does not have a diverse housing profile.

5. There have been a growing number of rental units (smaller populations, more transient).

6. Mount Desert's housing stock is relatively old, but in good condition.

Transportation:
How We Get About

Whether it is to buy a gallon of milk, go for a walk in Acadia National Park, or commute to work, transportation corridors are the link to the world beyond our doorstep.

Vehicular Traffic

Our primary transportation network is made up of a roadway system serving a variety of functions. The responsibility for building and maintaining them is shared by the Town of Mount Desert and the State's Department of Transportation (MDOT).

The town has 43± miles of publicly maintained roadways, varying from higher-speed collector roads to residential streets. There are 11± miles of collector roads (defined by the MDOT as roads that collect traffic from local roads to lower population densities removed from main travel routes.) The collector routes in the Town of Mount Desert include Routes 102, 198, and 3.

There are 32± miles of local roads, (defined by MDOT as all roadways not classified as an arterial or collector), and serving primarily adjacent land areas.

Topography dictates how our transportation network moves through the town. In general, the major network has a north-south orientation and passes through the valleys of the island. Somes Sound divides the town into two distinct areas, and creates a transportation bottleneck at its northern end in Somesville. Acadia National Park occupies large portions of the town in the eastern and western parts of the island.

The major roads around Somesville form the hub of our transportation network. Generally, traffic volumes decrease the further roadways are from this hub.

According to MDOT, Route 102 (south of the intersection with Routes 3/198) has the largest average annual daily traffic. In 2001 (the latest year in which data is available) more than 9,250 vehicles traveled this corridor per day.

More than 7,000 vehicles per day travel on Route 102 (at the Southwest Harbor town line) and Routes 198/3 (north of Northeast Harbor). An average of 4,000 vehicles per day travel along Route 198 into Northeast Harbor. Approximately 1,600 vehicles per day travel along the Pretty Marsh Road as well as Route 3 in Seal Harbor. In general, traffic volumes as measured by MDOT have not changed between 1998 and 2001. While Route 102 (north of Routes 198/3) has increased by 8%, traffic on Route 3 in Seal Harbor has decreased by 10%.

The seasonal impacts on our transportation network are hard to overemphasize. While no direct comparison is possible with our local road network, a representative comparison can be made based on traffic patterns crossing onto Mount Desert Island from a permanent recording station on Thompson Island. Seasonal comparisons between the winter and summer are striking.

Morning rush hour peaks between 7:00AM and 9:00AM in both winter and summer. Volumes in the winter range between 600 and 800 vehicles per hour. Volumes in the summer average around 1,200 vehicles per hour. Midday volumes drop off after 9:00 AM in the winter to approximately 400 vehicles per hour. In the summer, midday volumes continue to rise after morning rush hour to between 1,400 and 1,600 vehicles per hour.

Afternoon rush hour peaks between 4:00 and 6:00 PM. In the winter volumes reach 1,000 vehicles per hour. In the summer months, volumes during afternoon rush hour in the summer peak at 2,000 to 2,200 vehicles per hour.

Evening traffic volumes quickly fall off to 200 vehicles per hour in the winter months, while during the summer they slowly taper off to 1,000 vehicles per hour by 9:00 PM before plummeting to background traffic volumes by 11:00 PM.

The recording station does not count the increased traffic created from the number of summer residents living on the island. In many cases, this intra-island travel adds significantly to our local road network.

In addition to traffic volumes, MDOT tracks traffic safety by identifying 'high crash locations.' A high crash location has to have at least eight crashes in the last three years and individual crashes must have resulted in property damage or personal injury. According to MDOT's analysis, there are no high crash locations in our town.

However, two locations have received a lot of local attention for being dangerous. In Somesville, the Whitney Farm Road has a hump that can be very dangerous at high speeds. Also in Somesville, the stretch of Route 198 between Routes 102 and 233 can become very icy in the winter, and the road has hills and sharp corners.

While the majority of automobile parking is provided by the private sector, there are several public parking areas in the Town.

Northeast Harbor has mostly two-hour restricted parking throughout the village, and one all-day parking lot located off Main Street. Parking demand during the peak of the season is very high, and the Police Department hires a seasonal parking officer to enforce these restrictions. Still, parking remains a concern in Northeast Harbor on Main Street.

The Sea Street parking lot in Mount Desert is leased to residents of the Cranberry Isles. The Harbor Master manages this parking area as well as the smaller public lot near the marina. Parking demand far outpaces supply on Sea Street.

There are several parking areas that account for an inordinate amount of illegal parking tickets through the summer months. These locations include the Seal Harbor Yacht Club, Bartlett's Landing, and Little Long Pond.

MDOT's six-year plan for major infrastructure improvements identifies two potential projects in our town. First is a reconstruction of over 4 miles of Route 3 between Otter Creek and Somesville. The second is the replacement of Kittredge Bridge between Mount Desert and Bar Harbor over Babson Creek (also called Meadow Brook). The intersection of Route 198 and 102 at Somesville also requires future improvements to improve traffic flow.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

There are several pedestrian and bicycle facilities located throughout the community.

Somesville, Northeast Harbor, Seal Harbor, and Otter Creek all have sidewalks. Some of the sidewalks have been rebuilt along during sewer upgrade projects, but the sidewalks many remain in need of repair.

There are 120 miles of hiking trails in Acadia National Park. These trails are maintained by the National Park Service and Friends of Acadia and vary in terrain from handicap accessible to expert. The Seal Harbor Village Improvement Society and the Northeast Harbor Village Improvement Society each maintain a network of trails over public and protected lands connecting the villages with the Park trails.

In addition, there are 45 miles of carriage roads and paved automobile roads within Acadia National Park for hiking and bicycling.

Airport

While Mount Desert Island does not have its own airport, the Hancock County/Bar Harbor Airport is located just off the island in Trenton. This airport provides scheduled passenger service throughout the northeast as well as general aviation services for private individuals and cargo. Bangor International Airport is 90± minutes drive from MDI.

Ferry Service

There is private ferry service from Northeast Harbor to the Cranberry Islands. Cranberry Island residents use Northeast Harbor as their year-round shore-side base of operations, augment5ed with seasonal facilities in Manset.

In addition, ferry service to Nova Scotia is available from Bar Harbor, and MDOT runs a state-ferry service to Swans Island and Frenchboro out of Bass Harbor in Tremont.

Public Transportation

Several public transportation systems and options exist on Mount Desert Island as a whole:

Island Explorer

Ten years ago, citizens who initiated MDI Tomorrow recognized transportation as an important element of the future of MDI. One of the results was the creation of Island Explorer, a nationally recognized, propane-powered bus system that helps reduce traffic congestion and improves air quality for Mount Desert Island. Downeast Transportation, Inc. was incorporated in 1979 as a non-profit 501(c) (3). It provides public transportation in Hancock County, Maine through a contract agreement with the Maine Department of Transportation.

With 17 propane-powered, fare-free buses, the Island Explorer offers eight routes through MDI communities and Acadia National Park. It is supported by Acadia National Park, MDOT, USDOT, L.L. Bean, local towns, Friends of Acadia, and many local businesses. MDOT reports that the Island Explorer has reduced air

pollution by 33.7 tons since it inception in 1999. Passengers have eliminated an estimated 442,000 personal vehicle trips since then. In 2003, the Island Explorer carried its millionth cumulative passenger and extended the operating season through Columbus Day. The Jackson Laboratory also supports the Island Explorer bus service for many towns off the island.

Downeast Transportation Year-Round Public Transit System

In addition to the Island Explorer, Downeast Transportation runs limited year-round, midday service on weekdays between MDI communities and Bar Harbor or Ellsworth. The service receives financial support from MDOT, MDI towns, and passengers. From 1996-2001, ridership decreased at an average rate of 2.1% every year, and Downeast Transportation is examining ways to alter route design and schedules to improve services for commuters, senior citizens, and youth.

Island Connections

Island Connections is a non-profit organization that delivers meals and provides free rides to appointments, shopping, and other errands for elderly and disabled customers. Thanks to the efforts of over 175 volunteers, the organization serves an average of 300 people per year on 6,000 occasions.

Issues and Implications

1. A large part of Mount Desert's workforce commutes from other towns and from off island, putting much stress on the Town's parking and transportation networks, particularly in the summer.

2. Current development patterns discourage pedestrian and bicycle opportunities and contribute to increased dependence upon automobiles.

3. There is island-wide public transportation during the summer, but the lack of density in year-round communities could make additional public transportation difficult to justify.

4. There is a great deal of congestion in Somesville, particularly during the summer, as this is the most convenient road to the west side of the island. If the state widened this road, it would greatly alter the character of this village. Any considerations of major land-use changes or developments in Somesville would have to be undertaken in light of its impact upon traffic.

5. New subdivision streets are mostly dead-ends not connected to nearby communities.

6. There are few bike lanes along the roadways in the town. However, many of the state roads are already wide enough to have bike lanes.

Health & Recreation:
Our Wellness

As the health of our residents impacts the overall health of our greater community, the health of our community also has an impact on the health of our residents. A healthy community may be described, at a minimum, as one in which convenient access to medical and safe recreational resources are available. Other signs of a healthy community may include:

- That it strives to engage its citizenry – and, because there is a sense of ownership, they are more likely to be involved;
- That it supports appropriate economic development and affordable housing opportunities while maintaining its individual social and environmental character; and,
- That diversity is welcomed and appreciated (including, but not limited to economic, gender, cultural, and age differences).

The wellness of our community may impact, or be impacted by, transportation, economic, and public facilities - those topics are covered in other sections of this plan. The purpose of this chapter is to inventory current medical and self-improvement infrastructure and help us understand wellness-related strengths and weaknesses in our community.

Access to Local Medical Services

The Northeast Harbor Ambulance Service provides transportation (with a cardiac defibrillator) as far as Bangor. Neighborhood House offers a well-equipped exercise facility staffed by a trained Director with a Master's Degree.

In Somesville there is an Ophthalmologist's office (not open every day) and the daily physical medicine and speech therapy services of the Somesville Rehabilitation Center, a well equipped and staffed facility.

During the summer high season a Family Nurse Practitioner provides services in the MDI hospital outreach clinic in Northeast Harbor. Hospice services are also available from Hancock County Hospice headquarters off the island.

Regional Efforts

A greatly appreciated service for residents of the Town of Mount Desert is the visiting nurse program of the Mount Desert Nursing Association. The chief nurse provides five days a week service and a second nurse four days. Outreach community education program and health/disease screening clinics are offered throughout the year.

With per diem payments, special mental health and neo-natal trained nurses visits are available. A typical year includes over 1,800 visits (130-200 per month). Support is provided by the Town budget, fees from those able to pay, many donations,

sponsored benefit events and an endowment. Requests for services could justify another full-time nurse if financing were available.

The regional Community Health and Counseling service provides home visits and Hospice services. Island Connections volunteers provide transportation to needy persons for numerous personal needs.

In the early 2000s, some town citizens were members of the "Healthy Acadia" planning group involving island wide participation. Much discussion focused on mechanisms to provide health insurance for independent workers such as lobstermen as well as small businesses. Upon the launching of the State's Dirigo plan, these discussions were largely deferred. There are some preliminary conversations with Anthem and the Governor's office to see if there are any "updated" opportunities.

Mount Desert is unique because nearly half of the land in our community is a national park. This resource, as tremendous as it is, does not constitute all the park and recreation opportunities of the community. This chapter inventories the park and recreation opportunities available to our residents and visitors alike.

Acadia National Park

Acadia National Park was formally created in 1929 by accepting donations of private land and adding to the Sieur de Monts National Monument that was originally established in 1919.
Over the years, a collection of donations and acquisitions has created an irregular park boundary that covers 30,000 acres on Mount Desert Island and an additional 5,000 acres on Schoodic Peninsula and Isle au Haut. There are an additional 11,000 acres on which Acadia National Park holds conservation easements.

Acadia is one of the most visited parks in the United States; nearly 3,000,000 visitors enjoy the Park each year. They come to camp, hike, bike, canoe, kayak, sightsee, swim, fish, bird, ride horses and carriages, mostly during the spring, summer and fall, and to x-country ski during winter months. The park contains carriage and hiking trails, historic buildings and bridges, abundant wildlife (birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, native plants) and several threatened/endangered plants and animals. Recreational and cultural opportunities are available year-round.

Approximately 40% of The Town of Mount Desert is in Acadia National Park, and residents can access much of this land.

Municipal Parks and Recreation

Because of the availability of recreation in Acadia as well as the many private recreation resources, the Town of Mount Desert has relatively few publicly maintained recreation resources. However, there are a number of opportunities for recreation in the Town (Table 1).

Our community maintains two tennis courts located at the Marina in Northeast Harbor. The Harbor Master and the Chamber of Commerce oversee their use.

The Town of Mount Desert owns 15 acres of land along the east side of Somes Sound, which is primarily used as a picnic area. Pond's End, a beach area at the north end of Long Pond, is owned by the town, and is both a popular swimming spot and put-in for

canoes and kayaks during the summer. The Somes-Meynell Wildlife Sanctuary has two Somes Pond shoreline nature trails.

The Town also owns 76 acres of land on the Beech Hill Road. Most of this land is not designated for any particular use, but it is available for future planning and recreation efforts. Approximately 10 of these acres were transferred to the Island Housing Trust to provide for a planned 19 homes of "workforce housing".

Finally, Seal Harbor beach is owned by the Town of Mount Desert, but its maintenance is managed by a local non-profit neighborhood association. This 300 foot long beach has an associated short hiking trail and associated village green.

See Appendix A & B for water access opportunities.

Private Parks

In addition to public parklands, there are two private parks that are open to the public at no charge. Asticou Azalea Gardens and Asticou Terraces (Thuya Garden) are located in Northeast Harbor.

Off-Season Recreation Opportunities

Mount Desert Island's role as a seasonal vacation destination has created a focus of recreation opportunities. A number of outdoor winter activities are popular, but there are few indoor facilities that offer recreational opportunities year round.

Additionally, there is a group of dedicated volunteers who maintain cross-country ski trails in Acadia National Park.

The Neighborhood House in Northeast Harbor is a community center that has served Mount Desert residents for a century with numerous recreational, cultural, and educational events and activities, and has recently added a fitness room to its offerings. Although not located within

Town Dock, Tennis Courts, Showers	Seal Harbor Beach
Clifton Dock	Seal Harbor Club (private)
Northeast Harbor Fleet (private)	Seal Harbor Yacht Club (private)
Northeast Harbor Tennis Club & Northeast Harbor Swim Club (private)	Village Green
Northeast Harbor Golf Club (semi-private)	Jordan Pond House
Neighborhood House	Rockefeller Garden (scheduled visitation days)
Great Harbor Maritime Museum	Library
Mount Desert Elementary School	***Somesville***
Seasonal Swimming Pool &Basketball Court	Somesville Dock (private with public access)
Swimming Pool at Kimball Terrace	Somesville Harbor
Swimming Pool at Asticou Inn	Library
Thuya Gardens	Creek – Fishing
Asticou Garden	Somes Pond
Suminsby Park	Somes-Meynell Wildlife Sanctuary
Library	Historical Museum
Camp Beech Cliff	Pond's End (swimming and boat launch)
	Pretty Marsh

Otter Creek	Bartlett's Landing

Mount Desert, the MDI YMCA in Bar Harbor offers facilities for all island residents, including a fitness center, a swimming pool, children's camp and childcare, and a variety of health and fitness activities. The Harbor House in Southwest Harbor provides indoor facilities for many Mount Desert residents on the west side of town.

Access & Connections

Most of Mount Desert's recreational facilities are located within village areas. Because so much of the town consists of Acadia National Park, there is easy access to the Park throughout the town, particularly from the villages on the east side of town.

The open space located just north of Northeast Harbor has traditionally been used for recreation, and the trails in this area connect to the village of Northeast Harbor on one side, and to Acadia National Park on the other. Much of this land is owned by the Mount Desert Water District.

Private Recreation Opportunities

Mount Desert Island's role as a recreational destination creates many opportunities for private recreation. Several private recreation opportunities are available, including horseback riding, kayaking/canoeing, boating, fishing, whale watching, biking, golf, tennis, and other activities. Personal Water Craft (Jet Skis) are not permitted on any of the island lakes.

On the following page is a list of public and private water access points within the Town of Mount Desert.

FRESHWATER ACCESS - From East to West	
Location	**Comments/Limitations**
Jordon Pond (Acadia National Park)	No swimming because it is a drinking water supply. Boating allowed with restrictions. Island Explorer stop.
Little Long Pond	Swimming, limited parking.
Upper Hadlock Pond	National park property with restricted boating and also no swimming because it is a water supply.
Lower Hadlock Pond	National park property with restricted boating and also no swimming because it is a water supply.
Echo Lake	Island Explorer stop at all
Echo Vista Site, Route 102	Private property, but public use traditionally allowed. Roadside parking only.
East Beach	Moderately steep path with some off-road parking. A toilet cabin is available.
Ikes Point	Canoe and kayaking launching beach without facilities. Some parking is available.
South End	Acadia National Park, swimming and large parking lot.
Somes Pond	
South End Beach (Route 102)	Roadside parking only.
Somes - Meynell Wildlife Sanctuary - Route 102)	There is no public access for water activities and there is limited roadside parking.
North End (Oak Hill Road)	Roadside parking only with a steep slope to the water and no public facilities.
Long Pond	
Pond's End (Route 102)	Grass beach with a dock and float. Contains two temporary bathroom facilities and a launching ramp for watercraft.
Ripples Road Outlet Dam	There is limited parking with no facilities. Canoes and kayaks can be launched from this location.
Fire Road at Pretty Marsh	A boulder beach with no facilities and limited parking.
Round Pond (Route 102)	Usual access across private land. There are no facilities and has roadside parking only.

SALT WATER ACCESS - From East to West	
Location	**Comments/Limitations**
Otter Cove	Single lane, steep road with a deteriorating steep ramp. There is street parking only.
Seal Harbor Dock	Limited parking with no ramp.
Seal Harbor Yacht Cl (private)	This is available for members and their guests only and only has street parking available.
Dodge Point Road Ramp	Steep and deteriorating with severely limited parking. There are no public facilities.
Bracy Cove	Private stony beach with limited parking.
Butler/Morris Boatya	Private business with a Travelift.
Northeast Harbor Marina	Seasonal parking limitations with a recently repaired ramp.
Clifton Dock	Northeast Harbor Fleet that has marine fueling available.
Northeast Harbor Fle (private)	Private yacht club with sailing school.
Northeast Harbor Ten d Swim Club (private)	Available to members and their guests only.
Suminsby Park – Sargent Drive Picnic Area	Contains one temporary toilet facility and is a spot to launch kayaks.
Bar Harbor Boatyard	Private business.
Able/Stewart Boatyar	Private business.
Mount Desert Campground	Private business.
Somesville Dock	Private facility with limited public access
Hall Quarry/Musetti Campground	Private business.
Williams Boatyard	Private business.
Bartlett Landing Doc and Ramp	Limited parking with one temporary bathroom facility.

Pretty Marsh Picnic Area (ANP)	Limited parking available with a toilet cabin. There is a steep walk on ledges to the shore.
Source: Committee/Town Records	

SUMMARY OF FRESHWATER FISHING OPTIONS

Jordon Pond - Winter and open-water fishing permitted. Trailerable boat access provided. Outboard motors restricted to 10 hp or less. Limited parking for trailered vehicles.

Little Long Pond - Open-water fishing permitted. Carry-in access for canoes, kayaks and small boats. Limited parking for passenger vehicles Upper Hadlock Pond - Open-water fishing permitted. Outboard motors restricted to 10 hp or less. State of Maine owned carry-in access available (launch located in state highway right-of-way) for canoes, kayaks and small motorboats. Limited parking is available.

Lower Hadlock Pond - Open-water and winter fishing permitted. The Mount Desert Water Company property provides a small back-in boat launch for canoes, kayaks and small motorboats. Outboard motors restricted to 10 hp or less. Limited parking is available.

Echo Lake - Open-water and winter fishing permitted. Acadia National Park provides a back-in boat launch at Ike's Point for canoes, kayaks and small motorboats. Outboard motors restricted to 10 hp or less. Limited parking is available.

Somes Pond - Open-water and winter fishing permitted. Somes-Meynell Wildlife Sanctuary property along side Route 102A provides a grandfathered carry-in public access for canoes, kayaks and small boats. Parking is roadside only. In addition, there is another grandfathered public access to Somes Pond located along side the Oak Hill Road on the northwestern corner of the pond. There is only roadside parking at this location.

Long Pond - Open-water and winter fishing permitted. The Town of Mount Desert provides a back-in public boat launch located at "Pond's End" at the northern end of the pond off Route 102A. Limited parking is available.

Round Pond - Open-water and winter fishing permitted. A grandfathered carry-in public access is available off Route 102A located at the southeastern end of the pond. This access can accommodate canoes, kayaks and small boats. Outboard motors are prohibited on this pond. There is only roadside parking at this location.

Issues and Implications

1. The existence of Acadia National Park within Mount Desert provides unique recreational opportunities for the Town's residents and visitors.

2. ANP provides extensive public access to fresh water. There is access to salt water in each of Town's neighborhoods, in some cases across public land and in other cases across private land.

3. In most areas of Mount Desert there are very good connections and trails between the villages and open space.

4. Because limited parking is available at many facilities, both owned by the town and by Acadia National Park, purchase of adjacent lands should be considered when possible. The high valuation of land along the shoreline imposes major impediments.

5. It is noteworthy that some recent subdivision developments have retained traditional hiking trails through the properties with specific language easements (covenants). Although the Town is unusually fortunate in having many trails for hikers, bicyclists, skiers, and those who snowshoe (many in or connected to Acadia National Park), there is a continuing demand to expand and/or enhance trails systems in order to serve more areas of the Town.

6. Future road projects and developments need to address improving safe connections for cyclist and pedestrian, either with paved bicycle shoulders and sidewalks, or more preferably, through creation of separate bicycle pathways and/or connector. The section of Route 102 from the Somesville Fire House north to the Post Office is in need of widening to permit safer bicycle use, particularly going north. Pretty Marsh Road east from Northern Neck also needs shoulders as well as hill and curve reconstruction.

7. The Comprehensive Planning Committee encourages the Town to acquire more land or easements for trails, basketball and tennis courts. The high valuations make this difficult. The near proximity of the high school facilities on two Island Explorer Routes currently does provide for some of these opportunities (four tennis courts but no outdoor basketball facilities).

8. The potential loss of recreational values would be great were the ponds on the Island invaded by choking exotic plants such as Eurasian Milfoil and other invasive species. A watercraft inspection program at aquatic launch sites would demand considerable personnel time but may be well worth the effort. A volunteer group could provide valuable assistance.

9. To foster proactive consideration of opportunities for health enhancement, disease prevention and recreational programs and facilities development the Planning Board might appoint a few members to periodically consider status, needs and opportunities (2 to 4 times a year) in a workshop open to public input. Appointment of a member or members to attend meetings of "Healthy Acadia" and "M.D.I. Tomorrow" would also warrant consideration.

Historical & Archaeological: *Our Roots*

Mount Desert abounds with historic and archaeological resources. Native Americans hunted the woods, fished the waters, and left prehistoric archaeological sites throughout the community. European settlement and the evolution of today's community have created a different set of historic archaeological resources as well as historic villages, roads, and buildings unique to our town. All of these resources add to our character and should be cherished and protected for future generations.

Prehistoric Archaeological Resources

Prehistoric archaeological resources refer to largely Native American sites prior to 1700 and large-scale European settlement.

For centuries, our waterways were the first highways; Native Americans and early European settlers used bays and the ocean as their major transportation corridors and would rely on the bounty of the ocean for their food. Given Mount Desert's location, it should come as no surprise that our Island was a summer resort for the Native Americans long before the coming of the Europeans.

Parts of Mount Desert have been surveyed to identify prehistoric archaeological resources. A prehistoric archaeological resource refers largely to Native American settlements prior to 1700. As of 2003, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission had identified 31 prehistoric archaeological sites in the community, and they had also indicated numerous other places where other prehistoric archaeological sites are thought to be located. Many of these sites are from the Red Paint People and the Abenakis and consist of shell middens. These shell middens are piles of discarded shells and other artifacts that give researchers an idea of what local Native Americans ate and how they lived more than 3,000 years ago. All of these sites are located in the coastal zone, and 12 of the sites have been determined to be significant by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Historic Archaeological Resources

Like their prehistoric cousins, Historic Archaeological Resource sites can be difficult to see, but are very important to a community's character and understanding its past. These sites date from after the European settlement, and are primarily constructed by the European-Americans. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has identified 34 archaeological sites in Mount Desert.

Historic Sites

Historic sites are located throughout the community. In Mount Desert there are seven sites identified on the National Register of

Historic Places as well as numerous other locally significant resources.

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. It is a program run by the Department of the Interior and "coordinates and supports public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect significant historic and archeological resources." Sites in Mount Desert on the National Register of Historic Places include:

- The **Daniel Coit Gilman Summer Home** (also known as Over Edge), located off Huntington Road in Northeast Harbor. This cottage is historically significant for the period between 1895 and 1908. The house was constructed for the first president of Johns Hopkins University to plans by Fred Savage. Added in 1966, this was the first Mount Desert site added to the National Register.
-
- The **Somesville Historic District** went onto to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. It includes some 30 buildings in the heart of historic Somesville village. In 1761, Somesville became the location of the first permanent European settlement on the island and eventually included factories, mills, shops, shipyards, and boarding houses.

- The **Seal Harbor Congregational Church** was listed in 1985 for its architecture. It is located on Route 3 in Seal Harbor and was designed by Grosvenor Atterbury. It is now a private residence.

- **Saint Jude's Episcopal Church** is also located on Route 3 in Seal Harbor. It was listed 1986 as a representation of the shingle style and was designed by William Ralph Emerson.

- The **Union Church of Northeast Harbor** was listed in 1998. It is located on Summit Road in Northeast Harbor and was designed by Peabody and Stearns. It was put on the National Register of Historic Places as a representation of the shingle style of architecture.

- **Saint Mary's-by-the-Sea** is an Episcopal church that was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000. It is located on the South Shore Road in Northeast Harbor. The church was designed by Henry Vaughan and is an example of the late Gothic revival style.

  The **Carriage Paths, Bridges, and Gatehouses** of Acadia National Park were listed in the National Register in 1979. These are examples of historic roads, bridges, and Tudor Revival structures, many of which were created by John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

A mapping exhibit of the Towns historic and archaeological resources is included with the Addenda.

Historical Organizations and Museums

The Mount Desert Historical Society was founded in 1931 to preserve the heritage and protect the scenic and historic integrity of Mount Desert Island. The society operates two museums and maintains artifacts, photographs, and archival collections. It displays new exhibits on the Island's history each summer, conducts educational programs, and produces a journal.

The Historical Society has two museum buildings. One is located in Somesville overlooking the millpond and harbor. It was built in 1981 and displays a new exhibit each summer. Admission fees are nominal. The second is the Sound School House on Rte 198 that was built in 1892 and for 34 years was a school for Sound Village. It served as a community center until 1999, when the Town gave it to the Society. A renovation and addition converted it into an educational space. The building has exhibition space and offers educational programs to local schools, and is also used as a classroom by the Acadia Senior College.

In addition, there are several other Historical Societies in the region, including Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, Tremont, Frenchboro, Swan's Island, Little Cranberry Island (Islesford) and Great Cranberry Island.

The old municipal building on Main Street in Northeast Harbor has been a local history museum since 1984, and changed its mission in 1999, becoming the Great Harbor Maritime Museum. The Town voted to sell them building to the museum in 2007. The museum has new exhibits each summer, and offers children programs.

Other museums in the region include the Abbe Museum, the George B. Dorr Museum of Natural History, the Seal Cove Auto Museum, the Granite Museum, the Wendell Gilley Museum, the Islesford Museum, and the Lobster Museum.

Issues and Implications

1. Many of the town's prehistoric archaeological resources are located in coastal areas that are experiencing the greatest demand for development.

2. There is little in the Town's Land Use Ordinance to protect historic and archaeological resources.

3. Few public and private investments are being made to protect the town's history and much of the Town's history is becoming lost.

4. Many historically year round buildings are purchased and used only in the summer.

Carter Cemetery, American cemetery

Table 1: Historic Archaeological Sites in Mount Desert

Petit Pleasants Settlement, French Settlement
Jordan Pond House complex/dump
"A.G. Blair," Canadian wreck, schooner
"Atlanta," American wreck, barge
"F.C. Pendleton," American wreck, schooner
"Don," Unidentified wreck
Somes Sound Inscription, European Petroglyph
Mountain Road, Anglo-American Road
"Grace Choate," American wreck, schooner
"Jennie B.," American wreck, gas screw
"Margaret L.," American wreck, gas screw
"Electa Baily," American (?) wreck, schooner
"Susannah," British wreck, schooner
Pretty Marsh Picnic Area, American recreational area
Otter Cove Fishing Shack, American fish house
Jordan Pond Memorial Bench, American monument
Unidentified Jordan Pond Structure, American Unidentified Structure
Robinson House 1, American settlement
Robinson House 2, American settlement
G.W. Sargent/Somes Sound House 1, American domestic
Somes Sound House 2, American domestic
"Burpee C.," Canadian wreck, schooner
"Herald," Canadian wreck, schooner
"Joseph Ham," Canadian wreck, brigantine
"Linnet," Canadian wreck, schooner
"Robert H. Dexter," Canadian wreck, schooner
"Temperance," Canadian wreck, schooner
"Union," Canadian wreck, schooner
"Violet," Canadian wreck, schooner
Andrew J. Carter Homestead, American domestic, farmstead
Hadlock Farm, American domestic
Unknown Sargent Drive Homestead, American domestic
Wildwood Farm, American model farm

Table 2: Inventory of Local Historic Sites

Northeast Harbor: John Manchester II House, John Savage II House, Harbourside Community, Main Street, Stetson Grammar School, St. Ignatius Catholic Church, Magnum Donum, The Ancestral, Neighborhood House, Old Library, Manchester Point, Smallidge Point, Asticou Community, Old Firehouse, Spring House, Samuel Gilpatrick House, Gilpatrick Cove Bridge, Daniel Kimball House, Rosserne, Thuya Gardens and Facilities, Azalea Gardens, Manchester House, Swimming Club, Northeast Harbor Paths, Morris Cottage

Seal Harbor: Skylands, The Anchorage, Gideon Dodge House, Seal Harbor Fountain, Old Firehouse, Rockefeller Gardens, Yacht Club, Harbor Club, Catholic Church, Library, Dunham School, Day Mountain Caves, Water Company Building, various Stone Walls, Main Street, Cooksey Drive, Guild House, Seal Harbor Paths

Local Cemeteries; Pretty Marsh Cemetery, Smith Graves Cemetery (Pretty Marsh), Pray Cemetery (Pretty Marsh), Kenison Cemetery (Pretty Marsh), Oak Hill Road Cemetery, Brookside Cemetery (Somesville), Richardson Burying Ground (Beech Hill), Wasgatt Cemetery (Beech Hill), Sound Cemetery, Otter Creek Cemetery

Forest Hill Cemetery (Northeast Harbor), Knowles Cemetery (Northeast Harbor), Bartlett's Island Cemeteries (SIX), Brown Cemetery (Sound), Atherton and Mikhalapor Graves (Beech Hill), Seal Harbor Cemetery, Kimball Cemetery (Northeast Harbor), Carter Cemetery (Beech Hill), Sheep Island Cemetery (Somes Sound, Somesville), Savage Graves (North of Bear Island, Northeast Harbor), Blanchard Family Cemetery (Blanchard Road), Kittredge Tomb (Somesville)

Otter Creek: Aid (Church) Building, and Fish Houses.

Somesville: Eben Babson House, Library, Somesville Grammar School, Somesville Union Meeting House, Selectmen's Building, Parker Farm, Mill Pond, Mount Desert House, Wreck of the Catherine, Isaac Somes House, Abraham Somes House, A.C. Fernald Store, Main Street, Bridge

Pretty Marsh: Ephraim Pray House, Community Center, John Smith House, William Hersey House, Bartlett's Landing

Sound Village: Sound Schoolhouse, Saint James in the Woods, James Richardson house/barn

Hall Quarry: Quarries, Cyrus Hall House

Environment:
Marine Resources

Mount Desert has an active waterfront and commercial fishery. The town has become a popular cruising destination that is supported by several boat yards. Commercial fishing continues to be an important industry. The town provides services to both recreational and commercial boaters. All of the harbors offer ramps and floats while most provide other services and easy access to the Island Explorer bus system.

Port and Harbor Facilities

Northeast Harbor is the principal harbor for our town's commercial marine activity. Northeast Harbor offers the best protection from storms, making it the center of activity for year-round commercial fishing.

The town maintains a boat ramp, pier, marina, approximately 300 moorings and harbormaster at Northeast Harbor. The Chamber of Commerce has a welcome center at the harbor and the nearby village offers a full range of food and services. Ferry service to the Cranberry Isles uses the town pier. Commercial vessels also use the pier to unload their catch, while all boats are welcome to use the pump out facilities.

Clifton Dock, a private operation located at the mouth of the harbor, provides moorings, fuel and other marine services.

Northeast Harbor was dredged in the 1960's to accommodate larger vessels, with the inner portions filled for parking and recreation area and the bulkhead constructed for the docking facilities. The harbor has been silting in and will need to be dredged again in the future.

Seal Harbor is the second largest harbor in Mount Desert. It offers approximately 200 moorings, a public pier and boat ramp. A short walk up Main Street leads to the Village Market where a boater could find limited supplies. The Seal Harbor Yacht Club also offers moorings and dock facilities. The Town's only public beach is located at the head of the harbor. Seal Harbor Beach has a history of water quality issues, but with improved monitoring and enforcement the water quality seems to be improving.

Somes Harbor lies at the head of Somes Sound in Somesville. It has approximately 100 moorings for use during the summer months. A limited selection of food and supplies are available in Somesville. Recreation opportunities include the Somesville Library and Mount Desert Historical Society Museum. The floats and ramps are operated by the Somesville Landing Association, a private association that controls access. Somes Harbor has no commercial activity.

Bartlett's Landing is located on the west side of town between Pretty Marsh and Bartlett Island. Other than a town pier and boat ramp, there are no facilities. Parking is limited. The Town manages approximately 60 moorings on the east side of Bartlett's Narrows.

The Town employs a full time harbormaster, one full-time assistant harbormaster, a part-time assistant harbormaster, and six part-time seasonal assistants between the months of June and September. To assist the harbor master the Town has a 22-foot all-weather powerboat and a 20-foot powerboat that can be trailed to Pretty Marsh Harbor and Bartlett's Narrows as needed.

Mount Desert's harbormaster oversees and maintains the Town's marine-related facilities. This includes the three town piers and boat ramps, marina, parking, marine pump out facilities, and fish exchange areas in Northeast Harbor. The Harbor Master also manages the location, type, and scope of the Town's 700 different moorings.

There are four major boat yards for winter storage and repair with travelifts: Morris Yachts in Northeast Harbor, Henry R. Abel Yacht Yard on the east side of Somes Sound, Mount Desert Yacht Yard at the head of the Sound, and John Williams Company on the west shore in Hall Quarry. Bar Harbor Boating Company has a small facility south of Abel's.

Marine Management Ordinance

Mount Desert adopted a marine management ordinance to assist in managing marine activities within the town's tidal waters. The ordinance identifies and establishes guidelines for the four major harbors, the use of the Town's floats, piers, docks, and ramps. A waiting list for moorings exists at all four harbors and the ordinance establishes a priority system for this waiting list.

Access to Marine Waters

Access to marine waters is located throughout the community. Public lands, including Acadia National Park and the Town of Mount Desert provide access and leisure areas, scenic vantage points, trails, parks, campgrounds, boat ramps, piers, and floats. Access is available, by permission on private lands, at restaurants, and through organizations such as yacht clubs, landing organizations, etc.

Water-Dependent Uses

Water-dependent uses are located throughout the town. Piers and floats offer landing services, fuel, and other marine-related services. Ferries and tour boats operate from Mount Desert's harbors. Shore-side businesses and those not directly on the water offer services to commercial or recreational users. Finally, many of the restaurants and tourist-oriented businesses make their living from the customers that come to the region to be close to the ocean and Acadia National Park.

Recreational Activity

Recreation activity on the waters in and around Mount Desert is significant. There are two yacht clubs, one in Northeast Harbor and one in Seal Harbor with active racing schedules and children's' programs. The Great Harbor Maritime Museum provides children's programs as well as exhibits.

Marine Resources

Clamming on Mount Desert's mudflats is allowed by permit only. Non-resident licenses are limited to 10 % of the total licenses. Little commercial clamming occurs within Mount Desert. The

Town of Mount Desert and the Department of Marine Resources jointly manage the flats and the town can effectively open and close the flats that are not regulated by the Department of Marine Resources.

Shellfish beds are located throughout the town's coastal waters. Large concentrations of these beds are located around Bartlett Island, Bartlett Narrows, and Pretty Marsh Harbor, around the head of Somes Sound, in Somes Harbor, at the mouth of Somes Sound and tucked in the coves along the south end of the island east of Somes Sound.

The Department of Marine Resources declares certain areas off-limits to shellfish harvesting due to water quality concerns on guidelines established by the United States Food and Drug Administration. Areas that were closed in 2005 due to water quality considerations include:

- Northeast Harbor – closed due to the presence of boats, a wastewater treatment plant, and known point sources of pollution
- Somes Sound due to pollution from Southwest Harbor
- Seal Harbor – closed due to the presence of boats and a wastewater treatment plant
- Otter Creek – closed due to the presence of a closed wastewater treatment plant.
- Somes Harbor – closed seasonally due to the presence of boats
- Broad Cove – closed due to the presence of a wastewater treatment plant
- Pretty Marsh Harbor – closed due to the presence of non-point source pollutants

The commercial catch from these shellfish beds varies widely from year to year. Before 2000 more than 7,800 pounds per year of soft shell clams were reported to have been commercially harvested in Mount Desert. After passing the Shellfish Conservation Ordinance in 2000 only 300 pounds were reported. Although the current abundance of this resource is unknown, it appears to be somewhat depleted, and a lower level of harvesting is projected in the future.

More than 100 Mount Desert residents hold a Marine Resource license. According to records from the Maine Department of Marine Resources, this number fluctuates from year to year, but it has generally remained above 100 for the past five years.

Of the 110 license holders in 2002, 90 held licenses for lobstering/crabbing, 8 held licenses for commercial fishing, and 12 held licenses for quahogs/scallops/urchins. The data from the Maine Department of Marine Resources suggests that lobstering/crabbing is growing in popularity while commercial fishing and quahogs/scallops/urchins are becoming less popular as their resources are depleted.

Despite this shift within the fisheries, the number of commercial fishing boats registered to Mount Desert residents has remained stable. As of 2002, a total of 51 boats were registered to Mount Desert residents. Nearly two-thirds of these boats were less than 30 feet long, and only 7 were larger than 40 feet.

Mount Desert has relatively few eelgrass beds. They are located throughout Seal Harbor, near the east side of Somes Sound, and along the eastern shore near the entrance to Northeast Harbor.

In addition, there are two identified runs of anadromous fish in Mount Desert. The first is at the entrance to Bracey Cove and the

other is located at the head of Somes Harbor. Eel netting occurs seasonally in Somes Harbor.

Development Pressure

The pressure to develop land in Mount Desert is enormous. The value of shorefront property has grown beyond the reach of many fisherman and waterfront businesses.

Issues and Implications

1.Northeast Harbor will need to be dredged.

2. Parking needs to be added at the marina.

3. Marine facilities need to be upgraded and the Town should take advantage of beautification opportunities around the marina

4. We need to maintain the relatively good access residents have to shore and marine areas for both recreation and economic benefit.

5. The Shellfish Conservation Ordinance needs better enforcement, and the Town should collect more information on the viability and abundance of this resource

6. Overall there is a reasonable balance between commercial & recreational uses; however having commercial floats in Northeast Harbor year-round could prove beneficial for the local economy.

7. The water quality in Seal Harbor needs to be improved.

8.The town has mapped out all of the moorings within Mount Desert, but does not currently have the abilities to police them.

Environment
Inland Resources

Mount Desert Island has an abundance of high-quality natural resources. These resources are one of the principal attractions of our community and are thereby central to our region's sense of place and economy. Maintaining these natural resources in as pure a state as possible is important to the well being of our Town.

Topography

Mount Desert's most distinctive natural features are the rounded mountain peaks blending into the crashing surf of the Atlantic Ocean. This spectacular scenery has attracted people to our community for centuries. These mountains were formed by the glaciers that once covered Mount Desert Island. As these massive walls of ice moved south, they scraped away rock and dirt, leaving mounds of granite too hard to be worn away by ice. The retreating ice also left deep valleys that filled with water and became lakes, ponds and Somes Sound.

In addition to attracting millions of visitors each year, these mountains and valleys have played a large role in determining our town's development pattern. People settled in villages that are separated by mountains and the Sound. Later these villages became the Town of Mount Desert, but they remain separated and the communities are usually identified as individual villages rather than the Town as a whole.

Soils

The Town of Mount Desert consists of three major soil associations. The entire Town lying east of Somes Sound, the village of Hall Quarry and the area west of Long Pond has the same soil association, Schoodic-Rock Outcrop-Naskeag. This association is characterized by rock outcrop and Schoodic soils on the mountains. Schoodic soils are thin, well drained soils that are shallow to bedrock. Below the mountains, in the valleys and depressions, are Naskeag soils. Naskeag soils are deeper and usually have poor drainage. Together these soils are mostly forested with red spruce, balsam fir and jack pine.

The Beech Hill area has a very deep soil association known as Bixfield-Marlow-Brayton. The farmland on top of Beech Hill has Dixfield soils; these are moderately well drained soils with a sandy loam surface layer. A little lower on the hill are Marlow soils; these have a sandy surface with gravel below. Below the base of the hill are Brayton soils. Brayton soils are more level with finer sand making them poorly drained. This soil association is preferred by hardwood trees such as maple beech, oak and birch. Often balsam fir, red spruce and white pine can be found on the very shallow areas of Brayton soils. As with the Beech Hill area, if the stones are removed these soils are good for farming.

Pretty Marsh has Lyman-Scantic-Hermon soils. Lyman soils are found on the crests of small hills and ridges. Scantic soils are in the basins between ridges and waterways. Hermon soils are on the knolls and moraines. The surface of these knolls is very stony. These soils are often a sandy loam with gravel subsurface. The

major tree species growing on this soil association are balsam fir and red spruce.

Soils are often the largest limiting factor when sighting residential development. The shallow soils found on the island make sighting septic systems very important so there is enough area for the water to move vertically through the soil before hitting bedrock or groundwater.

Surface Waters

Tumbling creeks, placid ponds, tidal marshes, and the eastern United State's only natural fjord characterize the diversity of our town's water resources. Each water resource fills a different role in the town's natural environment.

Southern Shore – bold headlands and pocket beaches (Hunters Beach, Seal Harbor, Bracy Cove) define the Town's southern shore. This shoreline has large seasonal homes that are served by public water and sewer. Acadia National Park occupies the interior highlands. The Northeast Harbor and Seal Harbor wastewater treatment plants discharge into these waters, and recent upgrades to the Seal Harbor plant should help improve water quality in the harbor.

In 2005, the MDI Water Quality Coalition (MDIWQC) conducted a study of Seal Harbor and the Stanley Brook Watershed. Results of this study indicate storm water accounts for 50 % of the problems and road-related erosion accounts for an additional 25 %. Sediment and nutrients were the most common types of pollutants, although toxins and bacteria were found to be very severe when they did occur.

Somes Sound – is a five-mile long fjord that divides our community into two sections. The sound has a rocky shoreline and very steep sides. Much of the shoreline and surrounding forests are owned by the National Park Service. Somesville is the oldest community on Mount Desert Island and is located at the head the sound. Somesville has a public sewer system to help minimize nonpoint pollution. The Village of Hall Quarry sits above the Sound and relies on private septic systems.

Bartlett Narrows/Pretty Marsh Harbor – is on the west side of the island. The area has smaller, mostly seasonal homes that rely on private underground waste disposal. The shoreline is rocky with several shallow coves that are exposed at low tide.

Lakes (Long Pond, Echo Lake, Hodgdon Pond, Somes Pond, Round Pond, Jordan Pond, Hadlock Ponds) – are spread throughout our community. Most of the ponds shorelines are within Acadia National Park. The pond shorelines not within the Park have some year-round and seasonal homes. All ponds are popular places for boating and swimming. Fishing occurs year round. The fresh water resources in Mount Desert are great places to see wildlife including otter, beaver, mink, dear and fox.

On the following page is a current inventory of the water quality for the freshwater bodies within the Town of Mount Desert and estimates of the areas potentially impacted by future development.

Water tests conducted by the MDIWQC at the swimming beach on the north end of Long Pond between 2001 and 2005 generally showed *E. coli* levels to be safe; however on one occasion – July 10, 2001 – *E. coli* levels exceeded EPA standards for swim beaches. High bacteria levels may be due to birds, poorly

performing septic systems, babies without swim diapers, bathers with intestinal illness, dog waste, or storm water run-off at the beach site.

LAKE	DDA	ANAD	AAD	GF	D	F	WQC	LOP	C	P
Echo Lake	716	290	426	0.3	128	10.89	good	h	1.00	0.085
Echo Lake (Little)	311	30	281	0.3	84	4.49	mod-sensative	m	0.75	0.04
Hodgdon Pond	553	553	0	0	0	4.89	good	h	1.00	Park
Jordon Pond	948	948	0	0	0	21.14	outstanding	h	0.50	Park
Little Round Pond	172	20	152	0.3	38	1.63	mod-sensative	m	1.00	0.043
Long Pond	773	773	0	0	0	5.44	mod-sensative	h	0.75	0.032
Long Pond	2179	1000	1179	0.3	354	42.13	outstanding	h	0.50	0.06
Lower Hadlock Pond	214	214	0	0	0	2.57	good	h	1.00	Park
Round Pond	249	249	0	0	0	2.95	good	h	1.00	0.068
Somes Pond	1042	200	842	0.3	253	17.59	mod-sensative	h	0.75	0.052
Upper Hadlock Pond	808	808	0	0	0	7.14	mod-sensative	h	0.75	Park

DDA = Direct land drainage area in Township in acres
ANAD = Area not available for development in acres
AAD = Area available for development in acres (DDA - ANAD)
GF = Growth factor
D = Area likely to be developed in acres (GF x AAD)
F = lbs. phosphorus allocated to town's share of watershed per ppb in lake
WQC = Water quality category
LOP = Level of protection (h=high [coldwater fishery]; m=medium)
C = Acceptable increase in lake's phosphorus concentration in ppb

Streams, both perennial and intermittent, are another important resource for the community. These are located throughout the community. However, there is no single data source that can identify all of the streams in Mount Desert.

The Towns current zoning ordinance has a Shoreland overlay that includes:

-Areas within two hundred fifty feet of the normal high-water line of any saltwater body,

-Areas within two hundred fifty feet of the upland edge of a coastal or freshwater wetland, or

-Areas within seventy-five feet of the high-water line of a stream.

These shoreland areas provide greater levels of protection from the adverse impacts of land use change on the water quality of the town's surface waters.

Groundwater

Groundwater is water that is below ground. Precipitation, whether rain or snowmelt, percolates into the ground and saturates soil and cracks in the bedrock. Rural residences in the Town of Mount Desert rely on wells that pump groundwater to the surface to be used for potable water. Most of these wells are drilled into bedrock aquifers that store water in cracks and fractures in the bedrock. Most of these aquifers are relatively small (about 10 gallons per minute), but large enough to supply individual households in Mount Desert. Because the bedrock fractures tend to be interconnected, these aquifers are particularly susceptible to contamination.

The Maine Geologic Survey has produced maps showing a sand and gravel aquifer in the Town of Mount Desert between Stanley Brook and Hunters Brook just south of Pemetic Mountain. The Maine Geologic Survey estimates this aquifer would yield between 10 and 50 gallons per minute in a properly constructed well.

Wetlands

The ecological and economic benefits of wetlands have been widely recognized. These wetland benefits can be loosely grouped into three categories:

Biological benefits include fish, shellfish, and wildlife habitat (for feeding, nesting, and cover) and as travel corridors between upland areas.

Water quality benefits include groundwater recharge and discharge, stream flow maintenance, flood prevention, water-quality maintenance, and shoreline protection from erosion.

Human benefits include recreational uses such as hunting, birding, fishing, boating, and hiking. The aesthetic and open space values of wetlands are also important to communities.

Some wetlands provide more benefits than others, and therefore have more functional value to a town's natural environment.

The Maine Natural Areas Program characterizes wetlands based on their six functional values.

- Sediment retention
- Finfish habitat
- Flood flow alteration
- Educational/cultural value
- Plant and animal habitat
- Marine shellfish habitat

Using the Maine Natural Areas Program characterization, a wetland receives a point for each of these five functions it provides. Wetlands that provide all five functions will receive five points. Wetlands with more points are considered to provide a higher value to communities than those with lower points.

Mount Desert has two concentrations of high-value wetlands. The first is located in the wetlands surrounding Somes Pond. The second is located in the wetlands at the head of Squid Cove. The wetlands in these areas perform five of the tasks identified by the Maine Natural Areas Program.

Wetlands surrounding the head of Somes Sound and a smaller wetland off of Jordan Stream perform four of the Maine Natural Areas Program tasks.

Deer Wintering Areas

Maine's harsh winters can be devastating to deer herds. The deep snow, frigid temperatures, and low quality food supply can create high mortality rates within the herd. To decrease this mortality rate, deer herds typically move to wintering areas. The typical deer wintering area is a conifer forest. The closed canopy helps maintain warmer than average temperatures, reduces wind velocity, and catches much of the snowfall above the forest floor, allowing ground accumulations to become firmly packed.

Many of the identified deer wintering areas in Mount Desert are within Acadia National Park. The three larger deer wintering areas are on the east bank of Hodgdon Pond, along Hunters Brook, and around Upper Hadlock Pond. The largest deer wintering area outside of Acadia National Park is near Lower Hadlock Pond just north of Northeast Harbor.

Large Undeveloped Blocks of Land

Large undeveloped blocks of land provide continuous habitat for animals with large home ranges, such as bear, fisher, and moose. For example, undeveloped blocks of land greater than 2,500 acres could hold the full compliment of species in a pristine Maine environment while small blocks of land (less than 250 acres) tend to support species more typical of a suburban environment (raccoons, skunks, squirrels, songbirds, and deer).

Mount Desert, along with adjoining towns, has several large blocks of undeveloped land. Much of this undeveloped land lies within Acadia National Park. Approximately 9,500 acres out of the park's 34,000 total acres are within the town of Mount Desert.

High Value Plant and Animal Habitat

The availability of high value plant and animal habitat is essential to maintaining an abundant and diverse population for both ecological and recreational purposes. Mount Desert has several areas that offer quality habitat for a variety of species.

Mount Desert has three locations for peregrine falcons, a bird species that is on the State's Endangered Species list. Since the late 1980s, the state has been trying to re-establish a population of peregrine falcon, with limited success. In Mount Desert, peregrine falcons nest on rocky cliffs overlooking Echo Lake, Jordan Pond, and Valley Cove. All three locations are within Acadia National Park.

While the state's bald eagle population has been expanding, the species is still on the State Threatened Species list. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife identifies six bald eagle sites in Mount Desert. One is on Bartlett Island; two are on Bar Island at the head of Somes Harbor, two are located on Somes Pond, and one is located on Little Round Pond.

The Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) identifies and maps rare plants and exemplary natural communities. A natural community is defined as an assemblage of interacting plants and animals and their common environment, recurring across the landscape, in which the effects of human intervention are minimal.

MNAP has documented three rare natural communities and seven rare plants in Mount Desert. Most of theses are located on the east side of town either within or straddling the boundaries of Acadia National Park.

Acadia National Park

Acadia National Park covers approximately 35,000 acres and includes lands on Mount Desert Island, Schoodic Peninsula, and Isle au Haut. Of this land, approximately 9,500 acres lie within the town of Mount Desert. In addition, the park holds more than 165 conservation easements on 11,000 acres across Mount Desert Island and surrounding islands.

Acadia National Park contains a wide variety of important habitats of state and federal significance including old growth spruce forests, wetlands, and jack pine stands. More than 150 rare plant species have been identified within the park.

More detailed information about Acadia National Park can be found at Park Headquarters or www.nps.gov/acad/.

Land Conservation Organizations

Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT), a statewide land conservation organization, has its roots on Mount Desert Island and serves as the island's local land trust. MCHT is a non-profit organization with offices in Somesville, Rockport, and Topsham. It is governed by a Board of Directors and has more than 30 staff members working full-time.

MCHT owns land in Northeast Harbor, along Babson Creek and Folly Island. They also hold 12 conservation easements in the Town of Mount Desert.

Public Open Spaces

Many of the public open spaces are owned by Acadia National Park, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and the Town of Mount Desert.

Forest Lands

Mount Desert is known for its thick evergreen forests. Estimates based on data provided by the Maine Natural Areas Program suggest that more than 90 % of Mount Desert's land area is covered by forest. The remaining areas include rock outcrops, shoreline, developed areas, and fields.

Despite the abundance of forest habitat there is very little commercial harvesting of forest products in the Town. Data provided by the Maine Forest Service suggests that through the last 10 years, only in 1999 were there three notices of intent to harvest – the service's minimum threshold for reporting. Thin soils make regeneration an arduous task, and the dramatic topography makes access to the land difficult.

As of 2004, ten parcels totaled 1,900 acres were enrolled in the Tree Growth Tax Program, a current use tax program that is designed to keep property taxes on forest lands lower, thereby making forestry an alternative to development.

One-half of the total acreage enrolled in the Tree Growth Tax Program is located on Bartlett Island.

Within the last five years one property that was enrolled in the Tree Growth Tax Program was removed for development. The tree growth program is designed to require landowners to pay a penalty for removing land out of the program. The penalty is based on the amount of taxes that were saved over the years. The parcel that was removed paid a significant penalty, but the real estate market has grown to make development profitable even after paying the assessed penalty.

Farm Lands

The face of farming is changing rapidly throughout Hancock County. According to data provided by the US Department of Agriculture, between 1974 and 1997 the number of active farms has increased and the number of households that list farming as their principal occupation has increased. But the size of the farms has decreased significantly, and the products are more likely to be higher value market crops than they were in the past.

Only 6 % of soils in Mount Desert are prime farmland soils. In general, the town's soils are too thin and poor in nutrients to support active farming without significant improvements by the farmers. Locations in Mount Desert that do have concentrations of prime farmland soils include:

- Pretty Marsh Harbor
- Beech Hill Road
- Oak Hill Road
- Somesville
- Northeast Harbor

- Lands within Acadia National Park

There are only two active farms in the Town, and these are on Bartlett Island and Beech Hill Road.

Issues and Implications

1. Sprawling land-use patterns, especially on the west side of town, are fragmenting wildlife habitat.

2. Lands that are marginally suitable for development, such as steep slopes, are under increasing development pressures, which could adversely impact natural resources.

3. Protecting Mount Desert's open space and critical natural resources contributes to protecting the character of the Town, which is central to the Town's existence.

4. There are regional organizations that monitor natural resources, but Mount Desert has no local organization to do so.

5. There is the potential for private residential groundwater wells to become contaminated by failing subsurface disposal systems due to the poor soils across the town, particularly in the areas seeing high growth rates, Pretty Marsh and Hall Quarry.

6. While neither forestry nor agriculture play a large economic role in Mount Desert, they are important for the scenic resources, wildlife habitat, and open space they provide.

7. There is very limited opportunity for agriculture in Mount Desert, due to the lack of adequate soils, and due to land prices being prohibitively expensive. Agriculture that does exist contributes to the local food source.

Public Facilities:
Our Institutions and Services

Growth and development changes the demands placed on municipal services and facilities. Mount Desert's denser communities are served by public water and public sewer systems. In the more rural areas of Mount Desert, water supply and sewer disposal is an individual responsibility, based on private wells and septic systems. This chapter provides a basic overview of the public water and sewer systems, and the adequacy of major public facilities in our town. It assesses what impacts population and demographic changes will have on the demands for these services and facilities.

General Government

The Mount Desert Municipal Building serves as the general administration building for the Town, housing the town manager, clerk, assessor, treasurer, and other offices. The building has a meeting facility in which the Selectmen and other town committees meet. In addition, the Police Department and Fire Department are located in the lower level of the Municipal Building.

The building is located on Sea Street in the village of Northeast Harbor. A public parking lot, tennis courts, boat launch, and marina are adjacent to the building and all of the services in downtown Northeast Harbor are within walking distance. The Mount Desert Chamber of Commerce maintains a visitor center across the street in the marina area for general visitor information as well as showers and laundry facilities for yachtsmen.

The municipal building has recently been renovated and is in good condition. However, the space is generally not adequate, as there is a need for more storage and office space.

Public Works

The Public Works Department is responsible for the Town's:

- Storm water systems;
- Roads and sidewalk network;
- Parks and cemeteries;
- Buildings and grounds; and
- Solid waste and recycling.

The department's office is located at the Northeast Harbor wastewater treatment plant off Sinclair Road; its highway garage is located on Sargeant Drive. Public Works' central garage is at the Sargeant Drive site. Most vehicle and equipment maintenance is performed in-house. The garage also services vehicles from other town departments, including school buses and fire trucks (with the exception of specialized equipment such as fire engine pumps). A log is maintained on every vehicle and piece of equipment documenting the level of effort and associated costs that have been put into it. This information is useful in tracking costs and life expectancy of the particular asset and is used in the Town's Capital Improvement Strategy.

There are 16 full-time staff and one part-time staff member within the department, including a director, four wastewater treatment personnel, six highway personnel, two mechanics, two solid waste personnel, one buildings and grounds person and a part-time year-around recycling center attendant. The solid waste and buildings & grounds crews add, respectively, two and one additional people, during the summer months.

Wastewater Treatment

The Town of Mount Desert owns and operates the public sewer systems in the community serving approximately 1,228 parcels of property. There are four separate public sewer collection systems in Mount Desert located in the villages of Otter Creek, Seal Harbor, Northeast Harbor and Somesville. The latter three villages have treatment facilities.

The Otter Creek wastewater treatment plant was replaced in 2004 – 05 with a pump station designed with capacity for growth in the area and included odor and grease controls. The wastewater from Otter Creek is pumped to Seal Harbor for treatment.

Seal Harbor's wastewater treatment plant was expanded and upgraded in 2004 – 05 while the Otter Creek pump station project was also underway. As part of the expansion, the treatment plant included modifications to readily treat the wastewater being pumped to it from Otter Creek. As with the Otter Creek pump station and in conformance with engineering guidelines, the treatment plant was designed with area growth and increased wastewater flows in mind.

Northeast Harbor's wastewater treatment system was most recently upgraded in 1996 with a new clarifier. The capacity of the system is generally adequate to deal with peak demand. Construction of a second clarifier at an estimated cost of $750,000 is anticipated for 2009. An upgrade to the collection system in Summit Road and to the pump station located in the Morris Yacht Yard was completed in 2007.

The Somesville treatment plant will require extensive reconstruction within the next two years at an estimated cost of $6,200,000. Outdated technology is becoming more and more difficult and expensive to repair and replace. The Town recently upgraded three of their pump station facilities in Somesville.

There is the potential for private residential groundwater wells in the Villages of Pretty Marsh and Hall Quarry to become contaminated should existing subsurface disposal systems fail due, in part, to the area's lack of adequate soils. If wells do become contaminated, the demand to extend public water and public sewer to these areas will be great, and the extension work will be expensive.

Stormwater Systems

The department also maintains the town's stormwater collection system. While most of the storm drains empty into waterways, some stormwater does make its way into the wastewater collection and treatment system. These drains can create problems during storm events when the wastewater treatment system becomes overwhelmed by the volume of water. The department makes the effort to identify where the storm drains empty into the collection

system and eliminates these illegal connections, which can include roof drains, cellar drains and catch basins.

Roads and Sidewalks

The town has approximately 32 miles of public town roads that are maintained year-round by public works staff and an additional 11 miles of State Aid roads that they plow in the winter. The latter roads are portions of Route 3 through Seal Harbor and Otter Creek between Harbor Brook and the Bar Harbor town line and the Pretty Marsh Road (Route 102A) from Route 102 in Somesville through to the Tremont town line. The State of Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for the work associated with the remainder of the public roads in town. The town has an ongoing program of prioritizing and repairing or reconstructing town roads.

The department also maintains the sidewalks in Otter Creek, Northeast Harbor, Seal Harbor, and Somesville. Portions of the sidewalks in Otter Creek are to be reconstructed in conjunction with an MDOT storm drain project scheduled for 2007 or 2008 construction. Necessary improvements to sidewalks in the other villages are identified and prioritized in the aforementioned Capital Improvement Strategy, included with this document.

Buildings & Grounds and Parks & Cemeteries

The buildings & grounds and parks & cemeteries divisions of public works has seen a great increase in responsibilities since the one full-time position was created for them. The one-person crew was originally only responsible for maintaining the town office and grounds and the village green inside the circle near the Northeast Harbor marina. Since the position was created, the responsibilities of the job now extend from Bartlett's Landing to Otter Creek and many points in between. A seasonal worker is hired to help during summer months to assist with, among other duties, servicing porta-potties at Bartlett's Landing, Pond's End and Suminsby Park (Sargeant Drive picnic area) performing grounds keeping in all of the villages; servicing the toilets at the old fire station in Northeast Harbor and at the Seal Harbor marina; cleaning toilets and showers for the Chamber of Commerce; sweeping Main Street in Northeast Harbor; collecting recyclables from the Somesville and Seal Harbor post offices; assisting with maintenance and repairs at the fire stations and; providing cleaning, repair and maintenance services to the town office.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The Town currently provides curbside collection for solid waste. The Town owns three garbage trucks that, depending on the season, collect solid waste and recycling and transport the waste to Eastern Maine Recycling (EMR), a privately owned transfer station located in Southwest Harbor. Residents also have the option to deliver their own trash and recyclables to the facility. Waste is transferred form EMR to the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company in Orrington, Maine where is it burned to generate electricity. Recyclables collected by EMR are marketed to various vendors. Presently, the town does not see any of the receipts from the sale of the recyclables; this will be addressed in any future contract negotiations with EMR.

One additional option available to Mount Desert residents is to use the recycling center located at the highway garage on Sargeant

Drive. As mentioned above, though Mount Desert does not receive any revenue from the sale of recyclables from EMR, it does benefit from the sale of material collected at its own recycling center. The Town is a member of the Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRA), which markets recyclable materials on behalf of the Town. The Town's current agreement with EMR was due to expire at the end of June in 2007, and a new contract is under negotiation.

Mount Desert has an active Solid Waste and Recycling Committee that meet on a regular basis. The Town is also a charter member of the Acadia Disposal District (ADD), a quasi-municipal group officially formed in 2003. The purpose of the ADD is to provide for the cost-effective, environmentally friendly, efficient and lawful management, disposal and recycling of waste materials on behalf of its member towns. The ADD was instrumental in banning cardboard from the waste stream in 2005 and has been actively involved in organizing the Island's annual household hazardous waste and universal waste collection day. Other ADD member municipalities include Cranberry Isles, Tremont, Trenton, and Southwest Harbor.

The State of Maine Planning Office's Department of Waste Management and Recycling tracks recycling rates at the municipal level. The overall rate for the town has dropped in recent years. Additional data is available from the State Planning Office.

Mount Desert Recycling Rates

Year	%
2005	42.7
2004	37.5
2003	37.6
2002	46.6
2001	57.4
2000	46.6

Source: State Planning

Public Water Service

While the Mount Desert Water District does provide services for the Town of Mount Desert, it should be noted that the Water District is its own separate entity. It was established in 1994 to operate the public water service throughout Northeast Harbor and Seal Harbor. The Water District is the outgrowth of two water companies that operated separate water systems in these villages.

The Water District is a non-profit public utility that is overseen by a five-member board, made up of residents. Five staff positions keep the District operating, including a director, three operators, and one bookkeeper.

The two water systems are still separate, but the water collection, treatment, and delivery networks of the two water systems are similar. In total, the networks service approximately 1,000 residences and businesses.

Both sources of water are surface water. In Northeast Harbor, the Hadlock Ponds are the water source. In Seal Harbor, Jordan Pond is the water source. Both of these sources have approximately 1,000 acres of drainage basin that exists largely within Acadia National Park.

From these source waters, both systems draw water in to the treatment plant. All of the water is filtered and then treated with chlorine and ozone before being released to the delivery network.

In Seal Harbor, the water is pumped into a 500,000-gallon water tower located near Jordan Pond. From there, the water is fed by gravity down into the village of Seal Harbor.

In Northeast Harbor, water is pumped directly through the delivery network. Any remaining water pressure is used to fill a 500,000-gallon water tower located near Lower Hadlock Pond for storage. This stored water is used to complement peak demand and in case of an emergency.

The water systems in both networks have enough capacity to handle peak demand in the summer months (which is three times more than in other months) and allow for expansion to the networks. The Seal Harbor system in particular has excess capacity. Water pressure throughout the system is adequate to meet demand.
The Water District has an ongoing maintenance program. One of the largest challenges is to locate and replace pipes that are in some cases more than 100 years old. These pipes can leak and create other inefficiencies in the network, and let un-potable water in.

Federal water quality standards continue to evolve, and the demands placed on public water suppliers have steadily become more stringent. New regulations requiring another level of treatment are in the process of being adopted, which will require the Water District to add more treatment methods to its facilities.

Expansion to the water system is difficult, especially considering the topography, geography, and fragmented pattern of settlement on the east side of the town. Otter Creek is the most likely location for future expansion, should that community opt for public water service.

Expansions to the west side of the island where most of the new development is occurring would be prohibitively expensive.

Public Safety

The ***Mount Desert Police Department*** provides 24-hour public safety services to the town. The department is located in the lower level of the municipal building on Sea Street.

The department has six full-time officers comprised of a chief, a sergeant, and four patrol officers. A full-time employee is hired through the summer months (parking officer). Approximately four part-time officers help fill in the patrol schedule, especially during the summer months when the demand for public safety services increases dramatically.

In addition to the officers, the department has four full-time dispatchers that provide service for public safety (police, fire, highway department, and emergency medical services) as well as other town departments (school buses, water district, etc). An additional five dispatchers work part-time to fill out the schedule.

The police and dispatch operations are currently lacking adequate space. There is no room for storage of everything from records to uniforms, or space for processing evidence. Privacy is of major concern, as there is no place to talk in private and many residents access the Town Offices through the police department space.

The department operates two cruisers and a four-wheel drive vehicle. The primary officer of duty carries an Automated

External Defibrillator for emergency care in case of cardiac arrest, and all officers are trained in its use.

Fire Department Responses, 2002-2005				
Type of Service	**Year**			
	2002	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**
Alarm Activation	62	79	81	97
Motor Vehicle Accidents	15	12	14	14
Structured Fires	5	4	5	4
Wildland Fires	4	4	3	2
Assist EMS	*	6	21	4
Mutual Aid	5	10	4	2
Misc. General	36	46	30	21
Total	127	161	158	144
** Unrecorded information*				
Source: Fire Department Records				

In 2005, the department answered 1,714 service calls. These included a wide range of public safety services, ranging from routine traffic violations to violent crimes. Over 100 of the service calls were traffic accidents, one of which ended in a fatality. A new service call database was created in 2004 to more accurately detail the number and types of services provided by the police department.

The police department has at least one patrol on duty 24-hours per day. When a full complement of officers is available (the department has had difficulty maintaining its full complement), there are sometimes two patrols on duty during the evening hours. The department relies on support from neighboring towns to provide back up and/or cover emergency support when the department is transporting prisoners to the Hancock County Jail in Ellsworth. The Mount Desert Police Department provides the same assistance to neighboring communities, and has a formal mutual aid agreement with Bar Harbor and Southwest Harbor, which was just rewritten in 2005. While the town has informally assisted Tremont in the past, in 2006 a mutual aid agreement was written to formalize this relationship.

Mount Desert Fire Emergency Equipment, 2006								
Equipment	**Location**	**Gallons Water**	**Pump**	**Hose 2 1/2"**	**Hose 4"**	**Portable Tank**	**Foam**	**Other**
Engine 4	Northeast Harbor	1,000	1,500	500	1,500		A	CAS, Extrication Equipment
Ladder 1	Northeast Harbor	300	1,500	500	500			
Engine 1	Seal Harbor	1,500	1,500	1,000	1,000			
Engine 2	Seal Harbor	800	1,250		1,200		A	
Air 1	Seal Harbor							Mobile Cascade &Air Compressor
Engine 6	Somesville	700	1,250	1,000	2,500			Equipment and Extrication
Engine 3	Somesville	1,250	1,000	1,200	1,200		A	
Tanker 1	Somesville	2,500	1,000	200		2 @ 2,500		
Source: Town Records								

The department provides various community policing programs, including participating in countywide services for Senior citizens, programs for the schools, bicycle rodeos and car-seat inspections. The department often works with other agencies, and is looking to increase its community programs.

The ***Mount Desert Fire Department*** provides 24-hour fire prevention, protection, and rescue services throughout our town. In 2001, the fire department was created by merging the four firefighting organizations that existed in Northeast Harbor, Seal Harbor, Otter Creek, and Somesville.
Our fire department has one full-time fire chief. The chief is supported by approximately 36 volunteers. Of these volunteers, 17 meet or exceed the minimum qualifications set by the Maine Labor Standards Board. The remaining volunteers participate in a training program that is funded by the fire department. In addition, several of the volunteers are certified paramedics/EMTs and work for both the fire department and the Northeast Harbor Ambulance Service, Inc.

The department has fire stations located in Northeast Harbor, Somesville, Seal Harbor, and Otter Creek. These fire stations all have adequate space for existing needs. The following apparatus are located at each fire station:

In 2005, the department responded to 144 service calls. Of these, 6 were fires (buildings, woods, stoves, etc) and 97 were false alarms. The remaining calls were for a wide variety of services, including fuel leaks, broken power lines, assistance to police/EMS, and smoke investigations.

The department has mutual aid agreements with all of the fire departments in Hancock County. These agreements ensure that additional fire and rescue personnel are available in the event that one department is overwhelmed. In 2005, the Mount Desert Fire Department provided mutual aid to 2 fire calls on the Island.

Because the fire station in Otter Creek was closed, the fire department is working on establishing a more immediate response mutual aid agreement with Bar Harbor. This will increase the level of protection for the Otter Creek area.

The fire hydrants on the public water system are generally adequate for the firefighting crews. Some of the hydrants are outdated, but the water department is updating all of its hydrants and changing the threads on the hydrants to National Standard threads.

Response times throughout the community are generally adequate, although response times can lag in Seal Harbor, Otter Creek, and Somesville because there often are not enough volunteers during the day to respond to service calls.

The fire department has created an in-house firefighter training program. This new program has trained new volunteers as well as retrained veterans. Firefighters routinely receive advanced training at dedicated schools throughout the state. The department operates an internship program through the Mount Desert Island High School.

The department is currently undertaking a long-range planning program to create a plan for its future.

Issues the department has to address in the future include:

- Personnel – recruiting more volunteers, compensating volunteers for their training time, compensating volunteers for their time fighting fires
- Equipment – much equipment needs to be replaced, town has reserve account for apparatus, working on replacing three service trucks with a pumper/tanker/utility truck
- Converting – fire department is only three years old, still working on integrating equipment and culture

Emergency medical services (EMS) are provided by the Northeast Harbor Ambulance Service, Inc. This is a private not-for-profit corporation. Service is provided 24 hours a day by a staff of volunteers with mutual backup agreements with Southwest Harbor and Bar Harbor.

There is only one ambulance to serve the town's population, but the volume of calls has traditionally been just below 300 per year and the one vehicle has been adequate to date with very few exceptions. In addition, the service has coordinated with each village to make sure there is at least one Lifeflight helicopter landing zone in each section of town. The ambulance carries a handheld GPS instrument and has a common radio frequency on which to contact the Lifeflight crews.

At present there are one paramedic, four intermediates, and nine basics regularly responding by a pager system. Firemen trained in Emergency Vehicle Operations may also serve as drivers for the ambulance when necessary.

Education

Our town provides public school services to all residents from kindergarten through high school. K-8 students attend the Mount Desert Elementary School in Northeast Harbor and grades 9-12

attend the Mount Desert Island High School on Route 233 in Bar Harbor.

Our schools are organized in School Union 98. Participating in the Union gives us control over our primary school and a consolidated high school with Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, Tremont, the Cranberry Isles, Frenchboro, and Swans Island.

The ***Mount Desert Elementary School*** is located in the village of Northeast Harbor. The school was originally built c.1950s, and has recently been extensively renovated. At the same time, a 10,000 square foot addition added a cafeteria/kitchen, classrooms, and special program spaces.

Each grade has 1 classroom, with the exception of grades 4 and 8, which currently have 2 classrooms. There are 21 full-time staff members and specialists working with the students.

Traditionally, our community has provided strong support to all the program needs of our elementary students. The fine arts are a particular strength at our school.

Enrollment has been steadily decreasing. In the 1980's enrollment at the elementary school was close to 300 students. In 1998 it had 240 students. In 2004 enrollment is down to 156 students.

Demographic shifts statewide account for some of this decline – families are having fewer children, parents are waiting longer to start families, and the number of females of child-bearing age is decreasing as the Baby Boom generation ages.

But another factor in our town is likely the primary cause of depressed enrollments. Housing costs have skyrocketed in recent years. These higher prices, coupled with the very seasonal economy, make buying housing in our town a challenge for most young families.

The school administration projects those enrollments will stop declining as they reach an average of 12 to 15 students per grade. Currently there is an average of 17 students per grade. Under this scenario, enrollments will decline another 20 to 50 students before leveling off.

In addition, the location of the student body is shifting. While no exact numbers are available, anecdotal evidence suggests that the proportion of students living in Northeast Harbor and the eastern portions of Town is decreasing, while there are an increasing number of students from west of Somes Sound.

The Mount Desert Elementary School provides services to the community as well. The Neighborhood House uses school facilities extensively in the summer, but also during the school year for some of its programming. Also, a Committee for the School's Future has organized to decide how the community can make more efficient use of its new facility.

Resident Students Educated at Public Expense

Level	Actual		Projected	
	1990	2000	2010	2015
Elementary	154	11	42	21
Middle	62	90	47	33
High	55	120	108	98
Total	271	221	197	152
Source: State Planning Office				

The ***Mount Desert High School*** is located on Route 233 in Bar Harbor. This school educates approximately 710 students in grades 9-12 from Mount Desert, Tremont, Southwest Harbor, Bar Harbor, four island communities, and several mainland communities. A staff of 65 provides education services to these students.

The high school is run by Consolidated School District (CSD) 7. Mount Desert, Bar Harbor, Tremont, and Southwest Harbor belong to this CSD. These communities have representatives on the School Board that oversee the school's operation. Other communities sending their students to the high school pay annual tuition fees for each student at a rate established by the State.

The number of students that are being educated at Mount Desert Island High School on a tuition basis can vary from year to year depending on the 'competition' from other high schools in the region. Making public policy decisions in an environment that can swing rapidly from year-to-year can be challenging. Currently, there are approximately 160 students being sent to the high school from outside communities.

The high school has recently completed a $7 million renovation and expansion to its facility that increased its available space by 20 %. The expansion added primarily classrooms for the arts. These improvements will satisfy the high school's facility needs for the foreseeable future.

Enrollments in the high school have remained relatively steady. While the number of students from the four towns in the CSD has decreased, the number of tuition students attending the high school has increased (in part due to the quality of education and the new facilities).

In the future, enrollment at the high school could continue to decline.

Staffing at the high school has been relatively steady, although recently more and more of the staff are likely to commute to the island to work because of the high cost of housing on the island.

As high school enrollments decrease in the future, determining how to adjust the staff to accommodate decreased enrollments will become a larger issue. In addition, the services offered by the high school might have to be adjusted – fewer students in a school decrease the breadth of programming that can be offered efficiently.

Issues and Implications

1. School enrollments have decreased significantly in recent years, though projected to stabilize.

2. Recruitment of public safety volunteers is increasingly challenging due to an aging population and high costs related to training.

Fiscal Capacity
Our Institutions and Services

Understanding our town's fiscal position is crucial when planning for the community's growth and changing needs. This section examines Mount Desert's fiscal capacity and its ability to fund new and existing services and facilities.

Assessed Valuation, Commitment, & Tax Rate

Examining ***assessed valuations*** is one way to track the fiscal health of the community. Assessed valuation is the basis upon which local property taxes are levied. A rising valuation is a sign of fiscal strength – smaller tax rates are needed to raise a given sum of money.

In 2003, our town's assessed valuation reached $680.7 million, an increase of $119 million since 1992. This increase has been steady, but valuations have generally increased more rapidly between 1998 and 2002.

A growing tax base (assessed valuations are the basis on which local property taxes are raised) increases the amount of taxes collected for a given tax rate. For example, in 1997 and 1999, Mount Desert's tax rate was 8.55 mils. Between these two years the town's valuation had increased by $14.5 million. Due to this increasing valuation, the commitment (the amount the Town raises from property taxes) increased by $125,000.

Local commitment or the amount of property taxes collected to fund local government, for 2003 was $8.27 million (Figure 2, Table 1). This was more than twice the size of the $3.62 million commitment in 1992 (after adjusting for inflation, commitment increased by 73 %).

Commitment increased through the early 1990s before leveling off in the mid-1990s. Since 1999, commitment has increased more rapidly (nearly $3.00 million between 1999 and 2003).

Because commitment has increased at a faster rate than assessed valuation, our ***tax rate*** has increased. The tax rate reflects how much of the local valuation is committed in property taxes each year. In 2003, Mount Desert's local property tax rate was 12.15 mils (a mil is the number of dollars in property tax paid for each $1,000 in assessed valuation[1]). Since 1992, the tax rate has steadily increased from 6.45 mils, with larger increases coming in 2001 and 2002. The Town undertook a full revaluation of in 2006, however, and the total assessment is now approximately $2,000,000,000 and the tax rate for 2007 is 5.35 mils.

The full value tax rate is used by the State to adjust for local valuation discrepancies between communities[2]. Despite Mount

[1] A tax rate of 12.15 mils means that a property will be taxed $12.15 for every $1,000 in assessed value. At this tax rate, a property assessed at $200,000 would pay an annual tax of $2,430.

[2] Local assessed valuations reflect full market value only in the years a town completed a revaluation. Therefore, neighboring communities may have

Desert's rapid tax increase in recent years, the community has the lowest property taxes of any in the region. This suggests that the amount of money the Town collects in property taxes is relatively small when compared against the town's relatively large assessed valuation.

Note – full value tax rates do not account for differences in services and facilities. For example, larger and more urban communities tend to have more programs and facilities, thereby increasing the cost of the local government (and vice-versa for more rural communities).

Revenues

Local property taxes (commitment) were the largest source of revenue for Mount Desert in 2003, but nearly 20 % of the Town's $10,213,561 in revenues came from other sources (Table 3). Since 1993, total annual revenues have increased by $5.5 million (or 114 %).

Property taxes are the single largest source of revenue for Mount Desert, accounting for more than 80 % of annual revenues. Local property taxes totaled $8.2 million in 2003. The amount of property taxes that were raised in 2003 to fund local government has more than doubled since 1993.

Excise tax revenue includes those local taxes paid on cars, boats, and other objects. In 2003, excise taxes totaled nearly $600,000, or 6 % of the Town's total revenues. Since 1993, excise taxes revenues have nearly doubled.

Intergovernmental revenue includes revenues from various federal, state, and local sources. For example, this includes revenues paid to the Town from Acadia National Park, the Otter Creek Treatment Plant, and various assistance/reimbursements from the State for homesteads, tree growth lands, and general assistance. In 2003, these revenues accounted for 1 % of the Town's revenues, or $131,000. Since 1993, these revenue sources have increased by 82 %.

Charges for marine services include revenues earned by the marina, concessions, and mooring fees. In 2003, these revenues accounted for 5 % of the Town's total revenues, or $469,692. Since 1993, these revenues have increased by 60 %.

Charges for other services include proceeds earned by the Town through various programs. These include revenues from paid parking, planning/zoning fees, clerk fees, and solid waste collection. In 2003, these accounted for 1 % of the Town's revenues, or $105,600. Since 1993, these revenues have increased by 75 %.

Miscellaneous revenues include various other forms of income not mentioned above, such as rental from Adelphia Cable, interest on investments, and the sale of surplus property and equipment. In 2003, these revenues totaled $200,000 (about half of which was from interest on the Town's investments). These revenues have doubled since 1993.

significant differences in the reported value of two properties that in fact have the same market value. Because the State disburses aid to communities based in part on their assessed valuation, the State annually adjusts these valuations to account for market fluctuations. The resulting valuation is often called the Full Value and is the best basis on which comparisons between communities should be made.

Transfers and other sources include municipal revenue sharing and transfers from other accounts. In 2003, these revenues totaled 5 % of total revenues, or more than $480,000. Most of this revenue was the result of a $400,000 transfer from the Town's credit reserve. Since 1993, this form of revenue has increased dramatically.

Expenditures

In 2003, Mount Desert spent more than $9.7 million to provide services and facilities to citizens (Table 4). This is $4.7 million more than in 1993.

Education expenses pay for the town's public school service at the elementary school and the Mount Desert Island High School. In 2003, Mount Desert paid a total of $4.2 million for education (or 43 % of the annual budget). Since 1993, Elementary school expenses have increased by 113 % while high school expenses have increased by 152 %.

Public Works expenses operate the Town's public works department. In 2003, these expenses totaled $1.0 million, or 11 % of all expenses.

Wastewater Treatment includes operating expenses and debt expenses for the various wastewater treatment plants in the community. In 2003, these expenses totaled $1.0 million, or 11 % of total expenses.

Other expenditures pay for everything from compliance expenses/mandates to operating transfers to the various reserve accounts. In 2003 these expenses totaled $870,000, or 9 % of total expenses.

Personnel expenses include salaries, unemployment compensation, medical insurance, Social Security/Medicare, and other expenses used to maintain the Town's workforce. In 2003, these expenses accounted for $660,000, or 7 % of total expenses.

County taxes totaled $550,000 in 2003, or 6 % of total expenses. The amount paid in taxes to the County depends on the relative size of the town's valuation compared with other towns in the county.

Public safety expenses totaled $580,000, or 6 % of the town's total expenses.

General government accounts for administrative expenses needed to operate the local government. This includes funds for assessing, tax collection, clerk, and other local services. In 2003, these expenses totaled $530,000, or 5 % of the total budget.

Marine includes funds used to support the town's waterfront activities. In 2003, these expenses totaled $171,000, or 2 % of the total.

Regional Coordination

Although the four towns of Mount Desert Island (Mount Desert, Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, and Tremont) often emphasize their independence from each other, they have had a recent history of working together on a variety of issues. Because these four towns are located together on an island, and share a dependence upon Acadia National Park, regional efforts are critical for any future planning. The surrounding island towns and the gateway communities to MDI are also inexorably intertwined with the future of MDI, and need to be considered in any regional planning.

MDI Tomorrow is a regional planning process that has greatly increased the willingness of the island towns to work together, and has spawned a variety of regional efforts and organizations. Mount Desert should continue to participate in and support this process, and any resulting initiatives.

There are a number of issues listed in the Goals & Objectives section of the Plan that take a regional approach, including Transportation, Economy, Health & Recreation, Public Services & Facilities, Environment - Marine Resources, and Environment - Natural Resources.

The following is a brief discussion of existing regional efforts between the Town of Mount Desert and adjacent municipalities and regional interests, as well as issues that would benefit from expanded regional coordination.

Existing Regional Coordination

1. **Public Education.** The Town of Mount Desert provides education as a member of School Union 98. MDI High School is a Regional Community High School serving not only Mount Desert Island, but also five surrounding mainland communities and four outer island communities.

2. **Transportation.** There is a history on MDI of towns working together on transportation issues, especially public transportation initiatives. These include the Island Explorer, Downeast Transportation, and Island Connections, discussed in the *Transportation* chapter of the Inventory & Analysis section of the plan.

   There have been other regional transportation initiatives on MDI, such as an island-wide bicycle trail system, and ongoing studies along the Route 3/1A corridor that could potentially benefit all of MDI.

3. **Affordable and workforce housing.** The MDI Housing Authority provides housing assistance to elderly, disabled, and low-income families for all of Mount Desert Island, as

described in the *Housing* chapter of the Inventory & Analysis section of the plan.

The Island Housing Trust was created in 2004 as a result of regional planning efforts by the MDI Tomorrow process, and has begun two workforce housing projects in the towns of Bar Harbor and Mount Desert that aim to address the housing issue at an island-wide level.

4. **Public Services.** There has been some cooperation between public safety departments across the island in the form of mutual aid agreements, or more informal agreements. The Acadia Disposal District is a quasi-municipal, non-profit corporation owned by the member towns – Cranberry Isle, Mount Desert, Southwest Harbor, Trenton, and Tremont – which coordinates solid-waste disposal and recycling for our towns. There are plans developing to site and operate a modern transfer station and recycling center to serve the growing community.

5. **Non-profit organizations.** The Town has provided ongoing financial support to numerous non-profit groups that provide services within the Town or to its residents. This support is reviewed in the budget process by the Selectman and Warrant Committee, and presented to voters at annual Town Meeting. While this portion of the budget always stirs debate, the voters have traditionally and consistently recognized the important functions these groups provide, and supported them appropriately.

Expanded Regional Coordination

The Town of Mount Desert stands to benefit from active participation in coordinating the following regional issues:

- **Transportation**
- **Dark Skies**
- **Wildlife Habitat**
- **Waste Disposal**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Public Safety**
- **Zoning & Land Use Planning**

Policy Development

Goals

Population:

To encourage growth in our year-round community that supports prosperity and sustainability.

Mount Desert swells during summer months with seasonal residents, summer visitors, and tourists. The demand on facilities and services grows significantly during summer months. Though population growth has been relatively moderate, nearly half of the housing units are currently used as seasonal dwellings. The median age of the Town's year-round population increased from 36 to 43.6 years between 1980 and 2000; it is anticipated that the age will increase even more as retirees will move to Mount Desert to live year-round in the future. An increase in affordable housing and year-round jobs are recognized as key components contributing to a prosperous and sustainable Mount Desert.

Economy

To expand the local year-round economy to enhance the quality of life for Mount Desert's citizens, seasonal residents, and visitors.

Mount Desert's economy is most dependent upon the island's natural resources; the scenic beauty of our surroundings, including Acadia National Park and our other recreation amenities, form the foundation of our past and present economy, and the preservation of these resources is critical to a successful economic future.

The economy of Mount Desert is also very closely tied to current housing issues. The costs of housing are higher than many year-round residents are able to afford. This leads to many residents having a difficult time surviving financially, either forced to accept a lower standard of living, or having to move out of Mount Desert or off the island entirely. This trend is detrimental to Mount Desert's economy: businesses need a sufficient core of local resident support to remain open year-round, and cannot realistically exist solely on the convenience purchases of an off-island work force. Accordingly, to restore economic viability, Mount Desert cannot become solely a summer resort, but must actively support an expansion of those year-round economic opportunities that do not impact our natural resources. Future development regulations must be flexible and supportive of a variety of traditional and non-traditional

employment and business opportunities, such as professional services, expanded season eco-tourism, commercial fishing, home-based occupations and low-impact industries.

Housing:

To promote a pattern of residential growth that sustains all aspects of our community and that is affordable for year-round residents. The Town shall seek to meet the state requirements for addressing affordable housing need in Mount Desert in the next decade, and to encourage and support the efforts of the Island Housing Trust in addressing this goal.

The high cost for housing is currently one of the primary driving forces behind many of the issues facing the town of Mount Desert. An appropriate balance of housing should be sought after to support a healthy economy, and it should be kept affordable in order to avoid displacing community members to outlying areas. Housing should be developed in a way that improves connections between and among community members to create vibrant year-round villages. It should not degrade or exhaust the natural resources that are integral to the success of this community, such as fragmenting or destroying important wildlife habitat, polluting or exhausting water supplies, or negatively impacting either natural or built scenic resources.

Transportation:

To promote a transportation network that allows residents, visitors, and commuters to move safely, efficiently, and pleasurably throughout Mount Desert's villages, the Town, and Mount Desert Island.

Mount Desert's transportation network is fundamentally intertwined with Mount Desert Island's larger land-use patterns, and in supporting a safe and healthy community. Residents and visitors alike often rely heavily on personal automobiles, and therefore on the roads on which they drive. With many residents moving off the island due to rising housing costs on the island, this dependency is increasing, putting extra pressures on the roads. Both housing opportunities and services should be more self-contained on the island to reduce this dependency, which could also strengthen the economy. This dependency could also be reduced both by promoting land-use patterns that encourage denser development, walkable communities, infill in the villages, and by promoting a wide variety of transportation options, such as public transportation, and bicycle and pedestrian opportunities. By doing so, in addition to appropriately locating and designing the roadways themselves, the negative impacts to the natural landscapes can be minimized, while maximizing the interactions between and among residents and visitors.

Health and Recreation:

To enhance health and prevent disease and disability by providing personnel and facilities and attractive recreational opportunities to encourage healthy lifestyles.

The Town of Mount Desert is fortunate to have a national park within its boundaries. Not only does Acadia attract millions of visitors to the town, but also it provides outstanding recreational opportunities for the town residents, many of whom hike, bike, ski, and picnic in the park. Mount Desert's harbors and shores are some of the most popular places for boating and kayaking in New England. The town also owns several parks that provide additional opportunities for quiet and active enjoyment of the outdoors. These areas need to be maintained to enhance the quality of life for the people of the town.

Although the town has numerous resources aimed at enhancing health and preventing disease and disability there are unmet needs that require consideration.

Historic & Archaeological Resources:

To identify and preserve the town's important historic and archeological resources for future generations.

By understanding the forces that shaped the community's development, residents are better able to connect to their past. Historic structures contribute greatly to the town's built environment, by adding to its aesthetic qualities, attracting the seasonal residents that are central to the town's economy. Therefore it is important to protect the town's historic and archaeological resources. They are a significant part of the town's identity, and can provide tangible links with the community's past.

The Environment:

To preserve access to marine waters and protect our town's important marine resources for future generations.

The unique natural beauty of the shorelines, harbors, and passages draw boaters from afar, with the need to minimize conflict with fishermen tending their lobster traps and buoys. Vigilance and appropriate regulations will be needed to avoid despoiling the environment through overuse, unsavory or unsafe parking at access points, and the leaving of human waste and trash. The limitation and/or licensing of "out-of-township" commercial kayak touring groups should be considered to limit environmental disturbance. The increased boatyard activity in Northeast Harbor will have positive economic and employment benefits to the area and will attract more cruising yacht visits. Care must be taken to avoid negative impacts on our Northeast Harbor lobster, scallop, and urchin fishermen. Likewise, residential land sales and development (piers, etc) should not be permitted to compromise marine commercial activities. Winter on-shore boat storage represents a significant financial opportunity for those with acreage and facilities but must be sited with consideration of the visual and other impacts, such as traffic, noise, etc.

Attention must also be given to potential aquaculture activities in the future. Although the state Department of Marine Resources has jurisdiction over this, the appearance, activity, noise, and lighting of such operations is of legitimate concern to shoreland residents, fishermen, recreational boaters, and others. Aquaculture could provide employment for Mount Desert residents; however, there needs to be a mechanism whereby an effective dialogue can take place with those regulating and operating such endeavors. The same awareness and dialogue must be given to seaweed beds, sea squirts, and other circumstances that affect employment, appearances, and enjoyment of our marine resources.

To ensure that Mount Desert's variety of natural resources are protected for current and future generations.

Throughout the history of the town of Mount Desert inhabitants of the island have relied on the natural resources for survival, from Native Americans' reliance on its waters and the early days of logging and fishing, to Acadia National Park and the visitors that come to our town each year. Among these resources are the ocean; fresh water lakes, streams, and rich forests that provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species; predominately dark night skies, and scenic vistas. Together these resources help shape the character of Mount Desert; any future development must strive to preserve these resources.

To preserve the town's character by preserving it's working farm and forests.

While there currently is little land dedicated to these practices, forestry and agriculture do play a role in Mount Desert. They provide swaths of undeveloped land that protect wildlife habitat, wetlands, and other critical natural resources. This undeveloped land is also essential for maintaining the rural feel of the town, which draws the visitors that are central to the town's economy. Forestry and agricultural practices provide a link to historical land uses, particularly forestry, as timber was one of the resources that first drew settlers to the island.

Public Facilities & Services:

To provide safe and efficient public utilities and facilities to Mount Desert's residents and businesses, and use the public utility infrastructure as a tool to decrease the impact of land uses on the natural environment.

Providing adequate public facilities is important for allowing the community to survive year-round. Facilities such as schools and community centers, in addition to providing necessary services, provide opportunities for interaction among residents and are a part of the fabric of the year-round community. All public facilities contribute both to creating an environment that encourages growth, and to the quality of life of the town's residents. Public utilities must be maintained and, where necessary, enhanced, to contribute to the well being of the town's residents. The long-term sustainability of the town's utilities must be ensured, while achieving economic efficiency. Public utilities have the ability to influence land use patterns, and therefore attention must be given to how they will do so, and how they will impact the environment through the land uses the utilities are encouraging or discouraging.

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
1	**Increase the amount of housing available in Mount Desert that is economically viable for the year-round working community, and meet the State goal that at least 10% of the new housing units be qualified affordable housing.**			
	A	Support the efforts of qualified workforce housing entities that are seeking to create more affordable housing for year-round residents as well as lower income households. This support could be in the form of capital and/or operating funding, staff resources, donations of town land/services, or grant/assistance sources.	Planning Board in partnership with Island Housing Trust, Selectmen and Staff	On-going
	B	Adjust regulations to encourage infill in designated Growth Areas.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	C	Adjust regulations that will encourage multi-family housing opportunities in more areas of Mount Desert.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	D	Consider requiring that large subdivision projects include a workforce housing component. Procuring an existing home, building a new home, equity purchases, or paying a fee to an affordable housing fund could meet this requirement	Planning Board and Selectmen	On-going
	E	Adjust regulations to encourage mixed-uses in designated areas of Mount Desert.	Planning Board	Within 2 years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	F	Increase the number of year-round rental units by creating incentives to rent existing properties on a year-round basis, and incentives to create and convert accessory apartments for year-round rentals.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	G	Continue to update the workforce housing provisions in the LUZO, such as allowing density bonuses for lot partitions similar to the current provisions for subdivisions.	Planning Board	On-going
	H	Develop strategies to retain the existing year-round housing stock, such as equity purchases, donations, and local transfer taxes.	Planning Board	
2	**Ensure that new residential development is compatible with the integrity and qualities of Mount Desert.**			
	A	Continue to update the cluster section (section 5.16) of our subdivision ordinance to create incentives for those developing land to protect significant amounts of natural/scenic areas whenever development occurs in rural areas.	Planning Board	On-going
	B	Provide voluntary guidelines to encourage residents and developers to follow ecologically sound building practices, such as efficient and cleaner energy consumption and green building materials; and educate the public on the methods and benefits of these types of practices.	Town staff, CEO	On-going
	C	Create guidelines for development occurring on slopes of 15% or greater.	Planning Board	Within 2 years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	D	Update the Land Use Ordinance to restrict development occurring atop ridgelines or on slopes greater than 25%.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	E	Consider requiring the development of cluster housing or other conservation development concepts, in appropriate areas of Mount Desert	Planning Board	On-going
	F	Develop standards for lot configuration and address "spaghetti lot" situations.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	G	Review lot density and land suitability standards to protect wetlands and habitat.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
3	**Improve the design, quality and type of safe connections (rights-of-way, trails, sidewalks, bike paths) between our town's villages, neighborhoods, and subdivisions, in a way that promotes physical activity as a part of daily life.**			
	A	Improve automotive, bicycle, and pedestrian connections throughout the Town between residential neighborhoods (including subdivisions), community facilities, and areas with great recreation and commercial opportunity. Special attention shall be given to designs that improve pedestrian and bicycle safety; trails/rights-of-way will be encouraged in less dense areas with sidewalks/paths in more dense areas.	Planning Board	Within 2 years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	B	Create a pedestrian master plan that details where improvements and/or new infrastructure should be located, what level of service they should be maintained to, and an ongoing maintenance schedule to ensure these facilities provide a safe, convenient, and comfortable alternative to automobiles for residents and guests walking in, and between, our town's villages. Priority should be given to those investments that connect residential neighborhoods to community facilities (water access points, playfields, parks, schools, etc) and our commercial villages.	Traffic Committee, Planning Board, Public Works	Within 2 years
4	**Maintain and enhance the safety and quality of Mount Desert's road network.**			
	A	Develop a long-range infrastructure maintenance and capital improvement program that details the level of service at which Mount Desert's roads will be maintained and for what cost.	Public Works, Town Treasurer	Within 2 years
	B	Monitor locations that could become high-crash areas and make improvements to alleviate safety concerns, for instance widening road shoulders for parking near seasonal attractions.	Town staff, in collaboration with Acadia National Park Staff	Within 2 years
	C	Support the improvement of public signage, in order to increase the clarity, consistency and enhancement of public signs throughout the town.	Traffic Committee	Within 2 years
	D	Develop standards to manage new curb cuts on our major roadways.	Traffic Committee	Within 2 years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
5	**Work with surrounding communities to decrease the burden on Mount Desert's transportation network.**			
	A	Support an increase in year-round public transportation.	Staff, Selectmen	On-going
	B	Support the creation of an off-island intermodal transit hub to reduce commuter and visitor traffic.	Staff, Selectmen	On-going
	C	Support the creation of a ride-sharing network on and off the island.	Staff, Selectmen	On-going
	D	Support the creation of a regional transportation organization whose mission is to address transportation concerns at the regional level.	MDI Tomorrow - Transportation Group	On-going
6	**Use Transportation Planning as a tool to manage new growth.**			
	A	Ensure consideration of opportunities for connected road networks and through-streets over cul-de-sacs and dead-end roads in new subdivisions. Where through-streets are not possible, encourage pedestrian or bicycle access-ways between them.	Planning Board	On-going
	B	Promote the use of shared driveways to increase safety and minimize impacts to natural resources.	Planning Board and Ordinance Review Committee	On-going
	C	Update the Land Use Ordinance to allow more flexible parking arrangements in the pedestrian-oriented villages.	Planning Board, Traffic Committee, Public Works, and Selectmen	On-going

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
7	**Invest in infrastructure and service improvements that will improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.**			
	A	Quantify the demand for new or better parking facilities in peak summer months and create a plan to mitigate this shortfall. This could include improving the existing parking supply (new parking facilities, easements and rights-of-way; or more efficient use of current parking facilities) or reducing parking demand (investments in public transportation, alternative transportation facilities such as bike paths, sidewalks, etc).	Traffic Committee for further recommendation	On-going
	B	Create a sidewalk management plan that improves the existing sidewalk network and expands the sidewalk network to connect commercial centers, neighborhoods, community facilities, parks/playgrounds, and other pedestrian facilities.	Public Works	On-going
8	**Support efforts to provide more year-round and higher-paying employment options for residents that will sustain a viable year-round community, particularly those supporting home-based businesses and occupations.**			
	A	Review the Table of Permitted, Conditional, and Excluded Uses by District in the land use ordinance to ensure that limitations on home-based businesses and occupations are not overly restrictive.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	B	Update and clarify Land Use Ordinance definitions of commercial uses and home-based occupations.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	C	Provide DSL, economically feasible wireless internet, or similar communication technologies to more areas of Mount Desert accessible to both public and private users.	Technology Committee and Selectmen	On-going

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	D	Participate in regional efforts to diversify and strengthen the Hancock County economy. This will include ongoing involvement with the Coastal Acadia Development Corporation, and supporting endeavors of other state and regional organizations that promote this goal.	Staff, Selectmen	On-going
	E	Create incentives to establish year-round businesses in designated areas, for example in traditional village centers.	Staff, Selectmen	On-going
	F	Invest in infrastructure improvements that will support the fishing and shell-fishing industries.	Selectmen and Harbor Committee	On-going
	G	Establish a contract zoning option for uses-not normally permitted but may be otherwise suited for a particular location.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
9	**Ensure that non-residential development minimizes its negative impact on existing neighborhoods, the environment, and the community as a whole.**			
	A	Review the Table of Permitted, Conditional, and Excluded Uses by District in the Land Use Ordinance to ensure that appropriate residential and non-residential opportunities are permitted in each zone and that lot and building size restrictions are appropriate, and that lot coverage and parking are taken into consideration.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	B	Develop a "Dark Sky" Ordinance to minimize the impact of nighttime lights in the greater region.	Technology Committee, Planning Board, and Selectmen	Within 2 years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
10	**Work to ensure there are a range of high-quality recreation opportunities in the region.**			
	A	Work with the schools, local nonprofit groups, and businesses, in Mount Desert and island-wide, to maintain the range of recreation facilities and opportunities available to residents throughout the year.	Village Improvement Societies, Town Manager, Selectmen, Local School Officials	On-going
11	**Promote efficiency in and encourage expansion of public services and utilities in order to manage growth.**			
	A	Work with the public utilities to create a capital recovery program for individuals or entities that extend the public water and public sewer networks. This could create more financial incentives for privately financed utility extensions-those that extend public utilities to recoup some of their investment from new utility users.	Selectmen, Planning Board	On-going
	B	Pursue alternative financing methods such as impact fees and special assessment districts for expansion of the public utilities in areas of need.	Selectmen, Planning Board, Code Enforcement	On-going
	C	Consider requiring all new high-density subdivisions to either connect to public sewer lines when appropriate, or to install alternative state approved community sewer systems.	Planning Board	On-going
	D	Create performance standards for new sewer systems.	Public Works, Planning Board	Within 2 years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
12	**Plan for the town's future to ensure that improvements and upgrades to our town's public facilities and services are proceeding efficiently and will provide adequate services to residents and businesses in the future.**			
	A	The Public Works Department, Harbor Master, and Police Department should create a Northeast Harbor downtown parking survey to identify ways to alleviate the parking situation during the season in Northeast Harbor.	Traffic Committee	Within 2 years
	B	Work with the other communities on the island to create a regional public safety strategy that will better coordinate facilities and services across the island. This strategy should include approaches to volunteer recruitment for the fire departments and staff retention for all of the departments.	Hancock County Commissioner's Office, MDI Tomorrow Traffic Group, Hancock County Planning Commission	On-going
13	**Provide adequate education facilities for the town's residents.**			
	A	As elementary enrollments decrease, the Town of Mount Desert should examine how it can make the most efficient use of its recently renovated elementary school.	Local School officials, Selectmen	On-going
	B	Work with Consolidated School District 17 to ensure that the Mount Desert High School is used efficiently and that full ranges of educational services continue to be provided even if enrollments decline in the future.	Local School officials, Selectmen	Annually
	C	Continue to support community education programs available at the library, through the Acadia Senior College, Neighborhood House, etc.	Selectmen	On-going

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
14	**Ensure protection of our town's archaeological, historic, and aesthetic resources.**			
	A	Conduct a comprehensive inventory of local historic resources.	Planning Board, Historical Society	Within 2 years
	B	Continue to explore opportunities to create historic districts or landmarks.	Planning Board, Historical Society	On-going
	C	Adjust the land use ordinance to provide sufficient protection for important historic and archaeological resources.	Planning Board, Historical Society	Within 2 years
	D	Ensure that any adjustments to the land use ordinance and zoning ordinance are consistent with the historic character of our town's villages.	Planning Board, Historical Society, Selectmen	On-going
	E	Establish guidelines that ensure new commercial development will complement the historic character of existing buildings in our town's villages.	Planning Board, Historical Society	Within 2 years

15	**Leverage outside resources to improve the level of protection for Mount Desert's historical and archaeological resources.**			
	A	Explore the possibility of becoming Certified Local Government through the National Park Service. This would give Mount Desert access to federal funding for historic preservation projects throughout the community.	Town Staff	On-going
	B	Seek opportunities to use development or redevelopment as a tool to preserve historic sites and historic buildings.	Planning Board, Historical Society	On-going
	C	Continue to work with local organizations that provide local historic educational opportunities for residents and visitors.	Town Staff, Chamber of Commerce, Historical Society, Library, Acadia National Park, GHMM	On-going

Implementation Strategies			
	Objectives and Strategies	**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
16	**Improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of our town's harbors and related infrastructure.**		
	A Create and implement a Northeast Harbor marina master plan that is designed to alleviate the seasonal parking situation, improve recreational qualities, and increase opportunities for local fisherman. The Harbor Master, Police Department, Chamber, local fishermen, and others should participate in this planning process.	Harbor Committee, Planning Board, Village Improvement Societies, Chamber of Commerce	On-going
	B Develop additional means to encourage shared use of private piers and docks, and reduce the numbers of new private piers built, to alleviate safety and aesthetic concerns.	Harbor Committee, Planning Board, Village Improvement Societies	On-going

	C	Ensure the town works with those pursuing aquaculture to determine whether or not they are viable activities for the Town, based on best-available information.	Harbor Committee, Planning Board, Village Improvement Societies	On-going
17	**Ensure preservation of the working waterfront for commercial fishing and other commercially related water-dependent uses.**			
	A	Revisit the table of permitted uses in the Land Use Ordinance to ensure that Mount Desert regulations are not unfairly limiting the activities of water-dependent businesses.	Mount Desert Harbor Committee in collaboration with the Cranberry Island Cooperative and Maine Lobsterman's Association.	On-going
	B	Accommodate the operational needs of businesses in the design of all existing and/or proposed new public docking and parking facilities.	Harbor Committee in collaboration with the Planning Board	On-going

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
18	**Work to protect the quality of our town's freshwater and saltwater resources.**			
	A	Review and revise our standards governing and controlling both the quality and quantity of storm water runoff from new development to incorporate Low Impact Development principals and Best Management Practices (BMPs) as identified by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. These principals use modern methods to control storm water runoff so that it emulates natural hydro-geological systems, and to maintain existing drainage patterns where possible.	Town Manager, Public Works Department	Within 2 years
	B	Continue to review and revise the Land Use Ordinance to improve sewage disposal regulations.	Planning Board, Public Works Department	On-going
	C	Develop an official plan for town-managed pesticide application that utilizes best management practices.	Public Works, Selectmen	Within 2 years
	D	Work with a ground-water expert to complete a comprehensive hydrologic study of the town's water resources, in order to assess the capacity of the town's residential and commercial growth areas to absorb development based on water supply. This information will be used to update the Land Use Ordinance as necessary.	Selectmen and Planning Board, in collaboration with Island Housing Trust	Within 2 years
	E	Support regional efforts to inventory, educate citizens about, and improve fresh- and salt-water quality, including pursuing ongoing involvement with the MDI Water Quality Coalition.	Schools, Town Staff, Selectmen	On-going

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	F	Conduct shellfish study to determine the abundance of this resource; and the viability of pursuing steps to open areas currently closed to shell fishing and shellfish seeding operations in newly opened areas. It is recommended that this be done in conjunction with adjoining towns that share marine resources and efforts to protect marine water quality.	Selectmen, Shellfish Committee, in collaboration with the DEP	Within 2 years
	G	Take measures to prevent the introduction of invasive aquatic species such as, but not limited to, Eurasian Milfoil and hydrilla. This shall be accomplished through the placing of signs at public boat launching sites, the distribution of educational materials, and urging people to inspect their boats and airplanes for such species. Other steps could include the training of law enforcement personnel or a volunteer program in boat inspection.	Selectmen, Town Staff, Planning Board	On-going
19	**Improve our town's organizational ability to preserve important natural areas.**			
	A	Create a town Conservation Commission or Natural Resources Committee that would monitor and review the health of the town's natural resources; provide town boards with information that could be used in reviewing development proposals; and develop educational material for residents to learn more about these natural resources.	Selectmen	Within 2 years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	B	Create a detailed inventory of our town's important natural resources and identify the role these resources have in the health of the region's ecosystem. This inventory will be used as the basis for future planning efforts and shall include information on vernal pools, wetlands, plant and animal species, wildlife corridors, large blocks of unfragmented land, viewsheds, watersheds, and buffers with Acadia National Park.	Conservation Commission, Selectmen (recommended to work with students, volunteers, and other community stakeholders - such as Friends of Acadia	On-going
20	**Work to protect and preserve the distinctive peace, tranquility, and integrity of the community.**			
	A	Support efforts to decrease traffic congestion, point and non-point source pollution, noise pollution, and other activities that are inconsistent with our small town's character.	Conservation Commission, Traffic Committee, Village Improvement Societies and the Summer Residents Association	On-going
	B	Update the Land Use Ordinance whereby all new and retrofitted outdoor lighting fixtures for municipal facilities will be "Dark-Skies" friendly, and whereby all new and retrofitted outdoor lighting fixtures for commercial and residential development will be encouraged to be "Dark-Skies" friendly. This would include standards for new lighting fixtures, a timeline for retrofitting old lighting fixtures, and light encroachment-standards, aimed at containing light on a landowner's own property.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	C	Implement a plan to reduce the number of streetlights in Mount Desert, in order both to minimize light pollution and to reduce expenses for the taxpayers.	Public Works Department, Town Manager	Within 2 years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	D	Update the Land Use Ordinance to protect vegetative buffers and encourage revegetation.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	E	Include tree planting and similar landscaping measures as part of any downtown revitalization plans completed by the Town or Village Improvement Societies	Planning Board, Village Improvement Societies	On-going
21	**Promote the preservation of natural areas, scenic resources, and undeveloped land.**			
	A	Support efforts of landowners, local land trusts and other regional or state conservation organizations to protect important tracts of undeveloped land and key natural resources, whether through participation in the Open Space Tax Program or other means.	Selectmen, Planning Board, Beginning With Habitat, Conservation Commission, Local Land Trusts	On-going
	B	Initiate a planning effort with neighboring communities to protect larger blocks of unfragmented land and important wildlife corridors that extend into neighboring communities.	Conservation Commission, MDI Tomorrow Land Use and Design Committee	On-going
	C	Update shore land and resource protection zoning to comply with state standards, ensuring adequate protection of key natural resources and that development is allowed where it will not negatively impact these resources	Planning Board	Within 2 years
22	**Promote the economic viability of working farms and forests.**			
	A	Encourage working farms and forests to participate in the Farmland and Tree Growth Tax Programs.	Selectmen, Planning Board	**On-going**

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	B	Create an educational program with other communities on the island that highlights the importance of natural resource based occupations (working farms and forests) as an effective tool for keeping rural areas from being developed.	Staff	On-going
23	**Promote easy access to a local food supply, including fruits, vegetables, and seafood.**			
	A	Update Land Use Ordinance to support small-scale farming, and local food production and distribution.	Planning Board	Within 2 years
	B	Encourage school food services to provide healthy, local foods.	School Board, Healthy Acadia	On-going
	C	Allow use of public land for farmer's markets.	Selectmen	On-going
24	**Ensure that the recommendations from this Comprehensive Plan are addressed in a timely and effective manner and that this plan is updated when more details are completed.**			
	A	Ensure the continuation of an ongoing board or committee whose task is to update the Land Use Ordinances and perform other actions as outlined in this Comprehensive Plan.	Selectmen, Planning Board, Ordinance Review Committee	Within 6 months; after ongoing
	B	Enhance the Town's planning abilities, such as employing a planning professional, reorganizing Town volunteer planning roles, or through other means.	Selectmen, Staff, Planning Board	Within one year
25	**Ensure that the Town's governance structure is adequate to meet the needs of the community in the next decade.**			
	A	Create either a Governance Committee or a process in order to analyze our town's form of government and recommend the most appropriate and responsive form of government for the future.	Town Manager, Selectmen	Within two years

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
	B	Continue an on-going administrative assessment of each department's capacity to handle future demands placed on it as the result of growth and changes within Mount Desert.	Town Manager, Selectmen	On-going
	C	Inventory human resources throughout the Town to determine where efficiencies may be realized or new services must be acquired.	Town Manager	Within 6 months
	D	Promote citizenship and recognize public participation in Mount Desert's governmental process.	All departments, in collaboration with schools, Town committees, and related organizations	Annually
26	**Properly plan for future demands placed on municipal resources in order to increase efficiency and reduce fluctuations in the tax rate.**			
	A	Continue a rolling 5-year Capital Improvement Plan that identifies the capital investments the town is planning to make in the next five years, when the town will make those investments, how much each investment is projected to cost, and how the town will raise the money to make those investments. Require this Capital Investment to be maintained and updated on a rolling basis.	Finance Director, Town Warrant Committee, Town Manager, Selectmen	On-going
	B	Continue to use long-term bonding as a tool to upgrade facilities when the potential benefit from the investment can be matched with the borrowing terms of the bond package.	Finance Director, Town Warrant Committee, Town Manager	On-going
	C	Develop a policy to address the costs of public infrastructure directly attributed to new development.	Town Manager, Planning Board, Selectmen	On-going

Implementation Strategies				
Objectives and Strategies			**Who Will Implement?**	**When?**
27	**Investigate the possibility of providing additional services at a regional level as a means of reducing Mount Desert's expenses.**			
	A	Investigate regionalizing municipal services when efficiencies can be improved and a high level of service can be maintained.	Town Manager, through continued involvement with the League of Towns, Acadia National Park, and other stakeholder groups in the region	On-going

Land Use

Land Use: Settlement Patterns

This chapter surveys how land is currently used in Mount Desert, how these patterns of use have been changing, and what implications these changes might have on the Town's ability to provide facilities and services.

An inventory and analysis of current land use allows one to better understand current and projected development patterns. Maine's Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act require that "growth" and "rural" areas be designated. Growth areas should sufficiently accommodate residential, commercial and industrial development, taking into account 10-year forecasts. Rural areas should discourage incompatible development and may include agricultural, forest, open space and scenic areas within the community. Mount Desert's land use policies and ordinances should reflect the type of growth that is appropriate for the designated growth and rural areas.

From well-protected wildlife habitats to dense village centers, how land is used in our town varies wildly. And as land changes uses from one form to another, the ability of the Town to provide services and facilities to meet the demands of the new uses can change dramatically.

General Pattern of Development

The Town of Mount Desert spans Mount Desert Island from Bartlett Island in the west to Otter Creek in the east.

Punctuating this east-west orientation are several north-south geologic barriers that separate the town into several distinct areas.

Furthest west is Pretty Marsh Harbor and Bartlett Island. This area includes Indian Point Road and much of Pretty Marsh Road and is bounded by Blue Hill Bay to the west and Long Pond to the east. The area is generally low-lying with wetlands, ponds, and inlets determining where and how development could occur.

Somesville and Hall Quarry are bounded by Long Pond to the west and Somes Sound to the east. Oak Hill Road, Oak Hill Cross Road, Beech Ridge Road, and Route 102 are the transportation corridors in this section of town. Beech Mountain, Acadia Mountain, and St. Sauveur Mountain occupy the southern end of this section of town, and the northern border with Bar Harbor is largely wetland.

The village of Northeast Harbor is located at the mouth of Somes Sound on the east lobe of the island. This is the largest commercial center and the most densely developed area in town. Most of the town's municipal services are located in

Northeast Harbor, and the elementary school is located there as well.

Seal Harbor and Otter Creek lie along the southern shore of town to the east of Northeast Harbor. Seal Harbor is largely seasonal and both are located between Acadia National Park and the ocean. These communities are served by public water and a sewer system, which permits development to occur on soils that otherwise would not be able to handle the development.

The interior on the east side of the island is largely occupied by Acadia National Park. This land includes most of the higher peaks on the island and is punctuated by long valleys, streams, and ponds. Trails and carriage roads crisscross this part of the island.

Overview of Recent Development

Between 1990 and 2003, we estimate that 336 new housing units have been added to the town's housing stock. Of these, nearly 40 % were added in the village of Northeast Harbor and another 20 % were added on the east side of town. Approximately 40 % of the units were added on the west side of town.

The new units added to the community have different impacts on the land and town facilities. Those to the east (Northeast Harbor and the East Side) tended to the built on public water and sewer systems while those to the west were more spread out on private water and septic systems.

Commercial development has not been widespread in the community. New activity tends to be located in the denser villages and in general new commercial development has been modest.

Residential Land Use

Residential land uses are spread out across our community, although they tend to be denser in the villages (especially Otter Creek, Seal Harbor, Northeast Harbor, and Somesville) and along the shoreline. Generally, the west side of the island is less densely development than the east side.

Residential development is predominantly single-family homes, and there are relatively few mobile homes in the community.

Commercial Land Use

Commercial land uses are concentrated in the town's villages. These commercial uses tend to be retail shopping and tourism-recreation focused businesses, with a fair number of art galleries in Northeast Harbor. Many of the bed and breakfasts are located in the villages as well.

Acadia National Park

Acadia National Park occupies approximately 45,000 acres on Mount Desert Island, Schoodic Peninsula, and Isle au Haut. Acadia occupies a significant portion of our town – approximately 40% of our town is located within the boundaries of Acadia. This land is owned by the federal government for recreation and habitat protection.

Other Land Uses

Farming and forestry are not large land uses in our town. In 2004, a total of 1,900 acres were enrolled in the tree growth tax program – one-half of which is located on Bartlett Island. In addition, 153 acres on Bartlett Island are enrolled in the farmland tax program. While these numbers do not include all of the farming and forestry that occurs on the island, they do indicate a modest amount of natural resource activity.

In addition to these lands enrolled in the farmland and tree growth program (for more information see the *Environmental* chapter) Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) holds some other lands as conservation areas.

Municipal Land Use

The Town of Mount Desert itself does not own a large amount of land in the community. Northeast Harbor is the center of municipal activity, and includes the town offices, police station, marina/town landing, elementary school, fire station, public works garage, and public utilities.

Other town facilities are spread out in Seal Harbor (public utilities, town landing, fire station), Otter Creek (fire station), Somesville (fire station, public utilities), and Pretty Marsh Harbor (town landing).

Our town also owns a small number of open parcels of land held primarily for recreational purposes

Land Use Ordinance

Mount Desert enacted a Land Use Ordinance (LUZO) in March of 1978. The LUZO encompassed the whole township, regulating use of both shoreland and the interior. The current land use ordinance creates 14 zones and manages which type of land uses can occur in which zones.

Densities of development that are allowed in the zoning ordinance depend on a parcel's access to public utilities and proximity to a village, shoreline, and/or important natural resource.

Developable lots are allowed to be as small as 5,000 square feet in the heart of the town's villages, while the Shoreland Residential 5 zone requires a minimum of 5 acres for each developable lot (approximately 215,000 square feet).

The zoning scheme was structured throughout the community, primarily reflecting the development that had already occurred in the community, with future development directed to similar patterns.

In general, a list rating the allowable development from densest to least dense reads:

1. Northeast Harbor (both residential and commercial)
2. Seal Harbor and Somesville
3. Otter Creek
4. Hall Quarry
5. Pretty Marsh
6. Inland woodlands and conservation areas
7. Shoreland areas

Shoreland Commercial was designed to support commercial uses that are dependent on access to the water. The few parcels that are included in this zone are located in downtown Northeast Harbor, on Smallidge Point, at the northeast end of Somes Sound, and in Hall Quarry along Somes Sound.

The Resource Protection and Conservation Zones were designed to protect the natural character of the land. The Resource Protection Zone covers the wetlands adjacent to Ripple Pond and the headwaters of Babson Creek. Except for low impact recreation uses, no development is allowed in this zone. The Conservation Zone covers parcels around Somes Pond, Sargent Brook, Lower Hadlock Pond, and Little Harbor Brook. These areas can be developed on a conditional basis.

Shoreland Zoning Ordinance

Currently, Mount Desert's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance requires larger lots with greater amount of frontage than the State Shoreland Zoning minimums. The residential zones need a minimum of 250 feet of shore or lake frontage, and lot size requirements range from one to five acres. A small portion of the Town's shoreline is regulated under commercial shoreland zoning, with a minimum lot size of one acre with 100 feet of frontage. As adapted under the 1978 LUZO, the setback for structures on freshwater ponds is the same as tidal frontage at 75-feet. This varies from the State Shoreland Zoning minimums for great ponds that require a 100-foot setback, though a considerable portion of the development at the time was (and remains) within 100 feet of the water body, the exemption was considered appropriate with existing uses. Furthermore, this exception for less than the minimum setback is offset by greater (250 feet) width of frontage.

Key Issues

While the robust economy of the late 1990's and early 2000's generated an upturn of the Residential growth in the Town of Mount Desert, the activity has now slowed considerably to a level more consistent with the overall moderate growth patterns over the past three decades. Growth is expected to be manageable if it continues at this rate. As a relatively small island community, the town already possesses several strong natural restrictions on growth, such as limited land availability, roads to accommodate high rates of traffic or emergency

vehicles, and water and sewer treatment capacity. A significant amount of Mount Desert land already exists within Acadia National Park boundaries where future development is restricted. To best protect water resources, residents of the Town expressed preference for locating future commercial development in or adjacent the village centers. Residential development is best suited in those areas that are currently or potentially serviced by pubic sewer and water supplies. Development in other areas without pubic sewer and water supplies areas will require adequate measures to protect groundwater resources.

Mount Desert Land Use Districts, 2006		
Code	**Name**	**Description**
VC	Village Commercial	Village areas, accessible to public sewer, deemed appropriate primarily for commercial development.
SC	Shoreland Commercial	Areas allocated to marine activities which are dependent upon shore access.
VRI	Village Residential One	Village areas, with public sewer, deemed appropriate for intensive residential development.
VRII	Village Residential Two	Village areas on public sewer deemed suitable for development on lots not less than 20,000 square feet.
R1	Residential One	Areas where, because of the existing character of the neighborhood, lots of one acre are deemed appropriate.
R2	Residential Two	Areas where residential development, because of the existing character of the neighborhood or the characteristics of the land, shall be on lots of two acres or larger.
SR1	Shoreland Residential One	Areas in close proximity to water bodies, either partly or wholly within the State Mandated Shoreland Zone.
SR2	Shoreland Residential Two	
SR3	Shoreland Residential Three	
SR5	Shoreland Residential Five	
RW2	Rural or Woodland Two	Areas where retaining the rural or wooded character of the district is desired, and to allow uses consistent with this character. Minimum lot sizes shall be two or three acres as deemed appropriate.
RW3	Rural or Woodland Three	
RP	Resource Protection	Those land and water areas of natural character and importance, including flood plains as defined by the 100-year flood elevation, inland or coastal wetlands as defined in section 15, areas having unstable soils subject to slumping, mass movement or severe erosion, when these areas are two acres or more in size.
C	Conservation	Areas of natural character where the Planning Board on a case-by-case basis may permit limited use of low intensity with the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit.
Source: Town Records		

Land Use:
Future Use

In preparing the Future Land Use Plan, the Town has acquired a significant technical inventory and mapping of the existing conditions. Included in the Addenda are the following maps:

Base Map of Existing Land Divisions
Existing Land Divisions
Existing Zoning
Transportation & Public Infrastructure
Land Cover
Soils
Water & Marine Resources
Natural Resources
Development Patterns
Historical & Archaeological Resources
Build-out Scenario
Development Suitability

In addition to the above, the Town received materials and presentations provided by the "Beginning with Habitat" program and a case study for development suitability prepared by students at the College of the Atlantic.

Build-out Scenario

The Build-out map included in the Addend illustrates the potential development under our existing Land Use Zoning Ordinance, using the development patterns of the past 60 years and projected through 2035. This build-out scenario reflects the current zoning requirements for density, as well as factoring development limitations such as steep slopes, soils and wetlands, and lands where development is not legally permitted due to conservation easements or ownership by conservation and/or public entities.

As exhibited by the Build-Out Scenario, the Town has sufficient land area for the existing zoning regulations to accommodate the traditional growth patterns and the projected moderate growth patterns well into future.

Future Land Use Map

Included in the Addenda is a mapping exhibit of the Future Land Use Plan. The Plan delineates the areas designated for future growth and the rural areas more suitable for low-density development, and also reflects existing conservation and resource protection areas.

Growth District

Mount Desert's capacity for both business and residential growth is impacted by several factors:

- The community's need to protect water quality;
- Limited sewage infrastructure;
- Steep slopes unsuitable for growth;
- Limited transportation infrastructure; and
- Ordinance restrictions.

Recommended areas for growth lie primarily in the village areas of Northeast Harbor, Seal Harbor, Somesville, and Otter Creek proximate to existing public infrastructure, and include the existing areas zoned commercial. Also considered for growth are those areas proximate to the villages that is either currently served by public infrastructure or where future extension of our infrastructure appears physically and economically feasible. These areas are also included for potentially suitable for mixed-uses.

Rural District

The recommended areas for Rural Districts consists of the tidal and freshwater shorelines, the existing areas of Resource Protection, Resource Conservation, and Conservation, and the existing rural residential areas, including the eastern portions of Seal Harbor, Schoolhouse Ledge and the slope of Norumbega Mountain in Northeast Harbor, areas along Route #198, Hall Quarry, Beech Hill, and the rural areas west of Somesville village, and the entire western portion of the Town encompassing Pretty Marsh and Bartlett Island.

The following are synopses further explain each of the respective areas delineated by the Future Land Use Plan:

Village areas are those that traditionally have accommodated most of Mount Desert's population and most of its social and commercial activity. It includes established neighborhoods at high and medium densities, central business districts, and a mix of compatible uses and activities within walking distance or a very short drive of most village residents. Most of it is served by public sewer and/or water, or within areas to which these utilities could be easily extended. Most of the growth potential in these areas exists in the form of infill development, conversion, and adaptive reuse of buildings; however, there are a few areas where there would be potential for additional development. Future development should be in the form of mixed-use, as currently exists in these areas today.

Extended Village areas are those that will accommodate the preponderance of growth over the next decade. These areas can feasibly receive public sewer and water. They are areas within reasonable distances of the traditional village areas and the services the traditional villages provide. Uses in the extended village areas should include a mix of types of residential structure, and an additional housing unit should be allowed on a lot provided that the additional housing unit is workforce housing. Opportunities for commercial uses would be considered.

Rural Residential areas are those that may be free of multiple natural resource constraints, but are distinct from the village, and still have large tracts of unbroken land or retain their rural character. Residential buildings and other development should be compatible with this character, including extensive areas of field and woodlands. Density should be kept low.

Rural Resource areas are those of multiple natural resource constraints; and/or that are especially important for their long-term protection of water quality. Density in these areas should be kept low, and residential subdivisions should be required to be in the form of clustered housing.

SUMMARY

While the Town has sufficient land area under existing zoning to accommodate our projected growth, the Future Land Use Plan recognizes the impact of the existing zoning and seeks to manage the quality and function of future development through on-going review and adjustment of the Land Use Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance.

The Town zoning enacted in 1978 delineated the traditional village areas with the smallest lot size requirements to facilitate higher density development proximate to existing infrastructure, and delineated the rural areas with larger lots for low-density development. The Future Land Use Plan does not present dramatic changes to the current zoning delineations. It does, however, revise some land use areas, and introduces outlines better planning methods for guiding our growth in a manner that protects our resources.

As the intent of this Comprehensive Plan is to promote and sustain a diverse year-round community, the use and character of future growth is more significant than its location, though all growth must be managed to strengthen rather than erode the vitality of the Town.

Within the designated Growth Areas, subsequent revisions to the Land Use Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance should seek to provide housing opportunities for the year-round working community, and to promote compatible mixed-uses that strengthen the year-round economy. These revisions may include reconsideration to lot coverage requirements for in-fill, and for permitted uses. The Policy Development chapter of this Plan addresses these and other integral issues.

Within the designated Rural Areas, subsequent revisions to the Land Use Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance should also seek to provide housing opportunities for the year-round working community, and to promote compatible mixed-uses to strengthen the year-round economy, though with methods that preserves the rural character and natural environment. These revisions may include reconsideration and/or expansion of the cluster subdivision requirements, and developing improved standards for access, curb cuts, septic disposal and steep slopes. The Policy Development chapter of this Plan addresses these and other integral issues.

Capital Improvement Strategy

Capital Improvement Strategy

This capital improvement strategy is designed to assist the Town of Mound Desert in planning for the capital investments needed to service the projected growth and maintenance of services and facilities in our town.

Projected Growth

By 2005, our town had an estimated 2,184 year-round residents and an estimated peak summer seasonal population of 8,000. The year round population has been growing, but not as quickly as it has in the past. Growth rates of 3.5% to 26% were standards for each decade from the 1950s through the 1980s. (1950 population 1,115; 2000 population at 2,109 and 82% increase.) However, in the 1990s the growth rate slowed to 11%. The growth rate is projected to decline from 2000 through 2020 (town's population will total 1995 residents). Despite this population projection, a rate of residential housing growth is projected as the area attracts increasing numbers of seasonal property owners. The growth in our town has been robust in the last two decades; however this rate is not projected to continue for the next decade, as it is projected the Town will likely experience a modest population decline. The town depends on others within the region to provide service center services and the town will continue as a seasonal vocational community as we have been in the past.

Capital Improvement Planning Process

The Town of Mound Desert currently recognizes the importance of having a multi-year plan for its capital expenditures (any activity or purchase that exceeds $50,000 and has a life expectancy of greater than five (5) years). Examples of items that the Town has identified as Capital Improvement include fire trucks, public works equipment, road reconstruction, and other similar items. The Board of Selectmen and the Mount Desert Warrant Committee have adopted the concept of a five-year plan. The funding model of the five-year plan is exhibited herewith. Each year has the items identified by Department as anticipated needs. Each year the plan will be reviewed at staff level and new projections for the ensuing year will be made. The adoption of the concept by the Board of Selectmen and the Warrant Committee is not a commitment by either of those bodies to support the plan on a year-by-year basis but rather it is an endorsement of the planning and prioritization methodology. Furthermore, the action being requested of the Town Meeting vote does

not commit the Town to specific future action. The vote to endorse the proposed **Capital Improvement Plan** only states that the Town supports multi-year planning for large capital expenditures.

Capital Improvement Strategy

The Town of Mound Desert and other government entities have made several recent investments at several of their facilities to improve their effectiveness and to accommodate future growth. These include:

- Elementary school renovations
- Wastewater treatment plant closures and improvements, Otter Creek and Seal Harbor.
- Wastewater pump station construction and/or reconstruction Otter Creek, Somesville, Seal Harbor and Northeast Harbor
- Forced main sewer construction between Otter Creek and Seal Harbor
- Sewer and storm drain reconstruction in Northeast Harbor
- Transportation improvements to Route 102, Pretty Marsh Road, Ripples Road, Beech Hill Road and Sea Street
- Sidewalk improvements in Seal Harbor and Northeast Harbor
- Town Office renovations, roofing and siding replacement

The implementation of the goals, objectives, and strategies set forth in this Comprehensive Plan Update will require that the Town make investments in its infrastructure and facilities if it is going to continue to offer the same high level of facilities and services to the residents of the community. This section identifies the capital investments that will probably be necessary over the next ten years to accommodate the projected needs of the community.

- Wastewater treatment plants - located in Northeast Harbor and Somesville will require different levels of upgrades over the next two to four years. Each plant was constructed in the 1970's and has had varying degrees of work done to them in the ensuing years. Somesville has had only the bare minimum done to it to maintain its operations; Northeast Harbor substantially more.

- Housing expansion - in Somesville and development of Hall Quarry is placing added stress on groundwater as these areas rely on individual subsurface wastewater disposal systems and drilled or dug wells for potable water. Due to the nature of the soil and the bedrock conditions in the area, it is likely only a matter of time before these systems begin to fail leading to groundwater contamination and public health issues. Expanding the wastewater collection system to these un-served areas will reduce the possibility of wastewater related problems.

- Roadway Improvements – despite the roadway improvements that the Town has made, additional improvements remain in order to improve safety and the quality of travel for those individuals traveling in and through our Town. The Town will lobby and press the Maine Department of Transportation to improve and rehabilitate the major collector Route 3 corridor from Otter Creek to Northeast Harbor. The Town's financial obligation to these improvements is undetermined at this time.

- Public Works infrastructure – The Town's Highway Garage is 50 years old and has been cited as being inadequate and unsafe by our insurance carrier and Federal safety and environmental agencies. There is an identified need for a facility that provides a safe efficient workspace for our staff and storage for the millions of dollars of public works equipment and school department buses.

- Fire Department infrastructure – with the changing demographics of the Town it is likely we will be faced with a full-time paid department within the ten year window of this Comprehensive Plan. The current facilities are inadequate and unsuitable for a full-time paid fire department. Either expansion of the Town Office in Northeast Harbor or construction of a new more centrally located facility would be necessary to house a paid full-time department.

- Town Office infrastructure – administrative office space is at a premium as State and Federal mandated processes increase record storage requirements or staff. Police Department squad room and offices are undersized for modern law enforcement also suffering from State and Federal mandates.

- Northeast Harbor Marina – parking and other onshore components are inadequate to meet peak demand during our short but intense summer season. The adjacent pedestrian areas of the marina are also dated and present potential hazards to visitors to the facility. Our power supply to the slips is inadequate causing vessels to use on-board power generators to provide the necessary voltage.

- Seal Harbor Pier – the subsurface conditions of the access roadway and the parking area is unstable, having experienced a number of sinkholes in the last few years. The entire area requires drainage improvements, subgrade stabilization and subsequent repaving.

Project Name	Projected Cost	Reserve Balance	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
Wastewater Northeast	$2,500,000							$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$2,500,000
Harbor Plant Somesville	$1,900,000			$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000						$2,000,000
Plant Pump Station(s)	$1,000,000			$200,000		$200,000		$200,000		$200,000		$200,000	$1,000,000
Stormwater Separation	$3,000,000	$122,112		$300,000	$300,000	$300,000	$300,000	$300,000	$300,000	$300,000	$300,000	$300,000	$2,700,000
Sewer Line Extensions													
Somesville	$1,500,000							$500,000	$500,000	$500,000			$1,500,000
Hall Quarry	$1,500,000									$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$1,500,000
Route 3	$500,000					$250,000	$250,000						$500,000
Town Roads	$500,000	$114,517	$120,000	$120,000	$120,000	$120,000	$120,000	$120,000	$120,000	$120,000	$120,000	$120,000	$1,080,000
Highway Garage	$1,500,000				$500,000	$500,000	$500,000						$1,500,000
Fire Station (Rt. 3 Sound Dr.)	$1,500,000			$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000				$1,500,000
Police Station	$500,000							$250,000	$250,000				$500,000
Town Office Building Boiler Replacement	$80,000	$86,192	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$30,000	$215,000
PW Mobile Equipment	75000/yr	$319,916	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$675,000
Fire Equipment	$1,000,000	$389,065	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000	$675,000

Capital Improvement Reserve		$2,046,562											
Totals	$16,980,000	$3,078,363	$290,000	$1,540,000	$1,840,000	$2,290,000	$2,095,000	$2,295,000	$2,095,000	$2,295,000	$1,595,000	$1,800,000	$17,845,000
Non Tax Appropriation Northeast Harbor Marina	$2,500,000	$179,823	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000	$500,000						$2,000,000
Seal Harbor Pier.	$500,000	$174,943	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$450,000
Bartlett Dock	$200,000	$27,671	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$225,000
	$3,200,000	$382,437											

Civic Participation

This Comprehensive Plan Update has been developed over a period of over four years, and has demanded a significant commitment by the Comprehensive Plan Committee members, the other Town Boards and Committees, and the Town Staff, as well as the participation of residents and our neighbors. As achieving the goals and objectives set forth in this plan will require an ongoing commitment, maintaining and expanding the level of civic participation is paramount, and is perhaps the most important issue now facing the Town of Mount Desert. Accordingly, the Town must be proactive in fostering an environment that promotes greater civic participation. The following is an outline of suggested measures to increase civic participation:

- Ensure that the annual Town Meeting is well attended. The preparation of the meeting should anticipate the time constraints of many residents and maintains as manageable and efficient a Warrant as possible. The Town may need to consider dividing the Warrant articles over several evenings, or re-organizing the order of relevant articles.

- Actively seek to maintain decorum at all public meetings that are efficient, informative, and affords constructive input.

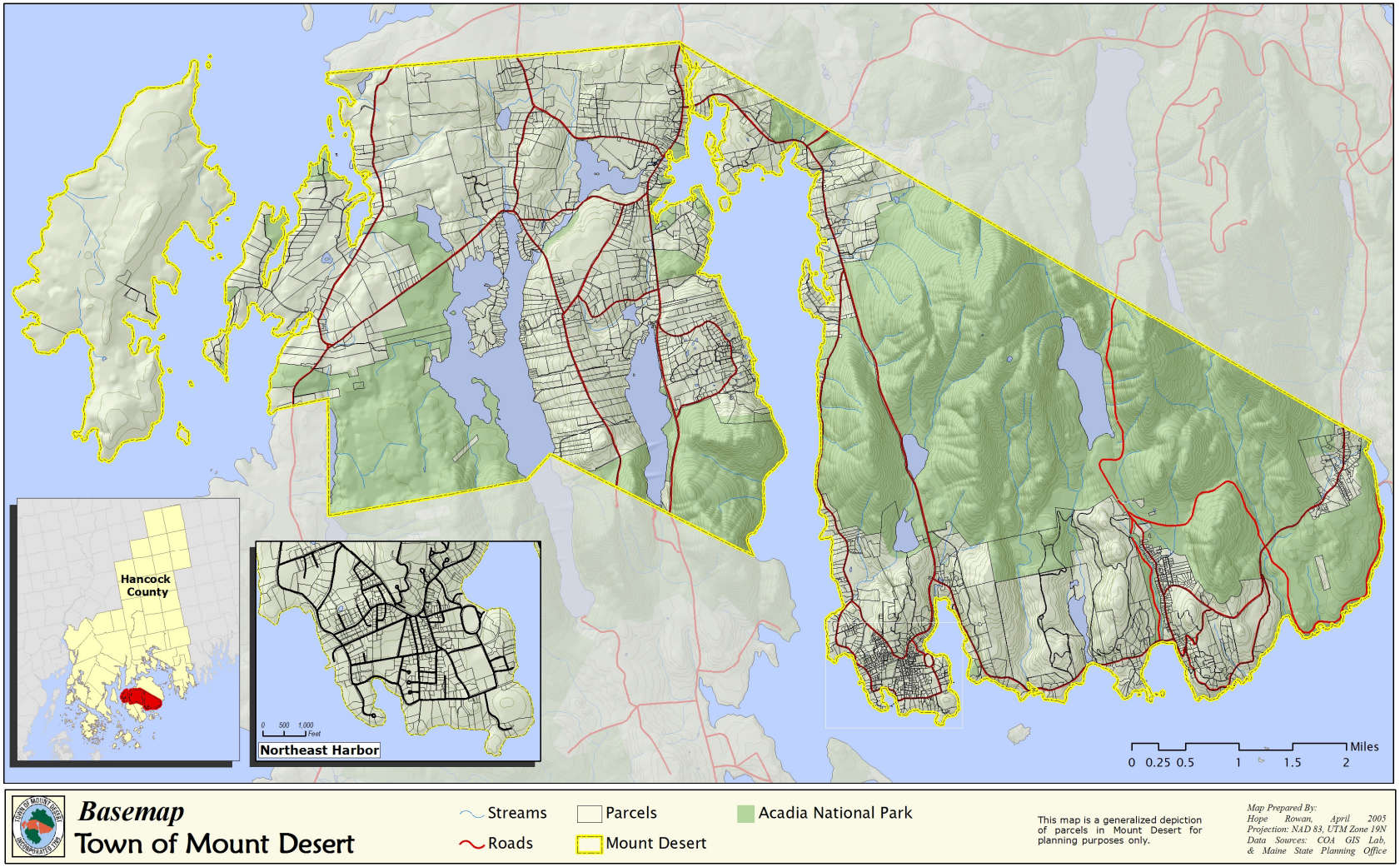
- Develop methods to enhance communication between Town Boards and Committees, Town Staff, and residents. Such methods could include greater exposure and increased utility of the Town's website and email technology, and implementing more liaisons positions between Boards and Committees.

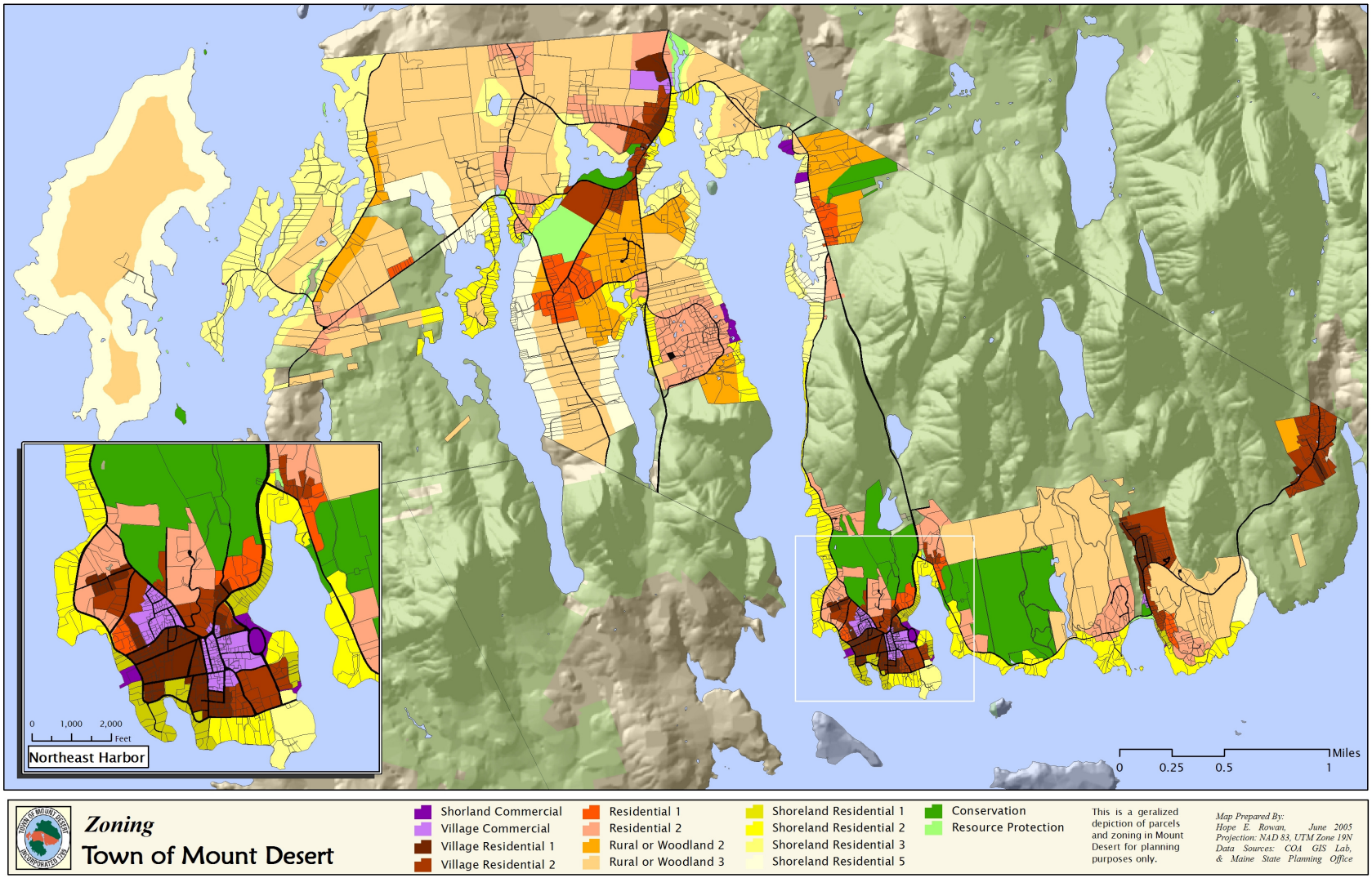
- Solicit participation from a broader range of age groups and interests. This could be achieved by organizing municipal or other relevant projects with the elementary school, high school, and Senior College, as well as groups such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church groups, Chamber of Commerce, and other local organizations. Organizing or co-sponsoring activities that have crossover interests with current municipal issues would provide exposure and/or opportunities for public input.

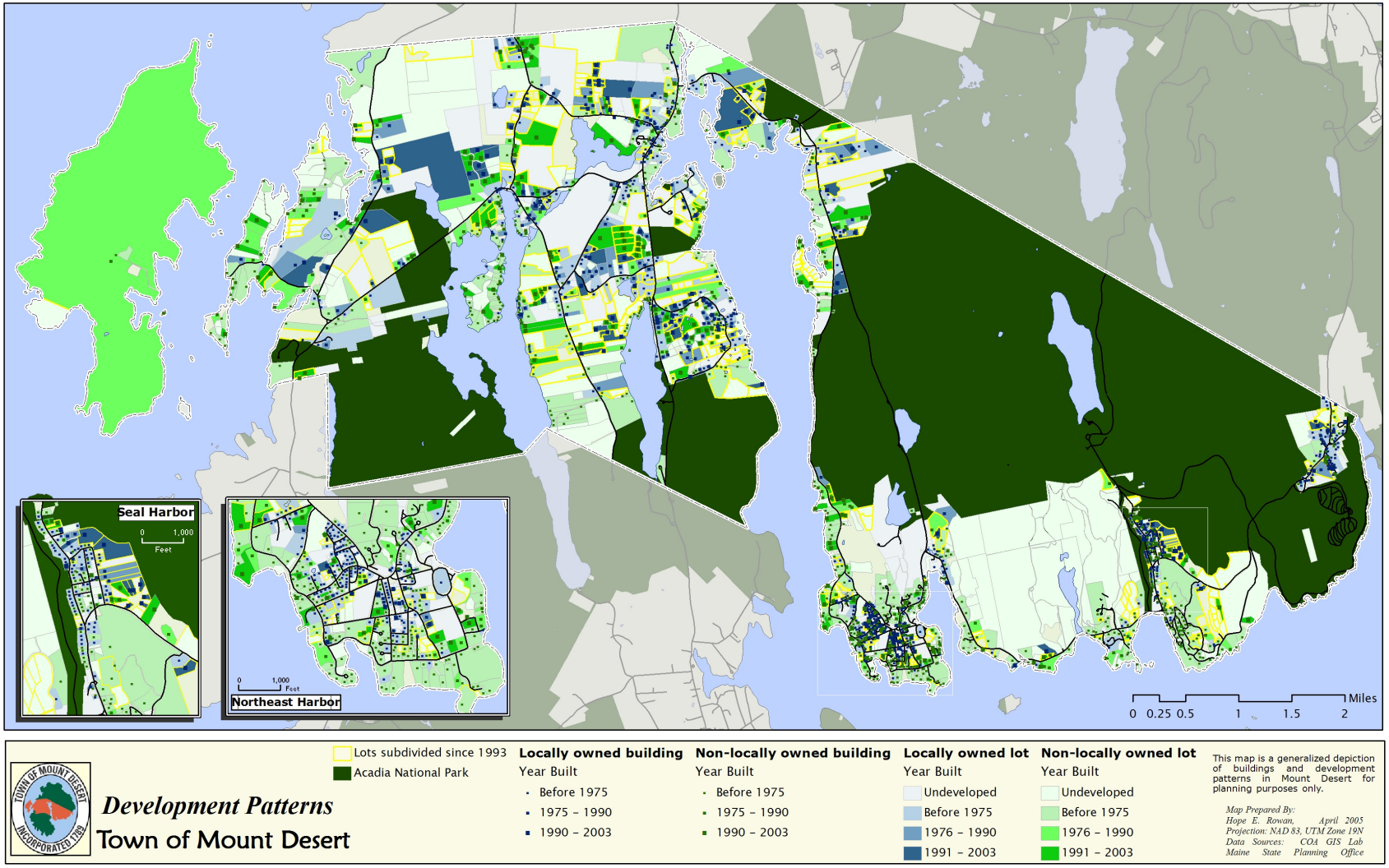
- Invest in existing Town facilities to increase their utility and our community pride. Refurbishing the meeting facilities at the Somesville and Seal Harbor meeting rooms with interiors that are more functional and comfortable, and with décor celebrating the Town's past and present could greatly enhance community participation. The interior décor need not be costly, and could be coordinated with the schools, scouts, and/or historical organizations as a community project.

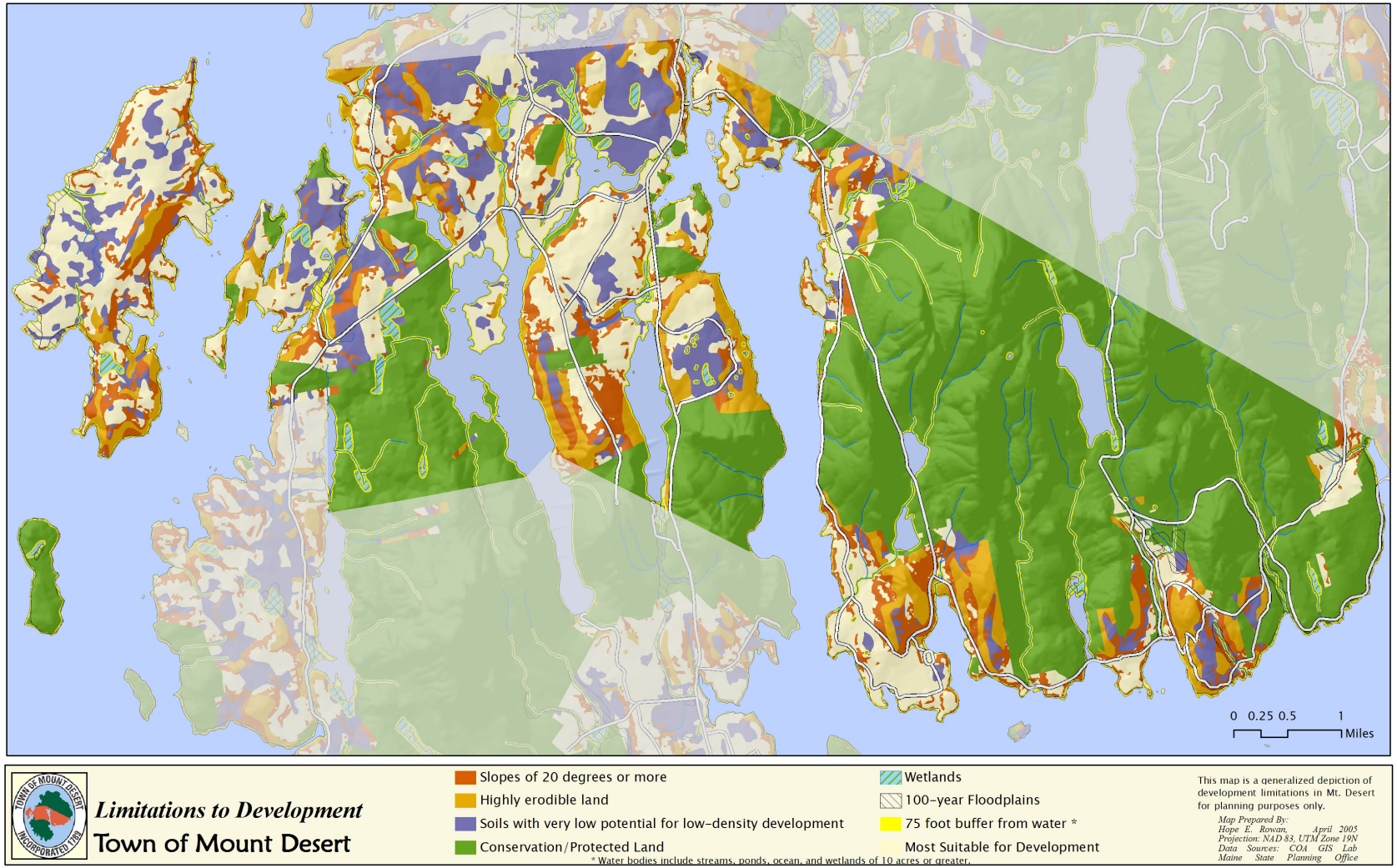
- Develop ways of meaningful recognition of volunteers, Town Staff, and civic participants. Also, the Town may consider reimbursement to public safety volunteers that forego wages or incur personal costs for training and/or equipment as a direct impact of their services.

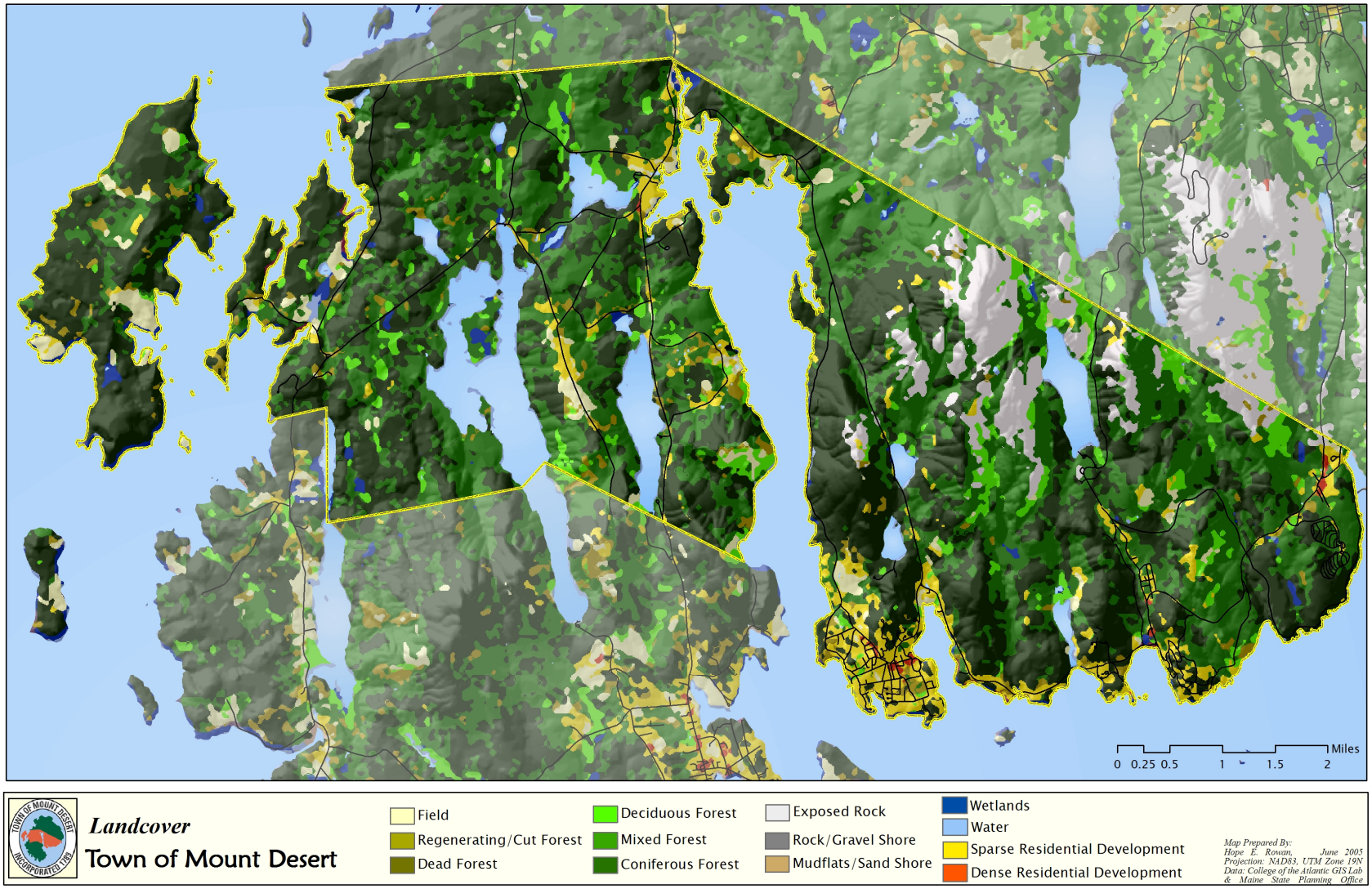
Maps

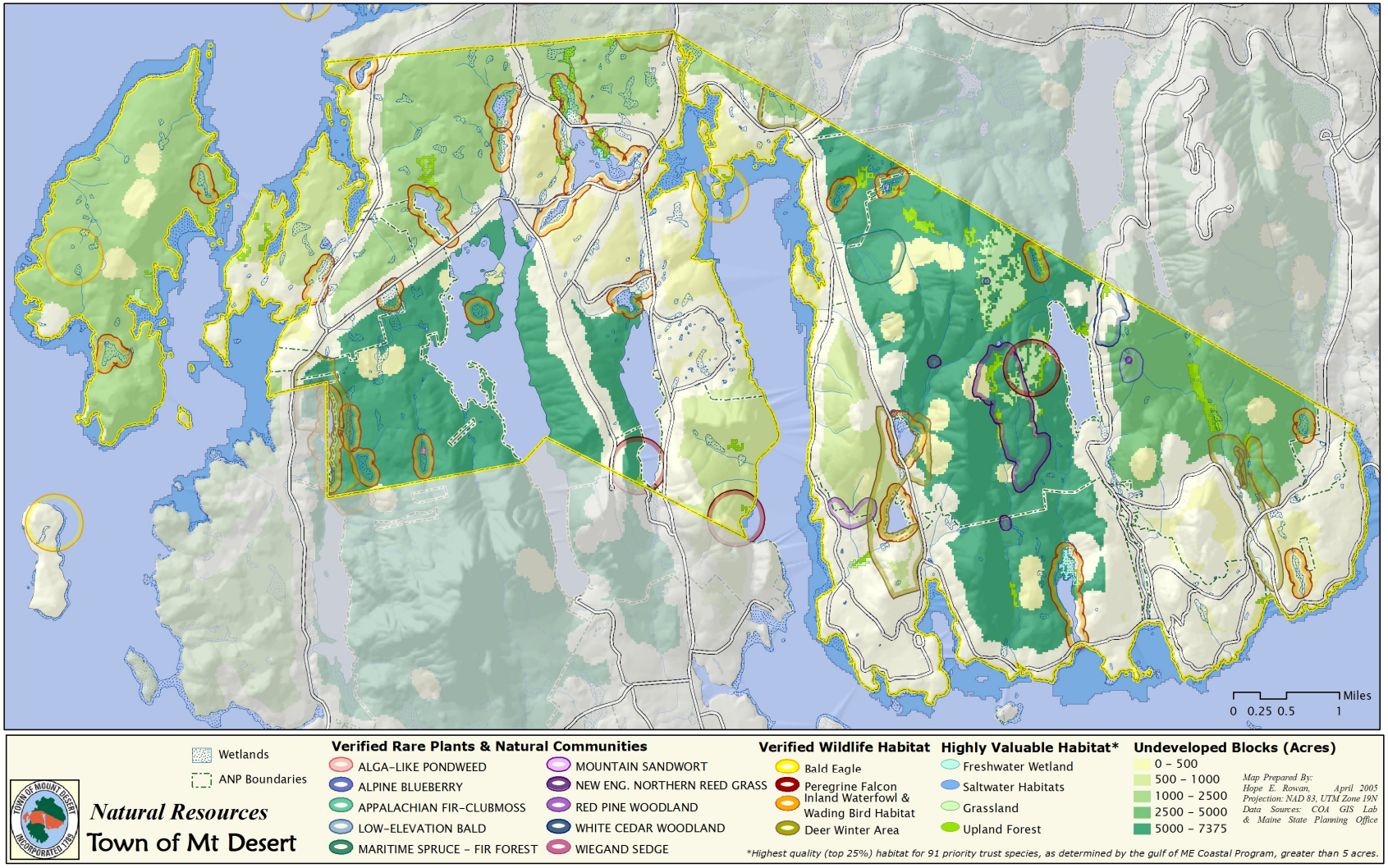

Hancock County
Northeast Harbor
0 500 1,000 Feet
Miles
0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2
Basemap
Town of Mount Desert
Streams
Roads
Parcels
Mount Desert
Acadia National Park
This map is a generalized depiction of parcels in Mount Desert for planning purposes only.
Map Prepared By:
Hope Rowan, April 2005
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab, & Maine State Planning Office

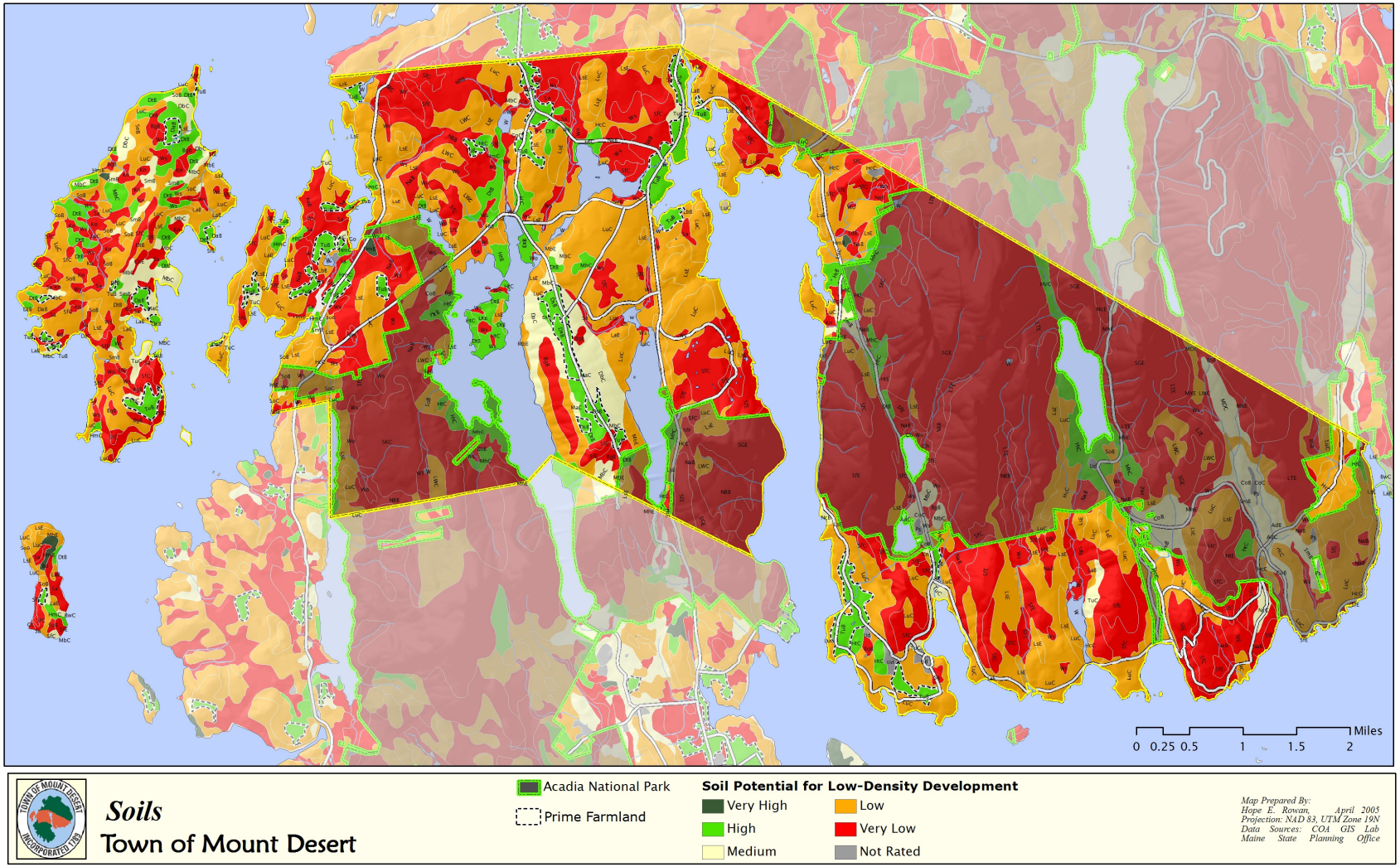

Northeast Harbor
0 1,000 2,000
Feet
0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles
Zoning
Town of Mount Desert
Shorland Commercial
Village Commercial
Village Residential 1
Village Residential 2
Residential 1
Residential 2
Rural or Woodland 2
Rural or Woodland 3
Shoreland Residential 1
Shoreland Residential 2
Shoreland Residential 3
Shoreland Residential 5
Conservation
Resource Protection
This is a geralized depiction of parcels and zoning in Mount Desert for planning purposes only.
Map Prepared By:
Hope E. Rowan, June 2005
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab, & Maine State Planning Office

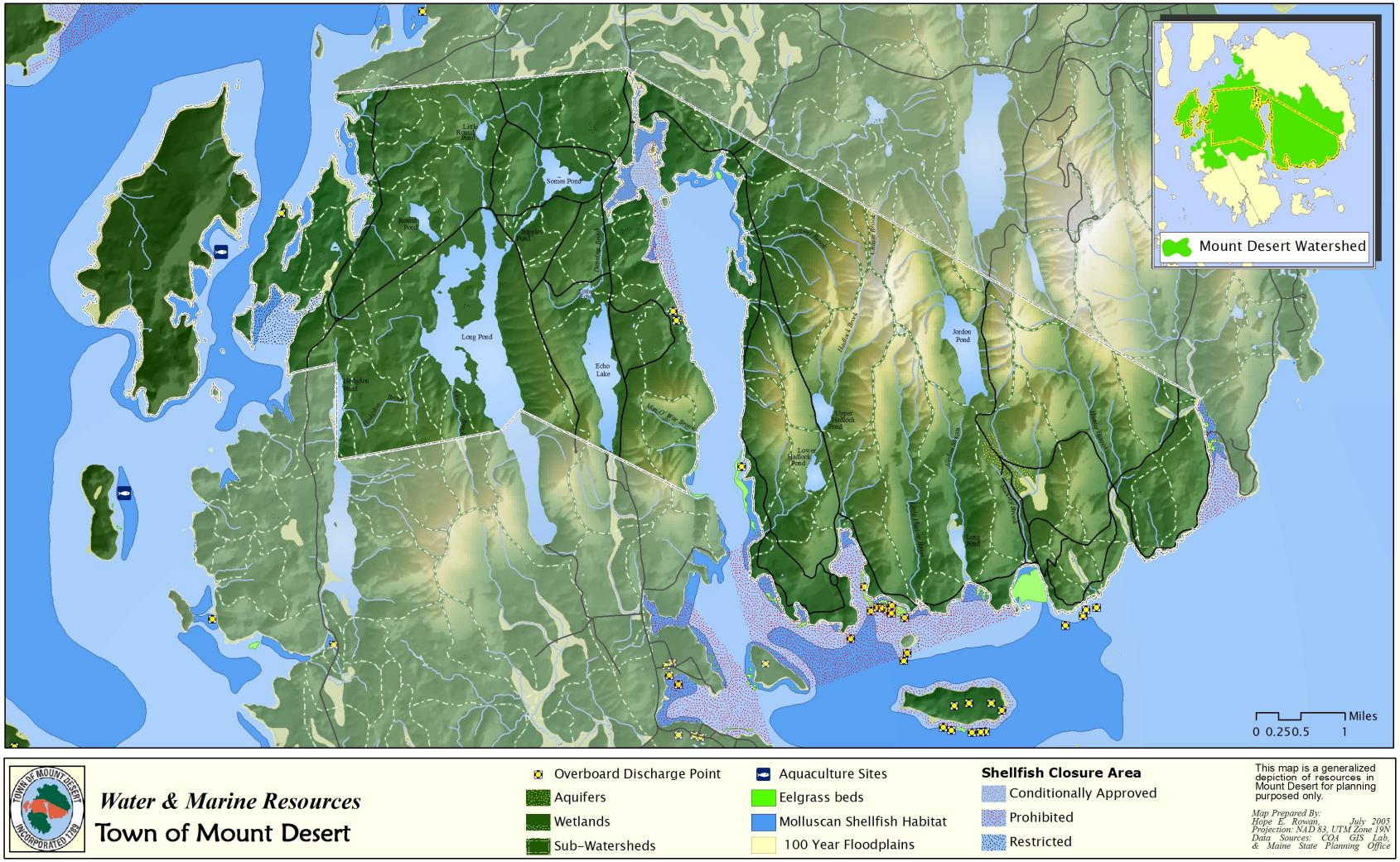

Seal Harbor
0 1,000 Feet
0 1,000 Feet
Northeast Harbor
Miles
0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2
Lots subdivided since 1993
Acadia National Park
Locally owned building
Year Built
Before 1975
1975 – 1990
1990 – 2003
Non-locally owned building
Year Built
Before 1975
1975 – 1990
1990 – 2003
Locally owned lot
Year Built
Undeveloped
Before 1975
1976 – 1990
1991 – 2003
Non-locally owned lot
Year Built
Undeveloped
Before 1975
1976 – 1990
1991 – 2003
This map is a generalized depiction of buildings and development patterns in Mount Desert for planning purposes only.
Map Prepared By:
Hope E. Rowan, April 2005
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab
Maine State Planning Office
Development Patterns
Town of Mount Desert

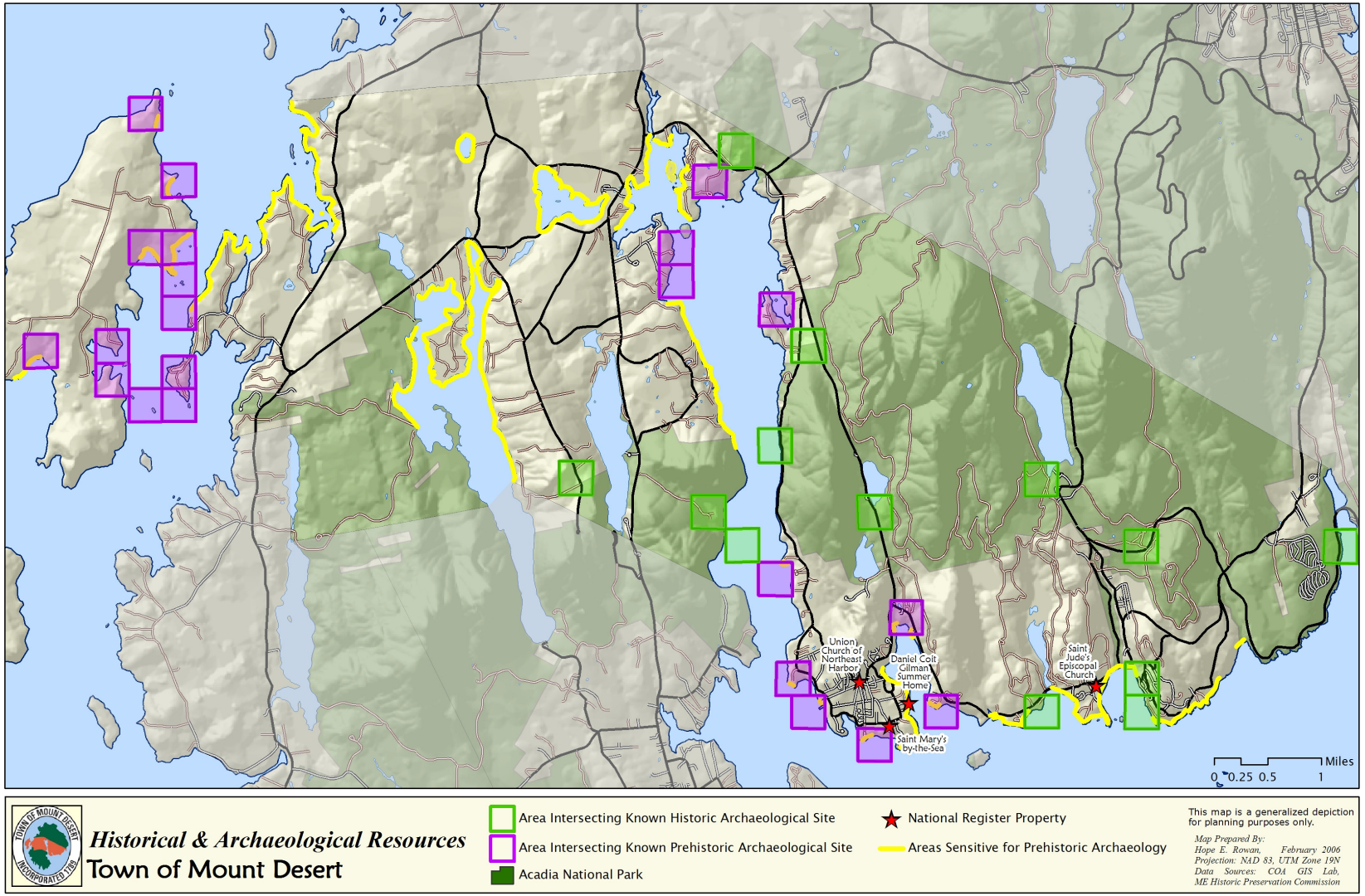

0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles
Limitations to Development
Town of Mount Desert
Slopes of 20 degrees or more
Highly erodible land
Soils with very low potential for low-density development
Conservation/Protected Land
Wetlands
100-year Floodplains
75 foot buffer from water *
Most Suitable for Development
* Water bodies include streams, ponds, ocean, and wetlands of 10 acres or greater.
This map is a generalized depiction of development limitations in Mt. Desert for planning purposes only.
Map Prepared By:
Hope E. Rowan, April 2005
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab
Maine State Planning Office

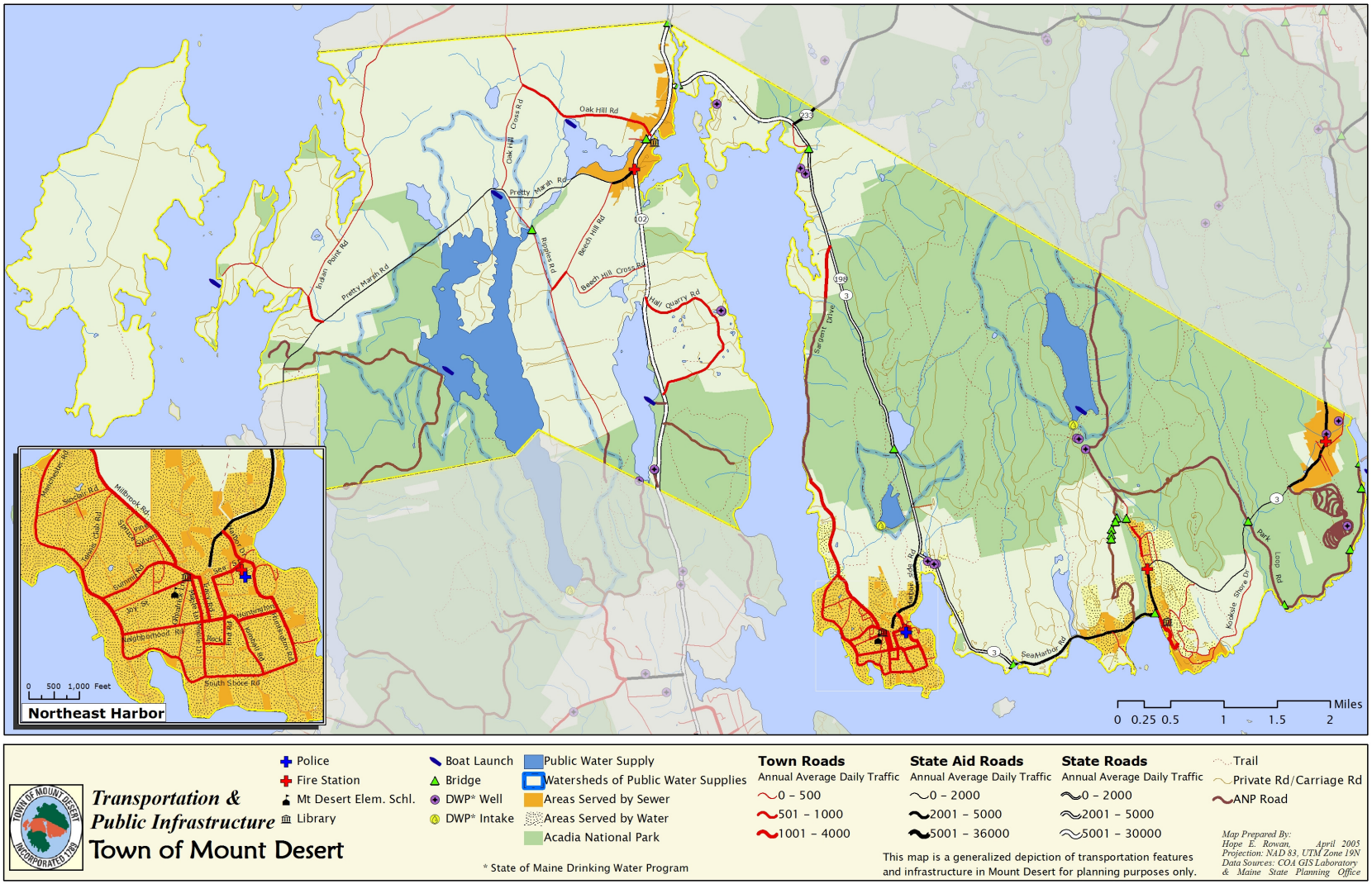

Miles
0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2
Landcover
Town of Mount Desert
Field
Regenerating/Cut Forest
Dead Forest
Deciduous Forest
Mixed Forest
Coniferous Forest
Exposed Rock
Rock/Gravel Shore
Mudflats/Sand Shore
Wetlands
Water
Sparse Residential Development
Dense Residential Development
Map Prepared By:
Hope E. Rowan, June 2005
Projection: NAD83, UTM Zone 19N
Data: College of the Atlantic GIS Lab & Maine State Planning Office

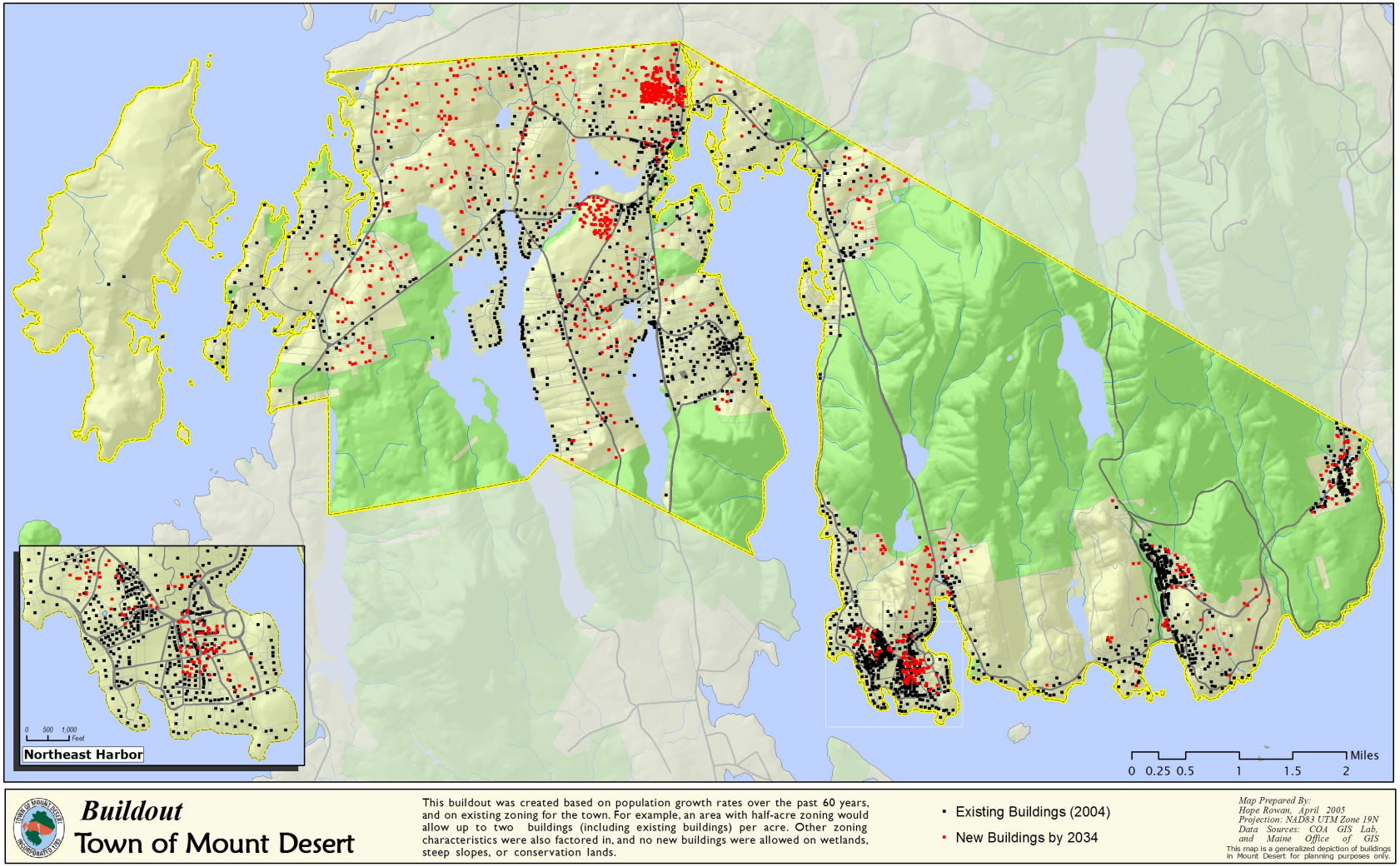

Miles
0 0.25 0.5 1
Wetlands
ANP Boundaries
Natural Resources
Town of Mt Desert
Verified Rare Plants & Natural Communities
ALGA-LIKE PONDWEED
ALPINE BLUEBERRY
APPALACHIAN FIR-CLUBMOSS
LOW-ELEVATION BALD
MARITIME SPRUCE - FIR FOREST
MOUNTAIN SANDWORT
NEW ENG. NORTHERN REED GRASS
RED PINE WOODLAND
WHITE CEDAR WOODLAND
WIEGAND SEDGE
Verified Wildlife Habitat
Bald Eagle
Peregrine Falcon
Inland Waterfowl & Wading Bird Habitat
Deer Winter Area
Highly Valuable Habitat*
Freshwater Wetland
Saltwater Habitats
Grassland
Upland Forest
Undeveloped Blocks (Acres)
0 - 500
500 - 1000
1000 - 2500
2500 - 5000
5000 - 7375
Map Prepared By:
Hope E. Rowan, April 2005
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab & Maine State Planning Office
*Highest quality (top 25%) habitat for 91 priority trust species, as determined by the gulf of ME Coastal Program, greater than 5 acres.


0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2
Miles
Soils
Town of Mount Desert
Acadia National Park
Prime Farmland
Soil Potential for Low-Density Development
Very High
High
Medium
Low
Very Low
Not Rated
Map Prepared By:
Hope E. Rowan, April 2005
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab
Maine State Planning Office


Mount Desert Watershed
Little Round Pond
Somes Pond
Round Pond
Eagle Lake
Long Pond
Echo Lake
Jordan Pond
Upper Hadlock Pond
Lower Hadlock Pond
Miles
0 0.250.5 1
Water & Marine Resources
Town of Mount Desert
Overboard Discharge Point
Aquifers
Wetlands
Sub-Watersheds
Aquaculture Sites
Eelgrass beds
Molluscan Shellfish Habitat
100 Year Floodplains
Shellfish Closure Area
Conditionally Approved
Prohibited
Restricted
This map is a generalized depiction of resources in Mount Desert for planning purposed only.
Map Prepared By: Hope E. Rowan, July 2005
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab, & Maine State Planning Office


Union Church of Northeast Harbor
Daniel Coit Gilman Summer Home
Saint Jude's Episcopal Church
Saint Mary's by-the-Sea
Miles
0 0.25 0.5 1
Historical & Archaeological Resources
Town of Mount Desert
Area Intersecting Known Historic Archaeological Site
Area Intersecting Known Prehistoric Archaeological Site
Acadia National Park
National Register Property
Areas Sensitive for Prehistoric Archaeology
This map is a generalized depiction for planning purposes only.
Map Prepared By:
Hope E. Rowan, February 2006
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab, ME Historic Preservation Commission


Oak Hill Rd
Oak Hill Cross Rd
Pretty Marsh Rd
Indian Point Rd
Ruggles Rd
Beech Hill Rd
Beech Hill Cross Rd
Hall Quarry Rd
Sargent Drive
Park Loop Rd
Seal Harbor Rd
Kebo Valley Rd
Northeast Harbor
Manchester Rd
Stocker Rd
Millbrook Rd
Summit Rd
Sky St
Neighborhood Rd
Sea St
Main St
Harbor Dr
Huntington Rd
South Shore Rd
0 500 1,000 Feet
0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles
Police
Fire Station
Mt Desert Elem. Schl.
Library
Boat Launch
Bridge
DWP* Well
DWP* Intake
Public Water Supply
Watersheds of Public Water Supplies
Areas Served by Sewer
Areas Served by Water
Acadia National Park
* State of Maine Drinking Water Program
Town Roads
Annual Average Daily Traffic
0 - 500
501 - 1000
1001 - 4000
State Aid Roads
Annual Average Daily Traffic
0 - 2000
2001 - 5000
5001 - 36000
State Roads
Annual Average Daily Traffic
0 - 2000
2001 - 5000
5001 - 30000
Trail
Private Rd/Carriage Rd
ANP Road
This map is a generalized depiction of transportation features and infrastructure in Mount Desert for planning purposes only.
Transportation & Public Infrastructure
Town of Mount Desert
Map Prepared By:
Hope E. Rowan, April 2005
Projection: NAD 83, UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Laboratory & Maine State Planning Office

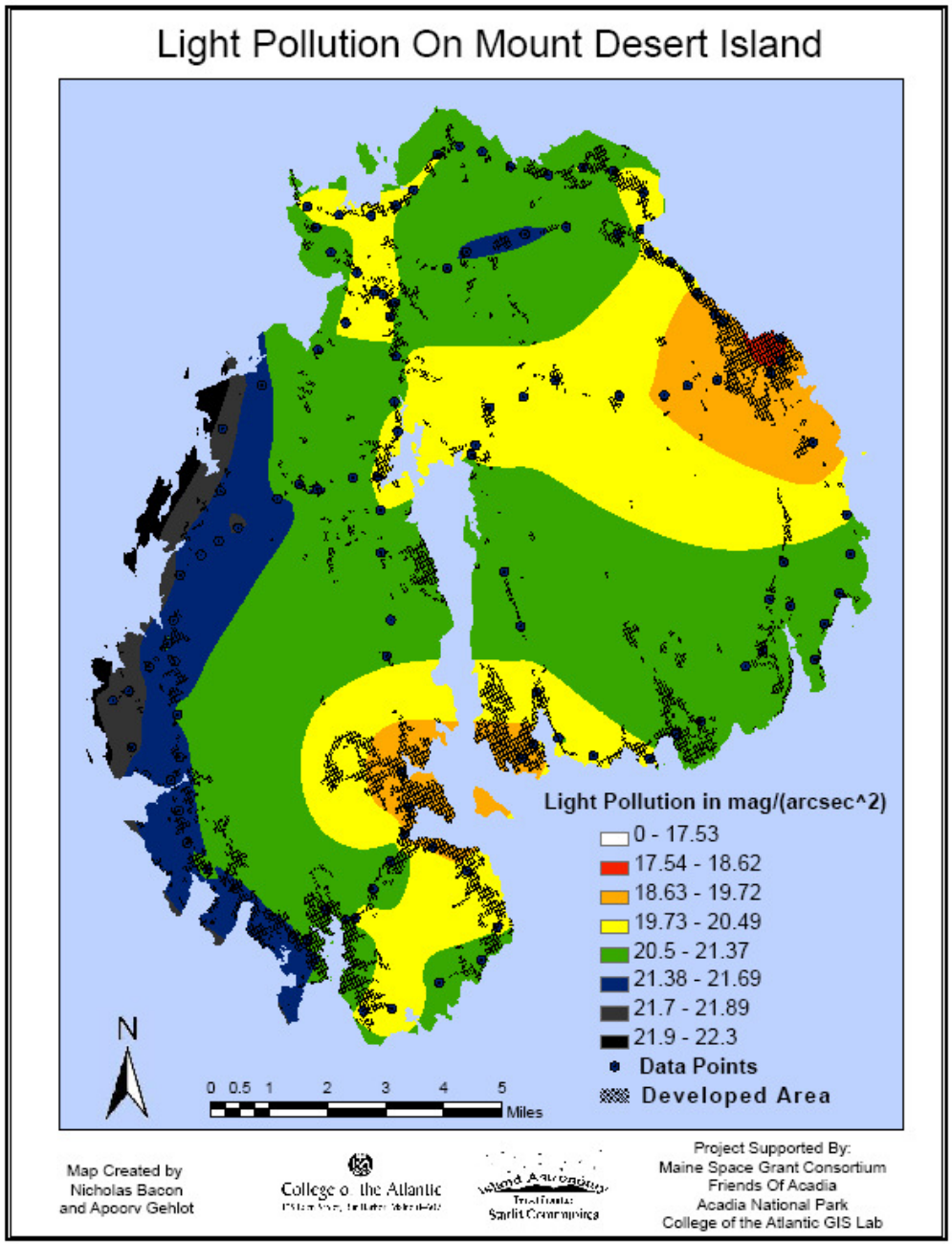


Buildout
Town of Mount Desert

This buildout was created based on population growth rates over the past 60 years, and on existing zoning for the town. For example, an area with half-acre zoning would allow up to two buildings (including existing buildings) per acre. Other zoning characteristics were also factored in, and no new buildings were allowed on wetlands, steep slopes, or conservation lands.

- Existing Buildings (2004)
- New Buildings by 2034

Map Prepared By:
Hope Rowan, April 2005
Projection: NAD83 UTM Zone 19N
Data Sources: COA GIS Lab, and Maine Office of GIS
This map is a generalized depiction of buildings in Mount Desert for planning purposes only.


Light Pollution On Mount Desert Island
Light Pollution in mag/(arcsec^2)
0 - 17.53
17.54 - 18.62
18.63 - 19.72
19.73 - 20.49
20.5 - 21.37
21.38 - 21.69
21.7 - 21.89
21.9 - 22.3
Data Points
Developed Area
N
0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5
Miles
Map Created by
Nicholas Bacon
and Apoorv Gehlot
College of the Atlantic
Project Supported By:
Maine Space Grant Consortium
Friends Of Acadia
Acadia National Park
College of the Atlantic GIS Lab

Appendices

Acknowledgements

As you all know, Mount Desert is a special place. The 2007 Mount Desert Comprehensive Plan is the result of years of work by Town Staff, various committee members, consultants, and many others throughout our immediate community and greater region. This project could not have been completed without our residents' overall patience and dedication for this ambitious effort.

A special thanks goes to our committed Comprehensive Planning Committee members, including:

Schofield Andrew, III
Robert Collins
Edith Dunham-Crowly
Sam Fox
Douglas Hopkins
Willie Granston
Cory Papadopoli
Brian Reilly
Lisa Renault
Sydney R. Rockefeller
Henry Schmelzer
Jerry Suminsby – Chair
Kathy Suminsby

The following organizations, businesses, and individuals provided special assistance at various times throughout the process:

Town of Mount Desert Staff
Planning Decisions, Inc.
Bobbie Williams
Hope Rowan
Savory Bay Environmental Planning and Project Management
College of the Atlantic
Mount Desert Island Housing Trust
Mount Desert Island Water Coalition
Mount Desert Island Tomorrow

As well, there were many community members who attended special meetings throughout the process to offer your vision for Mount Desert's future and provided ongoing feedback. Thanks for your involvement and commitment to our town.

Survey Results Referenced to Objectives

Objective 1. Increase the amount of housing available in Mount Desert that is more economically viable for the year-round working community.

Should the town encourage affordable housing?
YES 71%
NO 14%

Should ordinances be passed to encourage the following:

single family housing:	multi-family housing:	accessory dwellings:	mixed-use buildings:
YES 70%	YES 47%	YES 50%	YES 61%
NO 9%	NO 25%	NO 17%	NO 15%

How much of a priority should it be to expand housing stock that's affordable to the year-round workforce?*
VERY HIGH 56%
HIGH 26%
NEUTRAL 12%
LOW 4%
VERY LOW 1%

In order to expand housing stock that's affordable to the year-round workforce, would you support the following?*

	Incentives for landlords to rent year-round rather than seasonally	Modify zoning to allow combined retail, res., comm., uses in village buildings	Incentives for new development to include housing affordable to year-round workforce	Modify zoning to allow more multi-family housing, apts.	Provide housing for purchase/rent that is affordable to YR workforce through non-profit org.
STRONGLY SUPPORT	52%	37%	61%	33%	53%

SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	34%	32%	20%	29%	27%
NEUTRAL	10%	24%	15%	17%	12%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	2%	4%	2%	10%	5%
STRONGLY AGAINST	*2%*	*2%*	*2%*	*10%*	*2%*

Objective 2. Ensure that new residential development is compatible with the integrity and qualities of Mount Desert.

Which type of zoning do you prefer?

CURRENT	23%
CLUSTER	69%
BOTH	1%

As Mount Desert grows, where would you prefer to see residential development?

ANYWHERE	41%
DESIGNATED AREAS	31%
VILLAGE CENTERS	11%
VILLAGE & DESIGNATED AREAS	5%
NOWHERE	3%

Do you support the development of Town ordinances or other measures to protect the following?

	Forest Land:	Wildlife habitat:	Wetlands:	Scenic Views:	Open Space:
ORDINANCE	30%	35%	42%	37%	29%
PRIVATE	21%	19%	11%	13%	19%
BOTH	21%	21%	19%	20%	23%
NEITHER	7%	6%	6%	6%	7%

*To protect open space and environmental quality of land resources, would you support the following?**

	Encourage new subdivisions to have high-density on part of land, leave rest undeveloped	Strengthen ordinances to protect natural resources	Modify zoning to allow smaller lots, higher density
STRONGLY SUPPORT	26%	46%	24%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	36%	23%	25%
NEUTRAL	20%	25%	13%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	8%	4%	16%
STRONGLY AGAINST	*7%*	*3%*	*20%*

Objective 3. Improve the design, quality and type of safe connections (rights-of-way, trails, sidewalks, bike paths) between our town's villages, neighborhoods, and subdivisions, in a way that promotes physical activity as a part of daily life.

How much of a priority should it be to encouraging walking and biking?*

VERY HIGH	22%
HIGH	34%
NEUTRAL	31%
LOW	3%
VERY LOW	9%

To encourage walking and biking, would you support requiring new developments to include walking paths, bike paths or sidewalks?*

STRONGLY SUPPORT	43%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	26%
NEUTRAL	22%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	1%
STRONGLY AGAINST	5%

Objective 4. Maintain the safety and quality of Mount Desert's road network.

Do you feel summer traffic is a problem:

YES 78%

NO 12%

Objective 5. Work with surrounding communities to decrease the burden on Mount Desert's transportation network.

*How much of a priority should it be to reduce automobile congestion during the summer months?**

VERY HIGH 35%
HIGH 47%
NEUTRAL 15%
LOW 2%
VERY LOW 3%

*To reduce automobile congestion during the summer months, would you support the following?**

	Increase amount of Island Explorer service in summer:	*Establish parking facility in Trenton with bus service to villages:*	*Provide incentives to encourage carpooling*
STRONGLY SUPPORT	68%	46%	23%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	17%	25%	33%
NEUTRAL	14%	18%	31%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	0%	7%	3%
STRONGLY AGAINST	*1%*	*3%*	*4%*

*To promote a year-round economy, would you support the following?**

	Provide commuter Bus-service year-round	Modify zoning to reduce required parking spaces for in-town businesses
STRONGLY SUPPORT	50%	11%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	28%	14%
NEUTRAL	17%	30%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	2%	15%
STRONGLY AGAINST	*3%*	*21%*

Objective 6. Use Transportation Planning as a tool to manage new growth.

*To encourage walking and biking, would you support modifying zoning regulations to allow for fewer automobile parking spaces and more bicycle parking facilities?**

STRONGLY SUPPORT	7%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	10%
NEUTRAL	37%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	22%
STRONGLY AGAINST	*20%*

Objective 8. Support efforts to provide more year-round and higher-paying employment options for residents that will sustain a viable year-round community, particularly those supporting home-based businesses and occupations.

*How much of a priority should it be to promote a year-round economy?**

VERY HIGH	53%
HIGH	34%
NEUTRAL	10%
LOW	3%
VERY LOW	*0%*

If Verizon or Adelphia offered DSL high-speed internet service, would you be interested?

	Verizon:	*Adelphia:*
YES	*60%*	*50%*
NO	*40%*	*50%*

Objective 9. Ensure that non-residential development is of a high quality and that it minimizes its impact on existing neighborhoods, the environment, and the community as a whole.

As Mount Desert grows, where would you prefer to see commercial development?

ANYWHERE	*9%*
DESIGNATED AREAS	*28%*
VILLAGE CENTERS	*41%*
VILLAGES & DESIGNATED AREAS	*5%*
NOWHERE	*6%*

Objective 11. Promote efficiency in and encourage expansion of public services and utilities in order to manage growth.

*To protect open space and environmental quality of land resources, would you support encouraging residential development on existing water and sewer?**

STRONGLY SUPPORT	40%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	36%
NEUTRAL	17%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	3%
STRONGLY AGAINST	*3%*

Are you in favor of expanding the existing sewer system?

YES	*29%*
NO	*30%*
UNDECIDED	*33%*

Objective 17. Ensure preservation of the working waterfront by ensuring preservation of commercial fishing and other water-dependent commercial uses.

*How much of a priority should it be to promote marine industries and fisheries as part of a working waterfront?**

VERY HIGH	36%
HIGH	39%
NEUTRAL	19%

LOW 4%
VERY LOW 2%

*To promote marine industries and fisheries as a part of a working waterfront, would you support traditional shorefront businesses -- such as fishing, lobstering, and boat building – by modifying zoning regulations and property tax policies?**

STRONGLY SUPPORT 57%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT 24%
NEUTRAL 14%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST 3%
STRONGLY AGAINST 2%

Objective 18. Work to protect the quality of our town's freshwater and saltwater resources.

Do you support the development of Town ordinances or other measures to protect the following?

	Aquifers (drinking water):	Lakes & Ponds:
ORDINANCE	56%	45%
PRIVATE	5%	9%
BOTH	15%	21%
NEITHER	*3%*	*4%*

Objective 19. Improve our town's organizational ability to preserve important natural areas.

Objective 20. Work to protect and preserve the distinctive peace, tranquility, and integrity of the community.

Objective 21. Promote the preservation of natural areas, scenic resources, and undeveloped land.

Do you support the development of Town ordinances or other measures to protect the following?

	Forest Land:	Wildlife habitat:	Wetlands:	Scenic Views:	Open Space:
ORDINANCE	30%	35%	42%	37%	29%
PRIVATE	21%	19%	11%	13%	19%
BOTH	21%	21%	19%	20%	23%
NEITHER	*7%*	*6%*	*6%*	*6%*	*7%*

*How much of a priority should it be to protect open space and environmental quality of land resources?**

VERY HIGH	*47%*
HIGH	*28%*
NEUTRAL	*18%*
LOW	*2%*
VERY LOW	*5%*

*To protect open space and environmental quality of land resources, would you support strengthening ordinances to protect wetlands, watersheds, and wildlife habitat?**

STRONGLY SUPPORT	46%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	23%
NEUTRAL	25%
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	4%
STRONGLY AGAINST	*3%*

Objective 22. Promote the economic viability of working farms and forests. Working farms and forests are our town's best means of maintaining the character of our rural areas.

Do you support the development of Town ordinances or other measures to protect agricultural land?

ORDINANCE	*23%*
PRIVATE	*24%*
BOTH	*20%*
NEITHER	*8%*

Objective 23. Promote easy access to a local food supply, including fruits, vegetables, and seafood.

*How much of a priority should it be to promote agriculture & local foods?**

VERY HIGH	20%
HIGH	37%
NEUTRAL	30%
LOW	11%
VERY LOW	*2%*

*To promote agriculture and local foods, would you support expanding year-round outlets for locally grown, caught, or processed foods?**

STRONGLY SUPPORT	*48%*
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	*27%*
NEUTRAL	*23%*

SOMEWHAT AGAINST	*0%*
STRONGLY AGAINST	*0%*

*To promote healthy growth and social development of DI area youth, would you support increasing healthy food choices in schools to reduce childhood obesity?**

STRONGLY SUPPORT	*60%*
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	*28%*
NEUTRAL	*10%*
SOMEWHAT AGAINST	*1%*
STRONGLY AGAINST	*1%*

---

*MDI Tomorrow survey results from year-round Mount Desert residents, conducted by the Department of Resource Economics and Policy at the University of Maine for MDI Tomorrow – a resident's forum on the future of the MDI area and its communities.

All other data from the Mount Desert 2003 Comprehensive Plan Survey, sent to Mount Desert voters and taxpayers.

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