

CHAPTER 4

THE COMPREHENSIVE, ACTION PLAN

Issue Statements, Planning Implications, and Actions

4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

The specific details of Bath's demographic profile that underscore these Issue Statements, Planning Implications, and Actions are discussed at length in Appendix A, Demographics Inventory. All Issues have a corresponding inventory appendix that provides additional background material.

Issue Statement

It is important that Bath have a mix of ages, income levels, and ethnic groups. This mix contributes to the community energy, friendliness, and the overall sense of community.

Planning Implications of the Demographic Inventory

- Bath's population has remained relatively unchanged (except for a large temporary increase in 1920) for the last 100 years, hovering just above or just below 10,000 people. It has been declining since 1980, and this decline is forecast to continue into the near future.
- Surrounding towns have grown in population. In some cases, this growth has been substantial, at least in percentage terms.
- Bath's population decline is due to a combination of various factors:
 - o a relatively small land area
 - o higher tax rate compared to neighboring rural towns
 - o relatively high population density in the built-up portions of the City
 - o decreasing household size
- A key trend that affects demand for housing, community facilities, and services such as schools is the aging of Bath's population.
- Trends show that, percentage-wise, Bath is growing significantly in the 45- to 64-year-old age groups and losing population in the under-45-year-old age groups.
- Based on recent trends, the number of school-aged children (ages 5-17) is predicted to decline in the future. This trend can strain the maintenance of enrollment levels in public schools and the levels of public services for senior citizens in later years.
- Data from the 2000 U.S. Census (i.e., 1999 income data) show that the City of Bath lags behind the remainder of the Bath Region in family

income and has a larger percentage of families living below the poverty level. Bath also has a relatively high percentage of family households headed by single mothers with children under the age of eighteen. These factors strain the families as well as many of the City's public services.

Actions

Readers may notice that several actions are repeated in different Issue sections. This repetition underlines the connections among different perspectives, problems, and possibilities within the City. Planners are fond of saying that "everything is connected to everything else." Also, after each Action is text that designates the person or group responsible for undertaking the Action and the time frame.

- Encourage housing development different than what exists: for example, housing attractive to young professionals, loft space, and senior housing, and allow and encourage mixed-use, mixed-income, and mixed-age housing developments. Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010. Community Development Office – ongoing.
- Continue renter-to-owner programs. Community Development Office – Ongoing.
- Develop a children's park, with young-family-friendly amenities. The City's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)– 2014.
- Improve neighborhoods, including urban neighborhoods, by improving infrastructure, utilities, and the public realm. Provide incentives to landowners who help preserve or increase a sense of neighborhood. CIP, Community Development Office – Ongoing.
- Support Community Policing. Police Chief, City Council – Ongoing.

4.2 ECONOMY

State Goal

- Promote an economic climate, which increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.

Issue Statements

- Bath's arts, crafts, and cultural resources contribute to our cultural enjoyment and are both regional and local economic resources. The non-profit (i.e., nongovernmental) organizations such as Sagadahoc Preservation, Bath Historical Society, Main Street Bath, Chocolate Church Arts Center, Bath Area Family YMCA, Skate Park, Maine Maritime Museum, Elmhurst, and Patten Free Library add much to the

community. In addition, Patten Free Library is a regionally important cultural and educational resource. The Maine Maritime Museum is an important educational resource in addition to being an economic resource for the City.

- Community celebrations in Bath, such as Heritage Days, help make Bath a great place in which to live.
- The City's geographic location—close to the coast so we don't have the extremes of weather that more inland locations have, within an hour's drive to Augusta and Portland, and an easy drive to Reid and Popham Beach State Parks—helps make Bath an enjoyable and convenient place in which to live and is an economic asset.
- The tax base provided by Bath's major taxpayers helps keep taxes lower for residential property owners. However, the City's over-dependence on BIW and BIW's future—and the belief on the part of City government (especially in the past during times of BIW's prosperity) that diversifying the local economy was neither possible nor necessary—could place the City's future prosperity at risk.
- The City's historic downtown—its walkability, vitality, and the “nonfranchise” stores that cater to local needs, including both a locally owned supermarket and drugstore—make Bath unique and is important to both our sense of place and our economy.

Planning Implications of the Economy Inventory

- For many industry categories, the percentages of state-resident workers, regional-resident workers, and Bath-resident workers are similar. Bath had a high percentage of resident workers in manufacturing in 1990; although the percentage dropped in 2000, it was still higher than the region and the state
- The major employer in Bath is also one of the state's largest private employers and is the State's largest manufacturer—BIW. Other employers in Bath are considered small- or medium-sized. Bath and the Bath Region are dependent on BIW for jobs.
- Bath, because of the large employment at BIW, has a high jobs-to-worker ratio. In fact, there is 2.5 times the number of jobs in Bath as there are Bath-resident workers.
- Although Bath-resident workers earn wages higher than the Sagadahoc County and state averages, the non-wage sources of income (e.g.,

retirement accounts, pensions, and social security) are below the county and state per-capita averages.

- Home-based businesses are where many larger businesses get their start. Bath is flexible when it comes to starting a business in a residential area, provided the business does not negatively impact the residential quality of the neighborhood.
- The unemployment rate in Bath has consistently been below the state average, even with layoffs that have occurred at BIW.
- Many retail sectors in Bath show moderate to high weakness compared to the state and the neighboring, competing communities of Topsham and Brunswick. Overall, Bath's taxable retail sales per capita are 32 percent lower than the state average. The aspects of the retail market showing the most promise are "niche" sales that appeal to the tourism market, consumer goods that may appeal to higher quality and/or a higher level of customer service, and the restaurant category. By focusing on various specialty goods and other niche markets and by offering high levels of service, Bath retailers are distinct from the malls and "big box" retailers. Also, there would be value in marketing the downtown as an attractive destination (including restaurants and specialty shops) such that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- The multiplier or spin-off effects of further downsizing at BIW coupled with the decision to close Brunswick Naval Air Station (BNAS) in 2011 potentially bodes poorly for the regional economy without active programs to diversify and reduce dependency on the defense industry.
- It is important that Bath's economic-development activities focus on job-creation types of businesses.
- The report by the Maine State Planning Office (SPO) on the impacts of the closure of the BNAS states, "redevelopment efforts must be cognizant of prevailing market forces. In particular, on- and off-base redevelopment plans should capitalize on the unique strengths and assets of the mid-coast economy."
- The report titled *Measures of Growth 2007*, written for the Maine Economic Growth Council, reminds us that "in order for societies to thrive, they must focus investment in their people [this means education] as well as in cutting-edge technology."

Actions

- **Encourage non-profits and for-profits to continue mutually supporting one another.** City's Community Relations Coordinator – Ongoing.
- **Use the Internet to publicize a city calendar and directory of cultural events, including Main Street Bath, City of Bath, and other web sites.** City's Community Relations Coordinator, Main Street Bath – Ongoing.
- **Continue to host and/or support Community Involvement Day and other events and annual celebrations (e.g., Heritage Days and Autumnfest) that "celebrate" community and neighborhoods. Make sure these are well organized, supported, and publicized.** City's Community Relations Coordinator, Community Development Office – Ongoing.
- **Encourage local artists to participate in the Five Rivers Arts Alliance with open studio days.** City's Community Relations Coordinator – Ongoing.
- **Erect new outdoor directories, which include transportation schedules, at:**
 - o **Community College**
 - o **Bath Shopping Center**
 - o **Front & Elm Streets**
 - o **Maine Maritime Museum.** CIP – Ongoing.
- **Prepare an economic development plan that includes contingency planning for the possibility of BIW shrinking or closing, a clear and concise business-attraction and business-retention process, a staff "go-to" contact, and an economic development committee if appropriate.** City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Community Development Director, Planning Director – 2011.
- **Expand Wing Farm in Bath, develop incubator industrial space, and pursue high-tech companies. Wing Farm's expansion should be included in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), with funding through the 2008 BIW-Wing Farm Tax Increment Financing (TIF). (The Wing Farm expansion is also a high priority project on the Midcoast Economic Development District's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.)** City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Finance Director, Planning Director - 2011.
- **Work with regional development agencies to promote the regional economy.** City Manager, Assistant City Manager - Ongoing.
- **Develop links between the Community College and existing and new businesses.** City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Planning Director – 2010.
- **Include geographical information in the City's promotional materials, emphasizing Bath as a multimodal transportation hub.** City's Community Relations Coordinator, Main Street Bath – Ongoing.

- Encourage cultural tourism on a year-round basis and work with the City's accommodations industry to promote elder-hostel programs. City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Planning Director - Ongoing.
- Promote City, region, and individual agriculture. Establish a permanent indoor farmers market, organize a program of community-supported agriculture, and develop community gardens. City's Community Relations Coordinator, Community Development Office, Planning Office, Parks and Recreation Director - 2010.

4.3 CULTURAL AND NONGOVERNMENTAL RESOURCES

Issue Statement

Bath's arts, crafts, and cultural resources are both regional and local economic resources and contribute to our cultural enjoyment. The Patten Free Library is important to the Bath Region as a cultural and educational resource. The Maine Maritime Museum is an important economic resource for the City. Non-profit (i.e., nongovernmental) organizations such as Sagadahoc Preservation, Inc; Bath Historical Society, Main Street Bath, Chocolate Church Arts Center, Maine Maritime Museum, Elmhurst, and Patten Free Library add much to the community. Community celebrations such as Heritage Days help make Bath a great place in which to live.

Planning Implications of Cultural and Nongovernmental Resources Inventory

- Review of this inventory reveals that many organizations, both cultural and social service, are regional in scope. It is apparent that the population needed to support each effort—whether as participants, volunteers, or financial donors—is achieved by grouping several towns together. Also, the traffic patterns of Southern Midcoast Maine residents usually include several area towns, resulting in the natural outcome of regional groupings.
- Communication is key to taking advantage of available resources. One of the most effective ways is current organizational web sites. Then, the City of Bath, Main Street Bath, and Patten Free Library can assist inquiries by identifying links. Only partial attempts have been made to coordinate a community calendar. Each organization must keep its information current rather than it being the responsibility of a central body.
- Section 4.1, Demographics, indicates a growing number of older residents, many of whom are retired. Service-related and cultural organizations may need to revise their programs to stay relevant. A positive effect

resulting from the additional number of retirees is the availability of more volunteers.

Actions

- Organize, support, and publicize celebrations and other events, and establish an on-line City calendar/directory to publicize them. City's Community Relations Coordinator, Main Street Bath –Ongoing.
- Encourage local artists to participate in the Five Rivers Arts Alliance with open studio days. City's Community Relations Coordinator – Ongoing.
- Continue to host and/or support Community Involvement Day and other events and annual celebrations (e.g., Heritage Days and Autumnfest) that "celebrate" community and neighborhoods. Make sure these are well organized, supported, and publicized. City's Community Relations Coordinator, Community Development Office – Ongoing.
- Encourage non-profits and for-profits to continue mutually supporting one another. City's Community Relations Coordinator – Ongoing.
- Work with the Lower Kennebec Regional Land Trust (LKRLT) and use its resources and skills to help preserve appropriate open-space areas. Planning Director, Conservation Commission – Ongoing.

4.4 HOUSING

State Goal

- Encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.

Issue Statement

- It is important that the City of Bath have a mix of ages, income levels, and ethnic groups. This mix contributes to the community energy, friendliness, and the overall sense of community.

Planning Implications of the Housing Inventory

- The City of Bath's existing housing stock is old compared to surrounding towns (i.e., the Bath Region), with almost half of the housing built before 1939. Although this old housing stock is what gives Bath its historic heritage and is an element of local pride, it costs more to maintain, is often less energy efficient, and may have lead-based-paint health hazards.
- Housing projects constructed during the two World Wars greatly affected Bath's housing stock. It is one reason for the higher

percentage of multifamily homes resulting in more renter-occupied housing.

- The housing stock in Bath has grown little since 1990. The surrounding small towns, as well as Topsham and Brunswick, have seen increases more similar to the state average.
- According to the 2001 "Bath Housing Assessment" and the 2007 update, the Dike-Cobb neighborhood; properties around the Bailey and Fitz Streets intersection; the neighborhood between Route 1 and Rose Street; Washington and High Streets; and Elm Street contain clusters of housing in poor condition. Also listed in poor condition in the assessment are homes on Middle Street on each side of the viaduct; the Union and Granite Street areas; Western, Elsinore, Quimby, and Cottage Streets; Centre Street; Court Street; Charles Street and other streets between Centre and Court Streets; Bailey and Tolman Streets; and Windjammer Way, including parts of North Street.
- Only about half of the dwelling units in Bath are in single-family structures.
- Bath has a high percentage of dwelling units in multifamily structures and a low percentage of mobile homes.
- Bath has a small percentage of seasonal dwellings and little conversion of seasonal dwellings to year-round residency.
- The percentages of owner- versus renter-occupied housing reveal that Bath is similar to larger urban Service Center communities in the state.
- Approximately 65 percent of the residential growth in Bath from 2000 through 2007 occurred in the City's designated Growth Areas.
- It is difficult to predict the effect that the price of gasoline, the surplus Navy housing at BNAS (slated for closure in 2011), the tightening of credit, and other factors will have on regional housing growth and the location of that growth. The surplus BNAS housing temporarily may eliminate moderate-income housing demand. The price of gasoline, if it goes to \$4 per gallon and stays there, may affect rural housing construction and cause a demand for housing that is closer to people's employment. Credit-tightening will likely restrict housing construction everywhere.
- Although Bath has the highest percentage of federally assisted multifamily housing (for Maine communities with populations of more than 7,500) and has zoning regulations that encourage both single- and multifamily housing development at high densities, the City still has an

Affordability Index below 1.0. A number below 1.0 means the housing is unaffordable according to Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) criteria.

- Rental housing is also considered unaffordable according to MSHA criteria.

Actions

- Promote housing development unlike what already exists—for example, housing attractive to young professionals, loft space, senior housing—and allow and encourage mixed-use, mixed-income, and mixed-age housing developments. Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- Strive for at least 10 percent of all new housing to be affordable to first-time homebuyers and support such efforts of the Bath Housing Authority (BHA). Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- Continue renter-to-owner programs. Community Development Director – Ongoing.
- Develop a children's park, with young-family-friendly amenities. CIP - 2014.
- Improve neighborhoods, including urban neighborhoods, by improving infrastructure, utilities, and the public realm. Provide incentives to landowners who help preserve or increase a sense of neighborhood. CIP, Community Development Office – Ongoing.
- Support the Bath Police Department's Community Policing program. Police Chief, City Council – Ongoing.
- Implement locally if appropriate, and advocate for state level energy- and water-saving building and plumbing regulations. Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- Encourage and assist Bath residents and property owners to implement the Recommended Actions for the Bath Community and Residents listed in the "City of Bath Energy and Climate Action Plan." (See appendix M) City Manager, Community Development Director – Ongoing.

4.5 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

State Goal

Preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources.

Issue Statements

- The City of Bath's history, its historic atmosphere, the historic architectural fabric, and the fact that all is well documented are all part of what makes Bath a wonderful and extraordinary place in which to live,

as well as greatly benefiting the City's economy. The historic nature and appeal of Bath adds to both our sense of place and the City's economic well-being.

- In neighborhoods with a high degree of historic architectural integrity, ensuring that additions, modifications, and new structures are harmonious with the character of existing buildings will help maintain those neighborhoods' sense of place and economic well-being.

Planning Implications of the Historical and Archaeological Resources Inventory

- As noted in Section 4.4, the housing stock in Bath is old compared to that of surrounding towns. Although the old housing stock is what makes Bath historic, it also costs more to maintain, is often less energy efficient, and may have lead-based-paint health hazards. As homeowners seek to fix the problems, they may unknowingly destroy historic characteristics and possibly eviscerate the historic appearance of the structures.
- Because of the past emphasis on large, impressive homes in the Washington Street area, many homeowners are unaware that their more modest home is equally historic and significant in the history and current appearance of the City. Although some archaeological sites and significant structures are known to local inhabitants, not all historic resources are known to decision makers.
- Because of its pattern of development, Bath has retained much of its historic landscape, including residences, religious buildings, commercial structures, street widths, trees, and stonewalls. This cultural landscape has become one of the City's primary defining characteristics for both residents and visitors. Protecting and promoting the City's historic character while not impeding the City's continuing development will be a challenge.
- Time and again, report after report, "quality of place" is said to be an important (and often under-recognized) economic resource. This needs to be recognized in Bath as the City works toward economic diversification.

Educating residents about the importance of Bath's quality of place and historic character as economic resources make them easier to protect.

Showing visitors the City's quality of place and historic character will help capitalize on these economic resources.

- Heritage tourism and quality-of-place issues for retirees may hold promise for economic diversification.
- Finding ways to measure the success of programs designed to promote the historic resources of Bath would highlight their importance.
- A Heritage Center and a historic-marker program would help focus attention on Bath's historic resources.
- The requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) hamper the economically viable reuse of historic buildings in the downtown and elsewhere. It is often difficult to add to or rehabilitate nineteenth-century buildings using current building codes.
- There are numerous nationally recognized significant structures and areas of the City that are not protected by local law.
- Studies have shown that there are economic benefits to historic-property owners when their property is located in a locally protected historic district. We know that the historic character of Bath attracts many visitors to the City each year. Thus, it is important financially to both the owners of historic properties and the City to preserve and promote these resources.
- More knowledge of the City's archaeological resources and sites could put them at risk; however, more knowledge and public information about the City's historic resources could help protect them.

Actions

- **Plan and implement a system of City-wide historical markers.** City Manager, Community Relations Coordinator, Planning Director – 2010.
- **To educate the public, homeowners, and City leaders, produce and distribute an informative brochure and provide information on the City's web site about the value and importance of our historic resources, appropriate additions and renovations, and Historic District regulations.** Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, Sagadahoc Preservation, Inc – 2010.
- **Provide more local-history resources to schools (e.g., Patten Free Library History Room) and other educational programs (e.g., lectures and senior college).** Sagadahoc Preservation, Inc, . Patten Free Library, Bath Historical Society – begin in 2009.
- **Undertake additional and updated architectural surveys.** Planning Director. Sagadahoc Preservation, Inc. – 2012.
- **Develop easily understood and administered Historic District approval standards, which ensure that Bath maintains the authenticity of its historic buildings, structures, and landscape and also encourage**

contemporary, imaginative, and innovative design. Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.

- **Enlarge the local and national historic districts.** Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- **Continue the façade loan program.** Community Development Director – ongoing.
- **Enact a delay on the demolition of historic resources.** Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- **Incorporate information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) into land use planning and the development review process.** Planning Board, Planning Director - 2010.

4.6 NATURAL RESOURCES

State Goals

- Protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas.
- Protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas and unique natural areas.
- Protect the State's marine resources industry, ports and harbors from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public.
- Safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development, which threatens those resources.
- Promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.

Issue Statements

- Despite the fact that Bath is one of the most densely populated cities in Maine, the street trees, the rest of the urban forest, the green spaces of our cemeteries and parks (including Maple Grove and Oak Grove Cemeteries and the scattered small family cemeteries), City Park at the Library, Waterfront Park, Thorne Head, and Butler Head help make the City an enjoyable place in which to live and are valued economic assets to the community.
- The street trees and urban forest are important to how much we, as well as visitors to Bath, enjoy our community.

- The numerous water resources, including the Kennebec River, Winnegance Creek, Whiskeag Creek, New Meadows River, and Merrymeeting Bay, are valuable natural-resource assets.
- Views of the Kennebec River from downtown Bath, as well as from other locations in the community, are important to our sense of place.
- The Kennebec River, with its working waterfront, is also a critically important economic resource.

Planning Implications of the Natural Resources Inventory

- The surficial geology and resulting soils of Bath have not been kind to agriculture. The limited agriculture and forest practices, however, add to the lasting rural scenic quality of North Bath.
- There are steep slopes along the west side of High Street from near Nichols Street south to near Fairview Lane. The steepness of the slopes makes development of this area difficult, if not impractical.
- The City of Bath has approximately 414 acres of land that is either permanently removed from development potential or set aside in the state's Open Space Tax Program. All of the protected parcels are in North Bath.
- There are almost 205 acres of land in Bath classified in the Farmland Tax Program. Land in this classification is valued for tax purposes as farmland, not at market value. The farmland is used to grow hay, board horses, grow vegetables and flowers, harvest Christmas trees, and raise bison. Although this acreage is not a significant portion of the City, the farms add to the economy of Bath and to the rural character of North Bath.
- The Tree Growth Tax Program includes more than 376 acres of forestland.
- The lands in conservation plus the lands in one of the state's current-use tax programs total approximately 995 acres. This is about 1.5 square miles, or about 15 percent, of the area of the City of Bath.
- Nine large islands in the Kennebec River are part of the City of Bath.
- Large blocks of undeveloped land add greatly to the rural quality of Bath and also provide habitat for many birds and mammals. If these blocks are broken up, by even minor development, the value of the habitat to many species of animals is greatly diminished.

- The Kennebec River carries a huge volume of water. It is a visual, recreational, and economic resource. The river adds to our sense of place, our recreational enjoyment, and our economic livelihood.
- As stated on the Friends of Merrymeeting Bay's website, "the [Merrymeeting] Bay, by virtue of its unique characteristics and large size, is an ecological gem in our midst. Unfortunately, many factors, particularly water pollution and pressures from development, have reduced much of the once-abundant resources of the Bay to remnant levels."
- Beginning with Habitat's Kennebec Estuary Focus Area includes the Merrymeeting Bay, Lines Island, and other portions of Bath. This focus area is depicted on the Critical Natural Areas map. Working with landowners, the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust, and developing and implementing appropriate development regulations will help to protect this area of statewide ecological significance.
- The facilities, land, and businesses that can be referred to as the Port of Bath make our City somewhat unique. This gives the City a competitive advantage on which the City has capitalized for decades. The loss of any of these would make Bath much less economically competitive.
- As stated in the "Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment Action Plan 2007-2017": "Working waterfronts are essential to marine-dependent industries and often define the character of coastal communities." What is left of Bath's working waterfront is a former marina in the downtown area, a vacant parcel once used as a shipbuilding site and sardine cannery, and BIW.
- Wetlands are not just swamps that need to be filled to accommodate development. They provide important water-cleansing and flood-control functions, and they provide a breeding ground for many large and small animals. Wetlands also add to the beauty of Bath.
- As emphasized by Maine's Natural Areas Program (MNAP), knowledge of the significant plant and animal habitat, including rare species and natural communities, helps to avoid development conflicts and assists landowners in making informed decisions about development or conservation of their land. This is true whether or not the plant and animal habitats are catalogued by the MNAP.
- Views form our sense of place and are important to our enjoyment of Bath. The views include the Kennebec River, islands in the river, the east shore of the river, and open fields that contrast with Bath's urban

qualities. The views of the City from the river are also important to this sense of place.

- Much of the downtown is in a 100-year flood-hazard area. At times of astronomical high tides, some street-flooding occurs on Commercial and Washington Streets. If a sea-level rise occurs in the future, additional flooding will take place.
- Natural resources and natural areas provide both opportunities for and constraints to development. The natural areas with severe constraints are generally located along the West Bath town line in the southwest portion of Bath, along the Kennebec River south of BIW, along Whiskeag Creek east of Ridge Road, Butler Cove, along the New Meadows River west of Ridge Road, along the shore of Merrymeeting Bay, east of Varney Mill Road, and the large wetlands east of Windjammer Way and Bernard Street.

Actions

- Protect the City's natural resources, including its critical natural resources, ground water and surface water, locally important views, Merrymeeting Bay, and the Kennebec River with its working waterfront, by adopting, administering, and enforcing appropriate standards and regulations, and making information from MDEP, MIF&W, SRRRI, and others available to landowners. Planning Director, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, City Council – ongoing and when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- When the Open Space Plan is developed (see Public Facilities and Services Actions, page 24), include a section on appropriate techniques to protect important views. Planning Director, Planning Board, Parks and Recreation Director – 2011.
- Support the City's code-enforcement program with appropriate staff resources and adequate training. City Manager, City Council – annual budgets, ongoing.
- Develop a plan to eliminate point (including CSOs) and nonpoint sources of pollution entering Merrymeeting Bay and the Kennebec River. The plan should encourage marine business and industries to participate in programs such as clean marina programs. Planning Board, Public Works Director, Planning Director – 2011.
- Incorporate stormwater-management standards such as low-impact development standards and appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs), as well as "LEED for Neighborhood" criteria, into land use regulations. Make these standards available to landowners and developers. Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.

- Conserve the urban forest by protecting existing assets, including trees in the downtown, street trees in neighborhoods, and specific trees; by promoting a design that has esplanades and trees on all streets; by improving sidewalks and expanding the sidewalk network from which to view the City's urban forest; and by undertaking research for new resources and funding. Planning Board, Planning Director, CIP, Parks and Recreation Director – ongoing.
- Amend the City of Bath Public Works Department (PWD) Street Handbook, if needed, to include appropriate standards for stormwater management as well as erosion and sedimentation control, and incorporate *MaineDOT's Waterway and Wildlife Crossing Policy and Design Guide*. Public Works Director - 2011
- Inform the public about the City's varied natural resources—rural and urban—by promoting education in Bath schools; developing hiking and biking maps and guides; encouraging the use of public green spaces in parks and cemeteries by both residents and visitors; and updating and distributing the self-guided brochure about Bath's trees. Encourage the use of the Farm and Open Space Program and the Tree Growth Tax Program. RSU 1, Planning Director, Parks and Recreation Director, Bath Trails, Assessor's Office - ongoing.
- Require the use of BMPs for agricultural activities and require developments in critical rural areas to retain areas of prime farmland soils as open space. Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- Consult with the Maine Forest Service and the Soil and Water Conservation District when developing forest- and agricultural-management standards, respectively. Planning Director – ongoing.
- Reorganize the existing Forestry Committee into an expanded Conservation Commission that will suggest and support appropriate regulations to properly protect water and land assets, will provide information to land owners regarding to appropriate trees and shrubs to plant, and that will work with neighboring towns and local and regional conservation stakeholders, including regional land trusts and the Sagadahoc Region Rural Resources Initiative. Forestry Committee, Parks and Recreation Director, Planning Director - 2011.
- Undertake a monitoring and assessment program of the streams and riparian areas covered by the Critical Resources Areas map, using volunteers and/or the Conservation Commission. Forestry Committee (to become the Conservation Commission), Planning Director - 2011.
- Consistently use programs such as "Beginning with Habitat" in the planning process. Planning Board, Planning Director - ongoing

- When the Land Use Code is updated, amend it to conform to the State's Storm Water Management Law and Storm Water Rules, and incorporate any updates to the Floodplain Management Ordinance. Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – 2011.
- Continue the policy of not extending subsidized public sewer or water lines across Whiskeag Creek into North Bath. Planning Board, City Council – ongoing.
- Maintain the City's accesses to the Kennebec River: the North End and the South End Boat Launches, Waterfront Park, and South End Park. Parks and Recreation Director - ongoing.

4.7 TRANSPORTATION

Issue Statements

- Public transportation within the City of Bath and to other communities, as well as the City's location relative to the varied forms or modes of transportation (e.g., Route 1, rail, and the "marine highway"), adds to the enjoyment of our community and can provide great economic benefit. However, the full potential to use rail and the marine highway has not been realized.
- The negative aspects of the Route 1 corridor—its appearance, litter, traffic, the number of curb cuts, lack of access management, speed of vehicles, and the fact that it is out of character with the rest of the City—do not present an inviting gateway to the City of Bath. These negative aspects of Route 1 detract from our sense of place, are detrimental to the City's downtown, and harm the Bath economy.
- Traffic speed and congestion on many of the City's major streets are detrimental to the affected adjacent neighborhoods.
- The unavailability of parking in the downtown, a result of either not enough parking spaces or poorly managed, designated, and signed parking lots and spaces, is detrimental to the downtown and the City's overall economic health.
- Many of the privately owned (and some City-owned) parking lots are eyesores. They detract from our sense of neighborhood, the downtown pedestrian-friendliness, and the general attractiveness of the downtown.

Planning Implications of the Transportation Inventory

- With Route 1, the Kennebec River, and the railroad all coming together in the downtown, the City of Bath is a true transportation hub. This critical mass of transportation services can greatly enhance transportation access in the Bath Region and also significantly position Bath to become

more of a tourist and visitor destination. Enhancing these transportation modes and integrating them into broader community goals (e.g., neighborhood preservation and downtown revitalization) are important to Bath's economic and community-development future.

- The design of Route 1 west of High Street presents a poor image as a City of Bath gateway. It also provides poor vehicular and pedestrian connectivity between the North End and the South End in that portion of the City. The design of Route 1 encourages speeding, has poor access management, and several High Crash Locations (HCLs) are associated with it.
- The City's participation in the Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) Gateway 1 planning process is important for Bath as well as the rest of the Route 1 corridor.
- The present Route 1 viaduct through the downtown has poor aesthetics. Although it offers a link north and south under Route 1, the viaduct creates a visual and perhaps a psychological barrier between the North End and South End of the City.
- The MaineDOT forecasts that traffic on Route 1 in Bath, especially summer traffic, will continue to increase through 2030 (although annual average daily traffic [AADT] counts at many locations decreased between 2002 and 2005).
- The local committee that worked with the MaineDOT and its consultants on the conceptual design of the Route 1 viaduct replacement voted that a new four-lane viaduct was the best alternative. Although it will be several years before the viaduct is replaced, the improvements for Route 1 west of High Street suggested by the study could be implemented independent of the viaduct improvements.
- BIW commuter-traffic impacts have been significantly lessened by the Sagadahoc Bridge. Any design of the viaduct replacement should ensure that maintaining free traffic flow onto the bridge is mandatory.
- South of Route 1, High Street serves as access to Phippsburg and Popham Beach. The volume and speed of the traffic is negatively impacting quality of life of this neighborhood.
- Quality of life is also impacted in neighborhoods such as the Richardson Street-Western Avenue neighborhood and the Court Street neighborhood by vehicles using local streets as cut-throughs to and from Route 1 and/or West Bath. Local streets are also impacted by BIW traffic between High and Washington Streets.

- Whereas the Route 209 Bypass might solve some of the traffic problems mentioned previously, funding for it cannot be justified by the Maine DOT as a Route 1 improvement.
- Knowing the location of HCLs helps identify streets' trouble spots. HCLs are associated with Route 1, Leeman Highway, and the intersections at State Road and Congress Avenue and at Centre and Middle Streets.
- The rail line through Bath is called the Rockland Branch and is owned by the State of Maine. This line has had significant upgrades to rails, ties, crossings, and ballast in recent years. The line through Bath is used to move freight and for the seasonal Coastal Maine Scenic Passenger Train. Long-term plans for the line include providing tourists with multimodal, vehicle-free vacations; connecting the Rockland Branch to Amtrak; and alleviating traffic on Route 1 with a BIW commuter service.
- The City of Bath is served by a City-operated deviated fixed-route transit system, a seasonal trolley, an intercity bus, and a demand-response bus service—not all of which connect at one location.
- The marine highway offered by the Kennebec River has functioned as a vital economic resource for centuries and it is still a major economic resource today.
- According to recent studies, Waterfront Park is the best location for expanded waterfront facilities to support Maine's "Strategic Passenger Transportation Plan," which envisions bringing tourists to Maine for vehicle-free vacations.
- A study completed in 1999 found that in the downtown, parking supply was approximately in balance with parking demand. It also found, however, that there were block-specific shortages of parking, primarily along Front Street.
- There are several parking lots in the downtown that serve BIW employees. These lots are more valuable to Bath's economy than for simply storing vehicles for 8 hours a day.
- The City of Bath is located on the East Coast Greenway, the national nonmotorized pathway from Key West, Florida, to Calais, Maine. The local long-term plan for the Greenway is to extend the Androscoggin River Bike Path from Brunswick to the Sagadahoc Bridge.
- More work is needed on sidewalks in and around the downtown to meet the "walkable city" goal described in the 1999 "Action Plan for the Bath Downtown and Waterfront." A pedestrian pathway linking various locations on lower Washington Street to the downtown and located along

the river in the downtown area would provide an important connection and would complement the “walkable city” initiative. The various City and non-City trail and pathway initiatives could be coordinated, mapped, and publicized as a City-wide trail system.

- Addressing the negative impacts of the transportation system will make Bath a more pleasant and healthy community.
- The uses of land and transportation systems have a complex connection. The City of Bath—being old, mature, and compact—exemplifies what is today called “Smart Growth.” Bath continues to promote Smart Growth by discouraging growth in the rural parts of town, promoting infill development, allowing small lots (by Maine standards), allowing narrow streets in new developments and the narrowing of existing streets, allowing on-street parking in the downtown and in most residential neighborhoods, encouraging mixed-uses in the Downtown, and permitting houses to be built close to the street in high- and medium-density residential neighborhoods.

Actions

Multimodal Actions

- Encourage the development of all modes of transportation that tie the City effectively to the Midcoast Region and the rest of Maine. CIP, City Manager, Planning Director – ongoing.
- Undertake an educational program to emphasize the potential health and conservation benefits of walking and bicycling for work and play. Such a program will depend on the installation of bicycle racks, the clearing of sidewalks in winter, and the continued construction of connective sidewalks and trails throughout the City that facilitate movement within Bath and to neighboring towns. CIP, Bath Trails, Parks and Recreation Director, Public Works Director – 2011.
- Finish the Bath Railroad Station and surrounding projects, developing the train station as the central hub of local transportation—that is, the terminal/station for bus service, as well as the train, CityBus, trolley, and Visitors’ Center. CIP, Planning Director, Bath Transportation Commission – 2011.
- Develop a ferry service along the Kennebec River and into Boothbay Harbor. Planning Director, Bath Transportation Commission - 2015.

Actions to Improve the Appearance and Functionality of Route 1 and the Viaduct

- Undertake Route 1 gateway changes (e.g., a landscaped median and sidewalks and traffic-calming landscaping along the sides) CIP and Planning Director- 2013 and adopt design standards for the C4 Zone regardless of whether Contract Rezoning is pursued. Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- Beautify (e.g., paint and flowers) the existing viaduct until it is removed or rebuilt. Maine DOT, Main Street Bath – ongoing.
- Develop a safe way for pedestrians to cross Route 1 west of High Street. Maine DOT, Planning Director - 2015.
- Actively participate in the MaineDOT's Gateway 1 planning process and any other regional transportation-planning processes. Planning Director – ongoing.

Actions to Improve Parking

- Employ various methods to increase the effective use of existing parking by developing signage to direct motorists to appropriate parking locations and by adopting the City Council's Parking Committee plans, including development of a "Where to Park in Bath" brochure that explains locations and time regulations. City Council's Parking Committee, Planning Director, CIP – 2010.
- Improve the appearance of City-wide parking lots with the City taking the lead by landscaping the Water Street lot. Then, encourage the beautification of private and public parking lots by requiring annual business licenses with maintenance and landscaping standards. Planning Director, Public Works Director, CIP, City Council – 2010.
- If it is deemed necessary, develop new parking locations with appropriate time limits. CIP, Planning Director, City Council's Parking Committee – 2012 Then, if a parking garage is warranted, require it to include other uses (e.g., retail uses and a movie theater). CIP, City Council – 2020.

City-Wide Actions

- Use traffic-calming measures, including on-street parking, where needed. Planning Director, Public Works Director – Ongoing.
- Continue to analyze problematic intersections and improve them as needed. Planning Director, Public Works Director – ongoing.
- Develop and implement a ten-year plan for all streets and highways to maximize their efficiency and to make repairs and upgrades on a prioritized scheduled. Efficiency measures should include access management and appropriate permitting of developments. The repair and

upgrade schedule should reflect local, regional, and state priorities. Public Works Director, Planning Director - 2011.

- To improve health and safety, develop and implement a plan for improved winter maintenance of sidewalks to schools, the downtown, and other activity centers for pedestrians of all ages. Public Works Director – 2010. .
- Continue to work with Bath Trails and other hikers, bike riders, community health advocates, historic preservationists, and motorized trail users as appropriate, to develop, maintain, and promote a local and regional trail system. Parks and Recreation Director, Planning Director – ongoing.
- Work with MaineDOT and the yet to be created Gateway 1 regional entity to address deficiencies in the City's transportation systems—rail, bus, highway, and port—and any conflicts between the City's priorities and regional and state priorities. Public Works Director, Planning Director - ongoing.
- Work with MaineDOT to redirect the large amount of stormwater that come from the Route 1 and the Route 1 viaduct, and enter the City's sanitary sewer system. Public Works Director – ongoing.
- When the Land Use Code is updated, amend it to conform to the policy objectives of the Sensible Transportation Policy Act, the State Access Management Regulations, and the requirements pertaining to the State Traffic Permitting regulations for large developments. Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – 2011.

4.8 PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

State Goals

- Plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.
- Promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.

Issue Statements

- Overall efficiencies of City of Bath departments save the taxpayers money and allow the City to accomplish more with less.
- Energy costs will increase in the future and the impact on the environment of burning oil is well documented. As the City becomes more energy efficient and reduces emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases—and assists Bath residents and property owners to do the same—the community's financial resources will go farther, quality of life will be improved, and the earth's climate will benefit.

- Managing the City's solid waste will be a major financial burden for Bath taxpayers in the future.

Planning Implications of the Public Facilities and Services Inventory

- The Bath Fire Station is being used beyond its designed capacity and is inadequate. However, it makes sense to explore fire-service regionalization before building a new fire station.
- The BNAS Fire Department is an automatic aid provider to the Bath Fire Department. The Bath Fire Department's staffing level may need to change after BNAS closes.
- The Bath Fire Department is not sufficiently staffed to provide adequate responses to tall-building (i.e., ten to twelve stories) fires because safety procedures require teams of personnel to be used to evacuate people. The height of any new buildings may impact staffing needs of the Bath Fire Department.
- The Bath Police Department has kept budget costs down by using volunteers, being proactive with programs such as the Community Policing program, and by using grant funds.
- The City of Bath landfill expansion (i.e., creating a new cell), management of gas generated as material biodegrades, and the facility's closure will be enormous costs for which the City has only recently begun to plan and budget. There may be financial benefits to selling carbon credits from the burning of landfill gas. There may also be opportunities to generate energy from the gas-combustion process.
- The Rose Street pumping station is operating beyond its design capacity and will stop residential growth in its service area until the capacity is increased.
- The physical growth of the City is linked to the expansion of public water and sewer systems. These systems can be used to guide growth toward appropriate and away from inappropriate locations.
- Understanding the growth potential in various parts of the City will help the PWD plan street, intersection, and sewer-system capacity improvements.
- The age of the infrastructure (Bath being an old city) and previous funding priorities and budget decisions have resulted in a public infrastructure (i.e., streets, pumping stations, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, and water mains) that is in need of repair.

- The aging of the City's population (see Section 4.1) will result in a change in recreation needs of the community.
- The City of Bath has 671 acres of land in public recreation and parks (including cemeteries and boat launches) and open space (including lands in conservation), which is 0.07 acre (3,154 square feet) per capita. (This calculation excludes the 75-acre state-owned Lines Island, which—being located in the middle of the Kennebec River—is relatively inaccessible.)
- In the future utility costs are likely to increase for everything from heating oil for public buildings to fuel for vehicles and electricity.
- The City of Bath owns non-utilized and under-utilized public buildings. A study of these buildings revealed that some should be sold or redeveloped.
- Several buildings are owned by the City and leased to other businesses, including the Midcoast Center for Higher Education (MCHE), the former YMCA, the Customs House, and the Bath Railroad Station. Only the Customs House is self-sufficient—that is, it operates without taxpayer support.

Actions

- Use of the Bath Landfill should be optimized in several ways: regionalize recycling to increase opportunities to recycle more materials; encourage the creation of landfill fees to enhance further recycling; prohibit use of the landfill by non-Bath residents; and participate in local efforts for a building-materials exchange. Public Works Director, City Council - Ongoing.
- Develop an action plan for the remaining useful life of the landfill and its anticipated closure. Public Works Director – 2011.
- Develop a 10-year wastewater treatment plant facility plan and continue to fund sewer-line improvements and storm and sanitary sewer separation projects in the CIP. CIP – ongoing, Public Works Director – 2012.
- Utilize highly energy-efficient buildings and resources in all areas of City government and strongly encourage the same in the private sector: conduct energy audits of all City-owned buildings, promote City use of alternative sources of fuel, and adopt standards in the Land Use Code to encourage or require energy-efficient designs in the private sector. City Manager, Planning Board, City Council and Planning Director, Planning Board, City Council – when the Land Use Code is updated, 2010.
- Implement the Recommended Actions for the City of Bath Government listed in the “City of Bath Energy and Climate Action Plan.” (See appendix M) City Manager – 2010.

- Encourage and assist Bath residents and property owners to implement the Recommended Actions for the Bath Community and Residents listed in the "City of Bath Energy and Climate Action Plan." (See appendix M) City Manager, Community Development Director – 2010.
- Explore regional reorganization, which is discussed further in Section 4.11, Regional Coordination. City Manager, Appropriate Department Heads - Ongoing.
- Promote and protect public green spaces as discussed in Section 4.6, Natural Resources and in Appendix F, Natural Resources Inventory. Planning Board, Conservation Commission - Ongoing.
- Develop a recreation plan that addresses the needs of the City's changing demographics. Parks and Recreation Director – 2010.
- Develop an Open Space Plan that identifies open space needs, issues, preservation methods and potential sources for acquiring and/or preserving important areas. Parks and Recreation Director, Planning Director, Conservation Commission – 2011.
- Continue to plan for capital improvements to upgrade the City's aging infrastructure and to maintain public facilities. CIP, Public Works Director - Ongoing.
- Maintain the current (i.e., 2008) per capita acreage of park and open-space land. Require developers of residential subdivisions to either contribute land or the funds to purchase land so the City can maintain the per capita acreage. Planning Board, City Council - Ongoing.
- Continue the policy of not extending subsidized public sewer and water lines across Whiskeag Creek into North Bath. Planning Board, City Council - Ongoing.

4.9 EDUCATION

Issue Statement

- All public and private education institutions in the City and the region—from those that serve our youngest to those that serve our oldest, from general education to specific—are important to the community and our economy.

Planning Implications of the Education Inventory

- With the very recent formation of Regional School Unit 1 (RSU 1), it is too early to inventory past trends for an idea of the future.
- Bath school facilities are showing their age with a long list of needed and expensive capital improvements. These improvements could translate into major costs for RSU 1 in the future.
- The enrollment of Bath-resident students has declined and will likely continue to decline. Including former Union 47 students, enrollment will

likely stay level in the future. Predicted enrollments for RSU 1 will be critical planning information for the RSU 1 School Board in the near future.

- In the past five years, the overall percentage decrease in Bath School Department staff was greater than the percentage decrease in teachers. This reflects the emphasis of the Bath Board of Education on keeping teachers and making cuts in non-teacher personnel. It is too early to determine whether this will be the same approach taken by the RSU 1 School Board.
- The Bath Board of Education busing policy shows concern for student safety, as it should. There could be savings in transportation costs, however, if attention were given to mitigating or eliminating the safety problems and require students to walk farther to school. Walking to school could result in healthier students.
- The percentage of Bath students who graduate from high school is high and the rate is increasing. However, the percentage of Bath residents with college degrees is low compared to the rest of the Bath Region. Although a possible family tradition of placing high value on high school graduation as an entrance to BIW is positive, the possible tradition of placing a low value on a college education is negative.
- Bath is rich in a variety of educational resources in addition to those offered by the Bath School Department. These resources include the Head Start program, Senior College, Bath Regional Vocational Center, Bailey Evening School, The Hyde School, a campus of Southern Maine Community College (SMCC), and the University of Maine's University College.
- As discussed in Section 4.2, the report titled "Measures of Growth 2007" written for the Maine Economic Growth Council reminds us that "in order for societies to thrive, they must focus investment in their people [i.e., education] as well as in cutting-edge technology."

Actions

- **Actively participate in the RSU 1 School Board's deliberations pertaining to curricula and budgeting.** City Council, City Manager, Finance Director - Ongoing
- **Promote the importance of quality education, from kindergarten to senior college, as an economic development tool and to attract young families.** RSU 1 School Board, City Manager - Ongoing.
- **Develop links between the Community College and existing and new businesses.** City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Planning Director - 2010.

- Encourage the RSU 1 School Board to solve its deferred-maintenance problems by developing a thorough CIP for schools. City Manager, Finance Director, RSU 1 School Board - 2010.

4.10 FISCAL

State Goal

- Plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

Issue Statements

- The costs of operating the City government and providing the facilities and services that the public wants and needs continue to increase.
- The tax base provided by the City's major taxpayers helps to keep taxes lower for residential property owners. However, the City's over-dependence on BIW and its future, and the belief on the part of the City government (especially in the past during times of BIW's prosperity) that diversifying the local economy was neither possible nor necessary, could place the City's future prosperity at risk.
- The City's spending limitation assures the public that the City Council will not spend any more in a given year than was spent the previous year plus the rate of inflation (i.e., the Consumer Price Index [CPI]). However, the constraints of the spending limitation may outweigh the assurance it provides.

Planning Implications of the Fiscal Inventory

- The increase in valuation shows that the City of Bath's property value is growing. However, it is not growing as fast as the total municipal valuation in Sagadahoc County. This means that although Bath still pays the largest portion of the Sagadahoc County Tax, that portion is decreasing.
- Although BIW pays a major percentage of total taxes, Bath is dependent on its residential tax base to fund municipal services. Bath has few other industrial taxpayers and its commercial tax base is growing only slowly. This is a good reason to pursue new industrial and commercial development.
- Tax-exempt properties—that is, non-profits and other entities that pay no property taxes—accounted for more than 16 percent of Bath's total valuation in 2006. Urban communities are where colleges, hospitals, churches, Elks Clubs, and even state and federal properties are located. These properties pay no taxes, while still needing many municipal

services. There are significantly more tax-exempt properties in Bath and other large urban municipalities than in small rural communities. It is important for the City to be aggressive in recruiting new and keeping the existing commercial and industrial tax base to offset the large number of tax-exempt properties.

- A review of equalized tax rates indicates that larger municipalities in the Bath Region and other Service Center communities need higher taxes than smaller rural towns. The larger municipalities are also willing to levy taxes for the additional public facilities and services that citizens need and want. The fiscal capacity of a community apparently is more related to a balance of need, willingness to pay, and desired quality of life than other measures.
- A significant percentage of taxes paid by the City's taxpayers supports the facilities and services of the Sagadahoc County government. This highlights the need for elected officials in Bath and other Bath residents to be as involved as possible when the Sagadahoc County Commissioners prepare the county budget.
- Obtaining grant funding for projects in Bath has helped keep taxes down. Millions of dollars in grants (i.e., see the "Intergovernmental" column in the "Bath Revenue Sources, 1997 through 2007" table in Appendix J, Fiscal Inventory) have been used in the last ten years for housing-improvement loans, infrastructure upgrades, and other public improvements.
- The City's total expenditures decreased significantly in 2007. Time will tell (along with state revenue sharing, state support to education, and the county budget) whether expenditures will continue to drop.
- Although the City has significant debt (i.e., more than \$27 million), it is well below the legal debt limit. Borrowing money for projects allows those residents who will benefit most from the improvements to pay for them over time, as they are being used and enjoyed.
- The City's CIP is designed to identify capital needs in the next five years and to develop a strategy to pay for them. The more that the CIP can be tied to the City's land use and other non-financial planning, the more successful all City planning will be.
- The City's spending-limitation regulation allows no more yearly increase in spending than the CPI. It also encourages each department to spend its entire budget, and it requires the City Council to artificially appropriate funds at the end of a fiscal year to increase the budget up to the ceiling

to enable the next year's budget to grow if necessary. The rating agencies have downgraded Bath's bond rating due to this action. There should be a better way to control spending.

- Conversely, when the City Council voted to override LD 1, the bond rating agencies viewed this action favorably. There should be a better way than LD1 to address statewide local property tax increases.
- Tax Increment Finance is an economic-development tool that can be used to pay for public and private improvements associated with commercial and industrial growth. It also shelters some of the additional value from this growth so that the City's tax liabilities for Sagadahoc County and local education, as well as the amount of state revenue sharing, are benefited.

Actions

- Review options and opportunities pertaining to the most appropriate spending and budgeting procedures, including the Charter's spending limitation. City Manager, Finance Director, City Council – 2010.
- Continue the annual preparation and implementation of the CIP. Use the CIP to promote land use consistent with the Future Land Use Plan. City Manager, Finance Director, Planning Director - Ongoing.
- Prepare an economic development plan that includes contingency planning for the possibility of BIW downsizing or closing, a clear and concise business-attraction and business-retention process, a staff "go-to" contact, and an economic development committee if appropriate. City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Community Development Director, Planning Director - 2011.
- Use development incentives when in the best interest of the taxpayers and the City's economic future. City Manager, City Council - Ongoing.
- Pursue high-tech companies, expand Wing Farm Business Park, and develop "incubator" industrial space. City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Community Development Director, Planning Director - Ongoing.
- Work with regional development agencies to promote regional economic development. City Manager, Assistant City Manager - Ongoing.
- Develop links between the Community College and existing and new businesses. City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Planning Director - 2011.
- Include geographical information in the City's promotional materials, highlighting Bath as a multimodal transportation hub. City's Community Relations Coordinator, Main Street Bath – Ongoing.
- Encourage cultural tourism on a year-round basis and work with the City's accommodations industry to promote elder-hostel programs. City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Planning Director - Ongoing.

- Promote City, regional, and individual agriculture by establishing a permanent indoor farmers market, organizing a program of community-supported agriculture, and developing community gardens. City's Community Relations Coordinator, Community Development Office, Planning Office, Parks and Recreation Director - 2010.
- Take an assertive role in the Sagadahoc County budget-preparation process making sure that the County's activities and funding levels serve the best interests of City of Bath taxpayers. City Manager, City Council - Ongoing.

4.11 REGIONAL COORDINATION

Issue Statements

- The City of Bath is the Service Center and the "downtown" for a group of five area towns.
- The City of Bath can maintain its vibrant downtown in part because it is also the downtown for these other regional towns.
- Because of the City's higher valuation than other municipalities in RSU 1 and Sagadahoc County, Bath bears the largest part of the RSU 1 budget and the County Tax.

Planning Implications of the Regional Coordination Inventory

- Many services—municipal services and cultural, nongovernmental services—are shared in the Bath Region. This is done to provide more and better services and opportunities with lower costs.
- As costs to provide services increase, and as new residents in the towns of the Bath Region demand additional services, municipalities will have to become more efficient. This may reduce past concerns about the loss of local control when services are provided regionally and may encourage additional coordination.

Actions

- Encourage the City Council to consider regional coordination for more cost-effective, efficient, and productive service delivery of solid-waste management and recycling; development of housing affordable to first-time homebuyers; protection of natural resources; and promotion of local forestry and agriculture, recreation, energy conservation, economic development and tourism, transportation and public works, and fire and ambulance service. City Manager, Appropriate Department Heads - Ongoing.
- Conduct annual meetings of the Bath Region's Planning Boards, Select Boards and Councils, and County Commissioners. City Council, Planning Board, City Manager, Planning Director - 2011.

- Take an assertive role in the Sagadahoc County budget-preparation process making sure that the County's activities and funding levels serve the best interests of City of Bath taxpayers. City Council, City Manager – Ongoing.
- Participate in other regional-planning, economic development, resource-protection, and decision-making processes. Planning Board, City Council, City Manager, Planning Director – Ongoing.