

# NEWCASTLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



JUNE 2018



**Thank You to the hundreds of Newcastle residents and business owners who participated in the “This is Newcastle” Public Planning Process. Your ideas, needs, and vision have formed this Comprehensive Plan.**

# Acknowledgments

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## THE NLPC WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR PLANNING PROCESS SPONSORS AND CONTRIBUTORS:

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Lincoln County News  
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Lincoln Home  
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Newcastle Historical Society  
Newcastle Publick House  
Ocean's Wide  
Oxbow Brewery  
Reny's  
Scott B. Smith Imagery  
Sully's Hot Dogs

PARKING!

# BIG IDEAS

... and how to get it done.

Encourage local business esp. retail that is in keeping with village character (i.e. not strip or big box) and reduce setbacks - sim. to historic patterns. Parking behind.

promote solar farms ect! They are great.

Better public transportation

Allow unrestricted uses in rural areas in exchange for increasing lot size from 1 acre to 10 acres.

Need Business !!

Light Industrial Park off of Rte 1, screened by trees.

NEED  
COMMERCIAL USE  
IN  
RURAL ZONE  
\* Keep 1 Acre lots

More  
✓ Reny's  
Warehouses

I wish there could be a sidewalk from Jays Emporium to Kingsley Rd + Loops. Does it make sense now with its rather "embay" now.

Handwritten notes and diagrams including:  
- "road + ramp" with arrows pointing to "existing ramp"  
- "Hatch there" with arrows pointing to "ground"  
- "Town services" and "Community services" listed below



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# INTRODUCTION







# Welcome to the Newcastle Comprehensive Plan

The Newcastle Comprehensive Plan strives to tell the story of Newcastle and its people while respecting the past, being mindful of the present, and with thoughtful consideration for what Newcastle can become. It is grounded in a dynamic public process of open dialogue amongst residents of all ages, and offers an inspiring set of action steps that the Town of Newcastle can readily embrace to move forward.

The plan is attuned to the reality of Newcastle. As a small coastal town, Newcastle has an inherent need to be fiscally smart in how it provides services and quality of life enhancements for its residents. Although residents of Newcastle have diverse backgrounds, incomes, faiths, and experiences, each owns a share of Newcastle's future. Therefore, the Comprehensive Plan speaks to a need to encourage growth and investment across all demographics, emphasizing benefits for the broader community.

Ultimately, these investments in Newcastle should meet the needs of every age group, from children to elders, whether it be a street improvement or a new public gathering space in front of a Main Street building. In the spirit of providing for the people who are here today, and with the goal of a balanced community future, the plan coalesces around FIVE BIG IDEAS. These concepts define ambitious strategies and create action items designed to achieve the future that Newcastle desires.

## What is the Newcastle Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is the Town's official adopted statement of intent for the future of Newcastle. It serves as the foundation for informed decision making regarding land use policy and investment actions. The plan establishes a vision and guiding principles by way of "BIG IDEAS". While analyzing existing conditions and emerging trends, it describes and illustrates where future growth and development is preferred. It also identifies current and future public services and infrastructure, and presents strategic action steps for straightforward implementation.

Maine State law requires that towns review and update their Comprehensive Plans every 12 years. Some aspects of the State law require in-depth recording and analysis of facts and data, such as the census. It is important to recognize that the census data, and its assumptions regarding growth, may not accurately predict the future of Newcastle. Data was collected and reported for the Town to be consistent with the intent of rules and requirements as set forth in the Growth Management Act (30-A M.R.S.A. §§ 4312 - 4350) and Chapter 208: Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule.



# A Message from the Newcastle Local Planning Committee

## TAKING A TRUE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH FOR NEWCASTLE.

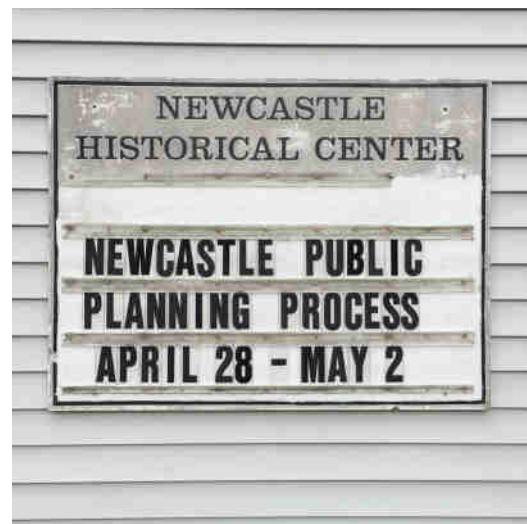
The town of Newcastle has had two Comprehensive Plans in recent history. The first, done in the 1990's and the most recent update completed in 2006. Our Land Use Ordinance was first created in 1971 and has been added to, patched up, and revised many times over many years. While the goal of a Comprehensive Plan is to present a vision that informs the Land Use Ordinance (LUO), this has rarely been accomplished for Newcastle. Instead, the LUO has been revised in a somewhat haphazard manner over the years, sometimes attempting to address the Comprehensive Plan but mostly as a reaction to current needs or events in the town. This new process is an attempt to change that once and for all.

Over the years the LUO has become a patchwork of regulations that are difficult to read, difficult to understand and difficult to enforce. The Selectmen, Planning Board and town residents who wanted to make substantial changes to their property all understood this. Development of any kind in Newcastle has been effectively shut down as a result. Various attempts were made to take a broader approach to reforming our LUO, most recently in 2010 when a home-grown planning process was undertaken. However, it became apparent that undertaking a wide-scope revision of the LUO was beyond the abilities of a volunteer committee working in their spare time.

The Selectmen made the decision to take a truly comprehensive approach to a new Comprehensive Plan and LUO for the town. Money was allocated to hire a consultant to create both a new Comprehensive Plan and LUO together and to do it in a process that would really include the entire community. A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was formed in 2014 to find the consultants who would accomplish this. The goal was to make the planning process as inclusive as possible and to really seek out ideas from anyone living or doing business in Newcastle. In early 2015, the consulting group Maine Design Workshop was chosen and we were introduced to the idea of a Character-Based Code.

In April 2015 the Steering Committee evolved to become the Newcastle Local Planning Committee (NLPC), comprised of representatives from every area of Newcastle, town boards and committees, and local businesses. The members of the NLPC have met regularly, often weekly, for the last 18 months, first educating ourselves on planning issues and then creating an engagement plan. We have reached out in every way possible to involve all the people of Newcastle in this important process – even using a fun “guerilla marketing” plan with the This is Newcastle signs that popped up all over town. The following pages detail that work. We have succeeded beyond our wildest dreams – engaging hundreds of people in the April 2016 Local Planning Process and subsequent meetings and talks.

The costs of running our schools, maintaining our roads and providing essential town services for Newcastle will not dramatically decrease in the future. The best method we have to avoid large increases in property taxes is through intelligent growth and development that protects and maintains our character. This Comprehensive Plan and Character-Based code are our new tools, rooted in our heritage, which will guide our future.



# Big Ideas.

## **One of the ways residents contributed their voices during the public participation process was through a dynamic, crowd-sourcing activity.**

Throughout the Planning weekend events in April 2016, people were asked to write their big ideas on paper and tape them up on a moveable wall. The wall was first launched at the Kick-Off & Hands-On Workshop and was later re-installed on the garage doors of the studio where, over the next several days, people added to the wall and used colored dots to vote for ideas. The wall was then moved to the fire station for a final chance to add ideas and vote with dots. People of all ages participated and all ideas, both big and small, remained on display until the close of the Planning Weekend. Each big idea is presented in the Comprehensive Plan with supporting narrative and insights, and includes specific action steps for the town to implement. Collectively, the big ideas serve as the Town's guiding principles, offer strategies, and provide a vision for Newcastle's future.

### **INNOVATION, ENTREPRENEURS, BUSINESS EVERYWHERE**

Two sentiments were shared frequently during the planning process: 1) provide flexible regulations so that residents can more easily start and grow businesses, and 2) allow greater use of the land. Even people who have no intention of starting businesses expressed support for growing local business. At the same time, people expressed a desire to keep Newcastle's rural character. While there may not be general agreement about how to make both these things happen, this comprehensive plan responds by recommending a different regulatory approach to the rural lands, including a complete overhaul of use standards. People in Newcastle want to make a living by participating in today's emerging economies. While the natural landscape of Newcastle may appear farm-centric, farming is not a dominant industry in the town. With reasonable zoning standards, businesses can start up, grow, thrive and help stabilize the town's finances. People can make living wages locally.

### **CLAIM MAIN STREET**

Newcastle's Village has a Main Street in disguise. The disguise has been in place for almost 100 years and it looks like a long, auto-centric highway off-ramp to Damariscotta, which the NLPC refers to as a "luge" track. A first step towards claiming Newcastle's Main Street involves working to reclaim MDOT land to create a civic square with a tree-lined promenade and streetscape leading to the bridge over the Damariscotta River. A civic square establishes stronger community identity and provides a place to gather. Claiming Main Street means more than civic pride; it means enabling a renaissance to happen on Main Street, providing incentive for people to live here, invest here, shop here, relax here, work here, play here and gather here. Arrival in the Village will be definitive and people will clearly understand where Newcastle's Main Street begins.

## **BE A LIFELONG LIVING COMMUNITY**

Neighborhoods provide the framework of life and of community; they are the sum of where we live, work, celebrate, socialize, pray, play and learn. The physical design of a neighborhood influences how we go about our daily lives. Can we walk to work or church or let our children safely walk or bicycle to school? Can we experience social connections? Are there housing opportunities available to meet the needs of every stage of life? A successful lifelong living community may or may not have become so through intentional actions. However, communities that choose to support lifelong living concepts focus their thinking, actions, and investments around one guiding principle: design for the comfort and safety of an 8-year-old. Design standards that work for an 8-year-old will work for an 88-year-old as well.

## **CELEBRATE LOCAL HERITAGE**

Newcastle is a living museum of cultural history, a history which should be preserved and celebrated for residents and for future generations. Newcastle's landscape still tells the story of its past, with several intact villages which are unaltered in their character and cohesiveness, containing buildings from the 18th and early 19th century. Long before colonial villages took shape on the land or timber was first cut and sent to England, Native Americans migrated through the area and settled for periods of time. Shell middens from 1000 years ago and other pre-historic artifacts are reminders that Newcastle's story began long before colonization.

## **MAKE RURAL WORK**

Greater development flexibility for rural landowners will help grow the local economy while creating incentives to preserve Newcastle's rural character. Encouraging innovative uses such as outdoor recreation and tourism-based businesses, in addition to more traditional rural uses, will accomplish these goals. Forested lands can serve double duty as managed woodlots and regional destinations for year-round activities including hiking, mountain biking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and zip-lines. Hospitality-related businesses such as B&B's, inns, cabins, and Nordic ski centers can support eco-adventures in addition to offering general provisions, equipment rentals, and eating establishments. Rural businesses can contribute to the future economic resiliency of the town.





# PUBLIC PROCESS



# Public Outreach



**From April 27th - May 2nd, 2016 the citizens of Newcastle were invited to participate in a multi-day public planning and design event to develop a vision for the future of Newcastle.**

## **Local Planning Committee**

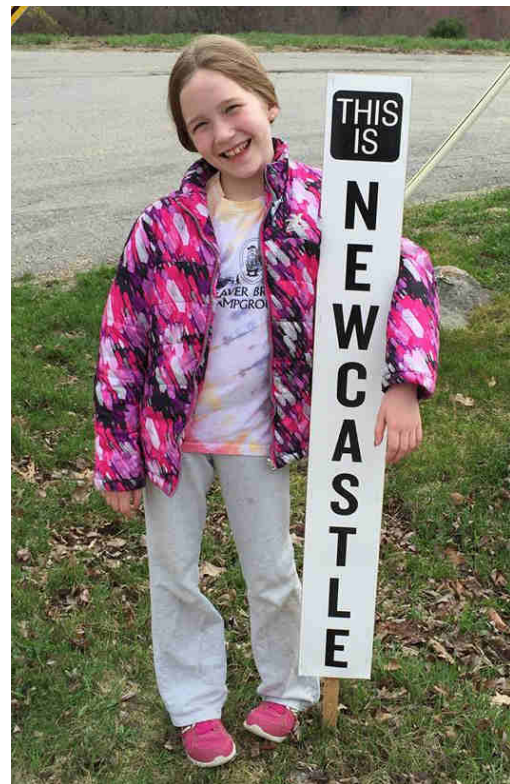
Gearing up for the Comprehensive Plan and Character-Based coding process, the Selectmen appointed a citizen committee which represented a variety of neighborhoods and backgrounds. The Newcastle Local Planning Committee (NLPC) was the driving force behind the public engagement efforts and worked with Maine Design Workshop early on to develop an outreach plan that was designed for Newcastle. Prior to beginning the process, the NLPC met for almost a year to learn about contemporary issues in planning, design, and regulatory frameworks.

## **Project Branding and This is Newcastle Selfie Campaign**

With assistance from MDW, the NLPC developed a strong localized brand for the project called "This Is Newcastle". As well as being a good slogan for the project, this phrase addresses the

almost comical confusion that exists, even among residents of Newcastle, as to the geographical boundaries of the town. The NLPC launched a "selfie campaign" by printing signs that resembled old fashioned town-line markers saying, "This is Newcastle", and encouraging people to take selfies with the signs all over town. Signs were distributed at Homeport Supply and the Town Office, and residents shared their selfies on the project Facebook page. Staff at the Town Office set up a photo booth and bulletin board so local elders not familiar with social media could participate as well. The selfie campaign generated a lot of local buzz, not just in Newcastle but also in neighboring communities, and appeared in Downeast Magazine. Newcastle residents are proud of their community and the selfie campaign reinforced this pride. At the same time, the variety of photo submissions highlighted the fact that Newcastle is made up of several different settlements, each with unique identities.





## Social & Online Media

The team set up a project Facebook page for the Town of Newcastle's planning efforts, and began to post information about the process and how people could participate. As selfies were uploaded, Facebook friends were invited to share their photos on social media, adding hashtags and inviting comments. A Q&A Fact sheet was prepared by MDW and added to the town's web site, as well as a detailed schedule for the 5-day public process. More than simply creating a source of online information, the Facebook page provided, and continues to provide, a platform for the community to celebrate what they love most about Newcastle.

## News Media

The NLPC crafted a series of editorials about the process and why it mattered, testing people's local knowledge about Newcastle, and asking questions such as, "More farms? More light manufacturing? More forestry? More open space? More breweries? More retail establishments? More clustered housing? More density downtown? More walking, horseback-riding, biking, snow-mobile and/or skiing trails?" Additionally, the Lincoln County News reported on the process and Lincoln County Television filmed different presentations and focus groups to broadcast on local public access.

## Print Media

All printed materials were consistently branded with the "This Is Newcastle" logo and aesthetic to provide a cohesive identity for all things project related. Postcards were handed out by NLPC members, and posters were placed at popular locations around both Damariscotta and Newcastle. The postcards included the full 5-day schedule of events and provided directions to get more information.

## Personal Outreach

In the weeks preceding the event, the NLPC took postcards door-to-door to over 700 households, demonstrating a commitment to make sure every resident of Newcastle felt invited to participate. NLPC members made personal invitations to friends and businesses, distributing postcards, making phone calls and reaching out via email.

## Character-Based Codes Workshop to Gardiner

Part of the NLPC's preparation for this project included a workshop about Character-Based coding. Members from various town committees and boards, as well as interested citizens, were invited to participate. The workshop was held on a Saturday and began with a presentation followed by a guided walking tour of Gardiner. Participants learned about Character-Based codes and how they regulate development. They surveyed different character districts and discussed street design in relationship to creating place and desired character. They were introduced to synoptic surveying as a tool that is used to analyze built environments and understand local precedents.



Newcastle Local Planning Committee members and guests participate in a bus trip to Gardiner, as part of a full-day Character-Based coding workshop.



# Pop-Up Studio



**The multi-day public planning process brought together over 100 participants to each of the big public presentations, and dozens of people to each of the various special topic meetings.**

The interactive engagement process provided an open forum for the public to work closely with the consultant team to identify big ideas and generate a community-wide vision for the Town. The NLPC obtained permission from a local landowner to use an old automotive garage on Main Street for the Studio. MDW set up a fully-functioning office and design studio for the duration of the event, open to the community at all hours. The Pop-Up Studio format generated interest among a broad spectrum of citizens and local stakeholders.



## Kick-Off & Hands On Workshop

The five-day process kicked off with a large turnout at Lincoln Academy's new state-of-the-art Applied Technology and Engineering Center (ATEC) for an introductory presentation that set the framework for the comprehensive planning and Character-Based coding process. The presentation gave an overview of the project, reviewed how Newcastle evolved over time, introduced some of the benefits that modern comprehensive planning and coding can provide, and outlined the project timeline. The MDW team explained its role as listeners and interpreters, intentionally providing no preconceived ideas, notions or concept sketches, while setting the stage for residents to communicate their own vision for the town.

Immediately following the kick-off presentation, the consultant team facilitated a hands-on design workshop. Participants were invited to roll up their sleeves and brainstorm ideas using several large maps showing different areas of town. Participants identified key areas of concern and opportunities on the maps. At the end of the night, participants returned to the table representing the neighborhood where they lived or worked for a discussion with fellow neighbors. The top big ideas were presented by each group, bringing into focus the most critical concerns and aspirations people have for their community. Information gathered from the hands-on workshop directly informed the design team as to community priorities and guiding principles. On the second day, the team conducted special



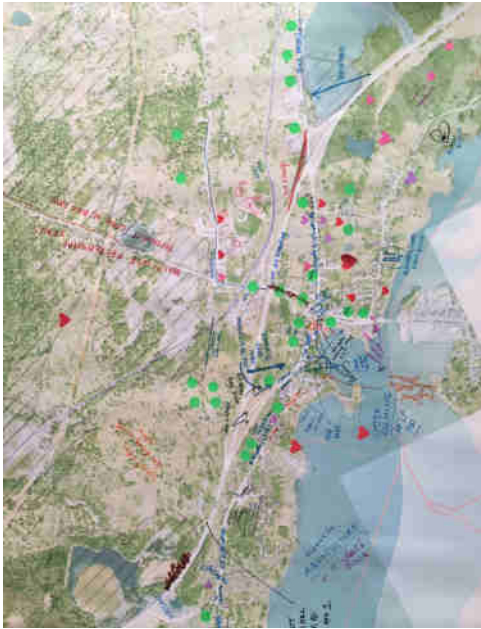
topic meetings in the studio, engaging a deeper discussion of issues, opportunities and constraints related to public works and safety, active living, arts, culture and historic assets, and farming and working landscapes (including marine). Later that evening, Lincoln Home hosted a business mixer. Local businesses and entrepreneurs met with team representatives to share stories and insights about what it is like to be a business owner/operator in Newcastle. Participants noted that this was the first time that Newcastle businesses had gathered to discuss local concerns on their own.



## PASSPORT TO NEWCASTLE: HANDS-ON WORKSHOP & SURVEY

The maps below were produced by small groups of participants during the Passport to Newcastle Hands-On Workshop and represent a consolidation of information and ideas collected during the evening. Each participant received a “Passport” and traveled around to maps of the various areas of Newcastle to answer a series of questions. During the opening night of the process and available at the design studio throughout the entire event, participants could complete a survey asking focused questions about each unique area

of Newcastle in addition to giving space for open ended contribution of ideas. Dozens of residents took the time to complete the survey and the answers helped to inform the work of the design team during the process. Many of the responses have been incorporated into the Plan Framework section of this plan. Comments from the workshop, survey, and other public input received during the public planning process guided the team to draw and shape illustrative master plans.



## The Studio

Meanwhile, members of the team began developing overall planning framework and illustrative plans in response to community input, pulling ideas from the workshop, citizen drop-ins, and the Round Table meetings. On the third day, while the team worked preparing concepts for the mid-process community check in presentation, the NLPC implemented two street repair demonstrations: Lot Activation and a 4-Way Stop.

## Lot Activation BLOCK PARTY

On Saturday, the NLPC temporarily activated the parking lot in front of the studio with liner buildings to create a community gathering space and model new infill development on Main Street. Miniature-scaled buildings, built by NLPC members, were placed at the edge of the sidewalk to create the sense of a street wall. Families were invited to paint the buildings while temporary seating, food carts and a DJ were set up. Families painted, ate lunch, lingered - even danced - and visited the studio to look at the work being developed and to share their aspirations for Newcastle's future.





### 4-Way STOP Project

On Saturday April 30th, from 10 am - 12 p.m., the NLPC worked with Lincoln County Sheriff's office to demonstrate how a 4-Way Intersection could be re-established at Academy Hill Road and Mills Road. Traffic cones were placed to block free-flow turning movements in the slip lane to Damariscotta, and temporary 4-way stop signs were installed to indicate to drivers how to behave in the newly configured intersection. As large trucks and vehicles approached the demonstration area from the south, volunteers quickly moved traffic cones to allow these longer vehicles to use the slip lane. People of all ages gathered on the street to watch and observe the demonstration, commenting on the slow-flow speed of cars, the

ease in crossing the street, the dramatic decrease in vehicle noise, and the generally pleasant environment. The test was repeated in June 2016, with slight modifications including keeping the slip lane as a yield condition while narrowing the lanes with cones. In both instances, the NLPC used a drone to record footage of the tests. Videos were uploaded to the project Facebook page. The consensus reached by the two tests is that Newcastle can have its own pedestrian oriented Main Street which is attractive, pleasant to walk along, and safe for both foot and vehicle traffic.



## Pop-Up Beer Garden & Pin-Up

Saturday's activities culminated with an evening pop-up beer garden, dinner and community bonfire, featuring Oxbow Brewing Company and Newcastle Publick House. Over 125 people attended, leaving standing room only and spilling out of the garage bays into the beer garden. That night, half-way through the weekend, the team presented preliminary illustrative plans, a draft set of guiding principles, and other work products at various stages of completion. After the community check-in presentation, people were invited to view maps and plans pinned up on the walls and onto makeshift display boards set out in the beer garden, and to ask questions and share feedback with team members. During this time and into the next afternoon, the public continued to filter into the studio to observe the team hard at work. At noon on Sunday the studio doors closed to the public and the team entered full production mode: synthesizing ideas, collaborating over design challenges, preparing renderings, compiling images, refining the illustrative plans and the regulating plan, and building the character districts and code tables.

## Closing Presentation

Due to the large numbers of participants who had attended the opening session and mid-point community check-in, it became apparent to the team and the NLPC that the venue for the closing presentation needed to be much bigger. The final event was moved to the Fire Station on River Road, where equipment was pulled out of several truck bays to accommodate more than 125 attendees. Temporary displays were set up on garage doors and rolling easels for participants to view before and after the presentation. Drone footage of the Tactical 4-way stop played on continuous loop so residents could see approximately 15 minutes of footage from the demonstration from a unique vantage-point. The evening, and weekend long planning process, concluded with a robust community discussion, along with an enthusiastic showing of support for the drawings presented. The positive response and level of dialogue indicated to the team and the NLPC that the community felt like it was heard and understood, and had achieved the consensus necessary to take on some big initiatives moving forward. The process was well-attended, and the committee was pleased with the diversity of attendance and the levels of participation.

## Sheepscot Meeting

After the initial Planning Process in April the NLPC held a follow up session in July, 2016 at the Harriet Bird Clubhouse in Sheepscot. The goal of the meeting was to collect more citizen input from rural residents and land owners. Over 50 people, mostly from North Newcastle and Sheepscot, attended the evening session which included a lively discussion about rural character. Residents recalled the history of the rural areas of Newcastle and fondly remembered the neighborly good will present in Newcastle. Others spoke about their concerns regarding possible large (5-10 acre) minimum lot sizes and the desire to keep as much land as possible available for agricultural production. The information gathered at this meeting was rolled into the April weekend workshop data for use in preparation of the Comprehensive Plan.











# NEWCASTLE TODAY



ROD MELANSON

# Who We Are



DAMARISCOTTA RIVER ASSOCIATION

Hiking on the River~Link Trail.

**When residents look around town and at neighboring Midcoast communities, the common perception is that the community is getting older and the population is shrinking.**

Many small Maine towns are losing population. The reasons for this trend may be: proximity to family or services to support aging, new and/or higher-paying jobs, broader housing choices, or the pursuit of more culturally-active lifestyles. Anecdotally, we know that small towns are competing for population, and that some coastal communities are growing while others continue to shrink. The population data can only tell us so much, leaving us to hypothesize what Newcastle's future might look like. Will the population decline or grow? What will the faces of Newcastle look like in 5, 10, 20 years? What can historical trends and current data tell us, and what outcomes might result from local policy and intentional strategic actions? Most humbling, what external forces outside of our control will influence who we are and how we live in the future?

## Population Trends

Newcastle's surge in population in the late Twentieth Century followed the trend of Lincoln County by a decade. Lincoln County's neutral growth, and even decline as measured by the American Community Survey (ACS) of 2014, may be an indication that Newcastle's population patterns will follow suit. Overall, the state of Maine's population trends demonstrated a similar arc, but not nearly as dramatic a swing as on the coast. The question that remains is whether population growth will rise again, after the lull, or continue to slow. However, given that population expansion in Newcastle came to an abrupt halt in a short four-year span after three decades of robust growth, indicates that the conditions in place that are depressing growth persist. Regardless, Newcastle's population has not decreased as of 2014.





DAMARISCOTTA RIVER ASSOCIATION

Loading oysterbeds at the shared Damariscotta town landing.

### State Data: Interpret with Caution

The State of Maine’s Governor’s Office of Policy & Management published population projections in 2015 for the Town of Newcastle and Lincoln County. The Governor’s Office used, by necessity, a universal equation applied to the entire state. The State measured each town’s share of a county’s population over a four-year period (2008-2012) then, estimating the county’s total population over future five-year periods (based on the county’s historic trajectory), the State divided each county total up by each town’s proportionate share.

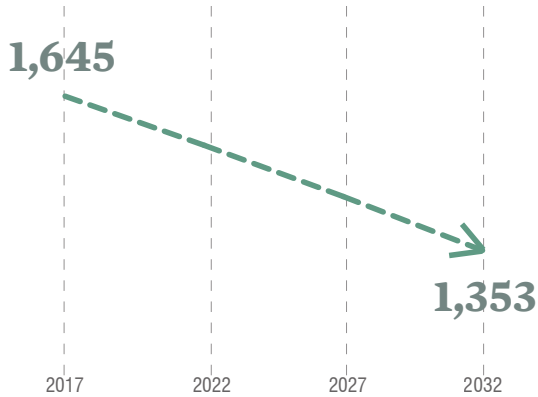
Each town’s proportionate share was based on the trend from 2008-2012, so if a town’s proportion of county population was dwindling each year by 1%, that changing share was reflected in the five-year estimates. The Governor’s Office admits that this mathematical analysis is flawed, saying “These town projections must be interpreted with caution. They are based on assumptions and past trends that may or may not hold into the future. In some ways, these population projections represent what will happen under a business-as-usual scenario where all the moving pieces (including migration rates, life expectancies, and sprawl patterns) continue on their current trajectories.” Indeed, the trajectories measured between 2008



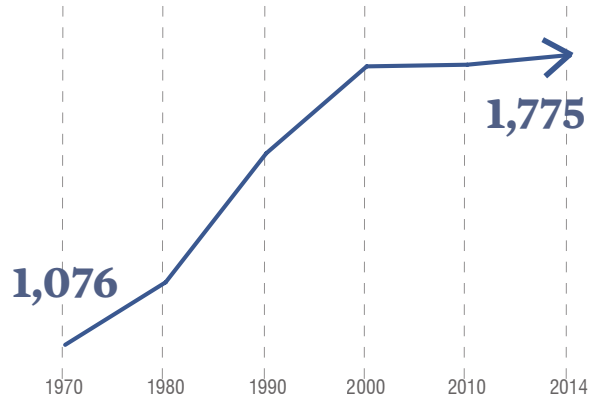
KATHARINA KEOUGHAN

Auto mechanic working at Newcastle Chrysler, a local business that draws regional customers.

## Projected Population, 2017-2032

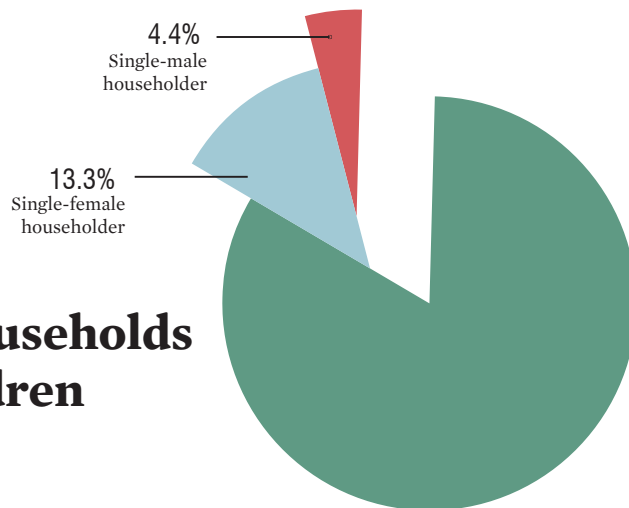


## Actual Population, 1970-2014



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, DECENNIAL CENSUS

## Family Households With Children



Average household size:



2.21 people

Average family size:



2.70 people

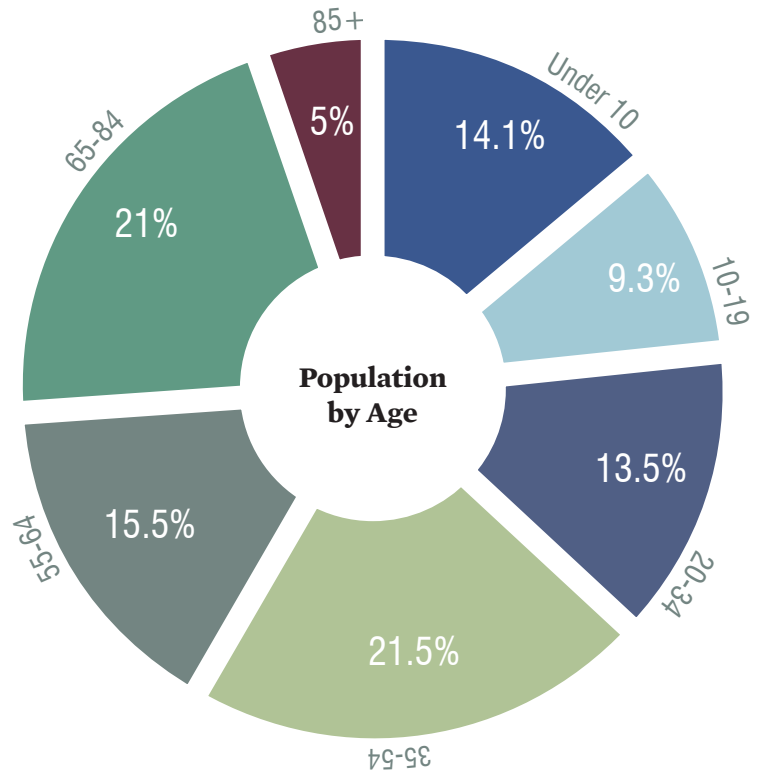
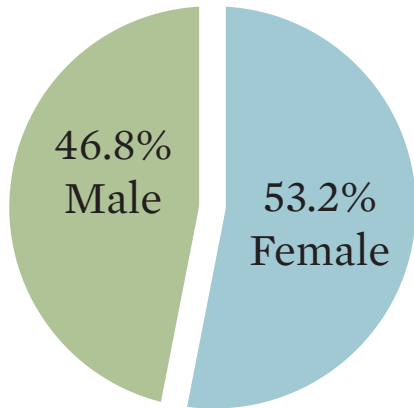
Average household size of renter-occupied units:



1.85 people

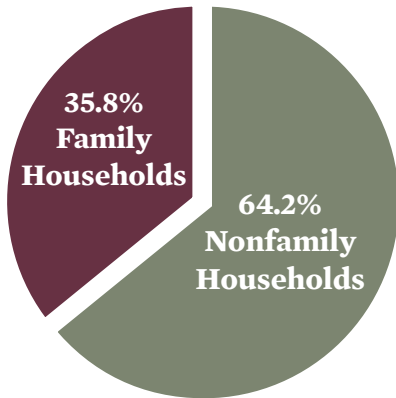
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2010 CENSUS





SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2014

## Housing Relationship



Median age is: **46.7 years**

### Insight:

**An almost equal number of young people (under the age of 19) live in Newcastle as seniors (age 65+)**

**23.8%** of households include children under 18 years

**37.7%** of households include individuals 65+ years

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2010 CENSUS

and 2012 were affected by a significant real estate recession and stock market crash. New housing construction was substantially stunted during those years.

For 2014, the State anticipated that Newcastle would have a negative population change, while the ACS data showed a 1% increase in population that year. Over the next three years, the State predicted a 5% decline in Newcastle by 2017, another 6% decline by 2022, 6% decrease again by 2027, and a full 7% drop by 2032.

These projections may have been helpful to forecast Newcastle's resident numbers if the Great Recession conditions held. However, the housing sector has largely recovered and the stock market continues to restore lost value. Slow wage growth may not support a population boom as experienced by Newcastle in the 1990's, but it is also not affecting population decline. The State projections may be useful, in fact, if the U.S. slides into another economic recession during the prediction period.

### **Baby Blip?**

Notable growth and retention of both adults of child-bearing age, and children of elementary school age, are two positive population trends in Newcastle's favor. U.S. Census data shows that the number of adults between 25 and 39 grew by over a third between 2000 and 2010, and that same group maintained its numbers four years later in 2014. During that same decade, the number of children under five grew by 18%, a sizable amount, and their numbers remained stable in 2014 as well.

To corroborate this trend, K-8 school enrollment numbers for the town of Newcastle grew by almost 15% in the six years between 2010 and 2015. High school enrollment for Newcastle remained largely flat between the same six-year period, fluctuating within 6%.

At the same time, the number of adults of childbearing age grew significantly over the 14-year span from 2000 to 2014. Children age nine and under rose by 58% in this period, while the number of adults of child-bearing age leapt by approximately 50%, according to U.S. Census data.

**The data tells us that Newcastle's number of young families is replenishing.**

### **Middle School Dip?**

While the number of young families had a strong positive trend throughout the 2000-2014 time period, the number of middle-school aged children (10-14) experienced a 42% dip throughout this period. The adults of a corresponding parenting age (35-49) experienced a similar dip in this same period. Since data indicates that young families were aging in place and being replenished with new young families, we can only speculate about the reasons for the middle-school dip. The county and state trends reflect a similar negative pattern for the middle-school age group. In 2010, when the dip is first recorded, middle schoolers would have been born between 2000- 2004.

All the U.S. Census data indicates that Newcastle is a favorable and attractive community for young families. Strategic planning and investment in schools and family-friendly amenities should only enhance Newcastle's draw. Newcastle's number of young families is most likely to be affected by outside sources, such as dramatic changes in the economy, and generational trends.

### **Retirement Destination**

Newcastle is experiencing remarkable growth among retired residents (ages 65-74).

The rise in retirees is positive on five levels:

1. Newcastle's child-bearing household trends are strong. There is a good balance of retirees to young families, providing a healthy diversity of ages in the community
2. Retirees at this age bracket have spending power and their growing numbers in the community equate to an increase in consumer foot traffic for local businesses
3. Retirees may have more flexibility in taking on a part-time, seasonal or volunteer job that supports smaller businesses or entities such as the schools or library
4. Retirees rarely need to travel at rush hour peaks, so the increase in population does not create pressure to increase road volumes
5. Retirees moving into a community can boost the real estate market by increasing the number of buyers in the marketplace.

There are potential negative factors associated with a spike of inflowing retirees. If retirees are

moving from a market with higher house prices, their stronger buying power could contribute to increased local prices for housing stock, simultaneously pushing out young families with less buying power. Also, if retirees follow national trends, competition may arise with young families who are also seeking smaller, affordable housing in walkable village centers. Given Newcastle's population trends to date, this has not emerged as a problem. However, one could argue that it is simply too soon to tell.

Newcastle is fortunate in that it is not reliant on one major employer that drives population trends. The population growth to date affirms Newcastle's quality of place. Newcastle is poised to grow. As external conditions such as economy and generational trends allow, investments in desirable amenities and other enhancements will bolster Newcastle's already high quality of place.

**People at both ends of the life spectrum are looking for the same qualities in community - walkability, active living, social gathering and a strong sense of community identity - all strengths Newcastle has to offer.**



Retirees enjoying active living opportunities at Lincoln Home.

## Retirement Living

### SCHOONER COVE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Located in Damariscotta on the Miles Campus, this independent living facility offers 47 units of 1 and 2 bedroom configurations, ranging from 650 - 1000 sf.

## Assisted Living, Dementia & Long Term Care

### LINCOLN HOME

The Lincoln Home provides 28 beds for assisted living, and contains a Memory Loss Care unit providing care for 12 residents. Additionally, Lincoln Home has 8 independent living apartments.

### HODGDON GREEN

Hodgdon Green, part of the ElderCare Network of Lincoln County is located in Damariscotta and accommodates 16 residents in private rooms.

### COVE'S EDGE

Located in Damariscotta on the Miles Campus, this facility provides skilled rehab care and long-term care.

### CHASE POINT ASSISTED LIVING

Located in Damariscotta on the Miles Campus, Chase Point is an assisted living facility. Riverside, also part of Chase Point, provides Alzheimer's care and other memory loss-related conditions. Units are studio and 1-bedroom.



## Health & Social Services

### LINCOLNHEALTH - MILES

Established in 1941 as Miles Memorial Hospital, Lincoln Health is a subsidiary of Maine Health, and is a full-service community health care center. Services include: public health education; wellness and rehabilitation; and Women's Center (obstetrics).

### MILES & ST ANDREWS HOME HEALTH & HOSPICE

Offers in-home comprehensive range of services from companionship to highly-technical skilled care, including physical, occupational, respiratory, and speech therapies. Social Workers provide support, counseling and access to community resources.

### MOBIUS

Mobius provides behavioral health services, including case management, community, residential and employment support and non-traditional communication.

### ON-SITE SCHOOL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Both Lincoln Academy and Great Salt Bay Schools have nurses and social workers on staff to address needs of students.

### ONE2ONE CARE AT LINCOLN HOME

Lincoln Home has provided home care services for up to 49 clients in the past, including 23 clients from Newcastle. The ability to provide service is highly dependent on availability of local health care workers.

## Family Resources

### WOMEN INFANT AND CHILDREN CLINIC

Located in Damariscotta, WIC provides help for children and single mothers with low income housing, in addition to unemployment, food, medical and rent assistance. Dandelion Spring Farm offers reduced rate share in CSA for EBT/SNAP benefits.

### MILES IN MOTION THRIFT SHOP

Located in Damariscotta, the thrift shop provides low-cost clothing for adults and children, home goods and furniture.

### YMCA - CENTRAL LINCOLN COUNTY

Initially started in 1973 as a recreation center where youth and teens could congregate and engage in sports in a safe and supervised environment, the facility is undergoing an \$8.5 mil capital campaign to expand services to meet the needs of ten towns, including facility improvements targeted to meet the needs of all ages of people - children, young adults, families and elders. Improvements include, natatorium (aquatic facility) with lap and warm- water therapy pools for swim lessons, swim team practices, therapy services, exercise and family fun; community meeting spaces, and indoor family adventure space with climbing wall.

### ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY

The pantry was started around 1989 as a completely volunteer non-profit organization, and remains so to this day. The organization distributes over 2,000 pounds of food each week, serving the residents of Damariscotta, Newcastle, Nobleboro, and the larger community. The food pantry is open every Tuesday and is located at the Second Congregational Church on Main Street.



School-aged children participating in Damariscotta River Association farm camp, one of the available local summer programs for families to take advantage of.

# How We Work



Morning Dew Farm, South Newcastle

## **Newcastle is known for its culture of entrepreneurship and highly skilled, hard working people.**

Understanding how Newcastle residents make their living today, and more importantly, how residents want to make their living in the future, is key to setting new regulatory policy for the town. The right policies for Newcastle will foster local creativity, entrepreneurship and growth for the businesses that are strong today and that support high quality of life and living wages for families and residents.

According to a snapshot survey of wage and employment data in 2013, Newcastle’s top employment sectors are healthcare and retail trade (including restaurants). Healthcare employed 112 employees over retail trade’s 95, but retail trade posted higher total wages, making it the largest share of local incomes.

The third largest employment sector in Newcastle was Construction at 37 – about a third

of healthcare and retail jobs. The next three industries to post were Administrative, Other Services, and Manufacturing at 31, 28 and 25 jobs respectively. At the bottom of the list were Arts/ Recreation, Professional Services, and Real Estate at 11, 7 and 5 jobs.

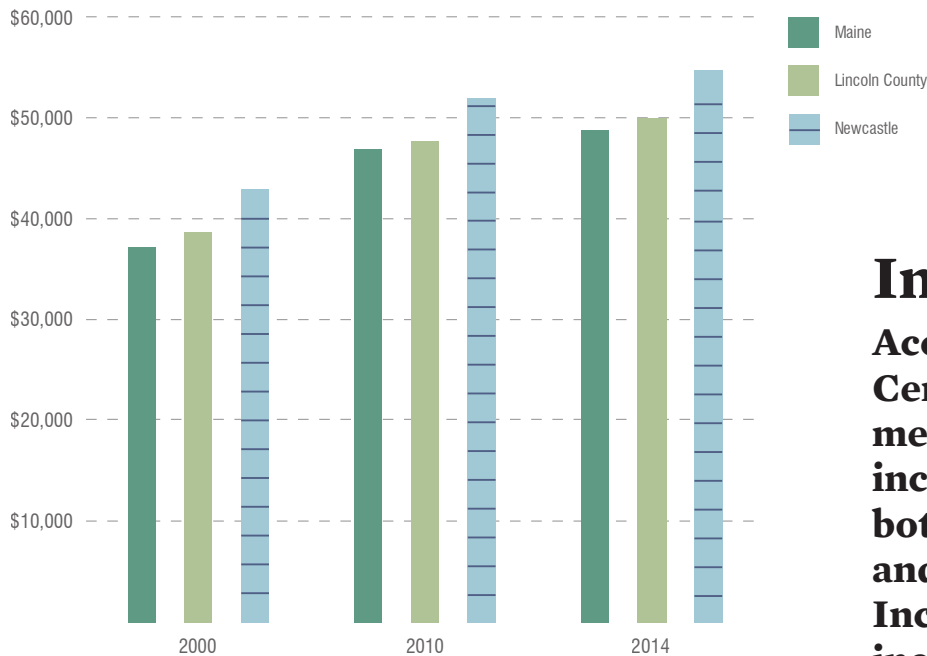
## **Self-employment**

While not considered a “sector”, self-employment is perceived locally to represent a significant way that Newcastle residents make a living. As a proportion of total workers in Lincoln County, self-employed individuals made up 27% of the workforce in 2014, according to data compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The rate was virtually unchanged since 2010, when the proportion was just under 28%. This is nearly double the average for the state of Maine, where typically 16% of the workforce reports being self-employed (as a “nonemployer” business), as reflected in IRS returns.

Clearly, Newcastle is situated in a county where there is a strong culture of self-employment. This may impact, though not necessarily negatively,



# Median Household Income Comparison, 2010-2014



**Insight:**  
**According to the U.S. Census, Newcastle’s median household income is higher than both Lincoln County and the State of Maine. Incomes have steadily increased since 2000.**

SOURCES: US CENSUS BUREAU, DECENNIAL CENSUS AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

commuter data and traffic trends if a full quarter of the population is traveling to meet clients and to different job sites outside of typical rush hour patterns, or if a portion of people are simply working from home.

The higher wages may be reflective of professional talent who can work remotely for higher-paying clients, or it could be an indication of the self-employed peddling skill-sets that are in high demand. Regardless of how wages are earned, higher wages are good for the local economy and will support local businesses.

**Comparatively, the self-employed in Lincoln County had higher incomes than the per capita average – by about 36%. The average income of the self-employed in Lincoln County was \$36,826 in 2010 and \$39,213 five years later in 2014 - a 6.5% growth rate over that period. However, self-employment wages still do not keep up with the rate of inflation, which was a cumulative 8.4% over the same years.**



The owner of Mexicali Blues, a Maine-based company with headquarters in Newcastle, sourcing goods from makers in Kathmandu.

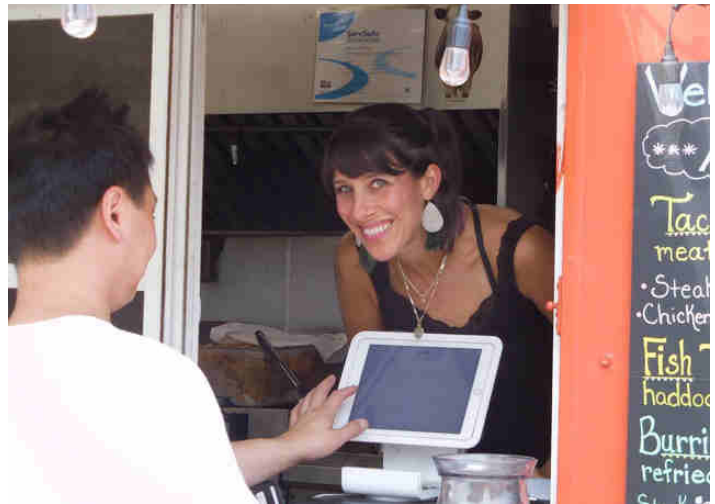
# Contribution of Rural Lands to the Local Economy

In Newcastle, what it means to be rural can no longer be defined simply as open, pastoral farm fields and large tracts of forested lands punctuated by the occasional subdivision, active farm and random home-based business. Where perhaps Sheepscot Village and its immediate surrounds may have a landscape that appears frozen in time - and Sheepscot Village landowners may actively preserve that landscape, making a living off the land and with the land must continue to evolve. One principle has held true: the people who live in the rural parts of Newcastle have been good stewards of the land and are intent on staying as such. The team has worked intensively with the Local Planning Committee to respond to overwhelming support for an expanded definition of rural Newcastle. We have heard residents express a strong desire to be home-based entrepreneurs, to establish rural-based businesses and expand existing successful businesses. However, under the town's existing land use ordinances, the rural districts have minimum lots of 1 – 2 acres and freely opening up the rural districts to commercial activities has the potential to conflict with another profoundly supported goal for the town: protect rural character. Everyone recognizes that how we individually define rural character may be different, but at the same time many people recognize that through careful design and common-sense performance standards, rural character can be preserved. If land use regulations remain locked on farming and residential housing, residential housing will be more likely to dominate the landscape.

## Sharing to Expand Capacity

New local policies can support the self-employed sector such as allowing shared facilities in Newcastle, including office spaces, shared commercial kitchens, and even community workshops where professionals can gain access to commercial-grade construction equipment. Sharing can go a long way to expand capacity for local self-employed workers.

In addition, Newcastle could benefit from affordable studio, shop, and laboratory suites where local artists, trades professionals and scientists can set up their operations on a small scale. This infrastructure may resemble the same layout as self-storage complexes, but on a smaller human scale, where workers can set up and store their equipment in a cost-efficient space (all of which is subject to property taxes and personal property taxes for the Town). Newcastle already benefits from fiber optics running through Main Street that connect the town to fast Internet. Being able to exchange data, market, and sell product to the world online, coupled with the local space to produce is a very successful equation.



Que Rico, a local seasonal food truck operating along the Damariscotta River.

## Wage Distribution

The share of the employment sector does not, however, correlate to the size of wages for each sector. Manufacturing jobs paid the most in town at an average of \$670 in weekly wages, followed by Professional Services and Real Estate, both at \$620 a week. These are among the smallest employers in town. Next on the list are Retail Trade and Construction, at \$538 and \$508 respectively. The last four industries were Other Services (\$469),

Healthcare (\$454), Arts/Recreation (\$451), and Administrative (\$371). According to a 2015 Infogroup survey, the two largest employers in town (at 50-99 employees) are Lincoln Academy and the R. H. Reny retailer corporate office and distribution center. The increased employment potential of these two companies largely resides in their individual business plans, rather than zoning decisions. The next top employers on the list are mid-sized (20-49 employees) and likewise individualized companies: a local newspaper, a nursing home, a car dealership, and a local pub. Considering this data, Newcastle might focus on zoning or TIF districts that encourage the addition of manufacturing jobs, including setting aside districts as clusters for industrial development.



Maine-made and inspired products featured at Milling Around, a local Main Street business.

### **Economic Clusters**

In economic development terms, a “cluster” is defined as the condition where multiple businesses of a similar industry situate themselves near one another. While this may seem counter-intuitive when competing for market share, economic clusters can result in the following advantages:

- More talent moves to the area because of the job opportunities, improving the hiring pool
- Adequate market capacity for industry-specific suppliers to locate themselves in the area
- Strategic investment in specialized or added local infrastructure for the most efficient rate of return
- A town can become knowledgeable and sensitive to an industry’s needs
- Industry camaraderie among employees and leadership
- More easily formed alliances to advocate for industry interests

Clusters create self-perpetuating, self-reliant, healthy economic ecosystems for a community. A diversified local economy is not dependent on the success of a single business or industry. Newcastle would be well advised to analyze in greater depth what sector(s) the town’s qualities and assets would appeal to, and seek to seed a designated area with like-minded companies. This can be accomplished on a small, medium or large scale. It could consist of large bioengineering firms such as in Bar Harbor, medium-sized distilleries such as in Portland, or small start-ups in an office-share environment.

### **Regional Opportunities**

According to the Maine Department of Labor’s Center for Workforce Research and Information, the three top occupations for Lincoln County in 2016 were Sales (1,430 jobs), Office Administration (1,420), and the Food-Service Industry (1,060). These three employment sectors comprise over a third (37%) of Lincoln County jobs (10,530 total). The next 41% of Lincoln County jobs consist of Construction, Transportation/Delivery, Education, Property Maintenance, Healthcare, and Management. The majority of employment opportunities in Newcastle and Lincoln County are middle-class and working-class jobs, which in turn reflect the workforce base from which these industries draw from. Employers will consider the labor pool before making new investments in a town.

### **Market Impact**

The per capita income data shows that incomes in Maine, Lincoln County and Newcastle are not keeping up with the rate of inflation. Per capita income is the sum of all income within a locale divided by the number of residents. However, the data is not iron-clad: the rate of inflation is a national statistic based on the Consumer Price Index. Local prices and demand for certain items on the Index may vary. The American Community Survey also includes a margin of error with the per capita income statistics (not published here) which sways dramatically. In Newcastle, a bad year on the stock market could deliver fewer capital gains for the wealthy, and may not be a reflection of local wage trends which accounts for the large swings in percentage change year-over-year. The shifts in percentage change may also be an indication of a higher rate of contract or seasonal employment, compared to traditional “corporate” jobs, where incomes are more consistent year over year. Regardless, the net result is the same. Whether

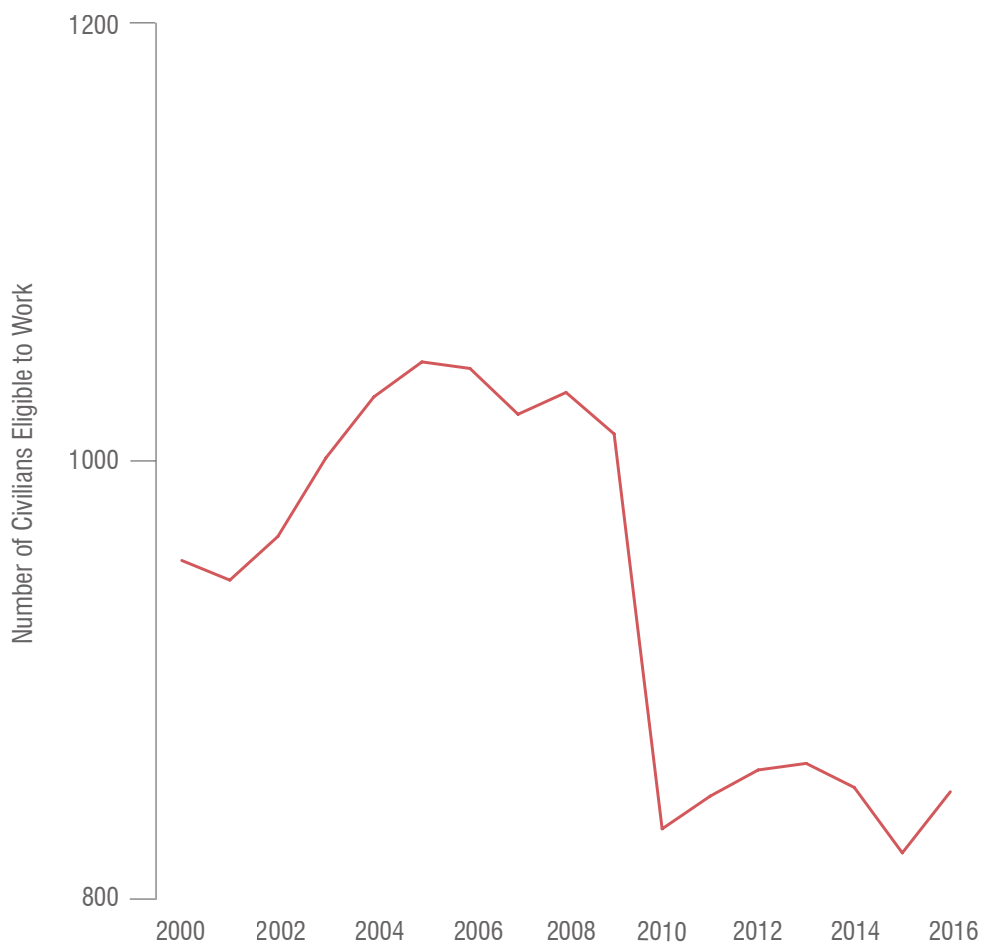


or not per capita income is keeping pace with the rate of inflation, it is certainly not outpacing it. Household wealth is struggling to maintain status quo. One positive note is that per capita income in Newcastle surpassed the statewide average by almost 16% in 2014. As in any rural state, this is not necessarily a high bar, though it does demonstrate that Newcastle is among the “wealthier” half of Maine communities.

## Unemployment

Newcastle’s unemployment rate experiences consistent seasonal fluctuation. However, the overarching trend since 2010 has been a declining trend in unemployment in Newcastle and Lincoln County. In 2010, Newcastle’s unemployment rate was 6.3%, and in 2016 the unemployment rate was 3.5%. Newcastle’s civilian labor force has experienced a significant decline since 2009, which may correlate to the increase in number of retirees.

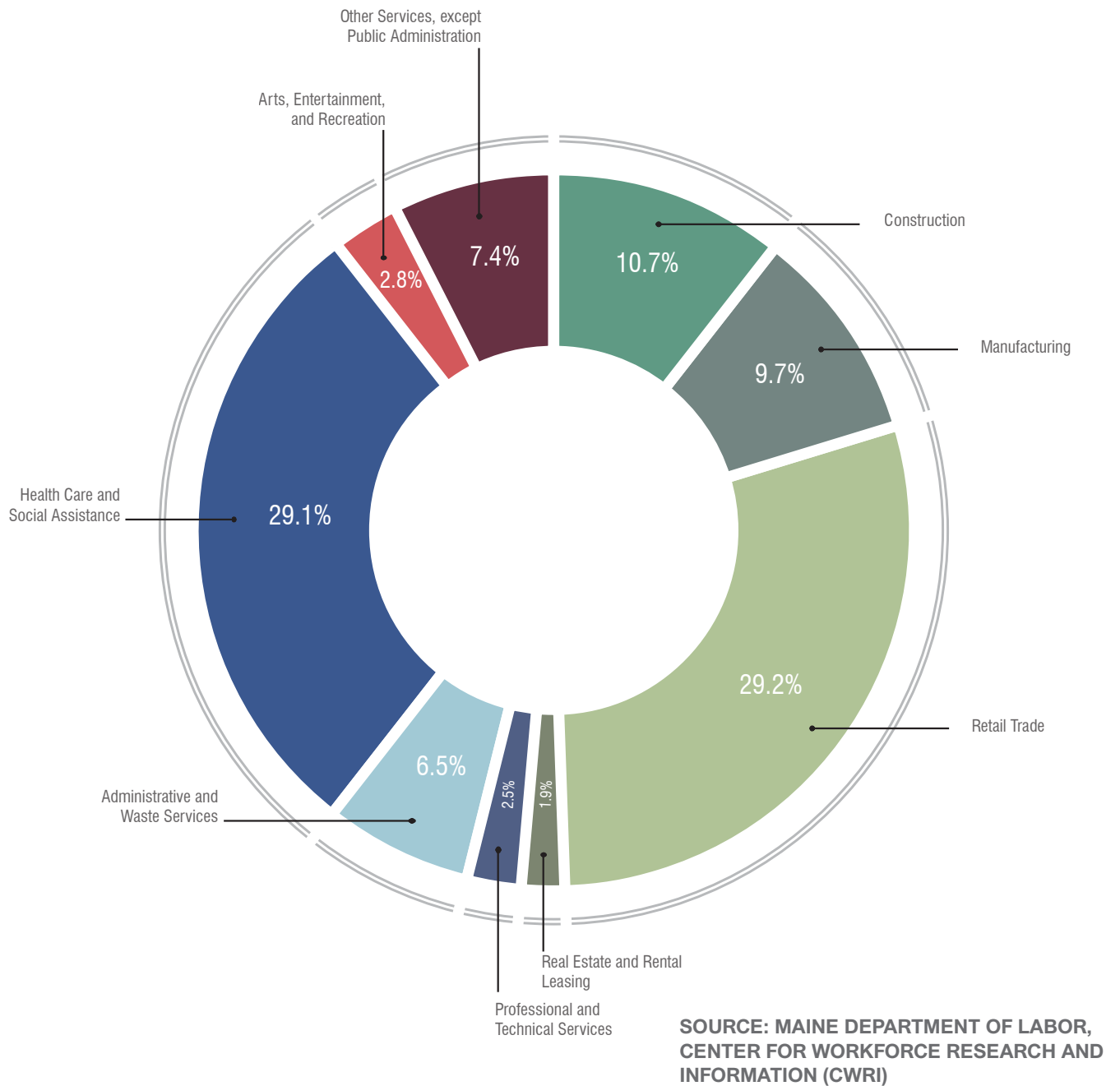
## Civilian Labor Force



SOURCE: MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

**“Find ways to bring low-impact business to town.  
Provide tax incentives and be welcoming.”  
- Participant, Passport to Newcastle**

# Aggregate Wages by Industry



## Insight:

**Newcastle residents earn wages predominantly from the Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade sectors. Manufacturing jobs pay the highest weekly wages, at \$670/week, yet represent less than 10% of the wage share**



# Innovative Businesses

## Defining Newcastle Today



### OXBOW BREWING COMPANY

What began as an entrepreneurial partnership between two friends brewing in a renovated barn has turned into a highly successful small-batch brewing company exporting to restaurants and bars in Vermont, Massachusetts, New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington DC. The original tap room is in Newcastle, a destination for beer lovers from all over the country, in particular for new beer releases. During warmer months, food trucks might be found on site, and new mountain biking trails are being planned for the over 15-acre wooded property. Oxbow continues to brew in Newcastle; however, it has a second tap room in Portland.



### EXACT DISPENSING SYSTEMS

Founder Bruce Kinsey began this company in 1978 in Southport, Maine. In 1999 EXACT relocated to their current facility in Newcastle. They design, build and install precision meter-mix and dispense systems in a wide variety of manufacturing markets around the world, including general manufacturing, motors and windings, electronics, automotive, filtration and military/aerospace. In addition to the primary focus on potting and encapsulation, they also extend their service to applications requiring precision bead dispensing and a host of other unique single and plural component needs.



### SPLITROCK DISTILLING COMPANY

New to the Newcastle scene, Split Rock Distillery is handcrafting small batches of spirits using locally-grown organic grains and fruits. Nutrient-rich mash, a by-product of the distillery process, is feeding heirloom pigs on High on the Hog farm, and water slurry is sprayed as compost on fields of organic produce at Dandelion Spring Farm. The distillery and tasting room is in a restored barn off Rt One. Partners Matt and Topher are not only offering authentic Maine craft spirits, but creating a destination location offering hiking, public distillery tours, and a full seasonal line-up of gourmet food trucks, and availability for special parties and events.



### DANDELION SPRING FARM AND STRAW FARM

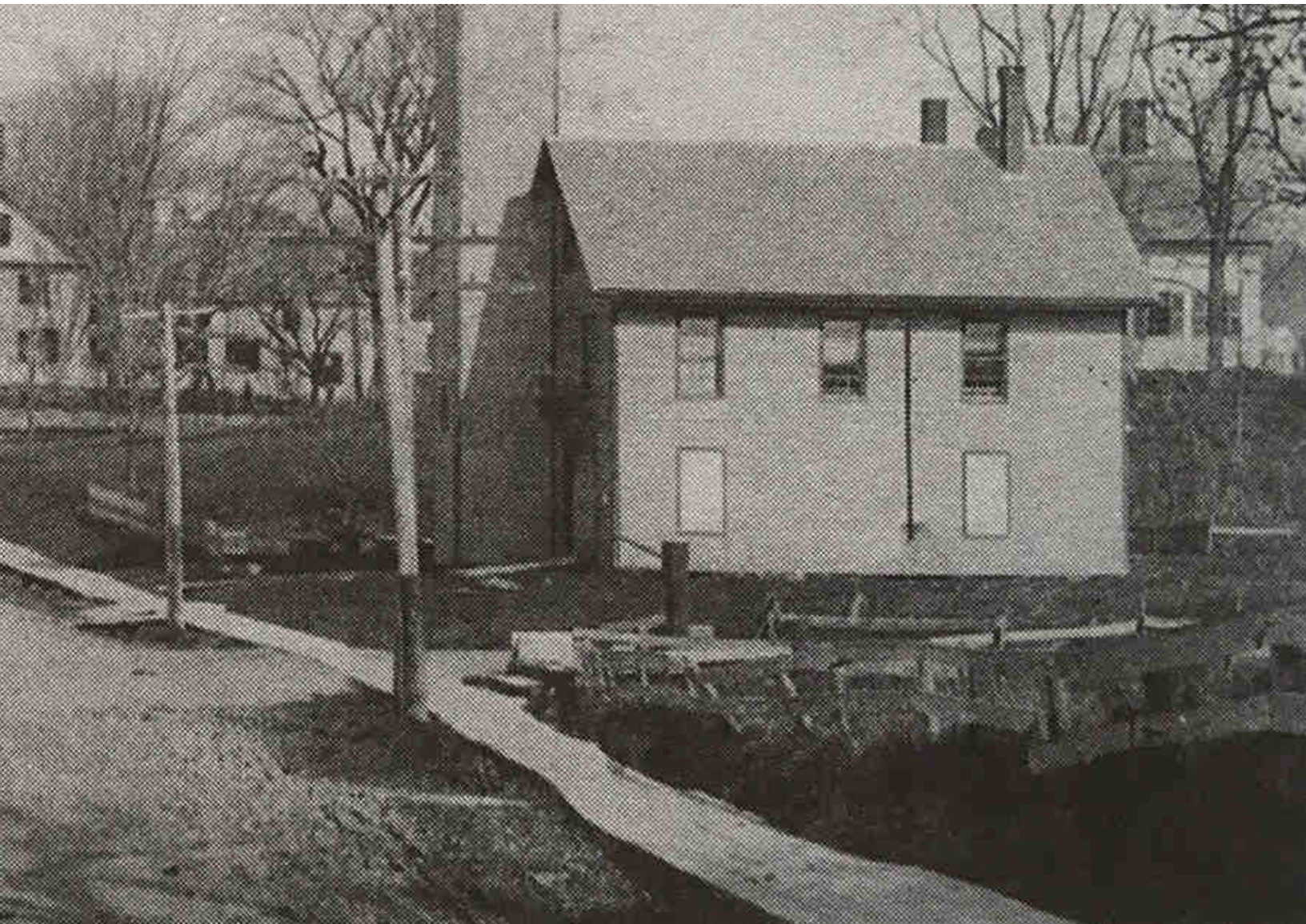
A partnership of two farmers sharing similar ethical goals, Dandelion and Straw Farms goals are to nurture a farm space that encourages broad community involvement, focus on soil nutrition, work within the landscape, feel sense of pride for the work that they do, and communicate openly and consistently about all parts of the farm process and manage financially successful businesses. The farms are MOFGA certified, offer CSA shares, attend farmers markets, and host on the farm picnics and Bee On the Farm, a regular gathering of “knitters, quilters, rug hookers and other hand-workers”.







# INFRASTRUCTURE







Looking down Liberty Street toward River Road

## Streets & Roads

**Streets and roads provide a necessary framework, connecting people to each other, places of employment, school and local amenities. Streets also play a role in civic life, and balancing the needs of function with quality of place will continue to be Newcastle’s challenge in years to come.**

Streets do more than move people in cars. They are public places where people walk, bicycle, and encounter their neighbors. Rural communities need to continually evaluate whether the road environment and condition matches the desired function of the road. Streets should also be compatible with the character of the neighborhoods through which they pass. Towns must always ask themselves if they are providing the right-sized infrastructure for the community’s needs. How might the street be contributing or detracting from the quality of life for the people who live there? After decades of belief that bigger, faster, wider streets are safer streets, it is time for communities of all sizes to take a hard look at how those types of streets impact our lives.

### Intersection Crash Rates

According to crash data provided by the Maine Department of Transportation spanning 2013-2015, Newcastle has three of Lincoln County’s five most accident-prone intersections, including:

- Second on list of Lincoln County accidents, Academy Hill at Main Street (Route One) with 9 crashes over that period
- Third on the list is Route One Atlantic Highway from Hopkins Hill to the Snead Spur with 10 crashes
- Fifth on the list is Pond Road (Route 215) from West Hamlet to Academy Hill with eight crashes. However, seven of the eight crashes are known to have occurred in the same winter and were likely caused by poor wintertime maintenance of the road.

Interestingly, only one of these intersections is situated in Newcastle’s downtown (Academy Hill/Main).

### Identified Local Transportation Needs

Participants at the Planning Weekend identified three major transportation needs:

1. safety improvements to Route One through the downtown; and,
2. transportation options for elders.

Participants also identified locations that are known for their dangerous driving conditions. Two of the locations identified correlate with MDOT's crash data (2013-2015). The two locations are the Route One spur and the intersection of Academy Hill Road at Rt 1. The consulting team also analyzed the Lincoln County Regional Planning Committee's 2013 Corridor Master Plan. In the report, there were five locations identified as areas of concern; however, MDOT data does not substantiate the claims at those sites.

### **Conflict of Community Vision and Street Design**

Balancing the needs of seasonal traffic, convenience, safety, and quality of place is a challenge for any coastal Maine town, before being forced to consider that maintaining regional mobility is a priority of the DOT. However, as substantiated during the public planning process, there is strong public opinion toward sacrificing regional mobility in favor of capturing local economic development on Route 1B and Main Street as a means to provide greater financial stability for the town. Local desires for a human-scale downtown and the current function of U.S. Route 1B as a major thoroughfare are not compatible. Vehicles coming into downtown Newcastle from the off ramp are frequently observed as going too fast. Also, the Route 1 overpass support columns on Academy Hill constrain pedestrians, moving them into proximity to cars entering downtown. Attendees of the planning process also identified several rural road locations where driver behavior (excess speed, distraction) combined with vertical and horizontal changes to the road profile have created both the perception and the reality of dangerous conditions.

### **Less road**

Anticipated road improvement costs represent one of Newcastle's greatest financial challenges. With budgeted road funding at approximately \$100,000 a year, Newcastle should take actions now to reduce its exposure to future costs. First, every time a road comes up for replacement or reconstruction, the road could be considered for conversion from paved road to gravel. A number of criteria should be considered, including cost, environmental impacts, number of daily road users and street classification. Second, Newcastle should adopt new road standards allowing smaller development projects to be served by low-impact,

## **What you said.**

"Map all storm drains and start an adopt-a-storm drain program"

"Eliminate fluoride in town drinking water"

"Bike trail system that doesn't widen roads with 4' margins. Save roadside character and rural landscapes (trees, stone walls)"

"Continue the sidewalks on Academy Hill Road with continuing buffer between the road and the sidewalk. Safety for Lincoln Academy students"

"Implement plan to restore and repair existing sidewalks, and to connect more hiking and walking trails"

"Speed control! Safer walking, biking"

"Reopen/connect West Old County/East Old County Road. Easier access to town for North Newcastle and Sheepscot Village residents and quicker access by EMS, Police and Fire"

"Please consider a no jake brake sign for Rt 1/Main Street off ramps for the large trucks!"

"SPEED: Combine signage with other improvements to visually narrow road – will reduce speeding"

lower-cost private roads, rather than wide, paved roads serving only a handful of users. Finally, Newcastle's Board of Selectmen should consider accepting no new road infrastructure outside of the Village. Village streets function as public spaces and non-town owned rights-of-way, currently owned by the DOT, should be conveyed to the Town.

### **Priority Sidewalks**

People in Newcastle want to walk for recreation and leisure as well as simply getting from one place to another. Sidewalks play an important role in the mobility of residents, specifically children and elders. During the "This is Newcastle" listening sessions, the MDW team repeatedly heard that sidewalks are highly desirable. Newcastle has a network of sidewalks in the downtown neighborhood, but the infrastructure outside of Main Street is generally in poor condition. The 2015 Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan cited multiple barriers on the sidewalks, such as mailboxes and utility poles, and observed several deficiencies in connectivity. Sidewalk enhancements should be a key annual capital priority for Newcastle to

# Connectivity

Unless there are topographic or ecological constraints prohibiting it, every street should be connected to at least two other streets. By avoiding the construction of dead ends or culs-de-sac, an interconnected network of streets can be achieved. The street network would then provide a multitude of routing alternatives to and from all destinations in a neighborhood, dispersing traffic and limiting congestion. Having a street network with a high degree of connectivity also enables individual streets to become narrower, which then slows traffic and increases vehicular and pedestrian safety. High connectivity also allows emergency service vehicles more options to get to the site of an emergency call. Encouraging a network of connected sidewalks, paths, and passages makes walking more convenient and enjoyable and increases pedestrian use throughout the community. Finally, by increasing the number of routes through the community, pedestrians are provided more interesting walking and jogging alternatives, access to a variety of neighborhoods and destinations, and more opportunity for social interaction.

focus economic development in the downtown. Sidewalk accessibility to schools in Newcastle is mixed. Lincoln Academy High School is connected via sidewalk to Main Street. In order to provide walkable access for students at Lincoln Academy, a sidewalk with a planted esplanade (as a traffic barrier) is recommended. However, the consolidated Great Salt Bay Elementary School in Damariscotta, which hosts Newcastle children, is on an auto-centric stretch of Route 1 with no sidewalks.

## Road Maintenance Budget

The Town of Newcastle's annual budget for local road maintenance, including sidewalks, is approximately \$100,000 and is anticipated to be flat-funded for the foreseeable future. The Maine Department of Transportation has scheduled repaving of several sections of state roads in Newcastle, but there are no plans for construction of new roads at this time.

## Newcastle-Damariscotta Bike Plan

The Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission prepared a Newcastle/Damariscotta Bike-Pedestrian Plan in 2015, identifying a detailed inventory of sidewalk and bicycling conditions, along with desired infrastructure improvements and potential routes to move pedestrians and bicyclists around and between the two towns. Goals outlined in the plan include the following capital improvements:

- "Modify the transportation infrastructure to provide safe bicycle/pedestrian access to and between significant destinations and neighborhoods and enhance connections to the network of other bicycle/pedestrian facilities" and "create routes to key destinations."

Strategies identified in the Bike-Pedestrian Plan include:

- Develop enhanced pedestrian access to the Great Salt Bay School and YMCA; and,
- Develop a bike-pedestrian path around the Great Salt Bay and an off-road connection between Sheepscot Village and Newcastle village

## Rt 1 Corridor Master Plan

In 2013, Lincoln County commissioned the Route 1 Corridor Master Plan. The plan was created by examining existing facilities, meetings with the Bicycle-Pedestrian Committee, and a survey of 208 residents and 83 students (among a population of over 34,400). Some recommendations in the plan align with the vision set forth for Route 1 in this comprehensive plan. i.e. limiting sprawl development patterns along the corridor. However, some recommendations in the corridor plan will need to be revisited and updated, such as the recommendation to build frontage roads or use vegetation to buffer all development along the corridor from view from Route 1.



## **The Value of On-Street Parking**

There is a local perception that parking in the downtown has always presented a challenge. MDW believes that current street configurations can be redesigned to increase on-street parking capacity. Similarly, some private lots also have potential for better, more-efficient use of space. Infrequent spikes in parking demand for church services or festivals can be accommodated by space

**The Corridor Master Plan used traffic trends from the early years of the Twenty-First Century to model future growth. The Great Recession of 2008-2010 significantly, and possibly permanently, interrupted assumptions made by this plan.**

sharing at business lots that operate at alternate times, and at nontraditional parking areas such as fields or rights-of-way. However, on-street parking is an invaluable resource for supporting vibrant, mixed use downtown Main Streets, and priority should be placed on repurposing existing asphalt from too-wide travel lanes to create additional parking.

## **Modern Parking Standards**

The Town of Newcastle currently requires off-street parking in the downtown district. Strict parking standards can prohibit growth when the pro forma is being dictated by density and parking space calculations. Parking standards frequently result in larger than necessary parking lots for commercial and mixed-use buildings. New Character-Based standards should allow for more flexible solutions such as off-site or shared lots, or in some cases the elimination of off-street parking where public, on-street parking is a local amenity.

## **Transit and Other Modes of Travel**

Newcastle has an historic train station on Academy Hill which is no longer used for passenger service. At the time of this report, the station is privately owned, in disrepair, and offered for sale. The station is ideally situated to service Newcastle and Damariscotta, which does not have a train station of its own. Part of the land surrounding the station is owned by the Maine Department of Transportation and other private parcels are occupied by the Downeast Energy company. Historically, trains supplied many industrial and agrarian operations in the area, and arriving passengers were ushered throughout the region via stagecoach and trolley. If passenger rail service were to become viable again in Newcastle, shuttle service or substantial parking improvements around the station would be necessary. In the meantime, forms of private transit serving



Newcastle includes: 1) the Concord Coachlines, which has a stop in Damariscotta on Main Street and provides connection to Boston Logan Airport and South Station; 2) Twin Village Taxi. Similarly, there are no publicly or privately operated airfields in the town of Newcastle. The closest airports to Newcastle are the Wiscasset Municipal Airport approximately 10 miles away, the Brunswick Executive Airport approximately 25 miles away, the Knox County Regional Airport in Rockland at approximately 30 miles away, the Augusta State Airport also 30 miles away, and the Portland International Jetport approximately 55 miles away. Finally, while Newcastle is situated on the Damariscotta River, the town does not have public transportation facilities on the waterfront. Waterway access can be obtained at the town landing in Damariscotta.

### **Traffic Permitting Measures**

In Newcastle, curb cuts on local roads for new development are submitted to the Public Works superintendent and undergo Site Plan Review by the Planning Board. State managed roads, such as Rt 1, are overseen by the Maine Department of Transportation. The Maine DOT has regimented setback and frontage minimums on Rt 1 to maintain highway safety, with controlled access locations in the vicinity of the Rt 1 on and off ramps only. Any development that has occurred on Rt 1 has required applications for curb cuts from the DOT, and must therefore meet DOT thresholds for safety.

The Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission's Corridor Master Plan states, "In the absence of commercial planned unit development standards, a 400-foot minimum frontage requirement is a good way of spacing commercial activities along a highway corridor and this is employed in all of Edgecomb's and Nobleboro's Route 1 corridor and most of Waldoboro's. The minimum frontage for Route 1 in Damariscotta is 100 feet while most of the Route 1 corridor in Newcastle has a minimum frontage of 100 to 200 feet.

Newcastle's Commercial District, however, which represents a prime future growth area, does not have a minimum frontage requirement, and therefore does not allow for minimum spacing between business uses. Given the high speed and high volume nature of the Route 1 corridor, a minimum highway frontage of 400 feet is optimal while a minimum frontage of less than 200 feet should be evaluated for potential modification." (Fauce, LCRPC Corridor Master Plan). The

recommended metric of 400 feet of frontage on the highway may be appropriate for portions of Rt 1 where maintenance of rural character is desired. The large frontage may conflict with the desired form of development for strategic areas along Rt 1, where the town wishes to transform a portion of the corridor to higher density infill development, with closeness of buildings, parking in the rear, and a secondary access network for local trip making between businesses. The regulatory framework section of this plan addresses key development standards for regulating new growth on Rt 1 as a Special District Highway Commercial district.

### **Road Standards = Land Use Goals**

Currently, Newcastle's street standards are uniform and do not take into consideration whether the street is in a pedestrian-scaled neighborhood or if it serves more as a rural conduit. Character-Based Codes, as recommended by our team, will require careful evaluation of the anticipated users of a street in conjunction with the existing land use context and long-term desired form of development. New zoning will incorporate a range of street types and standards to accommodate local conditions and desired development goals..

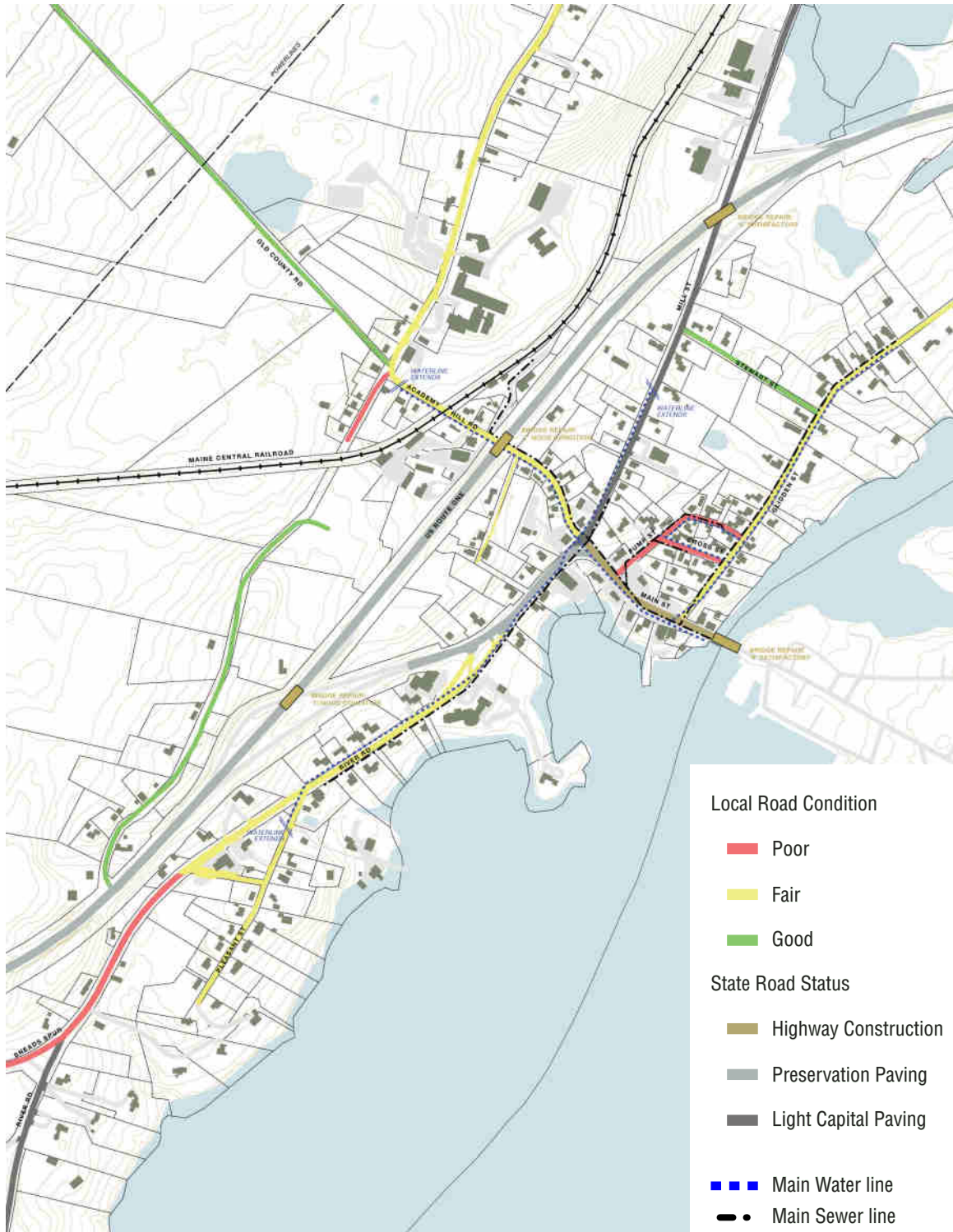
### **Road Standards = Bicycling and Walking**

New street types will include accommodations for walking and bicycling, again considering road users, context and desired form of development. Newcastle's Local Planning Committee observed that existing road standards do not support bicycle or pedestrian needs. Once Character-Based Codes are implemented, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations will be considered in the context of the neighborhood.

### **Subdivision Connectivity**

The topography of Newcastle makes the objective of connecting subdivisions to existing road networks challenging. Many rural roads are isolated from other developments by broad swaths of forested land, and in other locations, ledge, rivers, wetlands, the Rt 1 corridor and rail utilities may play a factor in connectivity.





## Insight:

### Miles of Roads in Newcastle:

- State Highway: 7.43
- State-Aid Highway: 17.65
- Town way/Seasonal: 23.65

**TOTAL: 48.73 MILES**



# Commuter Trends

According to the American Community Survey (2010-2014), Newcastle and neighboring communities support a local employment economy, with the majority of residents traveling under twenty minutes during their daily commute. However, the size of that locally employed majority shrank over five years from 61 percent commuting less than 20 minutes in 2010 to 54 percent in 2014. Newcastle's local employment trend beats the state average of 50 percent over 5 years of commuters traveling more than 20 minutes to get to work each day (presumably outside of their local economy). A shorter commute for Newcastle workers could be reflective of a healthier employment economy in the area, affordable and accessible housing options for working residents, and quality of life attributes in the town. As the proportion of Newcastle residents commuting further away rises, this could indicate a weakening local employment economy, or that higher quality of life attributes in town is attracting new residents employed elsewhere, or both. The lower the rate of commute is, the higher demand there should be for growth in Newcastle.

The mode of transportation to work is telling for Newcastle, too. From the same survey data, Newcastle has higher rates of residents working from home than both the state and county. In 2010, Newcastle had 17 percent of its workforce employed at home; in 2014, that number was down to 12 percent. In contrast, the state proportion of home workers is 5 percent over the same time period, and the county rate for Lincoln was 7 percent to 6 percent over the same 5 years. This high rate of home-office employees in Newcastle implies that there should be higher demand in town for amenities like coffee shops and other quiet places to work and possibly meet clients or collaborators. It is also testament to a strong quality of life in Newcastle where these home-office workers, who could in theory live anywhere in the region, chose Newcastle. A declining proportion of home workers could indicate a changing economy where more home workers are being hired by traditional companies, or that other communities are competing with Newcastle's amenities.

In addition, while total commuting workforce was down -14 percent and -7 percent for the state and county respectively between 2010 and 2014, Newcastle's number of commuters rose 10 percent. That data indicates Newcastle is attracting working families over retirees. With that influx of workers, single-commuter transportation (e.g., vehicles with a sole occupant) increased by 16 percent over those 5 years. That means higher congestion at intersections during rush hours and more wear and tear on commuter roads in town.

In the same American Community Survey, none of the respondents in Newcastle used public transportation to get to work in either 2010 or 2014. Public transportation was also the least used mode of commute at the state and county level during that period. Interestingly, the number of commuters who could walk to work in Newcastle fell from 3 percent in 2010 to 2 percent in 2014. The state rate stayed at 4 percent over that period.

What we can see from this data is that Newcastle has a strong local employment economy, is attracting working families, and offers quality of life attributes that appeal to home workers. These trends can inform Newcastle's transportation infrastructure needs.

TRAFFIC  
PATTERN  
CHANGE





# Bicycle Facilities: The Right Fit for the Right Context.

The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) has adopted a Complete Streets policy that means, as state routes are improved, bicycle facilities will be considered for inclusion in street design. Additionally, new private development with new local streets may provide an opportunity to create an enhanced environment for bicycling. Communities can customize their approach to integrating bicycle facilities to ensure that the right type of facility is used on each street within the network, avoiding the one-size-fits-all approach. The right bicycle facility enables users of different abilities to enjoy a safe and direct route to their destination, making cycling convenient, safe, and enjoyable.

## **BICYCLE LANE** for the confident biker



**A bicycle lane is a dedicated lane reserved for bicycle travel within a vehicular thoroughfare. The bicycle lane is separated from vehicular travel lanes by a painted line or a striped buffer.**

## **SHARROW** for the experienced biker



**A sharrow or a “shared lane marking” is a pavement marking applied to a roadway too narrow to accommodate a bicycle lane or cycle track, or on bike routes or bike boulevards with very slow vehicular target speeds.**



## CYCLE TRACK for the novice biker



A cycle track is a dedicated lane reserved for bicycle travel that is protected from moving traffic by a physical barrier such as parked cars, bollards, curbs, or medians. This facility is not just for urban street conditions.

## SHARED-USE PATH



A shared-use path is completely separated from all vehicular traffic and supports multiple non-motorized recreation opportunities, such as walking, bicycling and in-line skating.

## SHARED STREET



A shared street is a street created to be shared by pedestrians, bicyclists, and low-speed motor vehicles, including cars.



# Water Resources

**Newcastle’s rivers create an almost magical landscape, conveying a sense of peace and calm. Yet, each day twice a day, the rivers change dramatically and with that rise and fall of the tides, the moving in and out of water, we are reminded of forces much bigger than us.**

This section of the plan speaks to the actions and efforts of many stewards who love the rivers and who take care to ensure that this great landscape remains healthy and sustainable. Newcastle is fortunate to have a number of local organizations and citizen volunteers actively engaged in protecting water quality of Damariscotta Lake, the Great Salt Bay and Newcastle’s river environments.

## **River Stewards**

Since 1973, The Damariscotta River Association (DRA) has organized citizen volunteers to collect water quality data, count horseshoe crabs and serve as stewards of the Damariscotta River estuary with staff guidance and in consultation with leading scientists. The DRA monitors the Damariscotta River estuary, Great Salt Bay, Johns Bay and their watersheds. The DRA is headquartered in Damariscotta. Similarly, the Midcoast Conservancy

in Wiscasset is also actively working to protect and monitor water quality. The Midcoast Conservancy employs a Watershed Protection Specialist who focuses on water quality testing, fish passage, dam removal, aquatic invasive species, municipal planning, erosion control, pollution, and other water quality areas. The Conservancy is a merged coalition of four land trust organizations that protect, monitor, and advocate for the Sheepscot and Damariscotta rivers’ watersheds. Member groups include the Damariscotta Lake Watershed Association, Hidden Valley Nature Center, Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association and the Sheepscot Wellspring Land Alliance.

## **Non-point Pollution Sources**

Non-point source pollution is often the most difficult to detect and address. Newcastle has one known water body on the Maine Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) list of Lakes Most At Risk & Urban Impaired Streams (2005): Sherman Lake, a tributary abutting the Marsh River Preserve originating from the Sheepscot River. While the lake technically no longer exists, the site has not been removed from the list. In 2015, the EPA had labeled the Dyer River as an “impaired stream” on a map called Newcastle Watersheds. In 2016, the Maine EPA cited the Dyer River, a tributary of the Sheepscot River, for its low oxygen levels. The

Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association has been conducting annual river monitoring for two decades, and continues to perform water quality testing. The Midcoast Conservancy (MC) recently published the Damariscotta Lake Watershed Protection Plan in 2015. This plan allows the MC to apply for federal grant funding from Section 319 of the Clean Water Act to implement nonpoint source pollution control projects. If awarded, the MC would use this funding round to correct erosion issues in the Damariscotta Lake Watershed from 2017-2019, according to the MC's Water Quality Specialist, Garrison Beck.

### **Discharge Pollution Points**

In 1988, working closely with State and Federal agencies, the Great Salt Bay Sanitary District completed the construction of new wastewater collection and treatment facilities, according to the website [www.lagoonsonline.com](http://www.lagoonsonline.com) (accessed 10/14/2016), produced in conjunction with the State Department of Environmental Protection. Wastewater is chlorine treated, dechlorinated, re-aerated and discharged by the public dock in Damariscotta. New clamming flats on the Damariscotta River have been cleared to open since the lagoon was constructed. There are no overboard discharge permits indicated on the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's 2015 Newcastle Watersheds map.

### **Water Supplies Protected**

Newcastle's public water utility, the Great Salt Bay Sanitary District, draws, monitors and protects drinking water from the 77 acre, springfed Little Pond in Damariscotta. According to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's 2015 Newcastle Watersheds map, there are no aquifers in the Town of Newcastle.

## **What you said.**

"Have more eco-friendly energy sources"

"Noise ordinance for Newcastle"

"Night sky protection. See the stars, save \$, sleep better"

"Stream protection enhancements - include ephemeral streams"

"Grow understanding and awareness of Shoreland reg's - intent and spirit. Work with Midcoast Conservancy on education"

"Limit or eliminate pesticide use on public land, reduce on private land"

"Educate the community on nutrient loading."

"Restore habitat relationships between land and sea. Map habitats, culverts, and work with Maine Rivers to explore connections."

"Allow and encourage solar and wind systems".

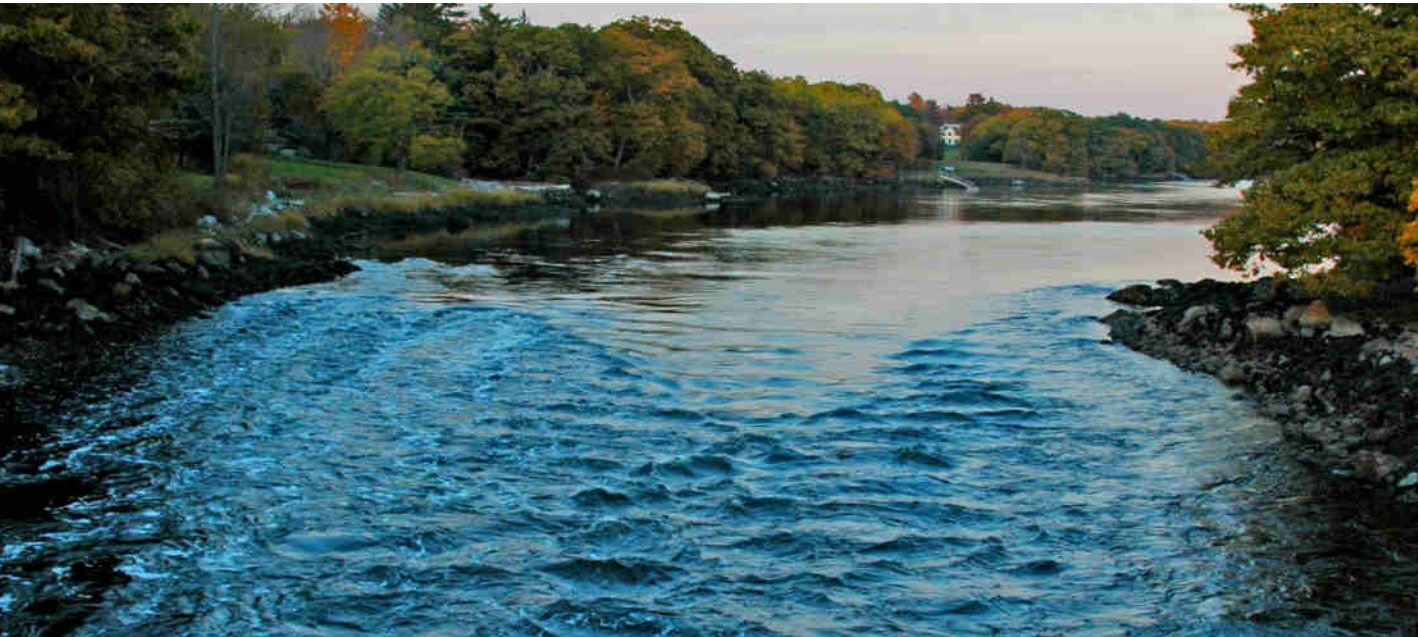
### **Public Works Best Practices for Waterbody Protection**

Public Works is responsible for winter sanding and plowing of state roads within the town, however come spring, the DOT is responsible for annual sweeping. Best practices for reducing sediment impacts to waterbodies include using salt instead of salt with a mixture of salt and sand to treat the roads. The Town maintains a winter snow dump at the now closed landfill, and this site is not located near any open water bodies. In spring, Newcastle's public works department sweeps streets in the Village, on Academy Hill and in newer subdivisions off Academy Hill Road.





# Marine Resources



**There is no doubt that the local economy is positively influenced by local marine resources. The area has historically supported tourism, aquaculture and fishing, and in 2015, state-wide valuation of oysters alone represented \$3.7 mil. Collaborating with Damariscotta to maintain water quality and quality access to the rivers should be a high priority.**

## **Coastal Water Quality Monitoring**

Newcastle's estuary is monitored by several nonprofit environmental stewardship organizations, including the Midcoast Conservancy and the Damariscotta River Association. The Town of Newcastle does not have a municipal pollution elimination program, but the Damariscotta River Association, founded in 1973, runs several environmental monitoring programs. Tidewater 2.0, an estuarine monitoring program, was launched in 1988 to monitor water quality and shellfish habitat with the help of trained citizen volunteers. From May to October, volunteers collect samples to measure dissolved oxygen levels, salinity, nitrogen, transparency and temperature from seven sites. The University of Maine's Darling

Marine Center provides volunteer training and data quality assurance. The data collected from this program is shared with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and other conservation groups in Maine through the Maine Coastal Observing Alliance. The Maine Coastal Observing Alliance is a coalition of eight conservation groups in coastal watershed areas that monitor water quality and share data with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. There is a specific focus on the acidification levels of Maine's ocean waters. The 2014 study of estuarine waterways is the most recent in 18 years.

## **Clam & Worm Flat Closings**

On April 29, 2015, the Maine Department of Marine Resources issued a letter closing shellfish flats on upper Great Salt Bay because of pollution and occasional discharge from the Mills district sewer treatment facility, plus areas below the Route One bridge between Newcastle and Damariscotta. These areas were downgraded from Restricted to Prohibited. In a letter dated the same, the Department prohibited shellfish cultivation in the Sheepscot River, Dyer River, Sherman Lake, and Deer Meadow Brook.

“The statewide clam harvest has hovered at around 10 million pounds a year since the late 1990’s, according to state data, down from a peak of nearly 40 million pounds in the mid-1970’s but up from a bust in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s, when landings fell to 6 million to 8 million pounds,”-- Colin Woodard in the Portland Press Herald. Woodard says harvesters and scientists are monitoring closely the predatory Asian “green crabs, milky ribbon worms, and moon snails, which have thrived as the Gulf of Maine’s waters have warmed in recent years.” Meanwhile, the Twin Villages of Newcastle and Damariscotta finalized a Shellfish Conservation Ordinance, adopted by each town in 2015. The Ordinance establishes a Shellfish Conservation Committee that sets the terms of shellfish licenses for both towns in collaboration with the Maine Department of Marine Resources. The Committee reviews “annually, the status of the resource using the results of clam flat harvester or dealer surveys and other sources of information and preparing, in conjunction with and subject to the approval of the Department, a plan for implementing conservation measures.”

### **Working Waterfront**

Oyster harvesting is growing exponentially. According to the State Department of Marine Resources, oyster landings grew 255 percent over a five-year period (2011-2015) statewide. Statewide valuations for oysters in 2015 was over \$3.7 million. The Damariscotta River is one of the state’s prime habitats for commercial oysters. Provided that clam populations remain stable in the presence of increased environmental stressors, and that culinary demand for oysters continues to climb, the marine fishing industry in Newcastle should maintain a strong presence over the next decade. **Currently, of all the licenses issued for riverine locations in Newcastle, not one commercial oystering business is registered in Newcastle.**

### **Public Access & Shore Parking**

The Harbor Committee established by the Newcastle-Damariscotta Harbor Management Ordinance, will “provide guidance in assigning suitable portions of harbors and other coastal and tidal waters for anchorages, mooring districts, boating facilities owned by the Towns and aquaculture sites.” Adequate land access to waters (including parking) is challenging because public right-of-ways constitute a finite amount of land.

### **Water-Oriented Business**

The communities of Newcastle and Damariscotta share waterfront access at the Town Landing in Damariscotta. Facilities include public-access boat launching, moorings, and limited tie-ups. Nearby is the private marina and restaurant, Schooner Landing, also accessible by public patrons. In Newcastle south of the downtown on Pleasant Street is Riverview Boat Company, offering large vessel services. Mooring rentals from the Town increased from 32 to 45 over a five-year period, 2012-2016, with remaining room to accommodate additional moorings. The opinion of the NLPC is that there is a reasonable balance of working waterfront to other uses right now.

### **Harbor Management Plan**

In 2015, the “Twin Villages” of Newcastle and Damariscotta ratified an Interlocal Agreement and Harbor Management Ordinance that authorizes a joint Harbor Committee to monitor uses, public access, safety and environmental condition of waterways between the two municipalities. The Commission is charged with overseeing a Harbor Master for the two towns, and the plan divides the harbor into five districts and governs activities, including Great Salt Bay and Sheepscot River. In addition, the joint Harbor Committee will “make recommendations for balancing the enhancement of harbor usage with the conservation of natural, cultural and aesthetic resources for the long-range benefit of all stakeholders,” as charged in the Newcastle-Damariscotta Harbor Management Ordinance.

### **Dredging Needs**

Newcastle’s marine traffic is primarily small craft vessels. In order to rise to the level of needing dredging, the Twin Villages would have to substantially expand their current docking infrastructure. Dredging by the Army Corps of Engineers is a highly competitive and costly procedure, so it is not an avenue being pursued by either town at this time. There is some historical conversation about investment into the harbor. If significant investment were to occur in expanded docks, the towns might engage in conversation with the Army Corps. However, dredging is generally a highly competitive and costly avenue.

# Public Facilities & Services



**With considerations of population data, current lifestyle trends and a healthy dose of fiscal conservatism, Newcastle can choose to plot along carefully - perhaps wait and see where the population data will go - or Newcastle can tighten up the sails and steer into the wind.**

Newcastle's population has not substantially changed between the 2000 and 2010 census (1,748 to 1,752 respectively), and yet as explored earlier in this plan, the percentage growth of young families with children under the age of 9, and new retirees between 2000 and 2014 is remarkable. Through the 12-year life span of this plan, the NLPC and town leadership should frequently revisit population and enrollment data to ensure that leadership can make adjustments to public services and community needs as necessary. Newcastle provides a basic level of municipal services. The town has a full time Fire Chief but volunteer fire force. Public utilities for water and sewer exist only in specific areas. Newcastle does not have a local police department, but contracts with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office for public safety services.

## Infrastructure and Growth

The trustees of the Great Salt Bay Sanitary District voted against expanding services at the expense of ratepayers. Instead, the utility is willing to accept privately developed infrastructure that meets its specifications. In 2014, the water utility firm Tata & Howard published a report that affirmed there is available capacity for water and sewer in Newcastle's downtown district for development, aided in part by a 50,000 gallon water-tower on Academy Hill. Modern sewer and water lines run approximately a half mile down River Road from the downtown district to the fire station and Pleasant Street development. The April 2016 study, completed by engineering consultants Wright Pierce, drafted a proposal for an eight-community water district in the Midcoast region to increase buying power and water supply.

## Great Salt Bay School District

The Great Salt Bay consolidated K-8 school in Damariscotta uses revolving debt service for major maintenance projects to minimize impacts on the annual operating budget. Energy efficiency improvements are a high priority for the school. No expansion of facilities or of services is anticipated at this time, though a Pre-K program for four year olds is being discussed at the conceptual level.



## Lincoln Academy

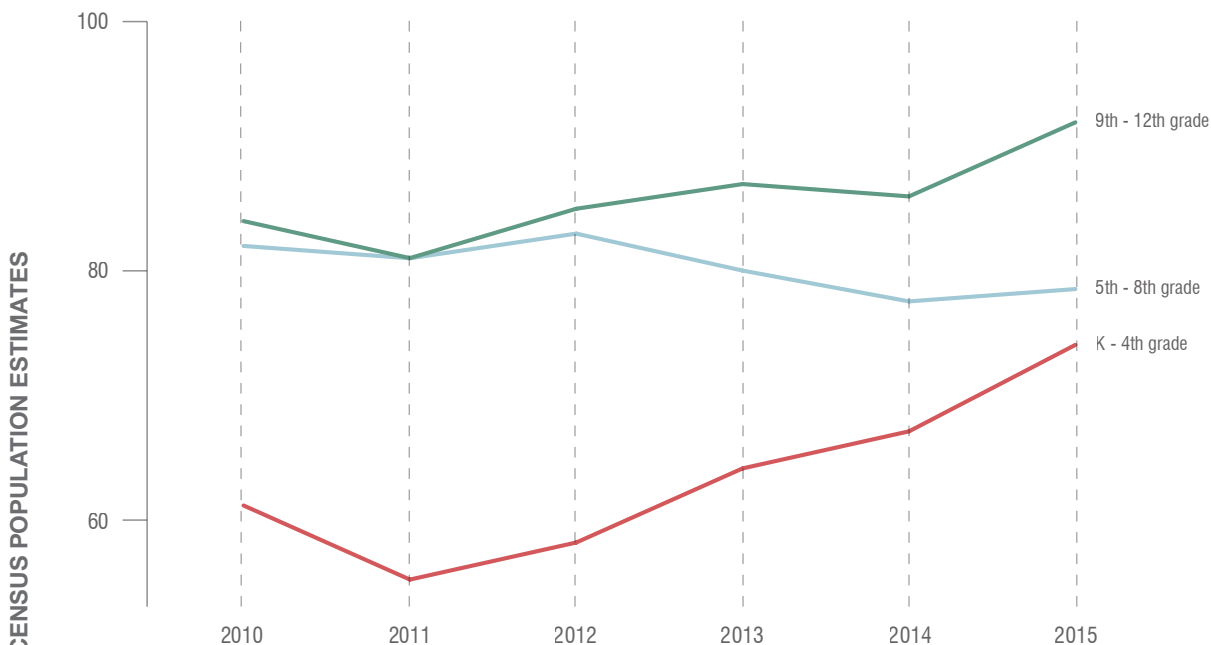
Lincoln Academy in Newcastle, founded in 1801, is a private school that enrolls public school students from 16 surrounding communities at the Maine Department of Education's average tuition rate. Lincoln Academy just completed a strategic planning process, which identified key issues with the choral arts program being hosted in a trailer and the visual arts program needing a gallery. The strategic plan envisions a performing arts center. Lincoln Academy's private status allows it to launch a capital campaign to finance major enhancements (since 1997, about \$10 million for capital improvements, \$1.4 million for operations, and \$650,000 for specific programs). Lincoln Academy just finished construction of a new dormitory to host international students who can afford higher tuition (\$42,000, including room and board) than the state average tuition rate for local students (\$10,131 for fiscal year 2016). There were 64 international students from 13 countries enrolled in 2014; Lincoln Academy had a goal of 78 for 2015 (out of a total student population of 548, or 14 percent).

## NUMBER OF NEWCASTLE STUDENTS

	Elementary Enrollment	Secondary Enrollment
2016	173	74.5
2015	166	78.5
2014	153	77.5
2013	151	80
2012	143	83
2011	136	81

**Levels of high school, post-secondary and graduate degrees has been steadily increasing since 2000 in Newcastle, Lincoln County, and the State of Maine.**

## School Enrollment, 2010-2015



SOURCE: US CENSUS POPULATION ESTIMATES

**Insight:** While K - 4 and grades 9 - 12 enrollment has increased steadily and at equal rates, the population of middle-schoolers dipped.

## Public Safety Services

Newcastle contracts with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office (LCS) for public safety, and it is the opinion of the NLPC that public perception is this service is adequate. Lincoln County Sheriff Todd Brackett participated in the Listening Sessions and expressed that the biggest issue and complaint is speeding. The Office is responding by using speed and mapping data to inform policing. LCS currently has between 6 – 15 personnel in the patrol division, providing service to 14 different towns with no local police departments. Newcastle sees mostly patrols passing through. Sheriff Todd Brackett expressed ongoing burden of false burglar alarms at private residences (approximately 2,800 alarms in 2015), and is considering model policies to bill and recover resources associated with false alarms. LCS is also looking for a substation and satellite locations.

Newcastle organizes a volunteer fire department. The Fire Chief expressed a common concern for small towns, which is having enough volunteers available during weekdays to respond to alarms. Newcastle is also wrestling with efficiency issues around sending the right vehicle to match the nature of the call. The Fire Station on River Road is in good condition.

## Storm Water Maintenance

The majority of the Town's storm water runoff is handled via sheet flow from our roadways, which travels via roadside ditches and culverts to wetland areas and streams or rivers. The maintenance for this type of infrastructure is to keep the road shoulders shaped and graded so that the storm water reaches the ditches and to keep ditch lines and culverts free and clear of obstructions from vegetation and or silt and sand build up which could impede the flow of storm water runoff. Limited portions of Town are serviced by engineered infrastructure which includes catch basins, manholes and underground conveyance pipes which carry the storm water runoff in a structured manner with the same result of storm water reaching wetlands, streams and rivers. This structured infrastructure exists on Academy Hill, River Road, Glidden Street, Mills Road and Main Street. The Maine DOT maintains the Main Street and Mills Road infrastructure and the Town owns and maintains the aforementioned remaining infrastructure. The maintenance of this infrastructure includes the annual cleaning of silt and debris from the catch basins and ensuring that the outfall pipes are free and clear of any obstructions.

As development progresses in Town, more structured or "engineered" storm water infrastructure may be necessary to handle increased storm water runoff created by more impervious surfaces. Design standards for storm water runoff can be addressed in many creative



ways to minimize the impacts of storm water and to benefit the environment. These standards would be addressed on a project by project basis and will be incorporated into the Land Use Codes.

### **Great Salt Bay Sanitary District**

The Great Salt Bay Sanitary District provides water and sewer utilities to the communities of Damariscotta, Newcastle and Nobleboro. In Newcastle, services are provided primarily in the downtown area, extending down River Road to the Fire Station, and up Academy Hill to Lincoln Academy. There are no current plans for local service expansion, however in 2010 the District did join a “Five Rivers Regional Water Council”, and in April 2016 released a regional water assessment plan to consider long term issues and implications of the public water system. The sewer company has a reserve account funded by impact fees for building new lagoons.

The Great Salt Bay Sanitary District provides drinking water and fire suppression water from Little Pond, a protected, 77 acre spring-fed lake in Damariscotta. Water is treated with ultraviolet light and chlorine. In Newcastle, the utility primarily services the downtown district and the Damariscotta Mills district. Septic systems in Newcastle are individually owned. Owners contract with private companies to service the systems. Similarly, the marine pumpout station in the harbor is privately contracted.

### **Solid Waste and Recycling**

The Town of Newcastle has an arrangement with the Nobleboro transfer station to process solid waste. Recycling capacities at the plant expand annually and investments in the facilities are ongoing. Established in 1987, Lincoln County runs a recycling plant and composting program in Wiscasset, and accepts recycling and green materials including seafood and shells and yard trimmings.

### **Telecommunications**

Newcastle’s telecommunications environment consists of traditional telephone voice service, DSL over those copper circuits, cellular service for voice and data, Cable service for entertainment delivery and internet service, domestic and business fiber service in some parts of the Town, and nearly unlimited fiber capacity to get to metropolitan internet hubs. Traditional “land line”

phone service, Exchanges 563 and 586, is provided by Tidewater Telecom from their facilities in Nobleboro.

Domestic and business fiber data services from Tidewater are presently available in limited areas of Newcastle where past demand or ConnectME grants have permitted cost-effective installation of fiber. Future expansion of fiber service is dependent of the same elements – getting sufficient customer demand in a “tight” enough grouping to make the business case for stringing new cable and obtaining State grant funding for fiber data service expansion. Tidewater also offers “cable channel” entertainment packages over its fiber network. The current content market favors traditional cable companies over local fiber providers, but that market is eroding and NetFlix is adding “creative destruction” to the picture. Over the next decade this market is likely to change significantly. One of the “planning tasks” facing the town is keeping on top of these trends to help guide the development of broadband services for the benefit of residents and Newcastle businesses – current and not yet imagined.

The Three Ring Binder is a three loop fiber path which spans the State of Maine. It consists of 288 strands fiber optics. This important transmission asset runs right down Main Street. It provides not only enormous transmission capacity, but also the potential to automatically re-route traffic in case a circuit is cut by vehicle accident, fire or other event. Importantly, a fiber optic regeneration facility for the Three Ring Binder exists in Damariscotta. The presence of this key node, with its potential for locating specialty electronic and photonic equipment, is a valuable asset which may well prove important in Newcastle’s future business environment.

“Cable TV” service in Newcastle is provided by Charter Communications under the “Spectrum” name after Charter acquired the Time-Warner local franchise. In addition to entertainment-oriented video packages, Spectrum offers cable-based telephony and data services.

One current large user of fiber-based broadband services is public education. AOS93 is served over the Maine School and Library Network by fiber optic data circuits. Lincoln Academy has a 1GB fiber circuit from the same source. They report it is sufficient to meet campus requirements. They also report that most day students have adequate broadband service at home to support “homework” activities of their students. In cases where a student has not had at home wired service, the library makes semester-length loans of cellular



transceivers with the data plans being covered by the school.

Broadband data services are the “highways and rail roads” of the post-industrial economy. Newcastle is well-positioned to access educational and business opportunities over these strands of glass.

## **Health and Social Services**

Newcastle is serviced by LincolnHealth in Damariscotta, formerly Miles Memorial Hospital. Other hospitals in proximity to Newcastle are Mid Coast Hospital in Brunswick (23 miles), Pen Bay Medical Center in Rockport (30 miles), and MaineGeneral Medical Center in Augusta (35 miles). MaineHealth, the major parent company of many hospitals and medical practices in Maine, operates the local LincolnHealth. LincolnHealth owns the Miles campus and Lincoln Medical Partners. Lincoln Medical Partners offers multiple primary care physician and outpatient services in the region. Both Lincoln Academy high school and the Great Salt Bay K-8 school have a health center and nurse on staff, as well as a social worker. Other assisted living facilities in the Newcastle area include:

- Cove’s Edge skilled rehabilitation and long term care
- Chase Point assisted living
- Lincoln Home assisted living
- One2One HomeCare assisted living at home
- Schooner Cove retirement community
- Miles & St. Andrews Home Health & Hospice  
Damariscotta is home to Mobius, a nonprofit support services agency for residents with disabilities. Founded in 1978, Mobius offers group homes, job placement assistance, and behavioral health services. Mobius has facilities in Newcastle.

## **Public Buildings and Properties**

Newcastle’s public buildings and properties are sufficiently meeting the needs of the population at current service levels. Skidompha Library is a private, non-profit facility, located on Main Street in Damariscotta. The Town Office, located in the Taniscot Engine House, occupies a portion of the building with the Historical Society operating a museum and storing archives in another portion of the building. Storage space at the town office for voting equipment and records is increasingly limited. In-town community meeting space is located at the Fire Station (Community Room), at the Town Office, and Harriet Bird Club House.

For several decades, annual town meetings were held in the gymnasium at Lincoln Academy, and secret ballot votes at the Fire Station on River Road. Town meetings are now held in the dining Commons. Both facilities are adequately serving needs associated with voting and town meeting procedures.

## **Street Tree Program**

Newcastle does not have a tree planting program for streets in the town.

## **Facility Investments**

New investments in public buildings are not currently contemplated by this plan or by the Great Salt Bay School District. During the life of this Comprehensive Plan, the NLPC and local leadership will need to observe growth trends in the future to reassess adequacy of services.

## **Cost Sharing with Neighbors**

In 2011, the towns of Newcastle and Damariscotta entered into a Public Works Interlocal Agreement, that was ratified each year at both Town Meetings. Each town would set its own infrastructure budget and the joint department would oversee projects in both communities. In Newcastle’s 2015 Annual Report, the arrangement was described as “a very cost effective endeavor.” In 2015, both the residents of Newcastle and Damariscotta voted to continue the successful partnership, however the Damariscotta Selectmen chose to terminate the agreement against the wishes of their citizens. The result has already proven to be less effective and more costly for Newcastle.



STEVE HUFNAGEL

People of all ages lending a helpful hand to construct trail amenities at River-Link.

PARKING!

BIG

000 a

Encourage

promote solar farms



# BIG IDEAS

IDEAS

and how to get it done.





# BUSINESS EVERYWHERE





# Innovation, Entrepreneurs, Business Everywhere



KATHARINA KEOUGHAN

## What has traditionally been thought of as “rural”, and how we continue to think about it, must evolve.

We need to recognize where Newcastle and many rural communities are today, anthropologically, socially and economically. We need to adapt how we regulate growth and development to ensure we are allowing entrepreneurship to emerge, local businesses to grow, and families to make living wages close to home. Newcastle residents know that there is a strong, skilled workforce of builders, contractors, carpenters as well as emerging young farm families, artisans and craftsman. Because many businesses are small, their potential to collectively market, build local brand and capture larger regional market share is limited. Many innovative strategies can help to strengthen and expand Newcastle’s local economy. However, the single most action that will stimulate economic growth is zoning reform, followed by an aggressive effort to tell the story of Newcastle. Newcastle’s

land use ordinances have restricted growth and business development in many ways in every part of town. Business flexibility was often cited by many participants during the Listening Sessions. This big idea touches on several strategies to open up business opportunities everywhere in town. Recommendations for zoning reform are threaded throughout this plan, and most comprehensively in the regulatory framework section.

## Work Local, at Home

Today, many people run businesses out of their homes. In talking with Newcastle residents, the team heard that many businesses operate without permits, in part because local zoning is too restrictive. Where special exceptions may be granted, local permitting processes are too cumbersome and unpredictable to know if a permit will be granted. Residents identified zoning as a significant barrier to entrepreneurial growth and

business expansion, and appear arbitrary and local the review processes even more so.

During the public planning process, the team prepared a matrix of rural-based businesses and standards to present to the community. As intensity of use increases, and depending on neighborhood context, corresponding performance standards would apply. Since the process concluded, the NLPC has worked with the team to refine policies and standards that accomplishes these goals. These include the desire for expanded business in the rural which respect existing landowner rights while recognizing the community's desire to preserve rural character.

It is hoped that new, expanded standards for activities in the rural character districts will foster new entrepreneurship. At the same time it is hoped that new rules will allow existing and undocumented businesses to be recognized, to grow and be supported by the community.

### Freedom To Farm

Farming in Maine is changing. New farm families are emerging up and down the state of Maine, carrying forward traditions and local knowledge about the land and farm practices. What may be different today is the direction farmers are taking with their farms by adding programming and activities that invite people to be part of farm life. Looking to diversify income and at the same time raise awareness for the art of farming, farmers are now considering additional activities. For example, some activities might include art groups, slow-food dinners, open farm days, trails and recreation, farmer's markets and CSA pick-ups. These activities would help raise awareness of about farm life and the values that farm families hold dear. Farmers are also embracing social media and technology. Farms even hold benefit dinners to raise capital for local infrastructure improvements.

Farmers should be permitted to harvest, process, package on site and send their goods directly to market. Farmers should also be able to build quality guest cabins to house migratory workers during periods of peak harvest. When not in use, those cabins could be rented out through sites like AirBnB to generate additional income. Additionally, fields or barns could be used to host weddings.

Finally, farm stores should be allowed to carry other farmer's products and other value-added goods to supplement times when on-farm-

## What you said.

- "Find ways to bring low-impact businesses to town. Provide tax incentives and be welcoming."
- "Allow unrestricted uses in the rural areas in exchange for increasing lot size from 1 acre to 10 acres"
- "More Reny's warehouses"
- "Light Industrial Park off of Rt 1, screened by trees"
- "Encourage businesses to collaborate with Lincoln Academy by creating internship opportunities for students"
- "Promote Aquaculture and Tourism - oysters, seaweed, scallops"



LINCOLN COUNTY NEWS

**Opposite page:** Katrina Kelley, owner and seamstress at Amphitrite Studio Clothing Co., a home-based business. **Above:** Employees at Lincoln County News, one of Newcastle's top ten employers. LCN is a locally owned and printed weekly newspaper with an online presence.

generated produce is low. Zoning should give farmers the latitude needed to be successful if farming is to be a significant part of Newcastle's rural identity.

### Aquaculture, Emerging

The majority of oysters being harvested in Maine are coming from the waters of the Damariscotta River. The statewide valuation for oysters in 2015



alone was over \$3.7 million dollars. Several licensed sites are located in the waters of Newcastle, and some sites are registered as experimental to see if the range of shellfish can be expanded. Access to the river for both commercial and non-commercial fishing is limited, as is land on the waterfront to provide shore support for commercial activity.

While the larger companies are located out of town, some residents are actively oyster farming. Institutions such as the Gulf of Maine and the Darling Center can serve as partners to explore potential development of a waterfront access plan and cooperative facilities. Small aquaculture farmers could benefit from access to shared facilities such as piers, processing areas and cold storage. Furthermore, cooperative marketing and distribution would facilitate moving shellfish from ocean to table.



ROD MELANSON

## How to Get it Done.

### SPACE TO INCUBATE BUSINESS

Budding entrepreneurs are often constrained by the need for low cost space and equipment. To enable start-ups, towns can proactively enlist local churches, schools, other businesses and

even residential landowners to make available underutilized space, even if on a temporary basis. For example, the town can encourage the use of church kitchens as “commercial kitchens” for processing local harvests. Underutilized space in warehouses and empty barns might serve as shared offices and studios or be turned into prototyping spaces. Extra garage space could be turned into maker-spaces and prototyping locations. Small machine shops could rent space and tools in the evenings and on weekends for second-shift use.

**Action: Amend zoning to allow for flexible uses and activities in existing and new buildings.**

### BUILD A SKILLED LABOR FORCE

Utilize space in off-school hours at Lincoln Academy’s ATEC building to offer arts, technology and engineering professional development to build local skills and capacity of workforce.

**Action: Partner with Lincoln Academy and CLC Adult Education to offer training programs with teens, young adults and adults.**

### OVERHAUL HOME OCCUPATION

Create a nuanced Character-Based Code that results in people having more opportunities to conduct business on their properties, in particular in the rural areas. Certain uses should have clear performance standards to ensure compatibility with the neighborhood and character district in which the property is located. Performance standards and clear pathways to permitting can broaden the number of uses allowed as-of-right and by special permit much beyond what is permissible under today’s zoning code.

**Action: Using creative zoning tools/approaches to zoning, unlock the potential to do business where you live.**

### COMMERCIAL BUSINESS IN THE RURAL AREAS

With nearly 50% of Newcastle’s land mass in Tree Growth or conservation and recreation, the rural areas should be allowed to support more than residential housing and trees. Entrepreneurs and landowners looking to develop rural-compatible businesses may not and should not be required to tie their business to residential home occupancy when certain performance standards are met.



Performance standards might include lot size, buffering from the street, and setbacks to other residential dwellings.

**Action: Allow commercial building types such as fabrication buildings, shop houses and inns in the rural areas.**

### THE NEWCASTLE BRAND

To develop an appealing brand, set strategies that broaden awareness and increase market share for the products and skills of Newcastle's makers. Newcastle can learn from other regional examples such as the new Made in LA campaign, which was developed in partnership with Maine College of Art to promote local makers and businesses in Lewiston/Auburn.

**Action: Create marketing and branding to highlight local artisans, makers and the skilled workforce.**

### CONNECT MENTORS

Mentorship is an asset to those starting new businesses, operating small businesses, in transitional careers, or preparing for entering the workforce or college. Collaborate with CLC Adult Education, Lincoln Academy, and state organizations, and ensure individuals and small businesses have local access to free/reduced rate technical assistance, professional development,

and mentorship opportunities. Programming may include general management functions of starting and running a business, digital literacy, state and federal licensing, permitting, and compliance issues.

**Action: Create a local mentorship program, matching students and adults with experienced professionals and tradespeople to build life skills and on-job training opportunities.**

### HOST A START UP FAIR

Building upon mentorship initiatives, host a regional start up fair to connect new, emerging entrepreneurs and small business with other entrepreneurs, technical skills-building, and sources of capital. Invite entities like CEI, Maine Organic Farm Growers Association (MOFGA), Maine Center for Creativity, CLC Adult Education, New England Foundation for the Arts, and Maine Technology Institute. Tap local knowledge from organizers of Maine Start Up Week.

**Action: Collaborate with local entities to launch an annual start up fair.**

### FARM MODELS & FARM-SUPPORTIVE ZONING

Zoning should not stand in the way of new farm business models. Farm stands, weekly share pickups, multi-farm food hubs, processing and



distribution models should all be permitted. Farm-supportive zoning allows expanded activities, including retail, restaurant, education, for profit recreation, manufacturing, and hospitality, so that farmers can rely on having a diversified income stream to support the economics of the farm.

**Action: Allow dormitory-style, seasonal housing on farms to accommodate seasonal and migratory workers.**

**Action: Work with Maine Farmland Trust to preserve working landscapes, to transition farms to the next generation, and to make entrance into farming more affordable for new farmers.**

**Action: Work with MOFGA to raise awareness for Journeyman’s program to train future farmers. Reform zoning rules to allow broader uses on the farm, such as on-farm restaurants, hospitality, education, recreation, retail sales and regularly scheduled events.**

**Action: Reform zoning rules to allow broader uses of the farm such as on-farm restaurants, hospitality, education , recreation, retail sales and regularly schedule events.**

## MAKE IT EASY TO HAVE A BUSINESS IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS

The consultant team and NLPC heard people say that they want to be able to run businesses on their own property, and that zoning has prohibited them from doing so in the past. This plan recommends the town’s new Character-Based code allow broader activities as-of-right, administered predominantly by staff using a simple application form. In order to allow flexibility in use and activity, the Character-Based code should include context-sensitive standards to minimize conflict between neighbors and maintain rural character.

## ACCESS FOR AQUACULTURE

Newcastle should be strategically positioning itself to benefit from growing food-based economies such as aquaculture. Actions the town can take include improving access to the river, passing zoning regulations that allow for increased working waterfront activities, and ocean-to-table business opportunities.

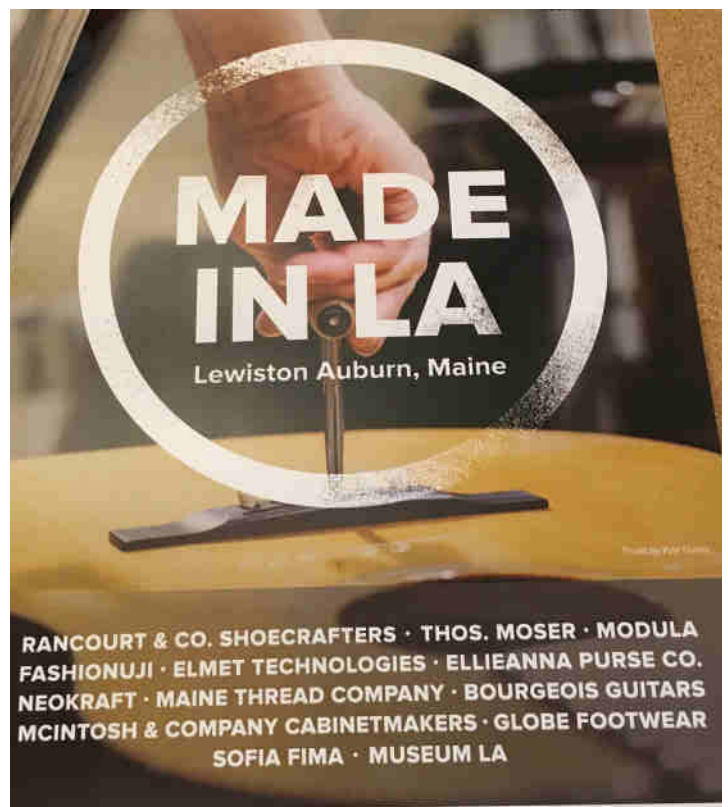
**Action: Work with industry farmers, harvesters, and dealers to identify issues and needs, and identify potential alternative access**

**points that accommodate diverse users along the river.**

**Action: Work with Darling Marine Center and Gulf of Maine Research Institute as they plan to develop aquaculture co-ops.**



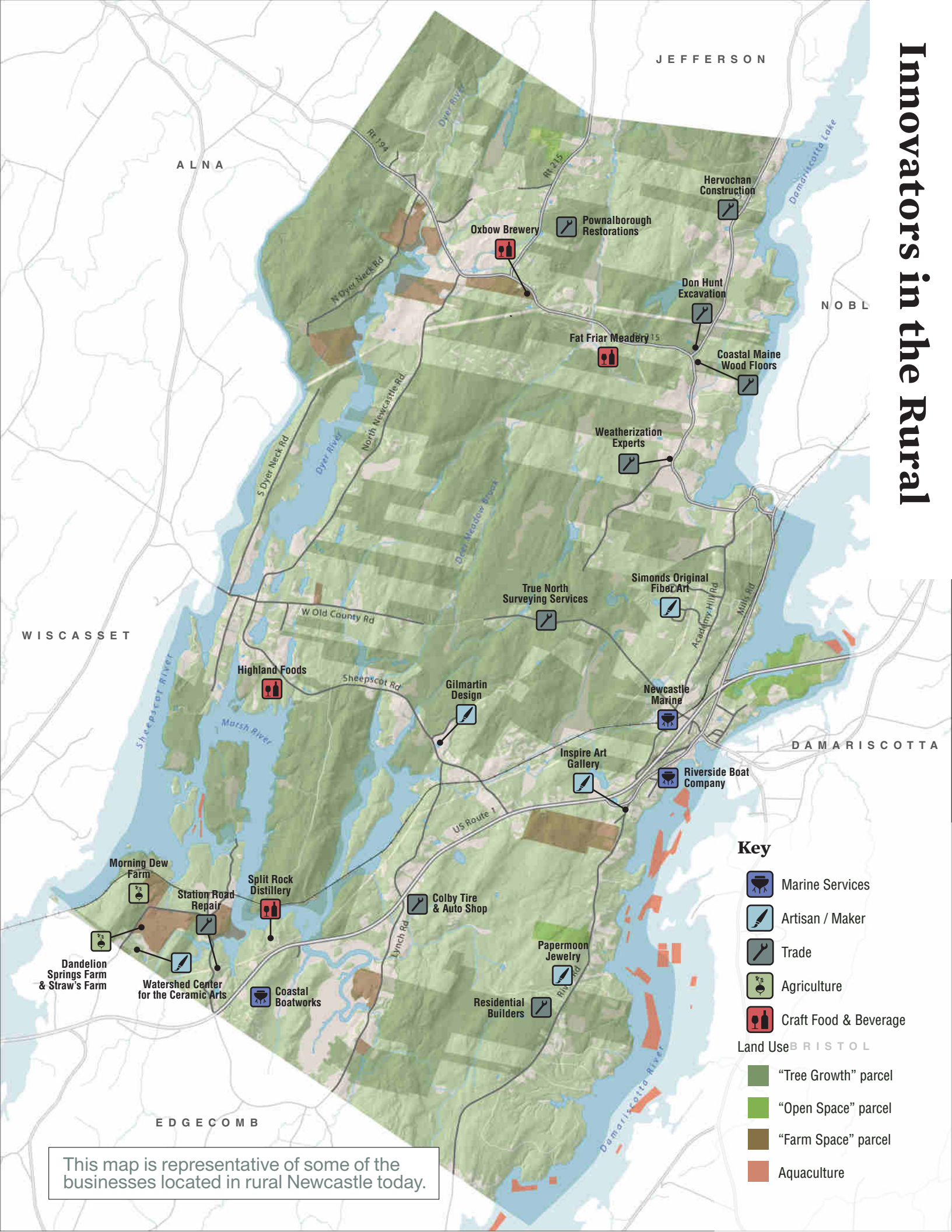
Expansion of Renys office and distribution center, located in Newcastle.



Made in LA is an example of a creative marketing campaign to celebrate local artisans and makers who help define Lewiston/Auburn today.



# Innovators in the Rural



JEFFERSON

ALNA

NOBLE

WISCASSET





DAMARISCOTTA

EDGECOMB

## Key

-  Marine Services
-  Artisan / Maker
-  Trade
-  Agriculture
-  Craft Food & Beverage

## Land Use

-  "Tree Growth" parcel
-  "Open Space" parcel
-  "Farm Space" parcel
-  Aquaculture

This map is representative of some of the businesses located in rural Newcastle today.





# CLAIM MAIN STREET





# Claim Main Street



**Newcastle’s Main Street may have been emerging as a service center at the turn of the 20th century. The DOT’s land takings in the 1920’s and 1960’s to create a wide, fast highway to Damariscotta may have halted such progress.**

The framework of what might have represented the beginnings of Newcastle’s Main Street was dismantled when several commercial buildings lining the street and leading up to the bridge were demolished to make way for cars. Newcastle square was destroyed, leaving a meager patch of greenspace for civic gatherings. The extra-wide right-of-way taken by the DOT was replaced with parking lots and empty gaps between buildings and streets. Setback restrictions now prohibit buildings from being located near the sidewalk.

Post WW-II zoning and fashionable development patterns contributed to the gaps between buildings on Main Street as well as pushing

buildings to the back of the lots. Such actions and restrictions all but halted the creation of a Main Street for Newcastle. Located only a block away, Damariscotta’s Main Street environment did not suffer the consequences of DOT action. Their Main Street can be characterized today as pleasant and pedestrian-scaled, with sidewalks, on-street parking with commercial buildings and shop fronts pulled up close to the street. With few exceptions, Damariscotta’s Main Street is just one lot deep. Newcastle, on the other hand, has only a few remnant buildings left. Although sidewalks and on-street parking do exist, the street conditions combined with gaps in the street fabric create an auto-scaled environment which is less comfortable for pedestrians. Buildings are of mixed quality, with many located at the rear of the property and ample amounts of parking in front. Of the historic commercial buildings that remain, the most iconic is the Newcastle Square Building, a multi-story red brick building similar in massing and architectural character to many of the buildings found framing



Damariscotta's Main Street. Sproul's Furniture, adjacent to the bridge, stands alone but continues to hold the street. A fundamental shift in thinking is critical to changing the design of Newcastle's Main Street. Streets must be designed for a downtown Main Street condition, with a design speed no greater than 20-25 mph. Newcastle is a destination, and therefore it is unnecessary to usher cars through downtown quickly.

**Newcastle has an opportunity to create a downtown experience that is unique to Newcastle, if the Town can work collaboratively with the DOT to change the perception of how Main Street in Newcastle should function – and where Main Street should start.**

Existing highway geometry that encourages mobility and speed should be abandoned. New street design should begin at the base of the off-ramp where it meets River Road, with tighter travel lanes, regularly spaced curb extensions and crosswalks, a new intersection at Academy Hill Road and Mills Road, removal of all big curves and curb radii, and expanded on-street parking, allowing for broad canopy street trees.

Next, the town should work with the DOT to recapture use of the rights-of-way to re-establish meaningful public spaces and create an attractive pedestrian environment. An advantage to the wide right-of-way is that Newcastle has the opportunity to create generous sidewalks and public spaces along Main Street, encouraging businesses to locate here, such as restaurants and cafes who place premiums on outdoor dining areas. Sidewalk and outdoor café space is at a premium, and is limited in Damariscotta. Creating a pedestrian-scaled and welcoming Main Street will attract investors and people who are looking for walkable, authentic places. Main Street is an untapped resource that could play a significant role in Newcastle's future, contributing to an expanded and diversified tax base.

## What you said.

"Changing one small traffic pattern (making a 4-way intersection) made it feel like we had an actual downtown instead of a highway to Damariscotta. Slower traffic felt safe and easy to navigate, also quieter. Loved it."

"Plant more street Trees. They enhance neighborhoods, slow down traffic, make walking more pleasurable."

"Parking!"

"Mini parks"

"Would be nice to have areas for free music-gathering – gazebo."

"Solve the traffic pattern at Main Street, Academy Hill, and Mills Road Intersections"

## How to get it done.

### INFILL WITH MIXED USE BUILDINGS AND REQUIRE ACTIVE GROUND FLOOR USES

Mixed-use buildings should be allowed to infill along Main Street, establishing a dense Main Street environment. Encouraging active ground floor uses, such as retail and restaurants, will create vibrancy as people move in and out of buildings. Shifting other uses, such as offices and housing to side, rear or upper floors maintains privacy for clients and residents while also supporting ground floor businesses. Damariscotta lacks the outdoor space to dine, gather, socialize, rest, and the street trees to provide shade. Newcastle can be the place for restaurants with outdoor seating on Main Street without compromising space for on-street parking, sidewalks and street trees.

**Action: Amend zoning to regulate shop fronts and mixed-use buildings as-of-right on Main Street.**

**Action: Create a generous sidewalk streetscape to encourage restaurants and cafes to locate here.**









Aerial view of Glidden Estate and farm, prior to Route 1 bypass.



Main Street looking west, today.

This view is of Main Street, looking west towards Academy Hill. New, mixed use buildings and shopfronts create a vibrant downtown for Newcastle, with generous sidewalks allow for civic gathering and on-street dining. New landscaped civic spaces replace unused street right-of-way, and expanded on-street parking supports local business. Crosswalks are placed at frequent intervals, with curb extensions to shorten pedestrian crossing distances. Street trees provide shade and pedestrian comfort. In this area of Newcastle, buildings can be 3 1/2 stories tall, accommodating a mix of commercial and residential activities.



## ENGAGE THE DOT

Discuss a scenario to slow traffic coming in to Newcastle. The off-ramp intersection with River Road and the intersection at Academy Hill/Main Street should be reconstructed reduce speeds. Additionally, expand on-street parking to support new businesses along Newcastle's claimed Main Street.

**Action: Collaborate with the DOT to re-design key intersections to transition from highway to Main Street conditions at River Road.**

## ESTABLISH A LINEAR PARK AND SQUARE

Create a street where residents and visitors alike can informally meet, socialize or purposefully gather to enjoy social activities. Utilize portions of the wide DOT right of way to establish a linear park and on-street parking, and restore Newcastle's Public Square (currently the Veterans Memorial Park) to provide a gathering place for celebration, music and events.

**Action: Collaborate with DOT to re-establish civic space at Newcastle Square and along Main Street.**

## CREATE A RIVER WALK

The Damariscotta River is a scenic asset that could contribute to the revitalization of Main Street. Main Street winds along and travels over the river, providing beautiful scenic views both up and down-river, but connection to the river is limited, at best. A new river walk trail should connect Main Street at Veterans Memorial Park to Lincoln Home, with places to sit and look out over the river. Multiple connection points should provide access to the river from nearby parking lots.

**Action: Engage landowners to develop a riverwalk trail.**

## TACTICAL INTERVENTIONS TO STIMULATE INVESTMENT

Use Tactical Urbanism as a means to test out solutions and ideas to address local needs, ranging from traffic calming streets where residents report frequent high speeds to encouraging temporary pop up businesses to locate on Main Street where parking is plentiful and opportunity exists to one day add new buildings. Create inexpensive, DIY street furniture and amenities to support pedestrians and local business. Up-cycle wooden pallets and other materials to create temporary



Create outdoor seating in alleys between buildings. Use lighting, planters, art and creative paint applications, and add portable heat source for extended seasonal use.

seating installations along Main Street. Provide places for people to rest and enjoy scenic views. To better assess the potential outcome of a project, town staff can use Tactical Urbanism as a first step before investing in studies, plans or construction.

**Action: Embed Tactical Urbanism into public works best practices.**

### FREE-RANGE GARDENING

In addition to any formal parks and gardens committee, invite the community to claim nooks and crannies in the Village to plant gardens, and support birds and pollinators.

**Action: Make space available for local groups and service clubs to adopt a garden. Partner with businesses such as Lincoln Home to create public-private garden spaces for social gathering.**

### ADOPT A CHARACTER-BASED CODE

Allow a mix of uses and more intensive development on Main Street and in the Village where development can be supported by existing infrastructure and sites that are being underutilized.



Program Main Street with engaging events such as the Damariscotta Pumpkin Festival.

**Action: To ensure compatibility with adjacent historic residential neighborhoods, adopt architectural standards and site standards to control form, character, scale and use.**

### ACTIVATE MAIN STREET OFTEN

Create reasons for people to gather, enjoy each other's company and celebrate community. Successful examples from across the country include outdoor community potluck dinners, readings, movies in the park, holiday caroling, plein-air painting, and block parties.

**Action: Encourage community groups to use Tactical Urbanism to enhance public and private spaces.**

### ADOPT A COMPLETE STREETS ORDINANCE

Complete Streets policies affect the look, feel, and function of streets and roads in our neighborhoods and towns. All modes of travel are considered in street design and the decision-making process.

**Action: Adopt a complete streets policy.**



Along Main Street, require storefronts with big windows and closely spaced entrances to create a lively street.



## FIX AND EXTEND SIDEWALKS TO ADJACENT DESTINATIONS

Overwhelmingly, residents posted to the Big Ideas wall a desire to fix existing sidewalks and extend sidewalks in the Village to reach popular amenities. Improved sidewalks would make streets safer by slowing traffic and separating people from moving vehicles where possible.

**Action: Fix and improve priority sidewalks first.**

## RE-STRIPE ROADS FOR SPEED CONTROL

If streets are in excellent to good condition, or reconstruction may not be practical in the near future, temporarily use paint to narrow travel lanes.

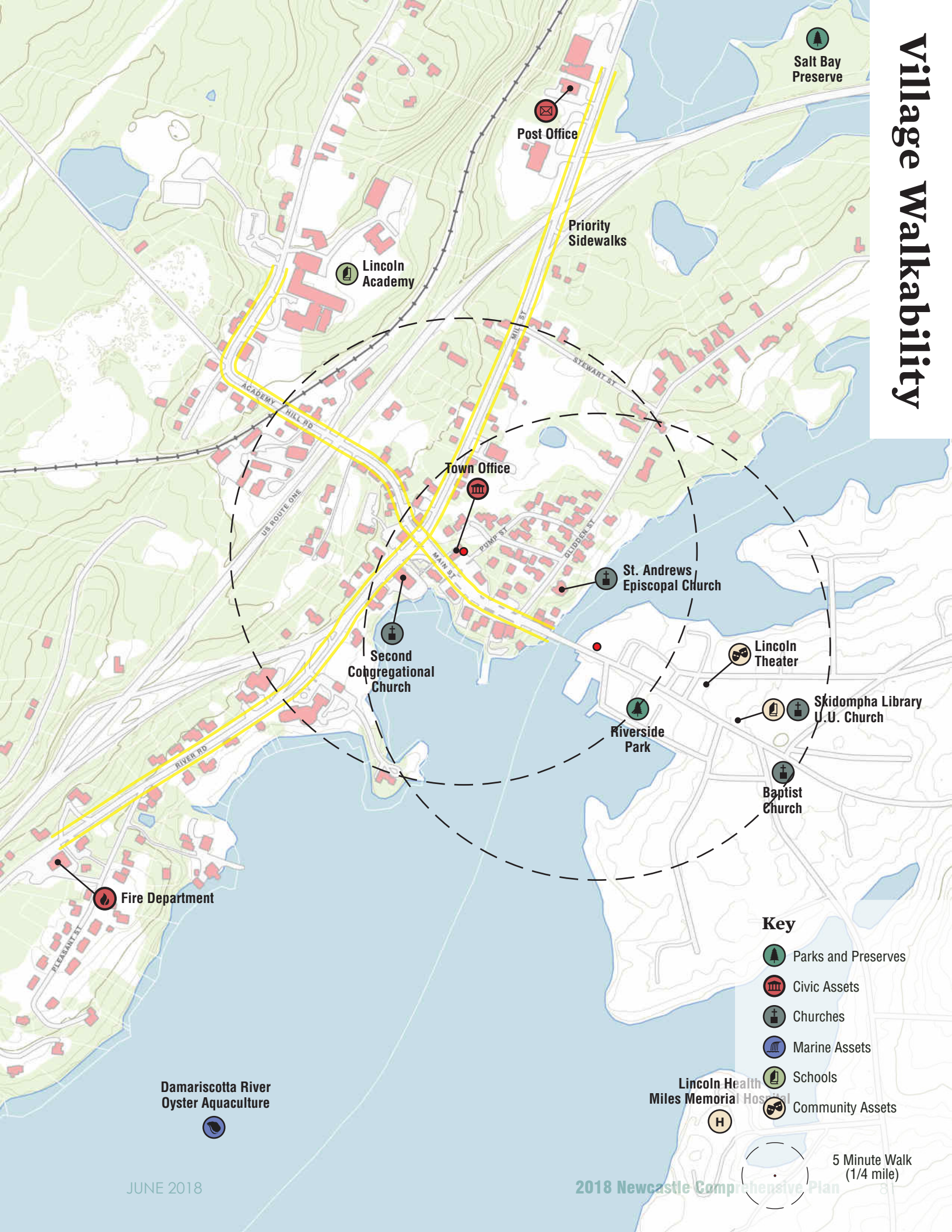
**Action: Prioritize streets as candidates for re-striping and speed control using temporary and permanent paint.**



Outdoor seating at River Bottom Raw Bar just before opening.



# Village Walkability



Salt Bay Preserve

Post Office

Priority Sidewalks

Lincoln Academy

Town Office

St. Andrews Episcopal Church

Second Congregational Church

Lincoln Theater

Skidompha Library  
U.U. Church

Riverside Park

Baptist Church

Fire Department

Damariscotta River  
Oyster Aquaculture

Lincoln Health  
Miles Memorial Hospital

## Key

- Parks and Preserves
- Civic Assets
- Churches
- Marine Assets
- Schools
- Community Assets

H

5 Minute Walk  
(1/4 mile)





# LIFELONG LIVING COMMUNITY



CHRISTOPHER DOHERTY



# Lifelong Living Community



**While we might not know what Newcastle’s future demographics will be, the Town can strengthen its position as an attractive, age diverse community. Newcastle can make decisions to accommodate people at every stage of life and to compete for new population.**

Lifelong living communities place the needs of the 8 year old and 80 year old at the forefront of consideration when thinking about planning and design of place. Both age groups need opportunities to socialize, to engage their minds, and to attend to personal care. They also need to experience and maintain a sense of independence. Both age groups may not be car dependent.

**The following six key elements of community design and public policy can have a big impact on the quality of life for both children and elders:**

## **1. Streets and Mobility Design**

Create slow flow streets with safe separation of sidewalks from moving vehicles and smooth surface sidewalks connecting the village to local destinations. Street designers should consider how fine grain decisions such as sidewalk placement, pedestrian-scaled lighting, minimizing crossing distances, tip-down curbs, contrasting materials choices, and availability of seating for resting and shade trees along a street can vastly enhance mobility and allow greater participation in civic life for young and old alike.

## **2. Public Spaces for Gathering and Play**

Keep in mind that neighborhood streets are public spaces, too. For children, move beyond expensive, colorful structured play equipment to provide places for informal play, and woodland and river exploration. Also, provide creative, open ended play areas. Open ended play spaces cost little to maintain and have low maintenance needs. Create pocket parks and small gathering spaces with simple enhancements, allowing neighbors to gather and socialize. Consider how new development interfaces with the public street to enhance quality of place on the street.

### 3. Social Support

Lifelong living communities recognize the value that strong social networks have on quality of life for residents. This support could include making food available at the Ecumenical Food Pantries and providing places for parents to gather and socialize with their children. Wherever possible, establishing indoor spaces in the community for people to connect and socialize will greatly enhance the livability of Newcastle.

### 4. Lifelong Learning

Newcastle has a high-quality education system, and local opportunities for continuing education and enrichment. This high-quality education system is a source of local pride and should be marketed to attract new, young families to Newcastle. Similarly, having opportunities for adult education and unique enrichment programs will attract empty-nesters and retirees who are looking for a more active and culturally stimulating next stage of life.

### 5. Active and Healthy Living

The Newcastle-Damariscotta area is in a strong position to benefit from new residents seeking active and healthy lifestyles. Current trends in Maine include a desire to know where your food and beverages come from, preference to eat farm-to-table and small craft foods and beverages, and more holistic approaches to health and wellness, incorporating active living (e.g. yoga, hiking, paddling, bicycling) and proactive mental health and social well-being (e.g. massage, therapy, art, music). Newcastle can continue to meet the needs of residents by fostering partnerships with and

## What you said.

“Better public transportation”

“Local playground”

“Mills road playground...a big nice one!”

“Create a dog run”

“We need safe bike lanes and more sidewalks!”

“Please, please [install a] bike path on River Road”

“I wish there could be a sidewalk from Day’s Emporium to Newcastle PO + Louis Does. I walk there now but its rather “cowboy” now.”

“Enforce speed limits”

“Make it possible for people to “age in place” in Newcastle. Find everyone who’s interested, create a database of resources in town and region, and build partnerships between groups.”

“A town center area with town services, community services (day care, social services, high school), educational services, professional offices all within walking distances.”

“Public space”

“Create an active living plan to inventory resources (parks, open space, trails, sidewalks) and develop plans for expansion.”

between community groups, businesses, health practitioners, and the schools while broadening access to resources, creating unique programming opportunities and providing spaces to gather and connect with neighbors.



## 6. Provide Housing Choice

Today, there are two converging trends. Both empty nesters and millennials are seeking out the same types of housing in the same kinds of neighborhoods; i.e. cities and small towns with highly walkable neighborhoods. For decades, the housing industry has been building the same type of housing. This type of housing can be characterized as single family, auto oriented, sidewalk-free, cul-de-sac neighborhoods disconnected from daily services and amenities. “Missing middle housing” is a recent term given to a group of housing types that have been missing from the marketplace, often because of restrictive zoning and financing. Examples include small houses (sometimes referred to as “granny flats”), accessory apartments and duplexes. Newcastle should allow a diversity of housing types as-of right in certain character districts in Newcastle.

## How to get it done.

### MARKET NEWCASTLE AS A DESIRABLE PLACE TO RAISE A FAMILY

The K-12 educational opportunities in Newcastle are an asset for attracting new families to the area. Both schools are well-supported. Highspeed internet also allows people to work remotely, perhaps even out of state. Adults have local options for continuing education to obtain GED’s and to pursue a variety of entrepreneurial and interest based learning and enrichment, such as languages, art, music and recreation.

**Action: Partner with Lincoln Academy and local businesses to fund marketing efforts.**

### BUILD NEW APARTMENTS AND NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE VILLAGE

Infill of apartments and neighborhoods are appropriate for the village for three reasons. First, sewer and water infrastructure, located in the Village and extending up Academy Hill, down River Road and up Mills Road, can support a denser form of development. Second, the Village offers many desirable amenities to support a high quality of life for people of all ages within safe and convenient walking distance. Third, building density in the Village increases valuation and broadens the tax base while consuming less land.

**Action: Amend zoning to allow dense apartments and cottage court developments to be built in the Village, including River Rd, Mills Rd, and Academy Hill Rd.**

### SUPPORT THE GREAT SALT BAY HERITAGE CENTER

The Heritage Center, run by Damariscotta River Association (DRA), offers highly enriching programming for people of all ages, including cultivating awareness for nature, ecosystems and local heritage through hands-on-learning experiences. Offerings include preschool programs, oyster gardening, the Archaeology School, community gardens, and midcoast stewardships.

**Action: Work with DRA to expand programming, considering sponsorship opportunities for school groups, elders, and families with financial need.**

### ENHANCE MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Prioritize sidewalk infrastructure in Newcastle Village, with the goal of providing smooth surfaces and highly visible differentiation between space for vehicles and space for pedestrians. Whenever possible, provide ADA accessibility and safe separation of moving vehicles from pedestrians. Be prepared for winter maintenance, and ensure Village sidewalks are cleared to allow elders and children to continue to walk safely to destinations.

**Action: Create and fund a sidewalk improvement plan, funding priority sidewalks first.**

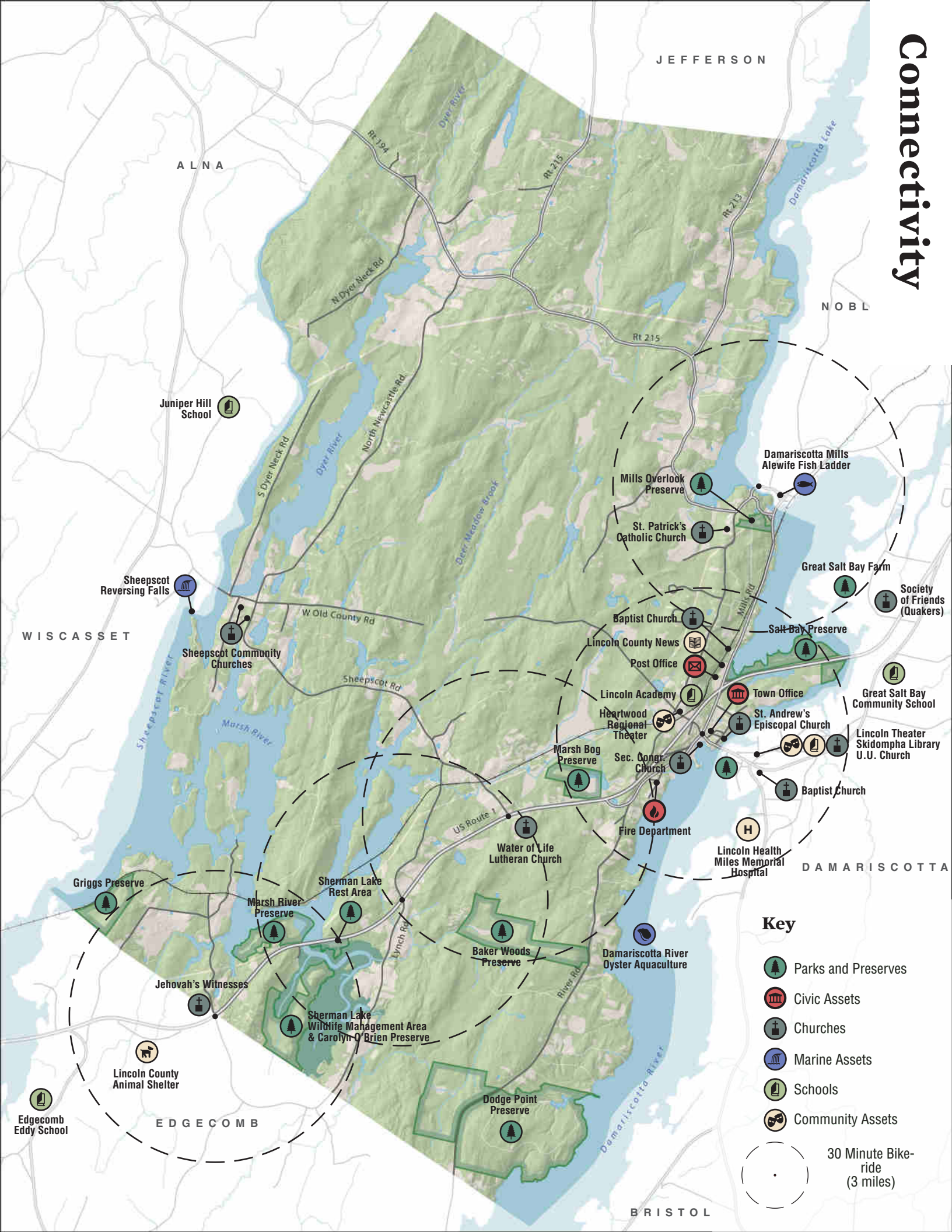
### PROMOTE DIVERSE HOUSING TYPES

Provide the zoning flexibility to allow for missing middle housing to meet the needs of singles, empty nesters, retirees, and young families and those who can’t afford or don’t want the floor area and yard space typically provided by a single-family home. Regulated under a Character-Based code, missing middle housing can result in a diverse housing stock, both in terms of building type and affordability.







**Action: Amend zoning to permit a variety of residential building types, including small accessory buildings on lots with existing**

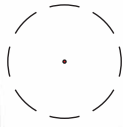


# Connectivity



## Key

-  Parks and Preserves
-  Civic Assets
-  Churches
-  Marine Assets
-  Schools
-  Community Assets

 30 Minute Bike-ride (3 miles)

ALNA

JEFFERSON

NOBL

Juniper Hill School

Sheepscoot Reversing Falls

Sheepscoot Community Churches

WISCASSET

Mills Overlook Preserve

St. Patrick's Catholic Church

Damariscotta Mills Alewife Fish Ladder

Great Salt Bay Farm

Society of Friends (Quakers)

Baptist Church

Salt Bay Preserve

Great Salt Bay Community School

Lincoln County News

Post Office

Town Office

Lincoln Theater Skidompha Library U.U. Church

Lincoln Academy

Heartwood Regional Theater

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

Sec. Cong. Church

Baptist Church

Marsh Bog Preserve

Fire Department

Lincoln Health Miles Memorial Hospital

DAMARISCOTTA

Water of Life Lutheran Church

Griggs Preserve

Marsh River Preserve

Sherman Lake Rest Area

Baker Woods Preserve

Damariscotta River Oyster Aquaculture

Jehovah's Witnesses

Sherman Lake Wildlife Management Area & Carolyn O'Brien Preserve

Lincoln County Animal Shelter

Edgecomb Eddy School

EDGECOMB

Dodge Point Preserve

BRISTOL

**primary dwellings and apartments in mixed use buildings.**

### **FINANCIALLY SUPPORT SHARED FACILITIES**

A number of existing organizations, many located in Damariscotta, provide social services, education, health and recreation opportunities and resources for residents of Newcastle. Additionally, the town shares library and harbor facilities with Damariscotta. Funding is allocated each year to support these important qualities of life-enhancing services.

**Action: Each year, continue to appropriate funds for essential amenities that provide improvements to quality of life and social experience, such as the Skidompha Library in Damariscotta and the Ecumenical Food Pantry.**

### **DOUBLE DUTY BUILDINGS AND PROPERTIES**

All buildings and properties should be considered for optimum productivity and income generation. The town should be proactive to make policies for residents to participate in a sharing economy. Zoning should allow for the activities within buildings to flex over time, as the needs of the owner shift due to market demands and personal or tenant needs.

**Action: Amend zoning to give flexibility to the activities being conducted inside buildings.**

**Action: Adopt a local municipal policy to address, support and clarify rules regarding short-term rentals, allowing residents to generate some additional income from residential properties.**

### **FLEX HOUSING AND CO-HOUSING**

Create opportunities within the community for new flexible housing that can adapt to changing needs or provide unique living arrangements with shared spaces and components. Common houses, kitchens, laundry, and outdoor spaces allow people at different times in their lives to live conveniently. Flex housing can be designed with affordability in mind. Flex housing can also be designed around specific needs of a population, such as dementia support or to meet needs of single parents with young children.

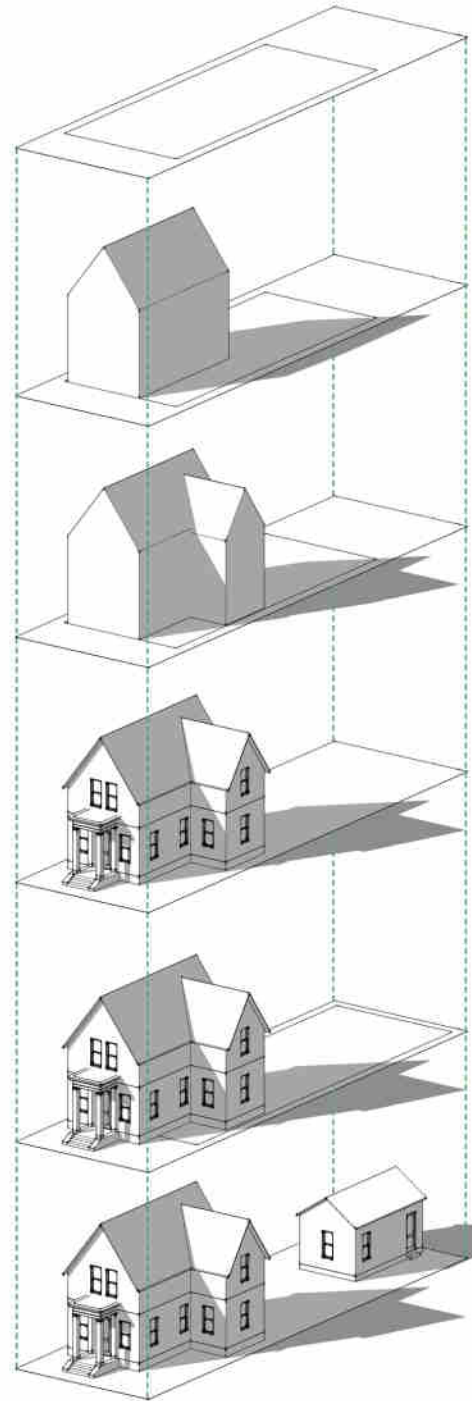
**Action: Amend zoning in designated growth sectors to allow for a variety of residential building types, including dormitory-style housing with shared indoor and outdoor common spaces.**



Missing Middle Housing consists of multiunit housing types such as duplexes, fourplexes, bungalow courts, and mansion apartments that are not bigger than a large house. Such housing was traditionally integrated throughout most walkable, pre- 1940's neighborhoods, but has now become much less common. Multi-unit housing is often integrated into blocks with primarily single-family homes. They provide diverse housing choices and generate enough density to support locally-serving commercial amenities.  
Reference: Wikipedia.org

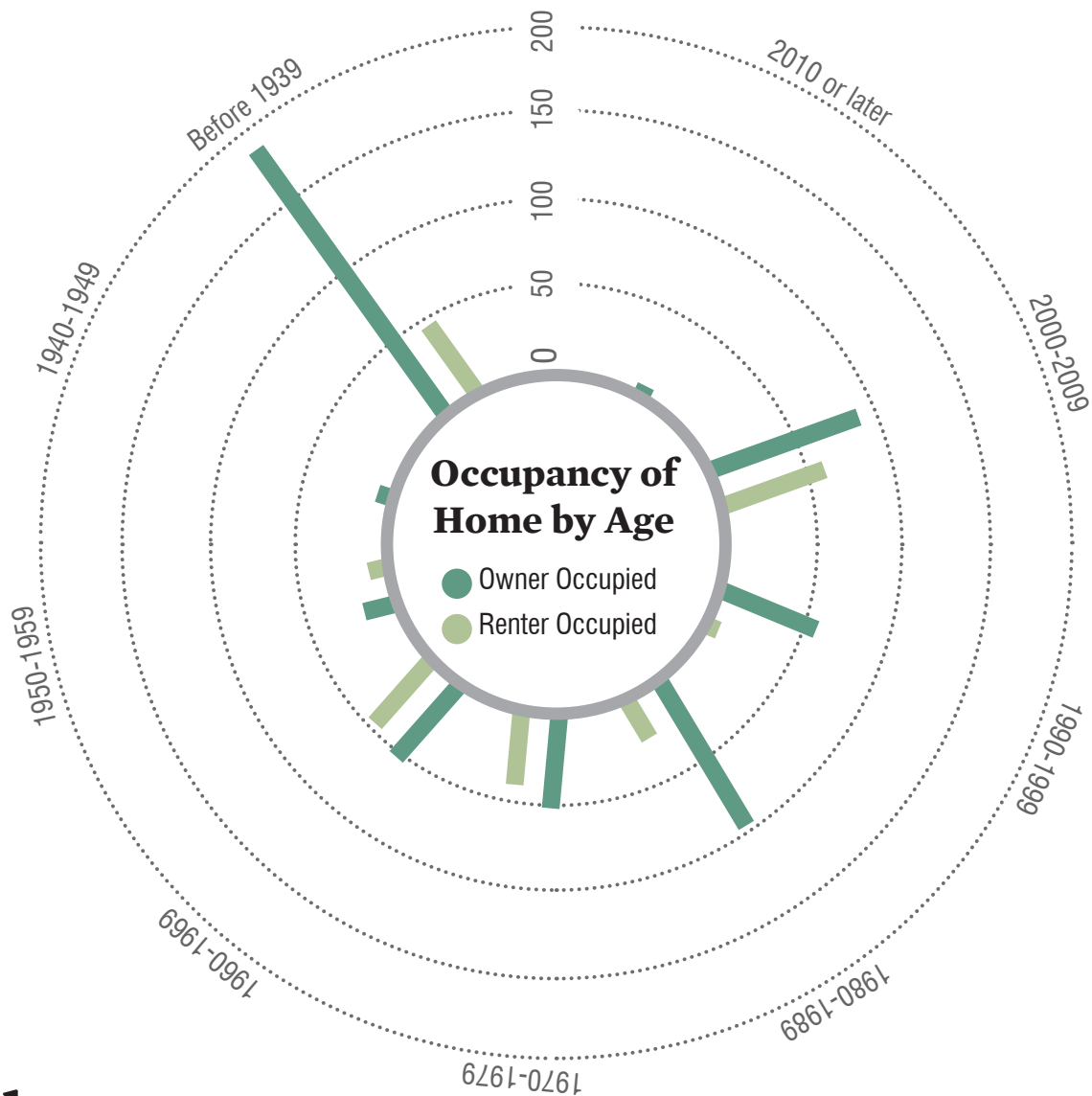
# How to Create an Accessory Apartment

Under new Character-Based coding rules, homeowners can add accessory apartments in existing housing or accessory buildings, as-of-right. This diagram illustrates how a house may evolve over time to accommodate growing needs of a family. First, an addition may be added as a wing to the principle house. Next, an accessory apartment can be added, generating additional income for the family or providing housing for a relative.





# Age of Housing, 2014



SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

## Insight:

23% of the total housing stock is owner-occupied and pre-dates 1939. Rental housing comprises a small portion of the housing stock and is of diverse age.

↑ The number of subsidized units for families increased in Lincoln County from 100 in 2008 to 164 in 2013

During this same period...

The number of subsidized housing units in Newcastle decreased from a total of 20 units to 17 units ↓

SOURCE: MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

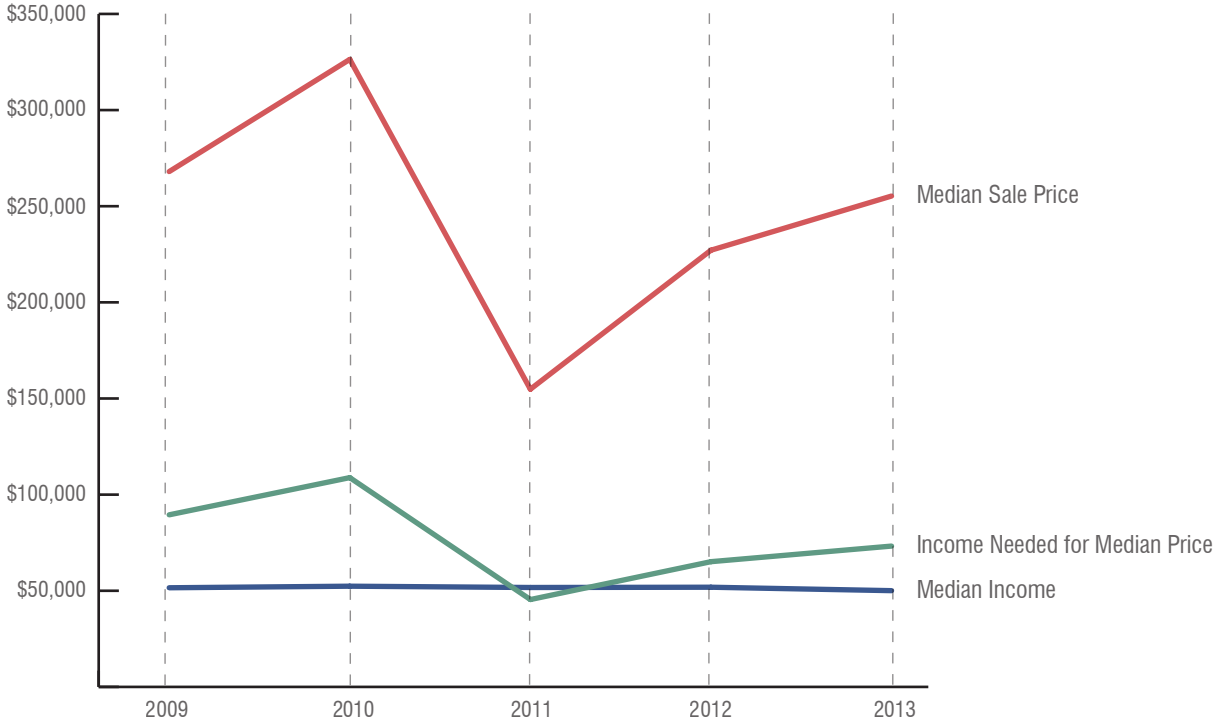
# Housing Occupancy



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2010 CENSUS

Homeowner vacancy rate:	<b>1.9%</b>
Rental vacancy rate:	<b>13.6%</b>

## Housing Affordability



SOURCE: MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

**In 2013, the Average 2 Bedroom Rent with Utilities was: \$923.48**





# CELEBRATE LOCAL HERITAGE



JOSEPH LEIGHTON

# Celebrate Local Heritage



JOSEPH LEIGHTON

**At every turn, Newcastle is a living museum of natural history. This history should be celebrated and kept alive through preservation efforts and story-telling.**

Spanning the time from Native American settlements to the arrival of the Colonists, Newcastle's history has mirrored other coastal New England and Maritime provinces. Homesteads, wars, extraction and export of natural resources, boat building, farming, saw mills, brickyards and fish processing are all a part of the historic landscape. Knowing the history and culture keeps us grounded and connected to the people around us. It also encourages us to be good stewards of the land and the beautiful historic buildings that we live in.

Furthermore, celebrating local heritage brings clarity and focus to what it means to work hard, to raise a family, to engage in civic life, and to evolve as good citizens. Newcastle's natural and historic cultural assets are rich. It is important

to collaborate with other regional entities such as the Damariscotta River Association's Heritage Center, Midcoast Conservancy's Hidden Valley Nature Center, and the Frances Perkins Center to keep local history and cultural arts alive. Enriched by our Native Americans heritage, artisans and craftsman, historic farms, active woodlots and riverine habitats, Newcastle offers many opportunities for engagement and unique learning opportunities. Promoting the town as a natural and historic cultural destination allows Newcastle to protect what people care about while deriving direct economic growth and local job creation.

## Protective Measures

In recent years, the three historic areas of Newcastle Village, Sheepscot Village and Damariscotta Mills have been subject to Design Review Ordinance and project review by a Design Review Board. The areas include “many significant structures representing period architectural styles and details, all of which contribute to the historic setting along with other more contemporary buildings.” (DRB, 2015 Town Report). Included in the town’s Design Review Ordinance is a Demolition Delay component. While demolition of historic structures is not common, there have been a few known instances where demolition has been requested.

Historic structures are a diminishing asset that provide an economic advantage for a community. Nationally, the economics are irrefutable. Communities that conserve their historic buildings prosper over communities that do not. Well maintained historic structures command high real estate values. When a property’s value is allowed to diminish because of unnecessary demolition, the tax burden of that diminished value is distributed to the rest of the town. Therefore, to ensure the town’s future prosperity and to preserve the town’s assessed value, the demolition of historic structures should continue to be regulated. Members of the Design Review Board (DRB) have reported concerns to the team over the clarity and ease of interpretation of this ordinance. Members and local citizens agree that some components of the Design Review Ordinance are effective, where as other aspects of the ordinance and permitting process create unnecessary, overly restrictive, costly hurdles.

According to local archeologist, Tim Dinsmore, sea-level rise could endanger pre-historic assets either by submersion or erosion.

Through Character-Based coding, many of the protective measures that previously existed in the Design Review Ordinance (DRO) will be carried forward, and a new Demolition Delay permit process will be established. When adopted, DRO will be repealed.

## What you said.

“Consider Newcastle History Plaques at key locations - the history is rich, varied and 300 - 400 years long”

## Conditions of Existing Historic Properties

A simple survey was conducted of property owners to identify conditions of the small number of historic properties recognized as local assets by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. According to NLPC members, no significant resources have fallen into disrepair. Currently, the community is not providing incentives for preservation of historical resources, though Damariscotta Mills residents of Newcastle and Nobleboro continue to work together to pursue funding for further preservation efforts at the Damariscotta Fish Ladder.

## Prehistoric and Historic Resources

Newcastle has benefitted from a coastal archaeological survey and from several road and individual property surveys that have resulted in the identification of a number of archaeological sites. Future archaeological survey should focus on the identification of potentially significant resources associated with the town’s agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the 17th and 18th centuries, according to local archeologist Tim Dinsmore. A comprehensive survey of Newcastle’s above-ground historic resources needs to be conducted in order to identify additional assets. The Town understands the importance of this task, but it is a costly task to undertake. In particular, the yearly work of the DRA Archaeology School, helps to advance local knowledge of Newcastle’s prehistoric and historic archaeological resources.



## How to Get it Done.

### NOMINATE DAMARISCOTTA MILLS TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Throughout the Planning Process, the team heard people express a desire for stronger protections for Damariscotta Mills, similar in level to Sheepscot Village. The Town should explore designating Damariscotta Mills as a National Register Historic District, thereby allowing owners of historical buildings the opportunity to take advantage of federal tax incentive programs for renovation. The Fish Ladder in the Mills is currently recognized by Maine State Historic Preservation Commission as a structure potentially eligible for the National Register. This effort would require financial capital and technical assistance to prepare a nomination.

**Action: Consider nominating Damariscotta Mills to the National Register, and use crowdfunding to raise capital to support the effort.**

### INVENTORY OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

Excluding the Sheepscot Historic District, only 7 other historic buildings have been placed on the National Register, and a comprehensive inventory of Newcastle's historic structures has not been completed. This effort will take significant resources to complete. However, once complete, information may be used to determine if other buildings should be nominated to the National Register.

**Action: Pursue grant funding to undertake a comprehensive inventory of historic structures.**

### DEMOLITION PERMIT

Rules for demolition of historic structures should discourage neglect and allow a period of time where the building can be moved, or documented and salvaged. The Town should discourage "demolition by neglect" of an identified historic structure. The Town should also explore other means of protecting historic structures.

**Action: Create a clear and concise Demolition Permit process for historic structures.**



## SIMPLIFY AND IMPROVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION REGULATIONS

The existing zoning code, which includes design review of historic properties, is considered by many to be arbitrary and subjective, and it has often left applicants, builders and Design Review Board members frustrated by the process and outcomes. Under the new Character-Based code, the essentials of building form, scale, massing, and components can be regulated clearly.

**Action: Amend zoning ordinance to include building form, scale, massing and components regulations.**

## ENABLE HISTORICAL EASEMENTS

Historical easements prevent a building from being torn down by current or future owners. A property tax reduction could also be provided as a way to incentivize landowners to apply for historical easements. The Town or another third party could act as the easement holder.

**Action: Amend zoning ordinance to include an historical easements module, including standards and processes.**

## PROTECT ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Given what is known today about Newcastle's past, projects that propose significant excavation and development should conduct research to verify if there's a potential for archaeological resources on the site. Prior to issuing project approvals, permitting authorities should verify this information to ensure proper plans are in place to respond appropriately.

**Action: Require that subdivision and large project review applicants determine the potential for archaeological resources by contacting Maine Historic Preservation Commission and the Newcastle Historical Society.**

## Insight:

According to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Newcastle has:

**42** Historic Archaeological sites on state data list; 3 listed on the National Register

**31** Prehistoric Archaeological sites on state data list; 9 listed on the National Register

**7** Historic Buildings and sites listed on the National Register, including Sheepscot Historic District

**4** properties have potential for the National Register





## Key

- Pre-Colonial
- Colonial
- Pre-Industrial
- ✱ Place Name
- 🏠 Historic Site
- 🚶 Historic Path / Road
- 🏭 Historic Industry
- 🐚 Shell Middens

Winnesisitico, or  
Fresh Falls

North Newcastle

### William Dyer (d.1675)

William Dyer was one of the original settlers of the area and while he actually lived in Sheepscot, he owned land across on the spit of land that now bears his name: Dyer Neck. His house was built at the mouth of what is now also called the Dyer River. He was one of the many killed in the regional conflict with the Wampanoag.

Pedcogowake  
("Thundering Place")

Governor Kavanaugh  
House (b. 1808)

Canasixet, or  
Mill River

St. Patrick Church  
(b. 1808)

West Hamlet

Wawenock  
Shell Middens

Alleyn's Falls

Lincoln Academy  
(fnd. 1801)

### Old County Rd

Once called the "carrying place", this pathway was used before colonists by the Wawenock, most likely as a canoe portage. "An old, direct, easy tract, from one river to the other" - it quickly became one of the first roads in the region.

Glidden-Austin  
Block (b. 1845)

St. Andrew's Church  
(ded. 1883)

2nd Congregational Church  
(b. 1848)

### Sheepscot Village Historical District

There are some claims of a first Dutch colony in the early 1600's, but the first recorded settlement was the "Sheepscot Plantation" in the 1630's, there were approximately 50 families. This settlement was raided, burned, and abandoned during King Philip's War in 1676. It was later resettled and by 1794 a bridge was built spanning the river in roughly the same place it does today.

### King's Highway

Arguably the oldest road in Maine, this route connected townhouses in Sheepscot to outer fields and the mill. Its name is preserved today on another piece of the road on "Little Neck".

### Boatbuilding

While "Riverside" remains one of few local wooden boatbuilding yards to this day, Newcastle was once like many in mid-coast towns and had a slew of local shipbuilders. 100 to 200 ton schooners, brigs, and other fishing vessels were built in the late 1700's straight through the 1800's.

South Newcastle

### Brickmaking

Perkins Family  
Homestead  
National Landmark  
(b. 1883)

### Madamescontee

'Damariscotta' is supposedly also a twist on an Abenaki name. The leading theory is that it is related to madamescontee, the word for 'alewife' - of which there are many. Another theory is described by George Varney in 1886:

"It was named for Darnarine, the Indian sachem of Sagadahoc (called Robin Hood by the English), but is now generally spoken of in the country-side as 'Scottie.'"

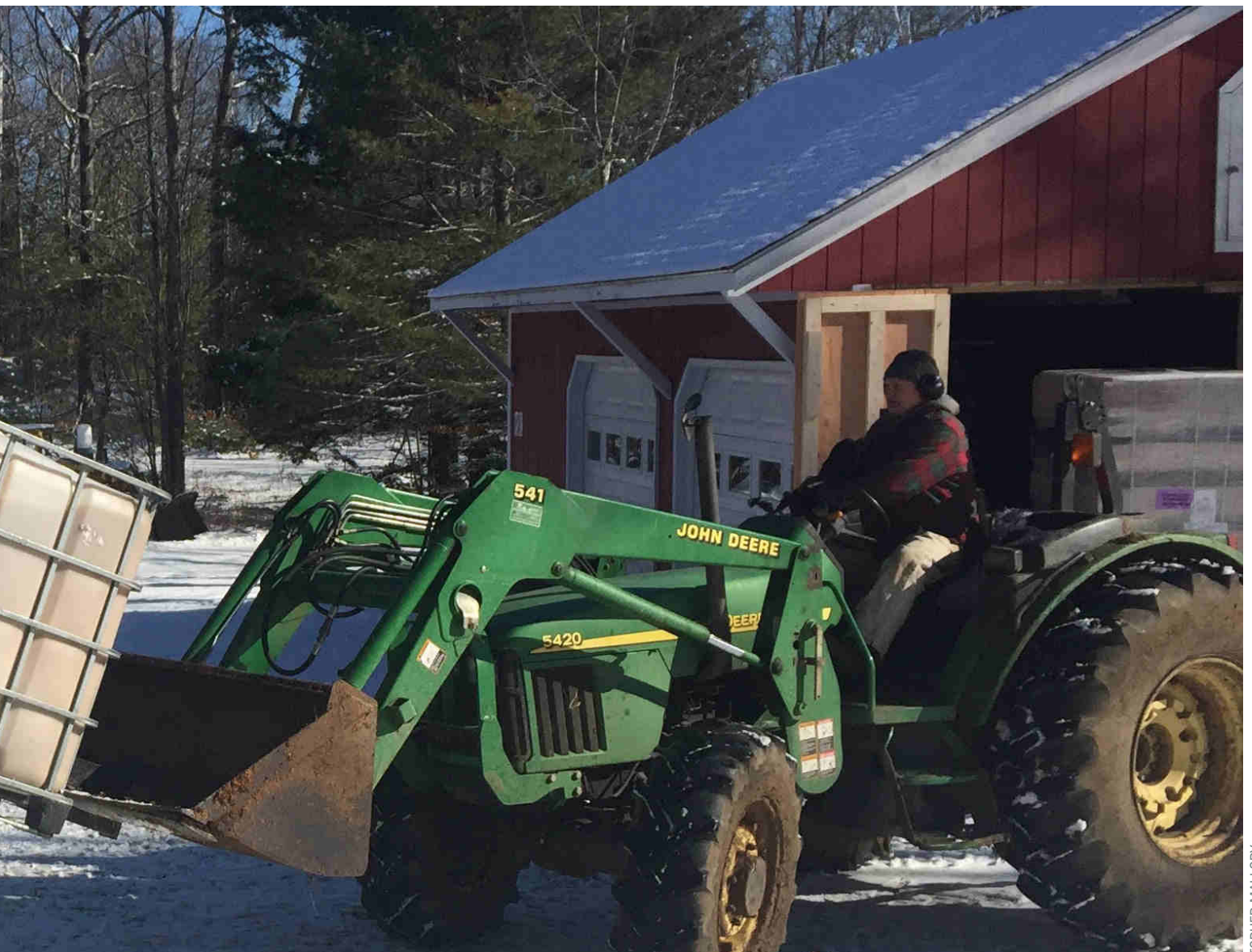
### Pashipscot

'Sheepscot/Sheepscot' has long been an argued English colonial name, perhaps "Sheep's gut" or some version. There is a general consensus, however, that the word is an English take on Abenaki like its sister village. The word pashipscot means - "river split by rocks"





# MAKE RURAL WORK



TOPHER MALLORY



# Make Rural Work



## **Newcastle has the opportunity to think beyond existing limitations and embrace a new strategy for using rural lands in new and creative ways.**

Newcastle’s future rural economy will depend on bold, creative thinking and the motivation of individuals and groups of people to collaborate, share resources and support each other and each other’s business growth. It will depend on the community staying open to flexibility and change. Adoption of a new zoning code will facilitate the application and project review process. Local leadership also plays an important role by standing behind the vision that the people have for Newcastle and moving zoning ordinance amendments forward.

During the planning process, residents expressed positive and constructive ideas suggesting Newcastle accepts what it has as assets (farmland, forest, and rivers) and works to build a stronger local economy. One resident added, “Eco-Adventures in the heart of Newcastle” to the big

ideas wall. Other residents cited examples of Maine communities using outdoor recreation, agritourism and the popularity of paddling and bicycling as means to transform and diversify small town economies.

The two industries of agritourism and outdoor recreation are often interrelated as people look to extend their experiences in rural communities. Craft makers of food and beverage, bed & breakfasts, tasting rooms and experiences, such as on-the-farm dinners would contribute to these industries. Town’s leaders can advance the future rural economy by making bold investments in town owned lands, investing in the harbor and water access, and perhaps even developing the first town owned and operated forest park with tree-top trekking and ropes course.

## **Agriculture and Timber**

Agriculture is considered by the NLPC as a growing industry in Newcastle. Frequently, participants in the planning process cited protection of farms as

a priority; however, farming today only comprises about 2% of the total land area. There is one large multi-generational dairy farm, the Russell Farm, currently for sale and it is unknown at this time what the future will bring to the property. Maine Farmland Trust has actively worked with farmers in Lincoln County to establish Forever Farms and partner land trusts with state and federal funding to secure and protect agricultural lands.

While the NLPC believes forestry has been relatively stable, the future of tree products remains uncertain. Land in Tree Growth tax status comprises a significant portion of the town, with approximately 35% of the land mass benefitting from tax relief. Newcastle has many large, forested blocks of undeveloped land, and tree growth has certainly contributed to the protection of Newcastle's rural landscape.

### **Conservation and Open Space**

At the same time, over 12% of Newcastle's land area is in permanent conservation, with over 5% of that total land area providing 4-season recreational opportunities. The Damariscotta River Association and Midcoast Conservancy have been highly successful securing lands and conservation easements in Newcastle and the region to protect unique habitats, preserve landscapes and provide high quality outdoor public access for a number of activities, including water access.

### **Local Recreation**

The Town-maintained baseball field is located at the Harriet Bird Playground in Sheepscot Village. Little League programming uses fields in Damariscotta, Bristol and Nobleboro. Newcastle children and adults have access to fitness and recreational programming through the Central Lincoln County YMCA, and adults have additional opportunities for fitness and recreation through Central Lincoln County Adult Education system. Both organizations are located in Damariscotta. Playgrounds with structured equipment are located at the YMCA and at the Great Salt Bay School. During the planning process several residents cited a desire to see a new local playground for in the Village.

## **What you said.**

"Eco-Adventures in the heart of Newcastle."

"Interconnected trail system for entire town!"

"Connect sidewalks to trails through River Road and Damariscotta Mills"

"have more biking trails"

"link town to Dodge Point by trail"

"trail to sidewalk connections"

"walking, biking, kayaking, skiing trail – from Sheepscot to downtown. Open Old County Road as a non-motor trailway"

"Create a map of access to trails, waterways, boat launch etc. and where one can park without bothering neighbors."

"Restore right-of-ways. Water access for public is priority."

"Lake access, especially for swimming. Alleviate pressure on swimming beaches in the Mills!"

"Develop public access to the Damariscotta and Sheepscot Rivers"

### **Damariscotta and Sheepscot Rivers**

Historical settlements likely occurred because of Newcastle's rivers. Today, Newcastle has limited public access to the rivers. During the public process, improving river access for low-impact activities such as kayak put-ins and paddling, fishing and swimming was cited by many as a desired goal.

Two specific locations for improvement were suggested:

- the reversing falls in Sheepscot, where access is ambiguous and signage is needed to clarify terms of use;
- behind Veteran's Memorial Park and the Second Congregational Church, where an improved set of stairs could provide access to the river.

Participants also expressed a desire to research, formalize and make basic site improvements such as signage, parking, and stable access to many other locations, such as at the marina (to include trailered boats), the bridge at S. Dyer's Neck Road, and Cochran Road (old ferry).

# Winter, a Maine reality.

Cold weather might not appear on most people's asset list, but winter is unavoidable. Newcastle can borrow innovative planning and community design ideas from other northern cities and towns who are taking proactive steps to create vibrant, 4-season places to live.

Winter communities are about strengthening local economies in down times, as well as improving winter livability for residents. Strategies embraced by winter cities solidify around the following three principles:

- **Consider elements of community design.** Think about sidewalk and street design for pedestrian comfort year-round. Incorporate design elements such as creative lighting, warming stations, wood benches and seating, windscreens, and community fire pits.
- **Adjust public works maintenance practices.** Use the appropriately sized equipment to plow and shovel snow. Clear priority sidewalks on and leading to Main Street, and plow street edges to support snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. As plowing equipment needs replacing, consider smaller sized street plowing equipment to better handle narrower neighborhood streets.
- **Create unique outdoor programming activities.** Include recreational programming and winter festivals and events to stimulate social gathering and local tourism. Examples include forest labyrinth skating trails, ice sculpture festivals, snow parks, and outdoor holiday markets.



Newcastle has land and water opportunities to be a year-round outdoor recreation destination, including camping, hiking and huts and trails network, winter skating paths, and paddling.



# How to Get it Done.

## START A FARM AND BREW TRAIL

Strategically partner Newcastle’s farmers, brewers and the distillery with other farmers, brewers and small batch artisan food producers in Lincoln County to create a Farm and Brew Trail. Develop marketing materials for digital and print media, and work with other local businesses to cross promote exploration of the Trail, including opportunities for outdoor recreation and local accommodations.

**Action: Partner with local and regional farmers, brewers and food producers to crowdfund and develop local marketing materials in print and digital media.**

## TREE GROWTH + BUSINESS

Drawing upon the expertise and resources of the Maine Forest Service, expand local knowledge about the myths and facts of Tree Growth Tax status and the ability to generate additional income from land in tree growth. Consider how landowners can work symbiotically within their 10-year forestry management plans to create innovative forest-based businesses such as treetop trekking, ropes course, wildlife viewing, and winter

ice skating trails through woods. Consider how large blocks of forested land can generate income while providing outdoor recreation and hospitality opportunities.


**Action: Undertake public education efforts about Tree Growth, and amend zoning to allow business in the rural areas, subject to performance standards.**

## HUTS AND TRAILS

Consider the Maine Huts and Trails system model to provide hospitality opportunities for outdoor recreationalists. Building on existing assets such as Hidden Valley Nature Center in Jefferson and Oxbow Brewing Company, identify potential for a network of hiking, mountain biking, skiing and/or snowshoeing between locations. Work with landowners who have properties in Tree Growth to route trails through these properties and strategically locate accommodations on or adjacent to these parcels. Adjust routes as needed to accommodate timber harvesting activities.

**Action: Convene willing landowners to explore building a trail network and reach out to entities like Maine Huts and Trails, DRA, Midcoast Conservancy and NEMBA for guidance.**

### Key

-  Potential Bike Path
  -  Current Trails
  -  Discontinued Roads
- |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Food Related         |  Snowshoeing      |
|  Lodging              |  X-Country Skiing |
|  Art Related          |  Ice Skating      |
|  Tasting Rooms        |  Swimming         |
|  Retail               |  Kayaking         |
|  Agriculture          |  Canoeing         |
|  Public Water Access  |  Fishing          |
|  Boat Trailer Parking |  Motorboating     |
|  Hiking / Walking     |  Sailing          |
|  Mountain Biking      |  Tourboating      |



# Make Rural Work







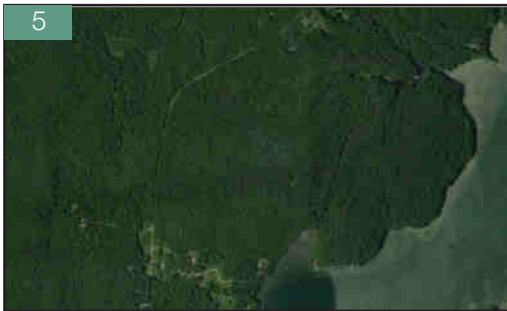
### RIVERLINK

Riverlink connects the Dodge Point trail head in Newcastle on the River Road to a trail head on McKay Road in Boothbay. Riverlink is a collaborative land conservation initiative among numerous state, municipal and non-profit partners to create a trail and wildlife corridor connecting the Damariscotta and Marsh Rivers and running down the spine of the Boothbay Peninsula. The goal is a permanently protected and publicly accessible block of contiguous land totaling several thousand acres and thus able to support clean water, recreation and wildlife at a necessary scale. Riverlink is 5 miles of strenuous trail.



### BAKER FOREST

The Baker Forest is a 165-acre forest property owned and managed by the DRA, and contains 1.75 miles of trails. The property begins on the River Road and extends westward nearly as far as Route One, crossing rocky ridges, flat and once cleared grazing ground, and a lowland stream with a long and current history of beaver activity. Owned and managed by the Bakers since the early 1960's, this woodland presents itself as a mature forest community. Trail Difficulty: Moderate.



### DODGE POINT PUBLIC RESERVED LAND

Dodge Point was once an award winning tree farm owned by the Freeman Family. Towering plantation red pine still dominate much of the forest and the State continues the long-standing tradition of careful timber harvest at regular intervals. Dodge Point boasts an extensive trail system and is the northeast terminus of the River-Link Trail. The DRA maintains a dock on the Dodge Point shore for public use. Dodge Point consists of over 500 acres with more than 8,000 feet of frontage along the Damariscotta River. Property contains up to 5.5 miles of easy/moderate trails.



### MARSH RIVER PRESERVE AND BOG

The 70-acre Marsh River Preserve protects over a mile of frontage along the ecologically significant Marsh River. Approximately one mile of trails wind through mixed forests and meander along beautiful salt marshes offering views across the Marsh River. The Marsh River Bog Preserve is a 54 acre property that DRA purchased in 2004. Cotton grass, bog orchids, cranberries, and stunted trees cling to a mat of peat moss which forms an 'island' in the center of the bog. The preserve contains 1 mile of easy trail, while the bog property contains 1/3 to 1 mile of trail.



### MILLS OVERLOOK PRESERVE

Gifted by Anne (Nancy) Booth, the 17 acre property contains an easy to moderate one mile loop trail connecting two of the Damariscotta region's most cherished and historic landmarks: the St. Patricks Church and the Damariscotta Mills Alewife Fish Ladder. The Mills Overlook provides scenic views of the fish ladder shed and landing area below, a church spire and old homes in the village along the Mills Road below, the north end of the Great Salt Bay, beautiful old farms and a distant view of the Camden Hills.



### SALT BAY HERITAGE TRAIL

Along with a large DRA conservation easement on private property, Salt Bay Preserve covers most of Glidden Point, which was bisected by Route 1 in the 1960's. Beginning with boardwalks across a salt marsh, the moderate difficulty three-mile Heritage Trail follows the shoreline of the Great Salt Bay before crossing under Route 1 through an old sheep tunnel. Soon thereafter, a spur to the shore allows access to one of Maine's most important archaeological sites – the great and ancient Indian shell heaps of Glidden Point. Continuing along the trail, hikers pass through stands of large white oaks and meander along beaver ponds, ending back at the northbound ramp to Route 1.



### SHERMAN MARSH AND O'BRIEN PENINSULA PRESERVE

This 95-acre property is varied, little-used, and rich in human history. A high ridge covered in juniper forms the spine of the peninsula and about half-way north a visitor encounters the remains of an old homestead. The adjacent 22-acre Carolyn O'Brien Preserve includes a band of cliffs defining the western boundary of the preserve and a salt marsh that was once the lake defining the eastern boundary. At some future date, both properties will be incorporated into the Riverlink trail. Property contains 2.5 miles of moderate difficulty trail.



### GRIGGS PRESERVE

This 56-acre property includes beautiful forestland with scenic vista overlooking the Sheepscot River, the reversing falls at Sheepscot Village and the railroad bridge in Wiscasset. The main trail loops 1.5 miles through huge pines and stone walls. Another 1/2 mile of trails pass through natural springs and bogs.

Information courtesy of DRA and Midcoast Conservancy

## LEGALIZE HOSPITALITY

Almost 50% of Newcastle’s land area is either in conservation or tree growth. Zoning should allow for businesses that pair with outdoor recreation. Newcastle has two bed and breakfasts, no campgrounds, and some privately owned and rented single family residential properties. Hospitality building-types should be encouraged in the rural districts.

**Action: Amend zoning to allow hospitality-type buildings, subject to performance standards.**

## CONNECT TO THE RIVERS

Work with private landowners to establish new potential access opportunities, resolve outstanding issues, and improve existing points of access. Consider design and amenities that support use by the 8-year-old and the 80 year old, including clear signage, stable footing, carrying distances and loading/unloading areas.

**Action: Establish an Eco-Adventures Steering Committee to explore public and private partnerships and opportunities to improve access to the rivers.**

## EXPAND MOUNTAIN BIKING

Partner with New England Mountain Bike Association and private landowners with mountain bike trails such as Oxbow, and land trusts such as DRA and the Hidden Valley Nature Center to create a regional network of mountain bike trails, with the goal of building a connected regional network of off-road trail facilities. Evaluate the potential to incorporate CMP corridors.

**Action: Establish an Eco-Adventures Steering Committee to explore public and private partnerships and opportunities to create a network of high-quality mountain biking trails.**

## Insight:

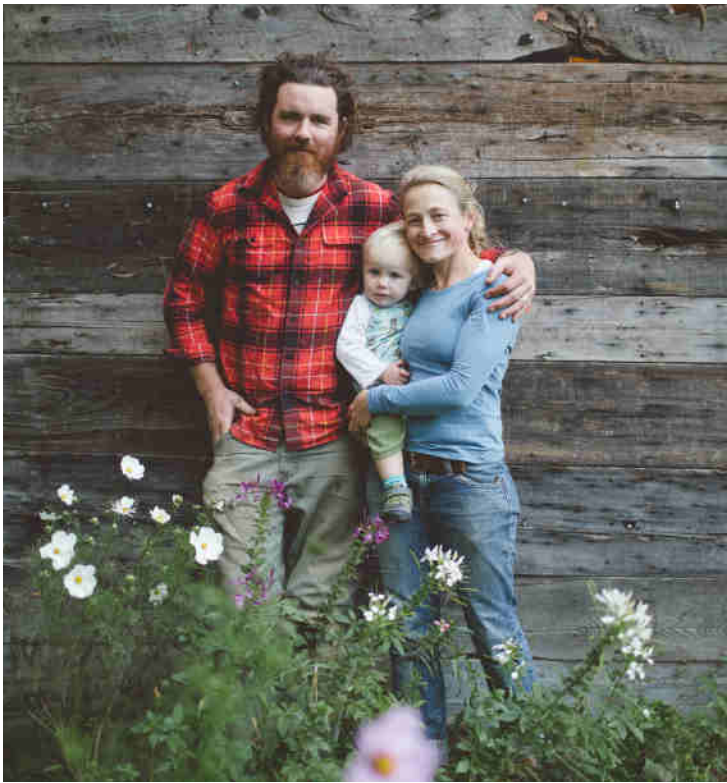
Newcastle’s land distribution:

460 acres	Farms (2.2%)
7,350 acres	Tree Growth (35.3%)
2,637 acres	Conservation (12.7%)
1,218 acres	Recreation (5.8%)
<b>20,844 acres</b>	<b>Total area</b>



LINCOLN COUNTY NEWS





## Morning Dew Farm

Morning Dew Farm is a Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) certified organic vegetable farm based out of the farmhouse where co-owner Brady Hatch grew up. Morning Dew Farm, opened in 2004, is owned and operated by the husband and wife team of Brendan McQuillen and Brady Hatch. The farm grows food on 10 acres of land in five of the area's towns, specializing in salad greens, culinary herbs, unique vegetables and forest-raised pork.

Morning Dew Farm produce can be found at Damariscotta's Monday and Friday farmers markets, through its winter and summer CSA programs, and at numerous stores and restaurants along the Midcoast.

## Agritourism

Agritourism is defined as farm-related, recreational activities designed for the enjoyment or education of the public to promote agricultural products, services, or experiences on the farm. Such activities include, but are not limited to, conducting educational farm tours, offering hay and sleigh rides, planting crop mazes, offering the public the opportunity to pick and purchase agricultural, horticultural, Christmas trees or other forest products produced on a farm, cross-country skiing, and engaging in other traditional non-intensive outdoor recreational activities.

## Ag Tax Rate

Eligible farmland consists of tracts of land of 5 or more contiguous acres. Farms must produce a gross annual income of at least \$2,000 per year from the sale value of farm products in 1 of 2, or 3 of 5 calendar years preceding the date of application for registration. The owner of the registered farmland bears the burden of proof when there is a question about the eligibility of the land. Farm products includes fruits, berries, vegetables, dairy products, livestock and livestock products, poultry and poultry products, grains, forages, flowers, seeds, grasses, bees, Christmas trees and other similar products. Eligible farmland does NOT include land used for woodlots, homes, farm buildings, roads, lawns or any area covered with non-crop vegetation.





# Hidden Valley Nature Center

Hidden Valley Nature Center (HVNC) is located above North Newcastle, in Jefferson, and offers cross country skiing, camping, trail running, and workshops on 1,000 acres of diverse terrain and habitat with shore frontage on Little Dyer Pond. Nearly 30 miles of multi-use trails knit together one of the most ecologically diverse and undeveloped tracts of forestland in the region. Each year HVNC hosts over 50 programs to build ecological literacy and durable communities amongst people of all ages. These programs are designed to strengthen commitment to sustainable resource management and local economies. Innovative programming includes:

- Three annual timber framing workshops
- Modern chainsaw techniques
- Edible mushroom foraging
- Winter camping courses

HVNC was founded in 2009 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; however, it recently became part of Midcoast Conservancy, alongside the Sheepscot Valley Conservation Organization, Sheepscot Wellspring Land Alliance, and the Damariscotta Lake Watershed Organization.







## Great Salt Bay Farm & Heritage Center

Located in Damariscotta, the Great Salt Bay Farm and Heritage Center serves as the headquarters for the Damariscotta River Association, a highly successful regional land trust. The Great Salt Bay Farm is an exemplary property for cultural and environmental education and enrichment with over one mile of shoreline, extensive wetlands providing both fresh and saltwater habitats, and rolling fields that have been worked for 200 years. Prior to cultivation, this area is known to have been the location of an actual Wabanaki summer encampment more than 1,000 years ago. Oyster shell middens on the property are among the more visible signs of native settlement. Today the Great Salt Bay Farm has become a community destination and education center with numerous physical and programmatic enhancements. Locals and visitors alike make use of the Farm year-round for walking, skiing, nature observation, sledding, and gardening. More than 1,000 students of all ages take part annually in the education programs based there.

### WABANAKI LIVING SKILLS AND CULTURE PROGRAM

In recognition of the Wabanaki tribe's known seasonal summer encampment here, each fall school children visiting the Heritage Center help to construct dwellings made of local natural materials based on traditional Wabanaki designs.

### MIDCOAST STEWARDS PROGRAM

The Midcoast Stewards Program is a field and lecture program consisting of 40 hours of ecology and cultural history about the Midcoast region which is taught by local professionals in mid- April through May. Participants pay a materials fee and also contribute 40 hours of volunteer service to a local conservation organization of their choice.

### ARCHAEOLOGY FIELD SCHOOL

Led by historical archaeologist Tim Dinsmore, the Archaeology Field School provides hands-on original research and learning. Field school participants attain basic field methodology skills while participating in local excavations of historic site unearthing historic artifacts.

### OYSTER GARDENING

The popular Oyster Gardening program spans two years. Participants grow oysters for non-commercial use (their own consumption) with support from professional aquaculturists and industry experts. Oyster Gardening is an educational program that uses aquaculture to teach students about water quality, estuarine ecology, resource use and management, shellfish biology and husbandry.







# CONSERVATION & SETTLEMENT



SCOTT B. SMITH IMAGERY



# Natural & Built Landscape



TOR GLENDENNING

**The residents of Newcastle have set a new framework for future growth rooted in a place-based economic strategy that considers the visions expressed by the community, historical settlement patterns, and environment and natural resources.**

As described earlier in this plan, through a robust planning process, residents identified places and spaces that were important for protection and conservation, and areas where new growth could sensitively occur over time. Based upon many community feedback loops, the team created a series of illustrative plans only for the places where general community consensus supported further growth and development. Additionally, the team also created a Conservation and Settlement Map showing sectors of conservation, preservation, and growth.

## WHY A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR GROWTH?

Evidence of the original platting of Newcastle, illustrated in the historic map of 1816, can still be seen today in the current parcel data for the Town. However, more recently roads and not rivers and streams often represent new property boundary lines. Many very large contiguous parcels of land still exist today, but they are considered development constrained by many factors, including state environmental regulations, DOT curb cut limitations (sight distance issues), current building and development costs, and market conditions. An ongoing concern of citizens has been the protection of rural character.

## CONSERVATION, PRESERVATION AND GROWTH

The base maps presented for use during the planning process included environmental data



from the State’s Beginning with Habitat data set. Maps identified wetlands, water bodies, land in conservation, tree growth, and land affected by existing Resource Protection and Shoreland Zoning. This data informed the illustrative designs prepared during the 5-day planning process. The consensus expressed during the 5-day planning process included:

- Focusing development in specific areas where development has already altered the landscape and infrastructure already exists to support new growth.
- Not assigning a location for a future hamlet on the map, while continuing to recognize that large parcels of land may be subdivided by right today under existing land use ordinances.

The areas identified by planning process participants as acceptable for future growth and development included: Newcastle Village, Academy Hill, and Rt 1 & River Road. The areas are currently served or can easily be connected to the Great Salt Bay Sewer and Water District, which has the capacity to serve additional growth. Properties along Main Street can accept new infill development, and the community responded positively to new development similar in nature to the historical pattern of settlement in the Village. For Academy Hill, participants were presented with a number of concept plans at the community check-in mid-process. The concepts showed a new neighborhood ranging in intensity of development. Participants expressed a strong desire for the second-most intensive design which shows a pattern akin to the historic neighborhood adjacent to Main Street. Based on feedback, the

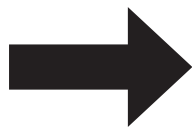
design team prepared an illustrative plan for Academy Hill reflecting support for a dense, walkable neighborhood to evolve over many years, with a distinct connection to Main Street. However, some members of the Newcastle Local Planning Committee hold a different opinion about the future of Academy Hill, and feel that the illustration included in this plan shows a development scenario that is too dense.

While some residents expressed a desire for no growth along Route 1, some residents expressed a desire for limited growth, while others expressed a desire to take advantage of Route 1 as an economic asset to Newcastle. The development pattern of Wiscasset’s auto-centric corridor was most mentioned as an example of what Newcastle residents do not want for its portion of Route 1. The design team responded by considering existing locations of commercial development, geology, wetlands, sight distances and topography, and prepared an illustrative plan showing limited growth along the Route 1 Corridor. Incorporated into the Route 1 illustrative plan is the 120-acre farm and forested parcel of land on River Road. During the process the landowner expressed her interest in seeing development occur on this site in the near future.

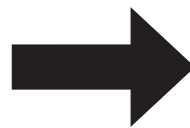
Residents in Sheepscot Village and Damariscotta Mills expressed interest in preservation of historical development patterns and an interest in balancing local and regional desires for water recreational access with the quiet, livable nature of their neighborhoods. The team responded to the preservation sentiment by not preparing illustrative plans for the two villages.



**CONSERVATION & SETTLEMENT MAP**



**GROWTH SECTOR**



**VILLAGE CENTER PLAN**

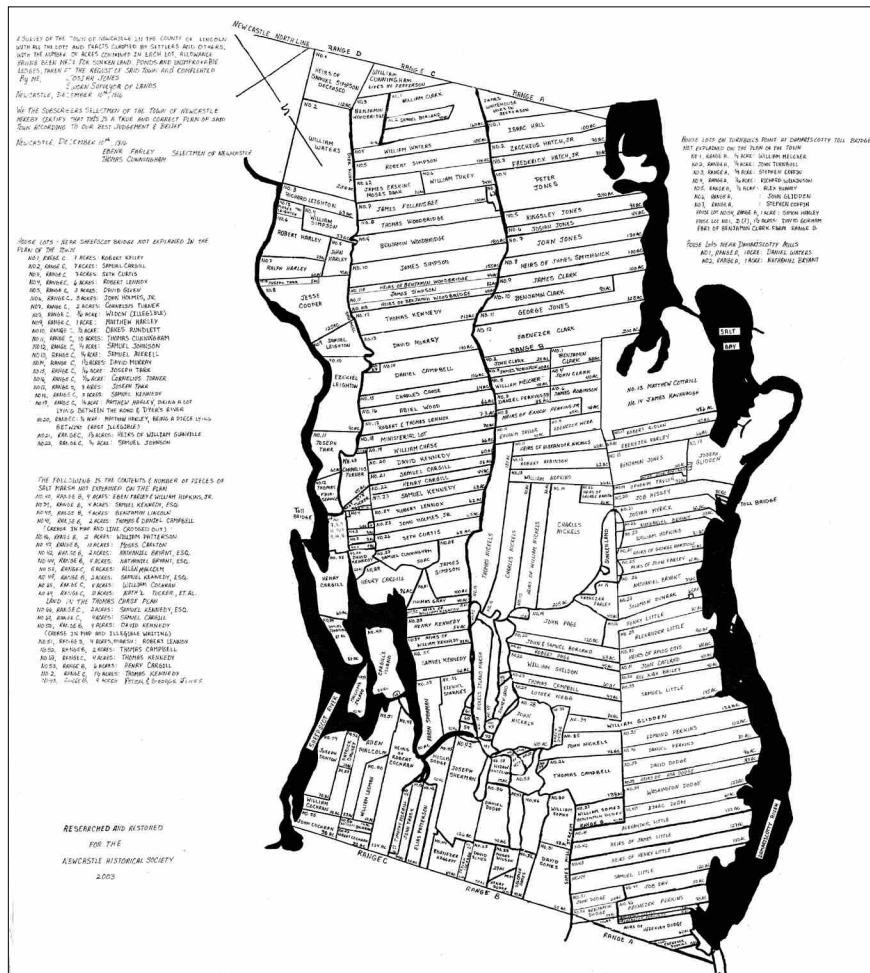
Similarly, when asked if there was a desire to reestablish Cow Shit Corner in North Newcastle as a place where economic activity could occur in a Hamlet pattern, neighborhood residents expressed a desire for no growth to occur there. Contradicting this sentiment, residents also expressed a strong desire for no change to the current zoning ordinance which allows for 1 acre lots. The design team responded to the “no growth” sentiment by not drawing an illustrative plan for a Hamlet at Cow Shit Corner.

However, during the closing presentation, the team presented two concepts for managing growth while preserving rural character: the concept of a Hamlet as an alternative development pattern to large subdivisions, and the concepts of a connected farm and a rural compound as alternative development patterns to traditional lot divisions.

## CROSSROADS & VILLAGES

Newcastle is comprised of a handful of post-colonial settlements ranging in scale from corner to crossroads to hamlet to village, and it is documented that Sheepscot Village is one of the earliest of settlements, referred to as Sheepscot Farms. Some settlements have all but vanished, but historical maps and tales told by local historians such as Arlene Cole help to preserve local knowledge about how Newcastle has evolved over hundreds of years. While Newcastle Village and Damariscotta have become the modern center of community, providing goods and services to support daily living, other settlements such as West Hamlet Village, Jones Corner, and the general store and post office at North Newcastle no longer exist. Genthner’s Corner, a 4-way intersection (Academy Hill and Mills Rd) disappeared with the taking of land to create the highway to Damariscotta. Except for Newcastle Village, the remaining settlements have all but transitioned to residential homes with no general stores, mercantile, taverns or post offices. The churches and Garrison Grange remain as local community gathering places, as do the Harriet Gertrude Bird Clubhouse and the Frances Perkins Homestead.

## NEWCASTLE 1816



RESEARCHED AND RESTORED FOR THE NEWCASTLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## ORGANIZATION OF THE MAP: SECTORS AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

The Conservation and Settlement map categorizes different types of settlement patterns, including one sector of conservation, C-1 Conservation Sector; one sector of preservation, P-1 Village Sector (Sheepscot and Damariscotta Mills); one sector of limited growth, G-1 Rural; and one sector of intended growth, G-2 Intended Growth Sector, plus intentional growth in all Special Districts.

To arrive at the sector map, the team worked with the community to identify areas that: 1) have strong established historical settlement patterns with available infrastructure (including streets, utilities, sewer and water services); 2) areas constrained by development due to site conditions and mandatory state land use regulations; and 3) the areas most vulnerable to impacts from incompatible development, including critical natural resources comprised of surface water bodies, protected wetlands, protected habitat, riparian corridors, purchased open space, conservation easements, wildlife transportation corridors, and areas left permanently natural as a part of conservation subdivisions.

The C-1 Conservation Sector represents land that has been permanently protected from development by fee ownership or conservation easement. The sector mapping and analysis directly responds to the state's Growth Management Law with respect to identifying the location of critical natural resources.

The limited growth G-1 Rural Sector includes agriculture, forestry lands, open space, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat, and scenic lands and directly responds to the state's Growth Management Law with respect to identifying locations for rural areas deserving of some level of regulatory protection. The rural sector should allow for intentional growth of rural and resource-based businesses and related activities to contribute to the future economic stability of Newcastle. Where a large tract or large, contiguous tracts of land may undergo subdivision, this sector should allow for that development to occur in a Hamlet place type, with a clustering of new lots with some preservation of open space, some mixed uses in buildings arranged on either side of an existing or new thoroughfare. Where a landowner wishes to have business activity on his/her property, this sector should allow for business to occur as part of a building group, subject to

performance standards.

Within the G-2 Intended Growth Sector and Special Districts, new and existing development is anticipated to occur as infill, retrofit, or new complete neighborhoods that provide for a mix of uses and building types oriented toward a center of activity. Neighborhoods will occur at a variety of scales, dependent on availability of existing or planned infrastructure and any site development constraints and market conditions.

Larger scaled neighborhoods, if they occur, are envisioned as complete neighborhoods with daily amenities within walking distance of new residences. An interconnected network of streets will provide the structure for the growth sectors and promote walking and cycling while also distributing traffic. It is anticipated that future development within growth areas will also include protection of critical resources.

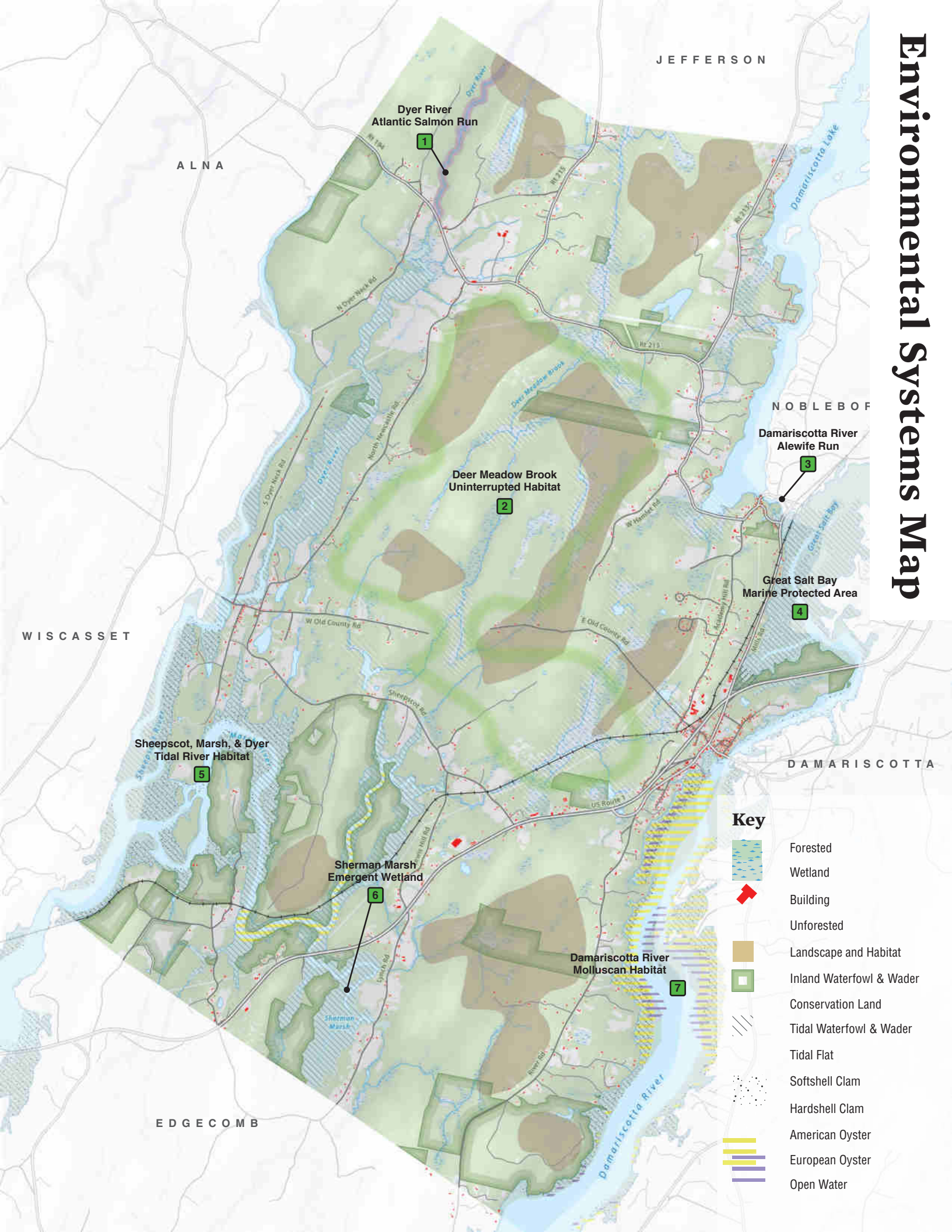
The G-2 Intended Growth Sector, combined with intended growth in each of the Special Districts, directly responds to the state's Growth Management Law with respect to identifying locations for growth areas suitable for orderly residential, commercial, or industrial development, and into which most development projected over ten years and a minimum of 75% of dollars for growth-related capital investments will be directed.

The Conservation and Settlement map also contains the Special District-Marine, Special District-Campus, and Special District-Fabrication, which are areas that are intrinsically different in use, character, site conditions, and/or overarching state regulations that governing development.



- 1** The Dyer River, like the Sheepscot, hosts a seasonal population of wild Atlantic Salmon. The salmon run to the Dyer Lakes in the town of Jefferson.
  
- 2** At the heart of Newcastle sits an unusually large piece of land that is relatively free from human development. The 3,000+ acre habitat surrounding Deer Meadow Brook serves as an important refuge and corridor for wildlife in midcoast Maine.
  
- 3** The Alewife run occurs in the early spring. Thousands of fish migrate yearly to Damariscotta Lake to spawn.
  
- 4** Great Salt Bay was the first marine area to be officially protected in the State of Maine. It is considered one of the most productive spawning grounds in the state.
  
- 5** These three rivers have a character distinct from the Damariscotta River and Great Salt Bay ecosystem. Instead of a large salty basin that fills and empties twice daily, these rivers are a swirling blend of brackish water - a soft gradient between salt and fresh ecosystems.
  
- 6** In October of 2005, a storm surge broke the 70-year-old dam responsible for the once shallow, freshwater lake. After the breaking of the dam, tidal salt and brackish water began its twice daily rhythm, beginning the process of large-scale ecosystem change.
  
- 7** This local ecosystem is renowned for providing some of the finest oysters to restaurants up and down the eastern seaboard. Aside from oysters, however, this area is also prime habitat for other mollusks; these include hard-shell, softshell, and razor clams.

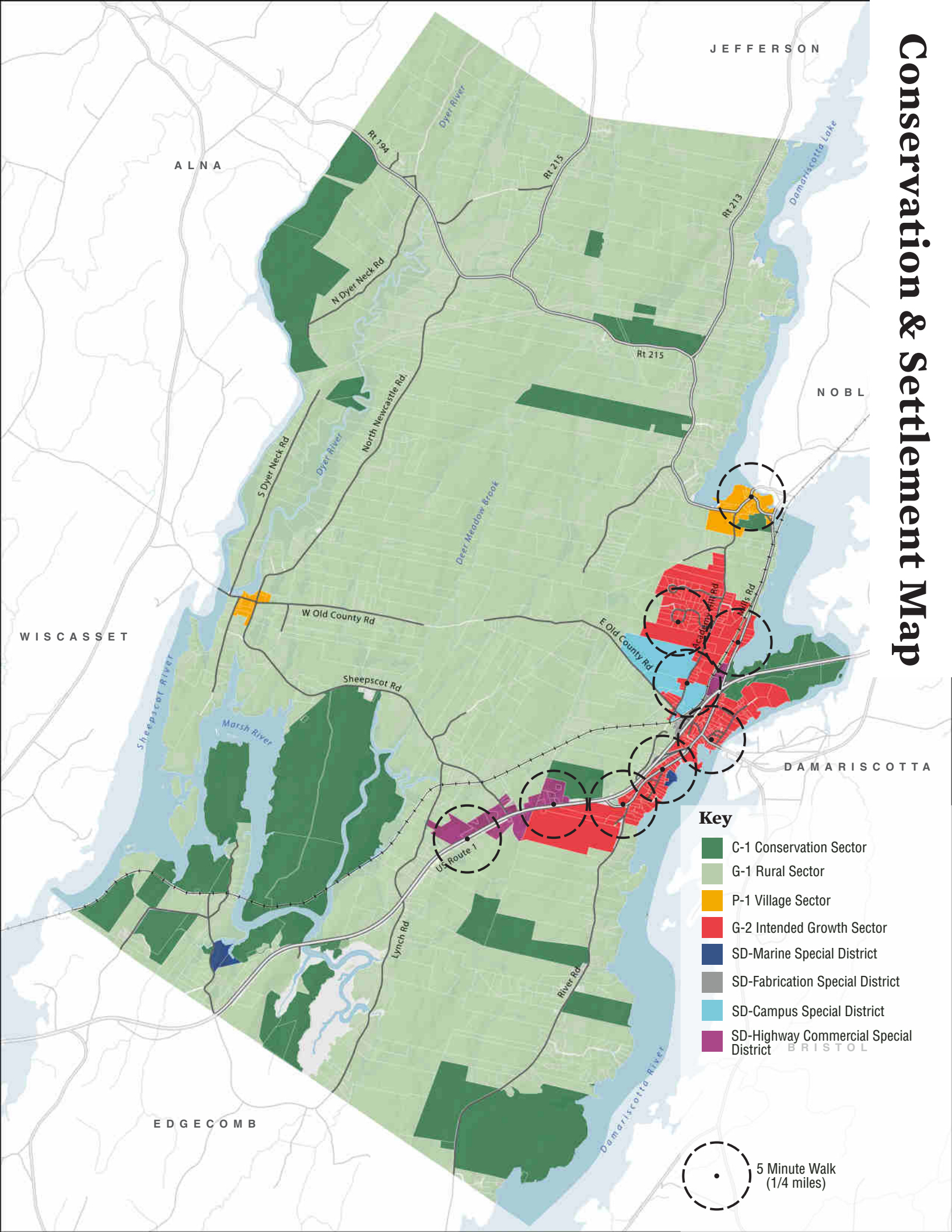
# Environmental Systems Map







# Conservation & Settlement Map



**Key**

- C-1 Conservation Sector
- G-1 Rural Sector
- P-1 Village Sector
- G-2 Intended Growth Sector
- SD-Marine Special District
- SD-Fabrication Special District
- SD-Campus Special District
- SD-Highway Commercial Special District

5 Minute Walk  
(1/4 miles)

# Natural Landscape Sector

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## C-1 Conservation Sector

The Conservation Sector includes lots entirely protected from development in perpetuity, through purchase or easement, including land acquired for conservation, open space, farming, public access and recreation; and, timber harvesting and forestry management.

# Limited Growth Sector

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## G-1 Rural Sector

The G-1 area identifies rural land currently zoned for low-density residential development. These areas are deserving of some degree of regulatory protection from unrestricted development for purposes that may include: supporting agriculture, forestry, open space, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat, scenic lands, recreation and eco-tourism. The G-1 area is where the Town desires to protect rural character but nevertheless is subject to development because existing zoning has already granted development potential by way of 1 and 2-acre lots.

The rural sector should permit intentional growth of rural and resource-based businesses and related activities to contribute to the future economic

stability of Newcastle. New Character-Based code provisions should regulate building types and site design, including visual screening, buffering, and architectural standards, especially if buildings are within a certain distance of a public road. Opt-in development tools such as rural building groups and the Hamlet place type should be available in the Character-Based code for use in this sector. New growth should be sensitive to the protection of rural character and minimize negative impacts to land and water, flora and fauna. Rural businesses should be regulated in the Character-Based code to include special performance standards to minimize potential negative impacts to neighbors, scenic views, land and water, and flora and fauna.

# Preservation Sector

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## P-1 Village Sector

The P-1 Village Sector area includes the historic villages of Sheepscot and Damariscotta Mills. In this sector there is a desire for preservation of historic buildings, scenic landscapes, and village enhancements rather than new infill growth and development. These areas are to be zoned to reflect the predominantly residential nature while allowing for expanded uses and accessory dwelling units.

# Intended Growth Sectors

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## **G-2 Intended Growth Sector**

Due to the presence of existing infrastructure, and a desire for a thriving walkable mixed-use town center, the town identified the areas in and around the Village and Main Street as prime areas for growth and development. It is anticipated that most residential and non-residential development over the next ten years will occur in this growth sector. Complete neighborhoods that include both existing and new residential housing as well as some mixed-use development are appropriate within this area. This sector includes the town's current commercially zoned areas and areas served by sewer and water infrastructure, including

the historic neighborhoods surrounding Main Street (Route 1B), Route 1, portions of River Road, Academy Hill Road and Mills Road.

# Special Districts

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## **SD-Marine Special District**

The Marine District includes sites with buildings and uses that are water-dependent or water-oriented. To address all applicable Shoreland zoning rules, site design requires a sensitive approach and use of best management practices to minimize to the greatest extent negative impacts to water resources. This district requires a unique set of standards. This sector, which includes lands zoned by the Town as General Development, would be rezoned as a Character-Based Special District and all General Development-related standards shall become a Module in the code.

## **SD-Fabrication Special District**

The Fabrication Special District is comprised of land adjacent to Route 1 and the railroad tracks on Academy Hill. This area is envisioned as a self-sustaining fabrication village with a mix of industrial, office, retail, live-work flex spaces and other supporting development. This district requires a unique set of standards that accommodates trucks, larger building footprints, and other unique requirements of fabrication enterprises. This sector would be rezoned to allow a range of building types and uses as a Character-Based Special District.

## **SD-Campus Special District**

Because of its unique function and design, the Lincoln Academy campus requires a unique set of standards to accommodate large detached buildings, buildings that face onto internal greens, large recreational spaces, lanes and access driveways, wayfinding and other unique qualities seen in a campus environment. This sector would be rezoned as a Character-Based Special District.

## **SD-Highway Commercial Special District**

The Highway Commercial Special District is assigned to areas of Route 1 that were developed in a conventional, auto-oriented suburban pattern or contain existing commercial businesses and vacant lands in between existing buildings. There has been a desire expressed to change the pattern of development in the suburban areas to infill underutilized and vacant sites, allowing future commercial activity.

Because of potentially larger building sizes, parking needs, and other unique characteristics of highway commercial activities, a unique set of standards will need to be developed for these areas, including standards to minimize surface parking lots visible from public thoroughfares.



# SHEEPSCOT VILLAGE



**Sheepscot Village stands today as if in a moment in time in the late 1700's. Recognized in 1978 as an Historic District in the National Register, historic preservation remains a top priority for the people who live in this village and the Town.**

Historically, the Sheepscot River provided routes of passage, and houses were located along the rivers. Stage coaches traveling the coast passed through Sheepscot, first crossing at Alna by Averills ferryway, then later by the Free Bridge, erected in 1794. It is thought that settlement here dated back as early as 1607 by the Dutch; however, in 1664 the Duke of York was granted a large area including Sheepscot, moving many Dutch families from the Hudson to Sheepscot, where they stayed until the French and Indian Wars (Arlene Cole, *History Tales of Newcastle*). It is also thought that there was a trading post located at the end of the King's Highway, with evidence unearthed including brickyard, sawpit, blacksmith remnants and other objects.

Cole also notes in her book that the early custom to have a two-acre lot for a "home lot", where buildings were located, lends itself to what she refers to as neighborly security. "Out lots" were at distance from the houses, and were places for tillage and woodlots.

Historic gathering places still standing today include the Garrison Hill Grange No. 497, Sheepscot Community Hill Church, and Sheepscot Community Valley Church. The Common is in private ownership, portions of it are linked to some of the properties on the King's Highway.

Today, change is marked mostly by improvements to street and bridge infrastructure. However, over time several segments of road have been reclaimed by woods. Reestablishing segments of road to connect East Old County, West Old County Road, Kavanaugh Road and Indian Trail were discussed during the planning process. Support for improvements ranged from no improvements to limited use by pedestrians to broader use by horses, snowmobiles, mountain bikes, emergency vehicles and cars. Some reasons for re-establishing

# To what degree should Sheepscot Village be a place that is protected in time?

## What you said.

segments for vehicle access include recreation, easy access to Newcastle Village, as well as improved response time for emergency services. Lack of support was also expressed, citing finance concerns, loss of privacy for the few houses who currently enjoy dead-end street conditions, and potential increased use of Sheepscot as a Rt 1 by-pass to Wiscasset bridge traffic.

Historic structures located in Sheepscot Village range in condition, and most recently the village lost the iconic “Twin River” House which sat atop Dyer Neck overlooking the Sheepscot River. When asked, “To what extent should Sheepscot Village be a place that is protected in time?”, survey respondents cited a desire for almost 100% preservation, yet also expressed an openness to small amounts of change so long as it is sensitive to the Village’s historic character. These potential positive changes might include the addition of a village store and better maintained streets and buildings. Examples of inappropriate change included increased noise related to truck traffic, and housing developments.

In response to what was heard during the public planning process, the team did not prepare illustrative plans showing incremental growth or transformation here. However, land surrounding the village, which is currently rural in character and zoned as rural, may be divided and subdivided per the requirements of the zoning ordinance. Preservation of open fields and scenic views across landscapes should be considered as important as the protection of historic structures here. Preservation of Sheepscot Village sets the context of the place and very much contributes to its uniqueness.

“The historic character still relatively intact should be protected. I don’t think that we can ask one part of town to accept future growth without asking all parts.”

“They appear to like it as it is. Protected in time doesn’t mean run-down (roads, services) or cut-off (modern communications). Resident’s preferences come first.”

“I do not think it should be prohibited to build a new house here and there. I do think lot size needs to be large enough so that people are not too close to one another.”

“Largely, yes. Most important work to be done there is to eliminate it as the de facto Wiscasset by-pass for trucks and cars. The village itself has become unlivable for noise, traffic.”

“If it needs to be protected in time, give it an historical designation of some sort. Do people want this? Is change a bad thing?”

“Limited protection”

“40%”

“The village should be protected from housing developments”

“100% protected as a prime residential area. Trucking over the new bridge should be restricted. Trucks hauling gravel should not be allowed to use the village as a conduit to the gravel pits in Jefferson.”

“Stay as is.”

“100%! That’s what they want.”

“Should also be a historic district”

“Try to retain this special village area. Could add some small restaurants/shops if the community would desire this, but should be voted on by those that live there.”

“Character should be maintained but mixed use should be allowed.”

“As much as Damariscotta Mills is – both are historic.”

“More or less completely. A village store would be OK if it was in scale.”

“As with all of Newcastle, careful, judicious growth should be allowed and encouraged.”

# SHEEPSCOT VILLAGE

## 1 Old Roads and Eco-Adventures

Many old roads used to provide direct connections between Sheepscot Village and other settlements, including West Hamlet Village, Damariscotta Mills, North Newcastle and Newcastle Village. Right of ways, including Dyer Road, West/East Old County Road, Kavanaugh Road, West Hamlet and Indian Trail should be closely researched to determine potential for establishing, at a minimum, hiking and mountain biking trails. Looking at Google Earth today, it is impossible to see the intersections of these roads, having been consumed by forested growth. These old passages could serve as the framework for a robust network of trails and contribute to an outdoor recreation-based economy.

## 2 Access to Sheepscot and Dyer River

Establish more formal rights to access the rivers from Sheepscot Village. While residents may informally reach the river from different points, no formal access exists today except at the Reversing Falls.

## 3 Reversing Falls

Establish clear signage and access to the Reversing Falls, welcoming visitors but reminding people to be good, respectful stewards, too.

## 4 Preserve Scenic Views

Acting as good stewards, continue to maintain uninterrupted scenic views across and to Sheepscot Village, contributing positively to the historic context of the collection of buildings that comprise this most loved place. Where iconic properties might become available for sale, consider partnerships with local non-profit entities or individuals or groups of landowners to secure development rights to keep scenic views intact.

## 5 Expand the Harriet Gertrude Bird Playground

Working with volunteers, crowd-fund and implement improvements to the Harriet Bird Playground, and if adjacent land becomes available, consider expansion. Explore the best use and purpose for the property, and consider in addition to organized sports, passive recreational opportunities such as walking, bird watching, community orchards and gardening.

## 6 Maintain Rural Roads

As roads are considered for reconstruction, maintain the narrow, rural road profile to discourage additional speeding that comes when rural roads are given wide, paved shoulders. While providing paved shoulders may enhance bicycling for some, wider pavement translates to increased comfort for drivers to speed, translating to greater vehicle noise and less-safe conditions for those who live adjacent to rural roads.

## 7 Maintain Civic Gathering spaces

Provide support for long term maintenance and preservation of the five historic civic spaces in Sheepscot Village: the grange, located at S. Dyer Neck; the bridge over the Sheepscot; the Sheepscot Hill; the Sheepscot Valley Churches; and “The Commons”, which is located across from the Sheepscot Valley church, between the King’s Highway and Sheepscot River.



3

2

4

7

4

7

5

6

1

S DYER NICK ROAD

STAGLER ROAD

N NEWCASTLE ROAD

SHEEPSCOT ROAD

W OLD COUNTY ROAD

CHASE FARM ROAD

PINE LODGE DRIVE

THE KINGS HIGHWAY

SHEEPSCOT ROAD

SHEEPSCOT ROAD

# NORTH NEWCASTLE



**While Cow Shit Corner might be an iconic symbol of the nexus of North Newcastle, the bounds of this neighborhood today are debated by residents and less defined than in earlier years when North Newcastle Village existed as a discernible place with local post office, general store, and one-room school.**

More broadly, the North Newcastle area included Dyer Valley, Jones Corner, and Jones Woods. Saw mills, tavern, fish processing, matchstick making, active farms and the Dyer's Valley Grange Hall comprised its history. Today, the landscape and land use in the area is predominantly comprised of forests, farms and hayfields, with mostly older residential houses on large lots. The most notable farm is Russell Farm's dairy operations, a multi-generational farm. Residents who participated in the planning process expressed a desire to keep North Newcastle rural, just as it is today.

With that said, changes to the neighborhood have occurred in the last 5 years. Recently, more visible home-based entrepreneurial activities have popped up in North Newcastle, and landowners and entrepreneurs have expressed an interest in starting and growing businesses in North Newcastle. Many entrepreneurs might fit the current definition of home occupation (accessory use to a residential house, with no real character change to the residential nature of the property), whereas Oxbow Brewing Company is a high-profile success story with a desire to grow its presence in the community. Oxbow has expressed interest in expanding its increasingly popular tasting room and offering many hospitality aspects, including on site restaurant, guest cabins, outdoor recreational trail network and permaculture gardens all connected to the brewery, making it an attractive State destination. The Fat Friars Meadery, just around the corner, creates synergy and a future opportunity to build on this economic cluster.

As has historically occurred in rural Newcastle and other parts of Maine, rural areas are ever changing. It may be that eco-tourism and visitors in search of

# Do you think the rural lands should allow greater flexibility in terms of what people can do on their property?

craft food and beverage will help to ignite a local rural economy here, providing value to the Town of Newcastle.

In light of the desires to grow but not change character, and to help guide decision-making about the right kinds of development regulations for rural lands, the team analyzed different types of rural development patterns found locally, state-wide and in New England. Working with the NLPC, the team identified many rural based regulatory tools that may help accomplish the vision that local residents have for North Newcastle. A detailed narrative can be found in the Regulatory Framework section of this plan.

## What you said.

“Increases in rural residential sprawl is a bad idea. If it could be clustered – maybe ok. Otherwise, residential development should be tight around the village not strung out along country roads.”

“Yes. Just keep it clean.”

“Not sure”

“No. When farmland is developed it is gone forever.”

“I’d like to see Cow Shit Corner remain agricultural.”

“The farmland near Morning Dew Farm is beautiful. Cow Shit Corner could become another nice village.”

“Yes, if it improves the environment, preserves scenic views, etc.”

“Not opposed so long as development maintains rural feel.”

“Try to keep use to be rural residential, farms, forests, no large development projects. Light, clean industry would be OK in my view.”

“Cow Shit Corner could become another small village with modest, but attractive homes and perhaps a small store and community center.”

“If we want farms in Newcastle, we need to protect our rural lands. If we could support farmers so they could make a living – I would love to see that.”

“I would like to see North Newcastle remain rural. I would suggest in all of Newcastle (not just North Newcastle), lot sizes in the currently undeveloped area be high, such as five acres per single family home.”

“This should be driven by the residents of the area. There are businesses that need a more rural setting, but should blend with the farming community. Farming, especially artisanal and organic, is a growing segment of Maine’s economy.”

“I’d like to see rural character with agriculture maintained. The only way to do that, I believe, is to allow for open space or cluster development and encourage agricultural and open space easements.”

“I think people should be able to sell homemade clothing, natural cheese, and their new spiffy sauerkraut.”



# NORTH NEWCASTLE

## 1 **Build Trails**

Working in conjunction with local land trusts and landowners, explore the potential to create walking, biking, hiking, and xc-skiing trails on private land that is immediately adjacent to the Resource Protection District. Identify key points for passive recreation, such as birding and other habitat viewing. Outdoor recreation opportunities may be for profit or not-for-profit, and paired with other hospitality-related businesses.

## 2 **Allow Business in the Rural**

Amend zoning ordinances to allow businesses to emerge in the rural areas. Adopt flexible rules to allow stand-alone business activities if certain standards and performance measures can be satisfied.

## 3 **Maintain Agriculture and Open Space**

Newcastle residents appreciate farms and agricultural landscapes, and expressed desire to see the Russell Farm continue with the next generation as an active farm. Wanting private land to stay undeveloped is a reasonable vision; however, it becomes unreasonable if people fail to recognize that the land has value to the owner. If preservation of the farm for agriculture or open space is truly desired by residents in the town, individuals or groups of people should act together to acquire the property in fee or acquire the development rights, place a farm conservation easement on the land, and work with Maine Farmland Trust to match the land to a farmer in search of land.

## 4 **Cow Shit Corner**

This iconic location in Newcastle needs no buildings or store to represent what people feel is the hub of North Newcastle but a sign mounted very high up on a pole. The convergence of North Newcastle Road on a bend in Rt. 194 makes this location ideal, as it was in the past, for retail goods and services. Zoning should be amended to allow for local business to occur here in a manner that is complimentary to the rural landscape.

## 5 **Discourage Speed on Rt. 215**

Work with the DOT to explore application of innovative on-road paint, striping and signage in key locations to discourage speeding and boost awareness of sharp, blind curves in the road.

## 6 **Oxbow Mountain Biking Network**

Work with Oxbow and New England Mountain Biking Association to expand mountain biking trails on Oxbow's property to create a regional network of trails. Brand Newcastle as a mountain biking and outdoor recreation destination, in partnership with other local and regional inns, B&B's, local farms, artisan food and beverage makers. Explore potential to route trails within the CMP corridor.

1

GRANITE POINT ROAD

ESTER ROAD

2

EVERGREEN ROAD

MURPHY ROAD

3

ROUTE 215

ROUTE 1M

5

ROUTE 215

4

ROUTE 1M

6

NEWCASTLE ROAD

# DAMARISCOTTA MILLS



**With historical development patterns still intact, Damariscotta Mills has evolved from a bustling settlement with a robust fishing industry, saw mills, grist mills and related processing and manufacturing to a quiet residential neighborhood.**

The Mills' historic and cultural past is still alive today with the care and stewardship of Mills residents from Newcastle and Nobleboro working together to restore the fish ladder, protect water quality in Damariscotta Lake, and host the Alewives Festival, an annual cultural celebration in conjunction with the running of the alewives. Predominantly residential now, locals share the Mills with visitors attending the Alewives Festival in late spring and beachgoers swimming at the lake in summer. It is a place where people come to swim, fish, paddle, bird-watch and walk, but where residents of all ages live and enjoy these very same amenities.

During the planning process, Newcastle residents were asked, "Should the Mills be further promoted

as a local and regional tourist destination?"

Residents genuinely feel that the Mills is a special place. Survey respondents expressed a willingness to maintain the status quo in terms of visitors to the Mills. They also expressed a desire for better management of public access, including managing parking for the beach. People also expressed support for enhancements to the pedestrian's quality of experience. They also addressed the use of local streets by regional truck traffic and creating a street environment that forces slow-flow of traffic through the neighborhood with true sharing of the street between pedestrians, bicyclists and cars.

Residents also expressed a desire to link the historic architectural and cultural contribution of Damariscotta Mills to the identity of Newcastle through formal establishment of an historic district. Residents feel that the Mills is deserving of similar protections to ensure that renovations and changes maintain the historic character of the neighborhood.



# Should the Mills be further promoted as a local and regional tourist destination?

Furthermore, continued stewardship of the fish ladder, in conjunction with neighbors in Nobleboro is a top priority. Residents also expressed interest in maintaining some level of low-impact local businesses. While the Mills once had a discernible “Main Street” with local businesses, only the Mill Pond Inn and Alewives Fabrics, both in Nobleboro, are located here today.

## What you said.

“Yes”

“Don’t they have enough already, considering the confined space. The swimming beach, the alewives ladder?”

“No. Need more parking for people using the swimming area.”

“No. Maybe just the fish ladder. That’s very cool.”

“Probably not. Most of the residents of Damariscotta Mills are in Nobleboro, but we spend a lot of time together working on the fish ladder/festivals etc. Its pretty clear that the community is wary of too much promotion. They dread the thought of tour buses showing up. Once that happens it would really spoil things. We’re very happy to share this wonderful spot, but will do everything we can to keep it a neighborhood rather than a national park or pumpkinfest.”

“It is really limited at present. It should probably retain its small character.”

“No. Too much congestion and no benefit to those who live there, only erosion of quality of life.”

“No. Our village is already congested and its feel would be destroyed by more traffic and people. We welcome them to the Alewife Festival but would like to be quiet the rest of the time.”

“Definitely not. We have enough tourists and too much traffic as it is. The large trucks and motorcycles roar through and are annoying.”

“Not unless you can figure out a parking/ transportation solution for the area.”

“NO!”

“Yes. Make it legal so town can catch elvers and sell.”

“It seems to attract enough attention”

“Only if the locals want it to be.”

“Why not?”

“All of Newcastle should be promoted as a local and regional destination.”

# DAMARISCOTTA MILLS

## 1 Reduce Speeds on Rt 215

Residents reported concerns about speed, accidents and even deaths along Rt 215. The portion of road through the Mills should be either returned to two-way traffic with 9 1/2 foot maximum lanes or re-striped to shrink the vehicle lane and more clearly define where pedestrians will be found. Along the more rural portions of 215, the town should consider working with DOT to add a wide array of special paint markings in the lanes at the approaches to sharp curves and grade changes.

## 2 Create Public Access

Working with other organizations such as the land trusts, explore opportunities to develop new public access to Damariscotta Lake.

## 3 Improve Facilities

Improve the boat launch, seating, access and parking. Use crowd-funding and volunteers to make incremental improvements.

## 4 Preserve Agricultural Fields

Residents cited preservation of scenic views across agricultural fields as desirable. This land, however, is in private ownership. While any party may make an offer to a landowner for acquisition, many farm-supportive funding mechanisms might be available, including programs such as Land for Maine's Future or Maine Farmland Trust.

## 5 Improve Facility at Ice House Park

While not in Newcastle per se, amenities cited as desirable include public toilets, bike racks and satellite parking to support the facility and improve access to Damariscotta Lake. Use crowd-funding and volunteers to make incremental improvements.

## 6 Satellite Beach Parking

Additional beach parking was noted as desirable to relieve the pressure already felt by beach goers. Work with Nobleboro residents to seek additional space for beach parking in this vicinity.

## 7 Walk and Bike Great Salt Bay

Improve walking and bicycling route around the Great Salt Bay. Consider first any low-cost improvements that can be made with paint and striping, signage and wayfinding, and maintenance of shoulders and street edges. Work regionally with Damariscotta and Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission to pursue funding for any larger facility improvements.

## 8 CMP Corridors

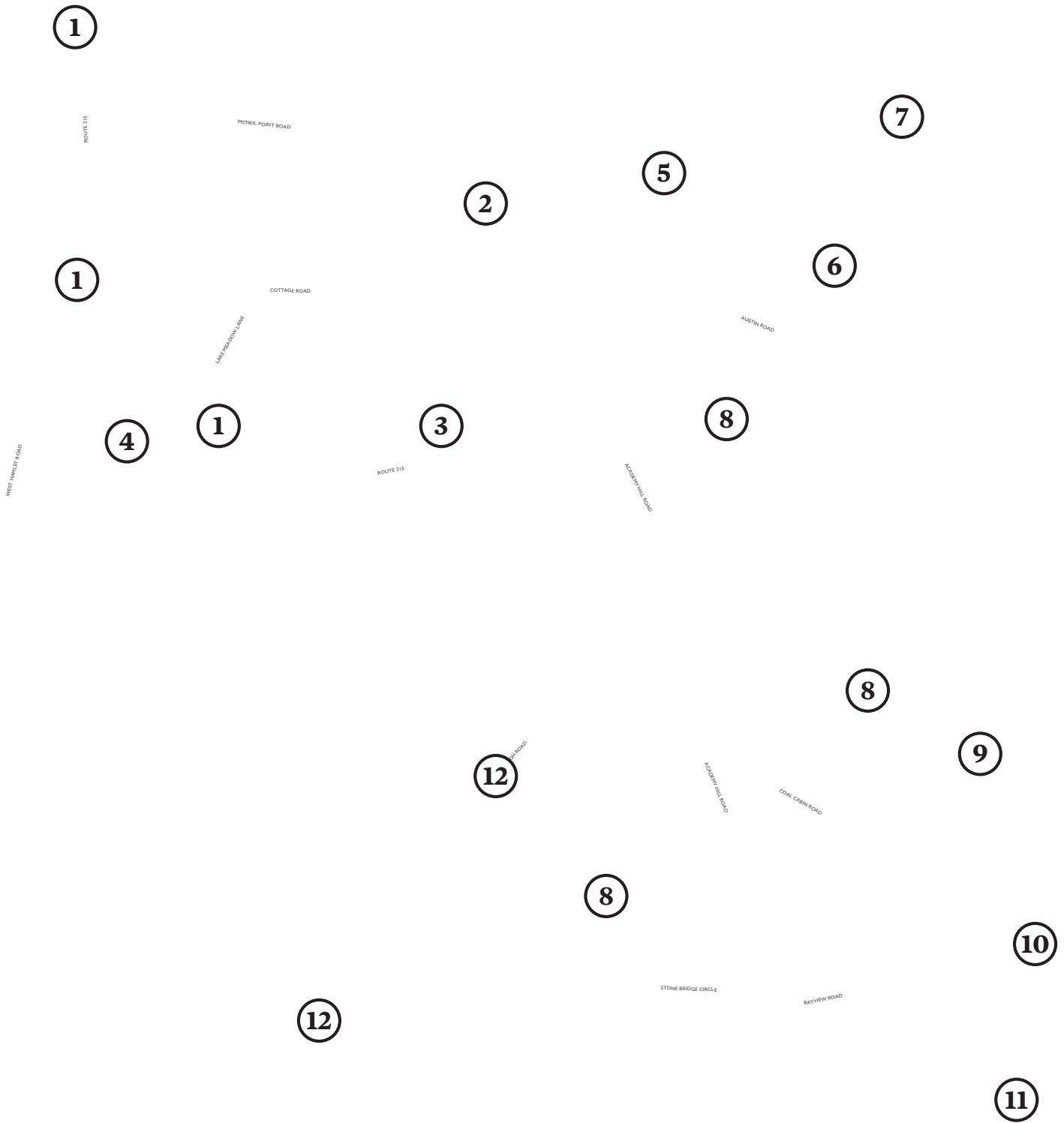
Explore ability to use CMP corridors for off road walking and mountain bike trails to provide connectivity between Damariscotta Mills, the neighborhoods off Academy Hill Road, and the Village.

## 9 Rail with Trail

Explore creating a separated, multi-use trail in the space between the railroad and Mills Road. Volunteer-driven and incrementally implemented, use crowd-funding and find local sources of seed money to make initial improvements, beginning with cutting vegetation and laying down woodchips. If successful, pursue funding support for longer term improvements.

## 10 Create an Adventure Park

The sand pile on Mills Road, with an overlook to the Great Salt Bay, makes for the perfect scene for an adventure park. Adventure parks allow children to be problem-solvers and creative thinkers, to use hammers, saws and paint, with adults performing volunteer tasks and general supervision. These parks encourage movement and manipulation of objects and incorporate basic elements of earth, wind, and water.



**11 Bikes on Mills Road**

Add shared lane markings to Mills Road to indicate to bicyclists and drivers where on the road is the safest place for bicyclists to be.

**12 Kavanaugh Road to Sheepscot Village**

Make incremental improvements to Kavanaugh Road to facilitate walking, bicycling and skiing. Partner with other entities such as the land trusts, Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission, and private business to crowdfund and provide match funding for private and public projects.



# ACADEMY HILL



**Academy Hill is a unique area of Newcastle sitting above Main Street but very much part of the Village. Academy Hill is now most notably the home St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, the Lincoln Academy school campus, and the former rail station.**

Today, Academy Hill is still marked by many commercial/industrial buildings that developed adjacent to the rail line. The buildings have been re-purposed for many activities ranging from manufacturing and technology to apartments. While physically connected to Main Street, residents expressed a desire for better pedestrian connectivity between Academy Hill and the Village for the benefit of all residents but for school-aged children who often walk down to Main Street in Damariscotta. Academy Hill last received notable residential development in the 1980’s, and new campus housing was recently built to accommodate foreign students attending Lincoln Academy. At the kick-off session residents expressed support for expanding the density of the village up Academy

Hill to allow new infill development of a variety of housing and business types.

Residents overwhelmingly recognize Lincoln Academy as one of the town’s most valuable assets to attract new economic growth, investment and young families. Providing attractive development opportunities for complete, walkable neighborhoods, with varying housing types and mixed-use flexible buildings will support new growth in Newcastle. This will also support the Academy and build upon arts and technology related industries.

## **A New, Complete Neighborhood**

During the public planning process, we heard residents express interest in seeing a new neighborhood take shape on Academy Hill near Lincoln Academy. The team responded by drawing concepts for a neighborhood of connected streets and blocks with varying sizes of lots, from small house lots to estate-like farm lots, like the historical pattern of development in the

Glidden neighborhood. The team checked with staff at the town and with Great Salt Bay Sanitary District to determine if existing sewer and water infrastructure could connect and serve the more intense concept plan.

At the community check-in presentation, the team presented the different concept sketches and received positive support from participants for the most dense neighborhood design. From here the plan was further refined by the team and again presented for comments and feedback at the final presentation.

**The illustration represents community support to grow Newcastle's village on Academy Hill, and to support new housing opportunities within easy walking distance of local amenities in the village and an excellent high school education.**

The illustration shows how a pedestrian-scale block pattern with narrow, residential streets and lanes, and a mix of houses big and small could be laid out should a landowner choose to develop his or her property. The plan conservatively considers and avoids wetlands.

To activate the concept plan and allow this area to transition to a higher density neighborhood, the area has been included in the G2 – Intended Growth area and should be re-zoned to the CD3-V Village Residential district. Furthermore, Character-Based code standards should be adopted to allow for narrow, slow-flow residential streets and lanes, to require connected streets and blocks, and to treat streets as public spaces. At the lot scale, Character-Based code standards should specify placement of houses in relationship to the street and lot lines, and require parking to occur at the side and rear of the property.

All new houses in the CD3-V Village Residential district can include new accessory dwelling units within the house or in accessory buildings on the property, providing opportunity to offset cost of new housing at the same time as increasing housing stock of new, rental units.

# Neighborhood Design Principles

## 1 Streets as Public Spaces

Streets are public spaces and should be designed to create outdoor rooms where random conversations happen between neighbors, where people can walk their dogs, and where children can ride their bicycles and play. New principal streets extending to Academy Hill Road should include concrete sidewalks separated by a tree-lined esplanade. Other streets may function in a yield condition, where all street users are considered equal.

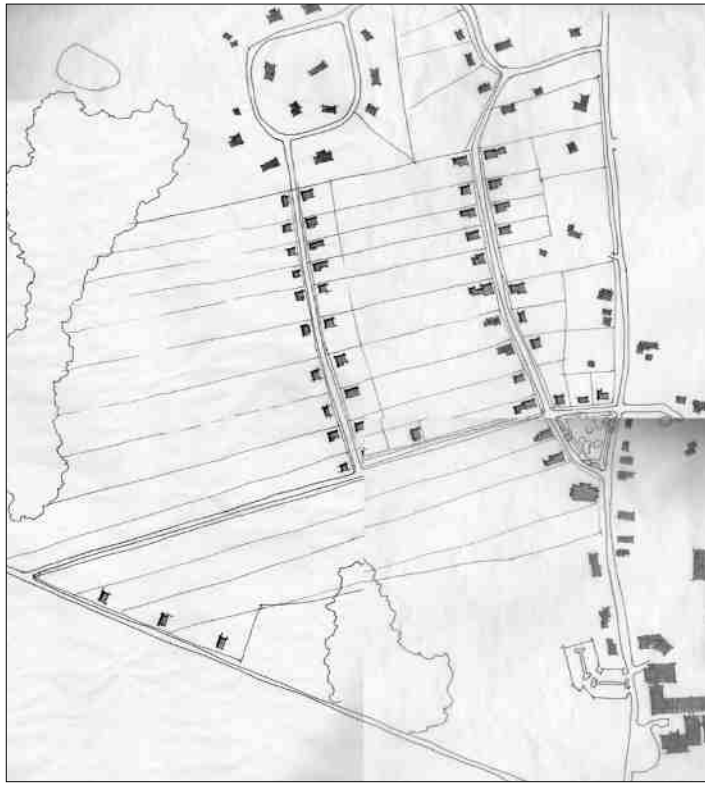
## 2 Pedestrian-Scaled Blocks

New neighborhoods should be designed to facilitate pedestrian connectivity and access. Blocks should be between 250 – 400 ft, not exceeding 400 ft, and mid-block passages may be incorporated to enhance connectivity to adjacent amenities or greenspace, or where topography might be challenging.

## 3 Scale of Housing, from Small House to Estate

Academy Hill should be allowed to develop in an historic pattern. Design new neighborhoods to include a similar diversity of lot sizes, thereby accommodating a diversity of scale of housing and lifestyle. Allow tightly arranged small houses on small lots, ideal for empty nesters or renters and first-time homebuyers. Also permit large homes on larger estate lots that allow more privacy and may facilitate big gardens and food growing or broader business activities at home. Diverse lot sizes inherently result in more socioeconomically diverse neighborhoods.

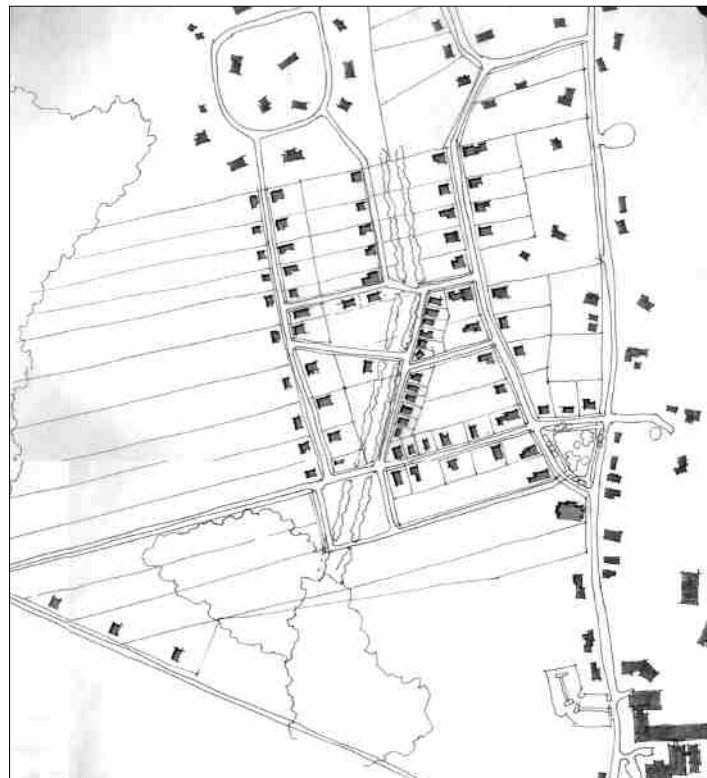
# ACADEMY HILL CONCEPT SKETCHES



Alternative 1

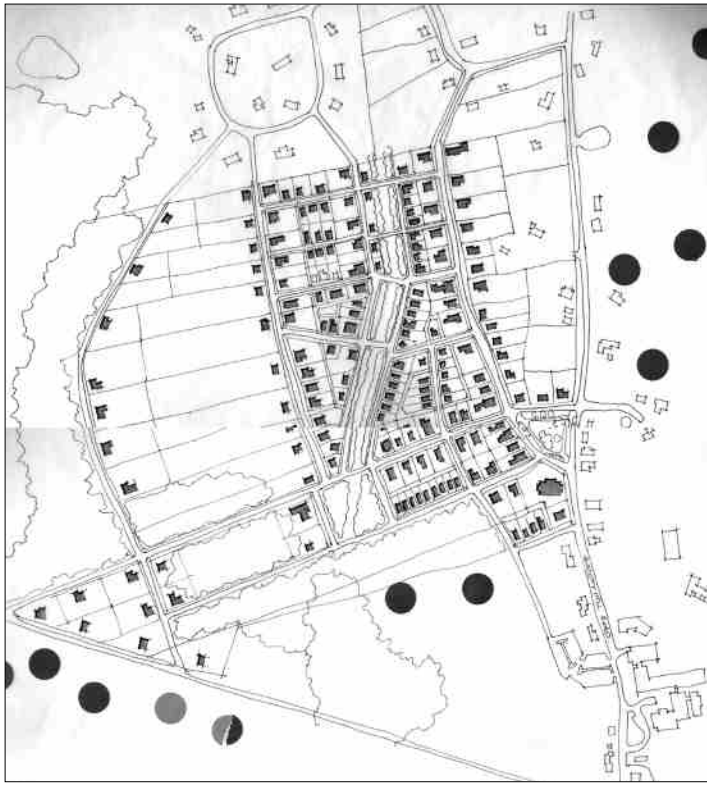
The alternative concept sketches presented here illustrate a what-if scenario, should multiple landowners choose to develop their properties at various levels of intensity. As sketched here, lots can vary in size from small house lots to estate lots and farms. This pattern of development is similar to the historic pattern found in the Glidden neighborhood just east of Academy Hill.

The alternative concept sketches shown here were presented for feedback at the mid-process check in. Plans for private land become real if and when landowners choose to develop.

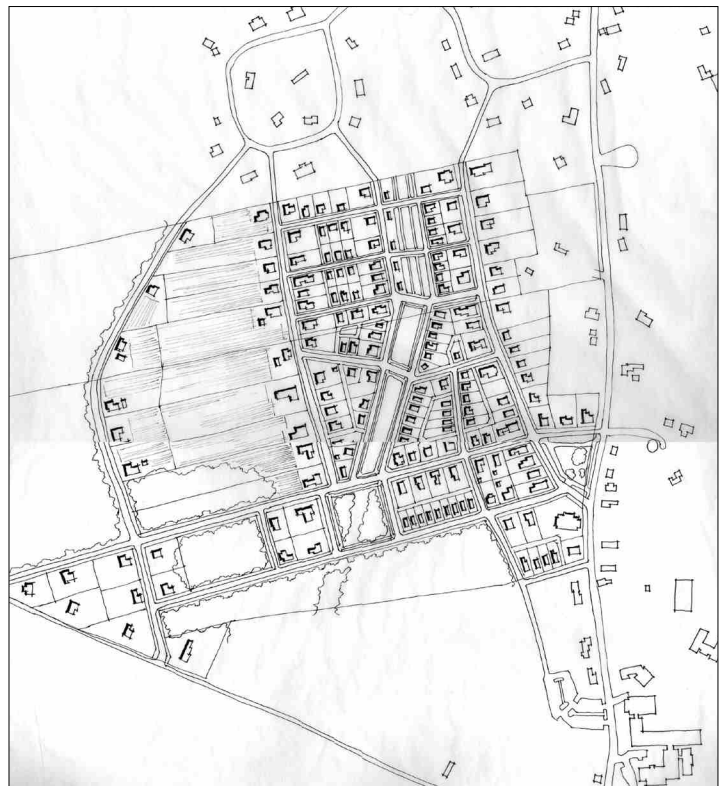


Alternative 2





Alternative 3



Alternative 4

# RT 1 & RIVER ROAD



**Characterized by scenic country roads passing historic homesteads and farm, this area was historically known as East Newcastle and South Newcastle, both places strongly oriented to the rivers that pass through them. Today the landscape is bisected by Rt 1 a primary transportation artery connecting Midcoast communities to all points both north and south.**

River Road winds between the Village of Newcastle and East Edgecomb, paralleling the Damariscotta River before connecting with Wiscasset Road just north of Boothbay. River Road was the location of the first Lincoln Academy (at the Bayley Home), and a number of brickyards. River Road also features the Frances Perkins Homestead and one of the two Glidden Cemeteries.

South Newcastle was the location of a railroad station and a post office. One notable structure remaining today is the former Methodist Church on Rt 1 at Station Road. This building was the

center of social and religious activity from the time of its construction in 1872. At various times it has been used by the Union Sewing Society, the Baptist and Congregational Societies and as the Freetown Grange, No. 191. Today, Rt 1 splits South Newcastle and East Newcastle and is a high-speed two-lane highway providing inter-regional connectivity throughout the Midcoast. Rt 1 is pressured by the need to remain a limited access highway. At the same time, it is this valuable access to customers and connectivity to outside markets that makes the Rt 1 corridor desirable for economic development. Towns like Newcastle need to work in collaboration with neighboring towns and the DOT to ensure access is permitted, but in a limited capacity, and avoids sprawling development from one edge of town to the next, threatening community identity, property values and local character.

Residents living in the South Newcastle and Sheepscot Village areas use Rt 1 for daily trips to reach services and amenities in the Village. In some places, when Rt 1 was built, local streets and roads were disconnected or dead-ended. Development

# “Are you comfortable with the Route 1 area accepting more development to help provide tax base? If so, what do you hope will be the character of this area?”

## What you said.

“Yes. Jobs that pay a living wage.”

“Yes. Similar to downtown and Searsport, Belfast, and Rt 1 in Bucksport, Ellsworth, etc.”

“Yes. More development. Multi-use but clustered with limited access.”

“Yes. But I would favor development of service road to reduce number of curb cuts and exit/entrances.”

“No. Look at Wiscasset.”

“Yes, but... fewer curb cuts. Hide parking and paving. Anything but typical strip mall feeling.”

“Yes but set it back like Reny’s.”

“Sure.”

“We would accept more development. Attention needs to be paid to traffic control. Avoid too many curb cuts, maybe allowing a strip of parking behind new business development.”

“Quintessential Maine – keep it Maine of old”

“Yes, keep roadsides vegetated, beautiful. Access roads to businesses and development.”

“Yes. Cool, trendy, attractive to teenagers. A place to get a snack, like Fernalds but not as popular.”

“Yes, but not just thrown in. There was no reason the trees in front of Reny’s warehouse had to be removed. It would have been nice to have the warehouse back behind the trees and not seen.”

“Develop very carefully with screening for the gateway to the town.”

“Yes, if it is implemented creatively to preserve rural character. Woodland buffers, expanded wetland protection (over that which is required by the state). I really believe we have an opportunity now to stop the Route 1 creep of strip malls with multiple traffic lights. Please keep/make Newcastle unique!”

“This is a good area for retail and light clean industry development. Encourage slow growth development along the Route 1 corridor and use development fees to fund other important town projects. Please no big box stores and no fast food drive through restaurants. Development should be tasteful and consistent with the community as a whole.”

“Yes. I would like to see some kind of set back if it is strictly industrial. I would not like to see strip mall-like development.”

“No. I think expanding to Rt 1 ruins character of our area. I hate how Wiscasset looks, for example, right now.”

along Rt 1 has become auto-centric with parking lots in front of buildings, some long open curb cuts or stretches of asphalt or dirt up against the road, and no connectivity between properties other than by user of Rt 1. Site development constraints such as wetlands, ledge, and sight distances have limited the amount of development that has occurred on Newcastle’s portion of Rt 1, and participants in the planning process expressed a mix of opinions about further development on Rt 1.

Most people expressed support for incremental amounts of development, recognizing the need

to expand tax base and to support strict design control to ensure development is attractive, localized, and contributes to a positive image of Newcastle.

River Road is characterized as a scenic country road with views of farms, forest, ledge outcropping and historic homes. Dodge Point Preserve and the Baker Forest Preserve each have frontage on River Road with access to recreational amenities at each property. Several other large parcels of land exist on River Road, and during the public process we heard that development interest exists for the



# RT 1 & RIVER ROAD

owner of a large tract of land with frontage on Rt 1 and River Road. As a result, the team prepared a master plan showing how a new complete neighborhood might be developed. Massing of some of the buildings in the plan could accommodate a large end-user, such as a regional hospital.

It is important to note that the character people desire for the corridor, the antithesis to the Wiscasset Rt 1 corridor, cannot be achieved if the corridor is fully zoned for commercial use. Over time the community should re-visit its zoning and consider up-zoning to the next most intensive character district if and when there are no other existing, underutilized commercial properties available for infill or redevelopment. Scattering new development along streets and corridors weakens vibrancy, property values and thus long term economic success of already developed places.

**Generally, as many people felt no development should occur here as did people who thought the corridor should be developed to the full extent practical.**

## ① Create a Complete Neighborhood

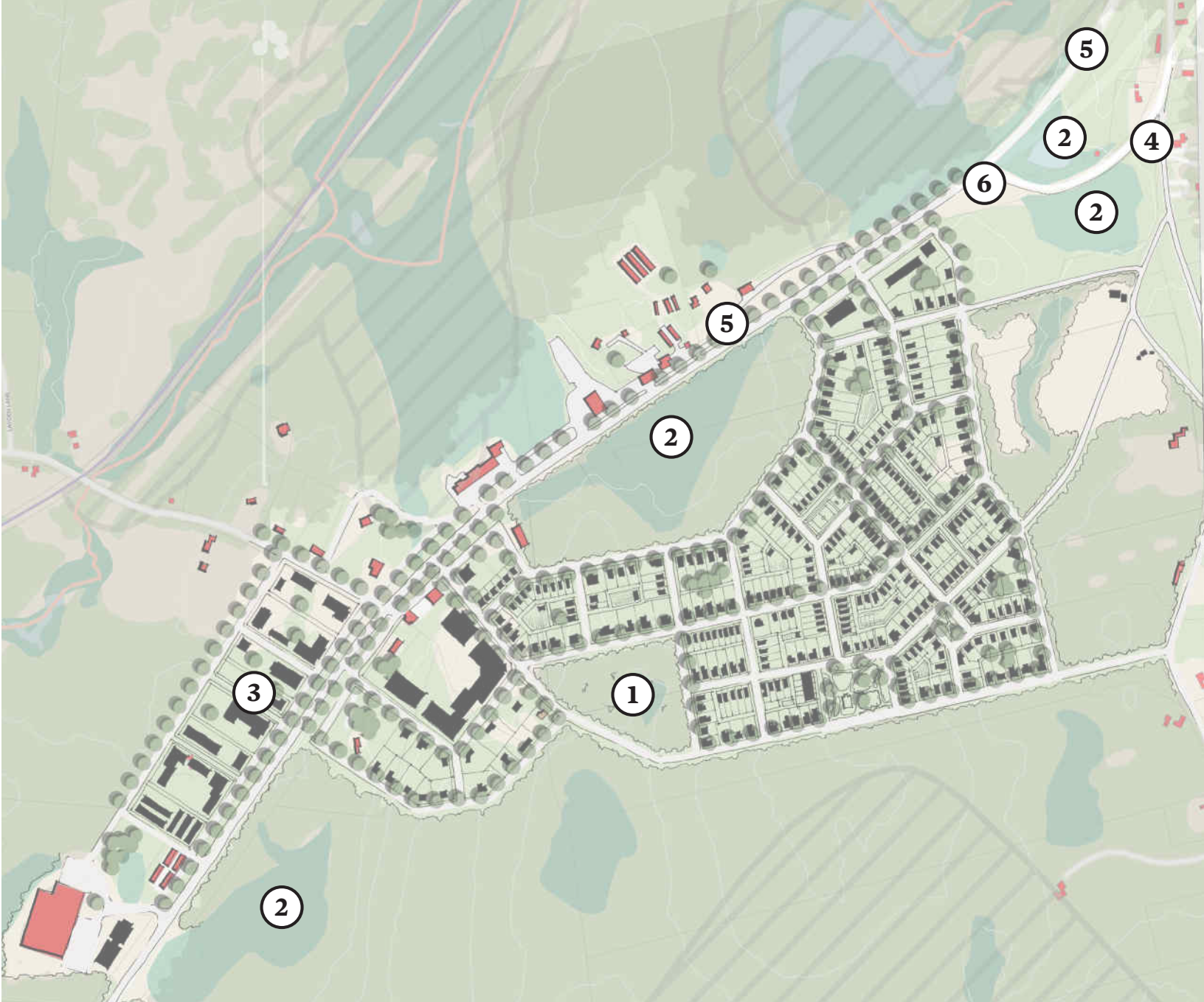
Locate a new neighborhood off River Road and Rt 1. This new neighborhood should include a fine grain pattern of streets and blocks, and opportunities for a variety of housing types on a range of lot sizes with pocket parks and connectivity to trails and green space. Reserve space near Rt 1 for a larger block of commercial businesses, in anticipation of a larger-sized tenant that might desire regional accessibility afforded by Rt 1, such as a regional hospital or hotel. Preserve the scenic farm character of River Road by clustering housing on the interior portion of the lots. Provide connectivity to Rt 1 at limited locations, and connectivity to River Road at several locations to reduce burden on any one intersection. During the planning process the concept of a neighborhood centered around dementia care was suggested by one of the large landowners in this area.

## ② Wetlands and Ledges for Scenic Value

Where possible, protect wetlands and rock ledges along Rt 1. Wetlands serve varying levels of importance as ecological habitat and receivers of storm water, in addition to creating natural breaks in corridor development. Rock ledges also contribute to the scenic qualities of the highway corridor. While some might believe wetlands have limited growth and development on the corridor up to this point in time, wetlands are not off limits to development. Any person may apply to the DOT to permit and fill wetlands - for the right price.

## ③ Expand Rt 1 Development

Allow for high-density, new development to occur in proximity to existing highway commercial development and work with the DOT to allow for a slowing of vehicular speeds along Newcastle's frontage. Manage access by providing new principal streets parallel to Rt 1 with limited access to Rt 1 and separated by a planting strip of native landscaping and street trees. Establish a pedestrian-scaled block pattern of secondary streets from which lots can have access. Front new liner buildings close to the street to screen existing parking lots and allow a variety of building types.



**4 Fix Intersection**

Explore intersection fixes where Snead's Spur meets River Road.

**5 Control Noise**

To preserve quality of life for residents living near Rt 1, install no jake-braking signage on Rt 1.

**6 Brand With Signage**

Increase broader awareness for the town of Newcastle by clearly marking where it starts and where it stops with improved signage on Rt 1 at all gateways.

**7 Extend Dodge Point Trail**

Work with the local land trusts and private property owners to extend the Dodge Point Trail along the Newcastle ridge to the Village. Explore crowd-funding as a source of revenue or to provide seed money and leverage for private or publicly funded grants. Use volunteer-power to build the trail in manageable increments.

# NEWCASTLE VILLAGE



**The Village, in conjunction with Damariscotta, is today's center for most civic, health, education, cultural opportunities and goods and amenities. The village is admired for its intact historic neighborhood, with a mix of small houses on smaller lots to large homes on estate lots, served by narrow yield streets and lanes with rear yard attached and detached barns and carriage houses.**

The most iconic commercial area in the Village is the Austin/Glidden Block, which used to hold one of the four-corners at Guenthner's Corner. But, through land takings in the 1930's and 60's, business Rt 1 removed the front lawn of the church, destroyed the adjacent Newcastle Square and thus Guenthner's Corner, and removed many commercial buildings that formed Newcastle's Main Street. With its wide swath, fast speeds, sidewalks against the roadway, and limited places for pedestrians to cross, combined with a confusing intersection, these actions have collectively discouraged a downtown Main Street from flourishing on the Newcastle side

of the Damariscotta River. Where business Rt 1 impacted Main Street, the Rt 1 by-pass and limited access to the highway, negatively impacts the connectivity of the Academy Hill area for both vehicles and pedestrians. Improving safety and connectivity on Academy Hill was often cited in the public process, recognizing that students at Lincoln Academy should be able to safely move from school to local amenities such as the library, restaurants and shops on Main Street. Central to the success of the Village is what the Town does with its streets, in particular Rt 1B. Wide rights-of-way provides opportunity to reclaim space for linear park, sidewalks, street trees, on-street parking to create a true Main Street. In order to undo decades of auto-centric oriented policy, re-establish Newcastle Square by eliminating the slip-lane and reconfiguring the intersection. Also, re-align the intersection of River Road and the off-ramp by creating a T-intersection. This will establish a gateway to Newcastle, with scenic views across the harbor and would signal the starting place of Newcastle's historic Village and welcome people to Main Street. In addition to support for establishing a Main Street, citizens felt unanimous



# “Should Main Street remain a fast track into Damariscotta? Should River Road or other currently residential areas within the Village remain residential only, or should they transition to allow more flexible business options?”

## What you said.

“It should stay residential”

“We should have small businesses from Newcastle Square to the bridge, perhaps making it an arts district.”

“I would not like to see this become a posh little enclave with no diversity. I would like to continue to see some of the true grittiness of real life here.”

“Keep it residential but allow commercial development such as business offices.”

“Yes”

“More flexible business options”

“We need to focus development in our downtown center. Once we are to capacity, then we can consider allowing more commercial development radiating from the center. I’m afraid if we allow business options on River Road we’ll never have a real downtown – just sprawl.”

“No, and 50/50. No big business, only small low key.”

“Further business development within walking distance in Newcastle Village seems to make sense to me. I would encourage the town to require any new physical structures to maintain the historical feel of the Village.”

“Commercial development only if it looks residential or “Village” like. No box buildings devoid of style. And parking behind the buildings.”

“Modest small scale business on River Road down to Rt 1 cut off would be fine, as now it is happening – professional offices, B&B’s etc.”

“Yes”

“Extend Damariscotta’s Main Street into Newcastle so it looks like Damariscotta’s downtown.”

“No luge track. Business along River Road and Academy Hill to past Lincoln Academy.”

“With Frances Perkins Center it is only wise to think about amenities tourists might like, like vegetable stand, coffee and muffin joint etc. Not talking large megaplex but mom and pop stores vs just food trucks.”

“Yes. Slow down the traffic. A crossed intersection (+) at Newcastle Square with a 4-way light would definitely slow traffic for town center, but wouldn’t solve traffic merging by Lincoln House. Maybe a 2-step process?”

“Need to address intersection.”

“More flexibility might encourage businesses, but I would like to see the businesses blend in, parking behind and focused [downward] lighting.”

“As I view Damariscotta and Newcastle as one village/ community for planning purposes, effort should be made for land use restrictions and incentives to be consistent with “downtown” service center concept.”

“Slow traffic. Newcastle = residential. People can ask for variances.”

“No. Flexible zoning would encourage a more total neighborhood feel.”

“No, better to have attractive, welcoming, pedestrian-friendly business and residential areas.”

“River Road should be residential on both sides, at least up to the Fire Station. Home based businesses should be allowed as long as noise and light issues, as well as parking, are addressed. Stand alone businesses could be looked at on a case by case basis, as long as the present character of the road is maintained.”

“Definitely not a luge.”

“We don’t need to duplicate, compete with Damariscotta retail.”

“The residential areas should stay residential.”

“Try to keep the village area with small businesses (no big box stores).”

# NEWCASTLE VILLAGE

consensus that the Village should be the focus of economic development and the place for new, dense infill of mixed use buildings, businesses and housing opportunities. New development will in turn create increased tax revenues and help to diversify the town's mostly residential tax base. New buildings of quality materials, good form and flexible use should be carefully placed on vacant and underutilized lots, pulled forward to address the street. With form being the focus of new regulations as opposed to use, new live/work and affordable, flexible housing opportunities can be created. Carriage houses and barns can be converted to home-based maker spaces, work studios, or accessory apartments and condos.

With new development, attention should be given to creating high quality buildings and spaces, providing human-scaled site amenities such as seating, sidewalks, paths, lighting, shade and shelter, and interesting places to linger. Design with all ages in mind - from street geometry that encourages slow-flow of vehicles, providing pedestrian safety and comfort to benches placed along Main Street for temporary resting. Avoid street geometry that creates gentle curvy road segments or round-a-bouts. Both allow for faster, continuous flow of cars at the detriment to people walking and bicycling. Both also consume more right of way that could otherwise be used for buildings and street improvements.) Instead, use stop-signs to force eye contact between people in cars and people using the street.

Lastly, preservation of the architectural integrity of historic buildings should continue to be a priority in the Village, and additions and renovations to structures should adhere to form, scale, and massing standards. These standards can be embedded into a Character-Based code and administered in a timely manner by staff, with clear paths to permitting for landowners wishing to make changes to their properties.

## 1 Traffic Calm the Streets

Design streets for 25 mph **maximum** speeds with maximum 10-foot travel lanes, and make retrofits to the street as opportunities arise. Simple, low cost retrofits include using paint to narrow travel lanes to 10' maximum and tighten curb radii. Stripe temporary curb extensions and install crosswalks. If an area does not qualify as a crossing due to missing landings, use paint to add street art directly to asphalt to signal to drivers to be aware. Use paint and plastic bollards to slow traffic speeds on curves to keep vehicles in their lanes. When funding permits, install permanent curb extensions and add street trees. Street trees provide a sense of enclosure to the street, shade and safety to pedestrians on sidewalks, and have the effect of limiting driver's cone of sight, which in turn causes drivers to slow down.

## 2 Improve Sidewalks in the Village

Sidewalks were cited by citizens as one of the most desired amenities for Newcastle. Where sidewalks exist today, continue to make improvements as part of annual road maintenance programs. As funding becomes available (whether by grants, town allocation or crowd-funding), extend sidewalks along River Road, Mills Road and on Academy Hill, incrementally, to provide improved connectivity to local amenities.

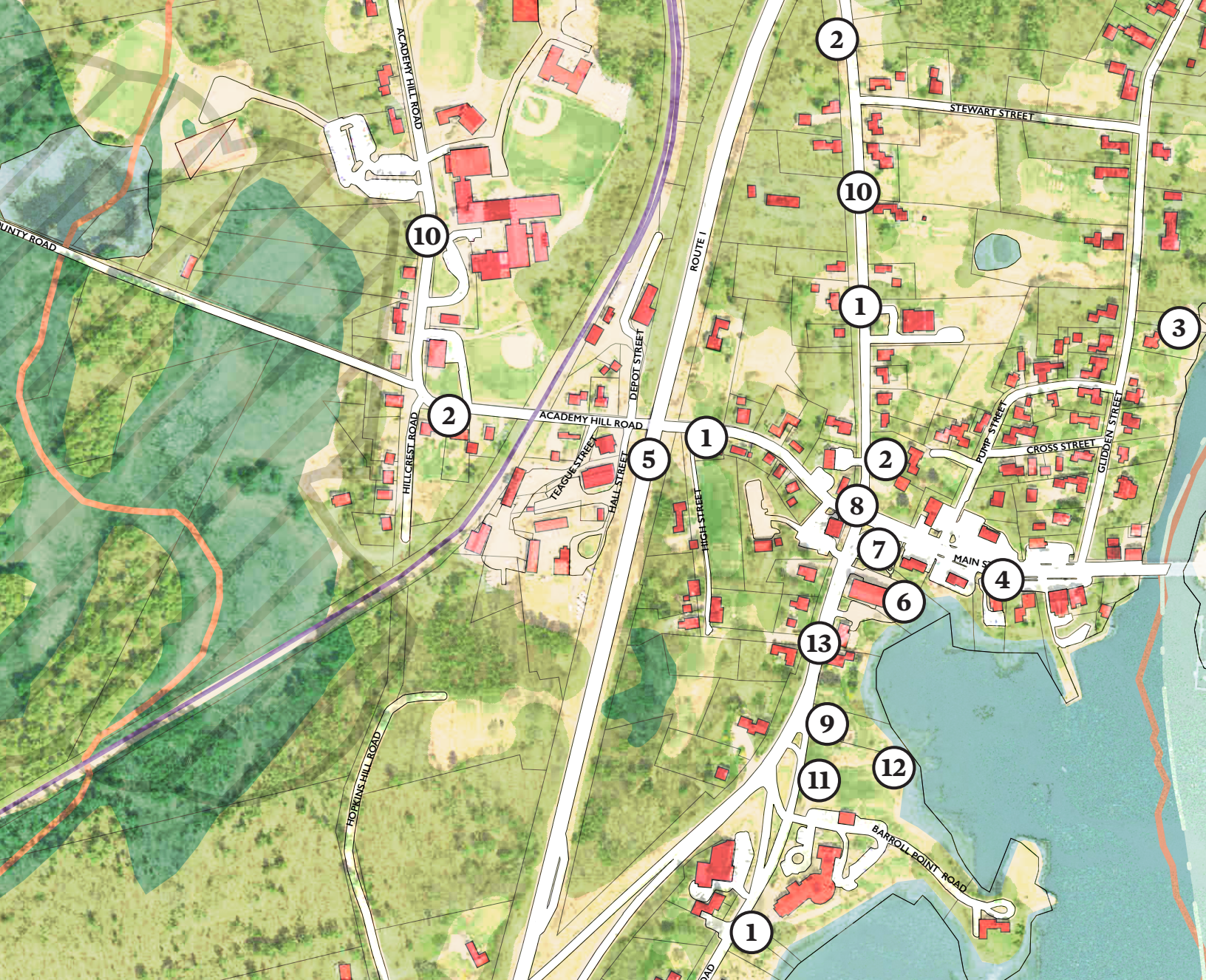
Not all streets should have sidewalks, though, as many of the streets in the Village are narrow with slow speeds, and currently function as yield streets where everyone shares the street.

When sidewalks are contemplated as part of a road reconstruction, provide safety for pedestrians by 1) separating the sidewalk from moving vehicles by use of a planting strip; and 2) use materials for the curb and sidewalk that contrast with the travel lane so to clearly define where the pedestrian belongs and where the car should be. Where historic 2' passages exist, work with landowners to preserve these passages.

## 3 Reinforce Public Access

Make the Glidden Street public access to the Damariscotta River welcoming by maintaining the right of way, adding seating to view the river and signage welcoming guests.





**4 Plant Street Trees**

Plant trees that, when mature, have broad canopy and broad leaves for maximum benefits of shade and traffic calming to the street. Use modern tree planting techniques to encourage healthy growth, including tree trenches and tree pits. Also, using mulches instead of grass keep soils from becoming compacted and tight.

**5 Enhance Under the Bridge**

Make the experience of walking under the Rt 1 bridge safer and more comfortable for pedestrians. Low cost improvements include adding colorful paint to the center span of the bridge and create canvases on each concrete abutment inviting students to create public art here. As funding or opportunity arises, install vertical granite curbing to better keep cars from

mounting curbing and use concrete sidewalks to better visually define pedestrian space from vehicular space. Use shared lane markings on either approach to the bridge, signaling to drivers and inexperienced bicyclists that the safest place for the bicycle here is in center of the lane.

**6 Connect to the River**

Working with adjacent property owners, provide low-cost enhancements such as gravel or woodchip pathways and seating to provide views to the river and harbor. Behind the church, push river-side parking approximately 3' in to create a smooth surface area for walking and seating atop the bank.



# NEWCASTLE VILLAGE

**7 Establish a Civic Square & Linear Park**  
Negotiate reclaiming DOT right of way to establish a new civic square for the Town of Newcastle, and repurpose portions of right-of-way along Main Street for a linear park, complete with wide sidewalks, esplanade and street trees, park benches, pedestrian scale lighting and attractive, native plantings.

**8 Re-establish a 4-Way Intersection**  
Create a Main Street for Newcastle by eliminating the highway road geometry that ushers cars at high speeds to Damariscotta. Engage the DOT to pursue a new intersection design that works best for Newcastle residents, is safer, and forces drivers into a slow-flow Main Street condition before the bridge.

**9 Improve Parking**  
On-street parking is a high-value amenity that can support Main Street development. Parking should be added on the RT 1B approach to the Village and, where space allow it, along the northerly section of River Road. On-street parking has the added benefit of slowing vehicles down and providing physical separation between moving cars and pedestrians.

**10 Strategically, Add Bike Facilities and Signage**  
Streets in the village should be designed for slow flow of vehicles to optimize pedestrian and bicycle safety and enhance quality of place. Bicycles in a village context should be accommodated, however each street must be examined carefully to determine what facility is the right fit for existing conditions and the desired future context. In the village, on street parking should always take precedent over a new bicycle lane, and the shared lane marking should be used instead. If a street is being reconstructed in the village and there is only enough space to choose a bicycle lane or an esplanade between sidewalk and curb, separating pedestrians on sidewalks from moving vehicles should take precedent and the shared lane marking should be used instead.

**11 Preserve Scenic Views**  
Newcastle residents and visitors alike wholeheartedly appreciate the incredible scenic view across the harbor seen as you approach town on Rt 1B. This view should be preserved in perpetuity.

**12 Shoreline Trail**  
Explore the potential of creating a public access trail along the shoreline, beginning near Lincoln Home and wrapping behind Main Street. Work with landowners and explore crowd-funding and the concept of interim, volunteer-built trails to demonstrate potential for a longer term, permanent installation.

**13 Create A Gateway to the Village**  
In tandem with establishing a 4-Way Intersection at Academy Hill Road and Main Street and preserving scenic views across to the harbor, Newcastle's gateway should be at the base of the Rt 1B ramp as it intersects with River Road. A new River Road alignment should be considered here and at this point vehicles entering Newcastle should be brought to a village-appropriate slow-flow speed. Reconfiguring the area provides opportunity for public space enhancements, a scenic overlook, and new municipal on-street parking with sidewalks to support future infill development here and on Main Street. Visitors to Newcastle-Damariscotta can get out of their vehicles much sooner, and walk down through town.

(Right, above) This drawing shows how, over many years, Main Street could evolve if landowners choose to develop and a Character-Based code is used.

(Right, below) This drawing shows how Newcastle Square could be built, establishing a new gateway to the Twin Villages.

Both drawings represent concepts only.











# REGULATORY FRAMEWORK



# Regulatory Framework

**During the public process it became clear that a majority of residents are interested in new growth and development to create jobs, support the daily needs of the community and contribute to the long-term economic stability of the town.**

Overwhelmingly, people expressed a strong preference for development that is complimentary to the existing character of Newcastle in and around the Village, including controlled growth on the Rt 1 corridor. There was broad consensus to ensure new growth happens in the form of clearly defined compact, walkable, mixed-use centers, not in the form of strip malls or buildings isolated by parking and sprawling along roads. People offered examples of vibrant Main Streets Newcastle could emulate, including extension of the pattern of development found in Damariscotta's downtown to Newcastle Square.

While people generally agreed that they like the neighborhoods the way they are today, three central and similar themes emerged about each neighborhood or village:

1. People are interested in active lifestyles and connectivity of places, with good quality, safe streets and excellent walking and bicycling conditions to access daily amenities and services in downtown Newcastle and Damariscotta;
2. A liberal home-based entrepreneurial economy to incubate new business in a flexible way; and
3. That the visions, local knowledge and sense of stewardship people have for their neighborhoods and villages be allowed to emerge, be heard and guide policy decision making. Overall, people recognize that it is the duty of each resident in each village and neighborhood to be good stewards of the Town.

Ordinances today fall short in safe-guarding and permitting more of the best of what Newcastle represents today and the vision people have for the future. Home-occupations are given discretionary review as special permits, and the rural districts are

zoned to permit single family residential housing on 1 and 2 acre lots, leaving very little opportunity for anything but a build-out of sprawling, single family house lots.

**People want clear zoning rules and clear understanding that if all the boxes are checked on the application, a permit will be issued in a timely manner.**

When projects move forward, the Planning Board and Design Review Board have often struggled to interpret ordinances and navigate through review processes. Existing ordinances provide discretionary review. Boards often feel conflicted about their roles and responsibilities in permitting, planning, and enforcement. This might also be due, in part, to a lack of staff capacity to perform project review and assist the Planning Board, or provide guidance to applicants wishing to propose a project. With limited staff capacity to assist, and a once-monthly meeting schedule for the Planning Board, the process of permitting is time-inefficient - which is a real barrier to investing in Newcastle.

## Zoning Today

Newcastle's current zoning is based in concept on the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act of 1926. Often referred to as "Euclidian" zoning after the 1926 Supreme Court case in Euclid, Ohio, its primary purpose was to separate uses to maintain health and living conditions of people predominantly living in cities.

As has occurred in many Maine towns and cities, over time ordinances have been made further inoperable by prohibitive language often adopted as a reaction to an undesirable project or development. Even acting with good



intentions, ordinances written by large committee or inexperienced staff often result in internal conflicts and unintended consequences. Finally, two aspects of Maine State Law contribute to the permitting climate in Maine, arguably in a positive and negative way: contract zoning and state subdivision law requiring all subdivisions of land be reviewed and approved by a local Planning Board.

Contract zoning allows for the dimensional standards and requirements of a municipality's zoning ordinance to be modified or waived if a project can demonstrate that a direct public benefit will result from the project. Contract zoning is enabled by State law, and Newcastle has not adopted this provision. Use, however, cannot be modified or waived, nor can any other minimum requirement of state-mandated laws or ordinances.

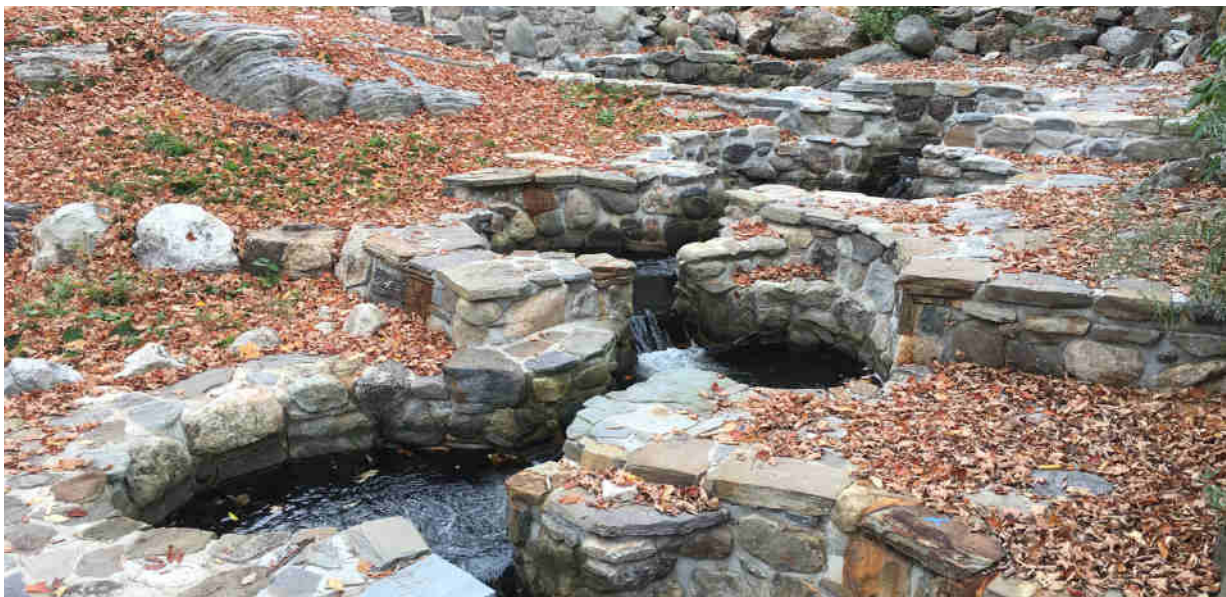
Second, state subdivision law requires all subdivisions that create 3 or more residential units within five years follow subdivision processes, and only Planning Boards may review and grant approval. This means that mixed use buildings with 3 or more units of residential housing cannot be simply reviewed administratively and expedited as a site plan if the project meets all aspects of local zoning and conforms to a municipalities Comprehensive Plan. This aspect of State Subdivision Law is antiquated and does not reflect the modern-day capacity of municipalities to set clear zoning and administratively check the boxes.

## SHORELAND ZONING

Adopted in 1971, the Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act requires municipalities to adopt, administer, and enforce local ordinances that regulate land use activities in the Shoreland zone. The intent of the law is to: protect water quality, wildlife habitat, wetlands, archaeological sites and historic resources, and commercial fishing and maritime industries; and, conserve shore cover, public access, natural beauty, and open space. It does this by controlling land uses, and placement of structures within the Shoreland area.

The Shoreland zone is comprised of all land areas within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of the: normal high-water line of any great pond or river; upland edge of a coastal wetland, including all areas affected by tidal action, and upland edge of defined freshwater wetlands; and all land areas within 75 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of certain streams.

The town has adopted specific districts and standards based on Maine Shoreland Zoning, Chapter 1000: Guidelines for Municipal Shoreland Zoning Ordinances including: Resource Protection District; Stream Protection District and General Development – Marine. All state-mandated ordinances would remain in effect as individual modules under the town's new Character-Based code.





# Character-Based Code

**Early in the Town’s preparations for updating the comprehensive plan, leadership recognized the value in regulating development with a Character-Based Code. Character-Based coding is still an emerging zoning tool in Maine. In contrast with conventional zoning, which emphasizes the separation of uses, a Character-Based code is focused on desired character –the look and feel of a place – as the primary organizing principle.**

## **A New Approach**

Character-Based codes take the approach that most uses, which fall into broad categories of retail, residential, office, civic uses, are compatible. Even light industrial activities may be compatible with residential, given the nature of the activity and building and site conditions. Given appropriate standards, all of these uses could be located close to each other, except for certain cases where odor or extreme noise are involved in the activity, in which case the conventional approach of separating uses is appropriate.

## **Strengthening Village Centers**

Historic places such as Newcastle that wish to sensitively grow their communities are able to better regulate new development under a Character-Based code because the emphasis is shifting off use and onto form, scale, building placement on the lot, and architectural standards to stitch new buildings into existing town fabric. Buildings are not required to look old, but buildings must be constructed of quality materials, emulate traditional massing, rhythm and fenestration so that buildings add something to the street, contributing to the public realm.

## **Protecting Neighborhoods**

While Character-Based codes can be used to promote infill and new investment in centers, it can also be a powerful tool to re-enforce and protect existing land use patterns. Where existing neighborhoods already exist, a Character-Based approach could be taken to maintain the current character and lifestyle, while making it easier

for homeowners to move forward with simple modifications to their home and property. This is especially true of historic neighborhoods where traditionally modifications or improvements have been regulated by design review guidelines and separate permitting board. In Newcastle, the Character-Based code will regulate modifications to existing buildings such that the Design Review Board will no longer be necessary.

## **Quality Building and Design**

Because Character-Based codes emphasize character, design, and context of development, a number of elements are regulated, including: number of building stories, placement of buildings on lots, the location of parking and garages, the public frontage between the building and street, and the street itself, including elements such as sidewalks, planting areas, drainage, bicycle amenities and pavement widths. Instead of building setbacks, Character-Based codes talk about where the front of a building should be placed. Instead of Floor Area Ratio, Character-Based codes talk about appropriate scale and massing of buildings. All this information is conveyed through easy to understand graphics and illustrations.

## **User-Friendly Code**

The goal of a Character-Based code is to make it clear to the public what steps need to be taken to build both simple and complex projects. Character-Based codes have user-friendly formatting and presentation of information.

The code language is written in plain English



rather than in complicated legal speak, with intuitive diagrams and graphics to support text.

### **Expedited Permitting**

Basing codes directly from publicly-lead illustrative master planning provides Newcastle the opportunity to fast-track projects by offering administrative review by staff IF a project can meet all aspects of the code. If projects cannot meet the code or a landowner wants to deviate from the code or requires a waiver, discretionary review processes are available. The exception to this rule is subdivision: State law places subdivision review authority with the Planning Board. However, State

law does not require public hearings but provides required procedures IF a town chooses to have a public hearing process.

A town may decide to expedite some types of subdivision by opting out of the public hearing process, yet the Board would still be required to review, make determination and issue findings.

# Local Precedent

**Character-Based codes are organized around the concept of community character, that being discerned from cumulative elements of the built environment. Or, put differently, the look and feel of a place, made up of many elements – lot, building, street and block.**

Preparing for a Character-Based code requires understanding what the community's character is today, and identifying where preservation of character is desired and where transformation of a place is desired. It might be that a community has exemplary DNA – good bones – and it is a matter of documenting the metrics that comprise these existing places in order to create development standards that emulate what exists today, and allow more of the same. It might be that the community's vision is to see some places transform, such as a highway retail corridor to a more connected, dense, walkable place. In that case, it is helpful to look to other communities for successful examples of transformation, to measure and observe what is contributing to character.

## Synoptic Survey

How we quantify the built environment is by conducting a synoptic survey at various places within the community, where conditions appear similar. In the book, *Form Based Codes* (Parolek, 2008), a synoptic survey is described as similar to that of sampling along a transect to document and analyze environmental conditions. As it applies to coding, the synoptic survey is a tool to measure and analyze human environments, measuring and observing: building form, scale, disposition on a lot (setbacks, build-to, how much of the frontage the building occupies), lot coverage, number of stories, transparency of façade, presence of sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, and streets and block lengths. The results of synoptic surveying tell us what the zoning rules would need to be in order to allow for a certain place to be recreated. This is highly important where preservation of existing neighborhood fabric is a high priority for the community, yet there is also a desire to see some infill and growth. In Newcastle, during the

public planning process the team visited a number of neighborhoods to measure and document existing conditions, ranging from low density rural conditions to Main Street.

## Rural Precedent

Surveying might also tell us that the character of an area, in numbers, is vastly different from standards in existing zoning ordinances. Newcastle's rural area is such a place, characterized by big lots and big frontages. In this case, the team looked for precedents and patterns of development in rural areas in Newcastle, Maine, and New England. The team used Google Earth technology to more closely understand rural patterns of development in order to recommend concepts and prototypes that support rural character yet maintain existing development rights and flexibility to farm or conduct other business activities on rural land.

**What is  
Rural?  
“I don't know,  
but I know it  
when I see it.”**



**CHARACTER DISTRICT & BUILDING TYPE ANALYSIS**

**NEWCASTLE - CD3 VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL  
PUMP STREET, NEWCASTLE**

**STREET**



Street Width	15 ft
Movement	two-way
No. of Lanes	unmarked
Parking Lanes	none
Parking Lane Width	n/a
Curb	none
Drain	none
Sidewalk Width	2 ft
Sidewalk Material	concrete
Planter Type	none
Planter Width	n/a
Tree Spacing	irregular

**BLOCKS & LOTS**



Lot Width	50 - 120 ft
Lot Depth	120 - 180 ft
Lot Area	6,000 - 21,600 sf
Frontage Buildout at Setback	20 - 80%
Front Setback, Primary	8 - 30 ft
Front Setback, Secondary	4 - 25 ft
Side Setback	8 - 34 ft
Rear Setback	12 - 50 ft
% Lot Coverage	20 - 40%
<b>PARKING CONDITION</b>	
Driveway Width	20 ft
Driveway Material	asphalt
<b>OUTBUILDING</b>	
Type	Barn, Carriage House
Outbuilding Dimensions	18 x 35 ft
Outbuilding Height	1 - 2.5 stories
Roof Pitch	Gable
<b>BLOCK DIMENSIONS</b>	
Average Units per Acre	4 - 10

**BUILDINGS**

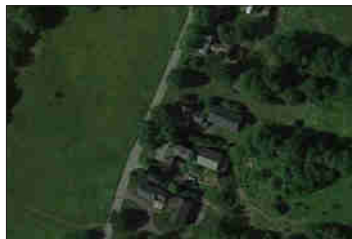


Building Type	HOUSE
Building Width	25 - 40 ft
Building Depth	20 - 35 ft
Building Area	2,700 - 3,600 sf
Building Height	1.5 - 2.5
Roof Type	gable
Roof Pitch	10/12
First floor above Grade	1 - 2 ft
Frontage Type	residential yard
Front Component	Stoop, Shed Dormer
Dimensions	3 ft deep
Side Component	Bay Window, Side Addition
Dimensions	
Rear Component	Rear Addition, Hyphen
Dimensions	20 x 24, 15 x 15 ft
Ground Level Use	Residential
Upper Level Use	Residential
No. Dwelling Units	1
Ground Story Glazing %	30%
Upper Story Glazing %	30%

**CHARACTER DISTRICT & BUILDING TYPE ANALYSIS**

**NEWCASTLE - CD3 VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL  
THE KINGS HIGHWAY, NEWCASTLE**

**STREET**



Street Width	13 ft
Movement	Yield
No. of Lanes	Unmarked
Parking Lanes	none
Parking Lane Width	n/a
Curb	none
Drain	none
Sidewalk Width	n/a
Sidewalk Material	n/a
Planter Type	none
Planter Width	n/a
Tree Spacing	n/a

**BLOCKS & LOTS**



Lot Width	70 - 150 ft
Lot Depth	120 - 200 ft
Lot Area	8,400 - 30,000 sf
Frontage Buildout at Setback	56% - 75%
Front Setback, Primary	20 - 30 ft
Front Setback, Secondary	30 ft
Side Setback	15 - 25 ft
Rear Setback	25 ft min
% Lot Coverage	27%
<b>PARKING CONDITION</b>	
Driveway Width	8 ft
Driveway Material	Tire Tracks
<b>OUTBUILDING</b>	
Type	Barn
Outbuilding Dimensions	20 - 36 deep, 24 - 60 ft wide
Outbuilding Height	1 - 2.5 stories
Roof Pitch	Gable

**BUILDINGS**



Building Type	HOUSE
Building Width	30 - 42 ft
Building Depth	20 - 64 ft
Building Area	600 sf - 2,700 sf
Building Height	2.5 stories
Roof Type	Gable, Hip
Roof Pitch	9/12
First floor above Grade	1 - 3 ft
Frontage Type	Residential Yard
Front Component	Stoop
Dimensions	4 ft wide, 3 ft deep
Side Component	Porch, Bay Window
Dimensions	10 ft deep / 4 ft deep
Rear Component	Hyphen, Back House
Dimensions	16 x 20 ft 20 x 20/25 ft
Ground Level Use	Residential
Upper Level Use	Residential
No. Dwelling Units	1
Ground Story Glazing %	30%



## DOWNTOWN MAIN STREET

Some exemplary historic buildings remain on Main Street, setting the framework for future infill development. Most iconic is Newcastle Square (or the Glidden block), set close to the street and occupying most of the lot's frontage, with parking behind the building. Several suburban-oriented buildings have been constructed over time, with deep front setbacks and parking in front of buildings. These sites provide opportunity for infill development and redevelopment to occur, over time, emulating the form, scale, and building placement of the more historic fabric found on Main Street.



## HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD

Newcastle's villages have intact historic fabric, including tight, walkable, interconnected streets with single family houses addressing the street. Streets are narrow, often with no curb or sidewalks, functioning in a yield condition. Houses address the street and have more formal landscaping in the front yard setbacks. Building components may include bay windows, dormers, front and side porches, attached barns and carriage houses behind main house. Each village includes high quality civic buildings and public space amenities varying from formal commons/square to trails on conservation land and scenic views with limited access to water.



## HIGHWAY RETAIL

Rt 1 constitutes Newcastle's highway retail corridor - and it is truly a highway condition, with high speeds. Due to site constraints, Newcastle did not experience the suburban sprawling retail growth pattern that neighboring towns experienced. The developed sites can be characterized by auto-oriented design, with varying setbacks of buildings with parking in front, multiple curb cuts, undefined space (wide curb cuts blurring into parking areas), limited landscaping, and few internal connections between properties. Buildings range in quality, character, and materials, and are predominantly single use and single story. The highway retail area is isolated in terms of connectivity or adjacency to neighborhoods.



## LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Only a handful of low density residential subdivisions have been constructed in Newcastle, characterized by deep setbacks of buildings and dead-end cul-de-sac streets. These developments are located off Academy Hill Road, and are not connected by sidewalks to the Village.



## INDUSTRIAL / WAREHOUSE

Newcastle, like many towns, saw a number of industrial type buildings and uses grow up in conjunction with the railroad line passing through town on Academy Hill; however, most were associated with agricultural goods. Some buildings remain today, with machine, industrial and technology-associated business emerging, and this area between Rt 1 and the railroad was identified as a desired place for further industrial, manufacturing and maker growth. With exception to the large Reny's distribution warehouse on Rt 1, Newcastle does not have warehouses or a warehouse district.



## RURAL

Almost 50% of Newcastle's land mass is either in conservation, recreation or Tree Growth, with large tracts of forested land being the most dominant landscape. While the character of the balance of Newcastle might appear as either tight human settlements or rural farmland (hayfields), active farms only represent about 2% of the land mass. The rural character of Newcastle can be defined as very low density with large lots and big lot frontages, with buildings (many historic) located close to the street (within 30 feet) or deeply set back. Older historic houses in view of water are often oriented to the water instead of the street.



## MARINE

While there is a significant amount of shore frontage, a history of fishing, boat building and brick making, and a substantial oyster industry today, marine activity is sparse in Newcastle. These sites are working, waterfront-dependent, and do not include other water-oriented uses. They provide access to the water for commercial and recreational purposes, as well as winter storage of boats. Sites are regulated by State Shoreland Zoning.



## INSTITUTIONAL

Lincoln Academy has a large school campus located atop Academy Hill, comprised of several educational and support buildings, playing fields and residential dormitories predominantly oriented along internal circulation driveways. The campus is within 1.2 mile of downtown Damariscotta, connected by sidewalks. The campus is not connected by sidewalks to the neighborhoods off Academy Hill to the north, or to Sheepscot or Damariscotta Mills, except by car.



# Character Districts

The Town of Newcastle is comprised of several different settlement areas with varying intensity of development, and a natural landscape that includes coastal riverine habitat, freshwater lake and streams, and upland timber forest. The unique and discernible character of Newcastle's natural and built landscapes can be best understood through organization by character districts. Character districts comprise the framework for establishing Character-Based codes.

Organizing a community into character districts based on existing and desired character of place is in stark contrast to the existing protocol of regulating land primarily by use. Setting zoning policy based on character allows the Town to better protect historic development patterns, allow certain agreed-upon areas of town to grow in a manner that is desired, and achieve transformation in places where development might already exist but where residents envision change over time. Zoning by character districts allows for a more fine-grained regulation of all the elements of building and site development that, collectively, create character.

During the public planning process, the community was asked to identify places, buildings, and spaces people love, and describe what the character of different places in Newcastle means to them. Based on direction provided by the community during the process, the team went out into the community to talk with residents in their streets, and observed, photographed, and measured the physical realm of each place to best understand how to zone for each place.

Information from the public combined with physical analysis informed the organization of Newcastle into several character districts and special districts. The Character-Based code, when adopted, will assign the character districts to land as shown on a regulating plan, which will serve as the Town's new official zoning map. The code will include standards for building, site improvements and other related elements keyed to each character district, ensuring new building and development meets the intention of each character district.



### CD1 CONSERVATION

Newcastle is comprised of a diverse natural landscape with large contiguous blocks of undeveloped land, farms and properties in Tree Growth. Only some properties have permanent conservation easements. Land enrolled in farm or tree growth is not permanently protected from development. The CD1 Conservation Character district consists of lands that are under conservation through purchase or by easement only.

- Allow for limited use and development.
- Language of individual deeds and easements may be more restrictive than town ordinances.



### CD2 RURAL 1 + 2

Newcastle residents identified a preference for the rural character to stay deliberately rural. At the same time, some residents want rights to make a living and work the land in both traditional and nontraditional ways, and allow business that is in character with rural landscapes to develop here. The CD2 Rural Character districts consist of rolling pastoral fields and forested lands with approximately 7,300 acres in Tree Growth. Typical buildings include houses, farmhouses, agricultural buildings, and cabins.

- Continue to allow residential development with no changes to the current base zoning of lot sizes for a residential dwelling.
- Allow a range of rural-compatible activities with performance standards to minimize impact on neighbors and rural character.
- Allow business activities with performance standards to minimize impact on neighbors and rural character.
- Allow and encourage use of building groups for rural residential development to minimize impact on rural character.



### CD3-N RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Newcastle’s village contains the historic Glidden neighborhood, with two distinct patterns of development, both within walking distance to Main Street, Academy Hill and the downtown core of Damariscotta. This neighborhood borders the Damariscotta River to the east and has access to lands and trails in conservation. There is strong support for protecting historic architecture and the residential character of these neighborhoods. The CD3-N Residential Neighborhood district is characterized by low-to medium-density residential areas, adjacent to a higher density residential neighborhood. This district has narrow, interconnected streets and long, irregular blocks, with a mix of small and large homes of historic architectural significance on large lots. Many of the lots have generous side yards and/or rear yards, and accessory barns and carriage houses connected to the principal house and sometimes detached. In this district, accessory dwelling units should be allowed. Plantings include street trees or naturalistic vegetation.

- Preserve historic fabric of the neighborhood.
- Use “Character-Based” requirements for residential development rather than the current lot size requirements.
- Expand the ability to create an “accessory apartment” in single-family homes or accessory structures.
- Expand the ability to have certain types of businesses in single-family homes or accessory structures, subject to performance standards.



### CD3-V VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL

The Village Residential district is similar to the Neighborhood Residential district in that it has intact historic fabric and exemplary architecture, and is primarily single family residential in use and character. In each of the villages there is ongoing support for protecting historic architecture and the residential character of the neighborhoods. At the same time, Newcastle Village has some opportunity for sensitive infill of new residential housing types. The CD3-V Village Residential district has narrow, interconnected streets with a mix of small and large residential houses with barns and carriage houses connected to the principal house and sometimes detached. Lots in this district are generally smaller, with shallower lot depths, narrower lot widths, and shallower setbacks, giving this district a more dense character than the adjacent neighborhood district.

- Preserve historic fabric of the neighborhood.
- Provide an opportunity for new housing types and allow infill that is in character with the existing neighborhood.
- Use “Character-Based” requirements for residential development rather than the current lot size requirements.
- Expand the ability to create an “accessory apartment” in single-family homes or accessory structures.
- Expand the ability to have certain types of businesses in single-family homes or accessory structures, subject to performance standards.





## CD4 VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD

The CD4 Village Neighborhood district extends Main Street and includes buildings of varying types, setbacks and uses, and lots of varying dimensions. This area of Newcastle is identified as a place for intentional growth and development, to enable new business and strengthen local economy, provide a variety of housing types and support Main Street and adjacent residential neighborhoods. A Character-Based approach will be integral to helping this district revitalize and thrive, and do so in a manner that is compatible with Newcastle’s historic character.

The CD4 Village Neighborhood district consists of a wide variety of building types within which a variety of uses and activities can occur. Building types include a range of housing types, addressing the need for missing-middle housing, including apartment buildings, stacked flats, single family homes, duplexes, live/works, and row houses. Setbacks and landscaping are variable. Streets may or may not have curbs and sidewalks, with medium-sized blocks.

- Use “Character-Based” requirements for mixed-use development rather than the current lot size requirements.
- Allow infill development and redevelopment in established neighborhoods compatible with existing historic fabric.
- Upgrade the gateways to the downtown area.
- Promote neighborhood-scale mixed-use development around significant intersections.
- Require “better quality design” for new development.
- Simplify the rules making it easier to develop or redevelop buildings in a way that respects the character of the neighborhood.
- Allow a variety of building types to enable mixed-use development and housing adjacent to downtown Main Street while maintaining compatibility with residential character of these areas.



## CD5 VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICT

Newcastle’s Village contains a handful of remaining historic commercial and civic buildings, many having been removed in the early and mid 20th century to facilitate a car-mobility focused highway to Damariscotta. The street condition, in addition to overly restrictive zoning, are two of the most impacting conditions inhibiting the emergence of a vibrant Main Street west of the bridge. This area is viewed by many as the heart of the community and the place where residents feel new growth should occur. Residents support transforming the street and adjacent properties into a highly walkable, downtown environment.

The CD5 Village Center district consists of higher density mixed use buildings that accommodates retail, offices, row houses, and apartments. It has a tight network of streets designed to accommodate all modes of travel, with wide sidewalks to encourage active ground-floor uses such as restaurants and cafes, steady street tree planting, on-street parking and buildings set close to the sidewalks. This district is the most dense of all character districts, with high permitted lot coverages, greatest number of stories and highest percentage of build out of lots. Buildings may or may not have off-street parking located behind buildings.

- Use “Character-Based” requirements for mixed-use development rather than the current lot size requirements.
- Continue to promote development/redevelopment/reuse in in-town areas that reinforces the traditional development pattern and increases pedestrian activity.
- Continue to focus larger-scale retail development in the Downtown.
- Promote intensive, mixed-use development around significant intersections.
- Expand the ability to create upper story residential uses in the downtown.
- Require “better quality design” for new development.

# Rural Place Types

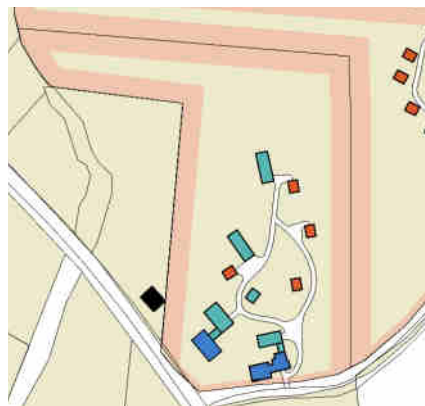
Newcastle still maintains many large, undeveloped parcels of land. Except for agriculture and tree harvesting, there is only one option for how to use rural land - to break off parcels for residential development. Today, a number of physical, market, and regulatory constraints create barriers to rural activity and new development. Existing barriers include, but are not limited to:

- Curb cut limitations (Maine DOT)
- Environmental Regulations (Maine DEP)
- Limitation of 1 building per lot (Newcastle zoning code)
- Shared septic systems not allowed (Newcastle zoning code)
- Existing zoning standards require long streets to access multiple lots (Newcastle Zoning Code)
- One size fits all road construction standards (Newcastle zoning code)
- Land values that do not support the cost of building infrastructure (market)
- High construction costs (market)

The community has indicated an interest in development options and compatible activities that are more apt to result in long term preservation of rural character. People should have a range of options and tools for development, including conventional subdivision or division of land, development of multiple units as part of building groups, and new hamlets or rural place types.



**Conventional Subdivision**



**Building Group**



**Rural Place Type**

# Conventional Subdivision

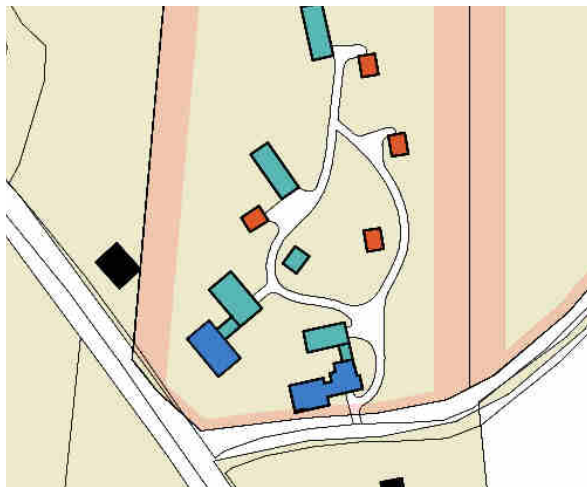


**While Newcastle still maintains many large parcels of land, often rural properties have environmental constraints impacting development, such as land subject to Resource Protection, wetlands, and steep slopes over 20%.**

In rural zones, property can and will continue to be allowed to subdivide or divide to create new lots that meet the minimum standards set forth in each corresponding character district. While some people are concerned about the long-term implications of a suburban build-out under a 1-acre and 2-acre residential development pattern, community consensus does not exist at this time to increase the minimum required lot sizes for the rural districts. The number of large parcels of land in conservation, recreation, agriculture or tree growth will help to offset development.



# Building Groups



**To respond to Newcastle’s desire to unlock permitted land uses across character districts, the NLPC and consultant team analyzed rural building group precedents. Providing a tiered-approach to building groups with corresponding standards will allow Newcastle to expand business activity, respect existing development rights granted under current 1-acre and 2-acre zoning, and preserve desired rural character.**

Creation of building groups is a new rural strategy to allow rural areas to grow and develop incrementally over time. Having form and character-driven development tools may result in a number of benefits including:

- reduced financial burden from infrastructure costs by providing options to share road, driveway, septic and well;
- flexibility to develop portions of a property most suitable for development, avoiding areas that may be constrained by environmental resources;
- alternative to conventional suburban development patterns (mandatory 1 and 2 acre lots).

A tiered approach to building groups can provide an easy way to build commercial-only development separate and independent of residential uses on site, and provide incentives to promote a long-term development pattern that keeps rural Newcastle rural. Landowners still follow standard subdivision protocols when State subdivision law is triggered. However, a single lot may have multiple buildings on it.

## BUILDING GROUP STANDARDS

The following tiered set of building groups are contemplated by this plan, accomplishing optional density and use bonuses in an area without altering the underlying zoning; and 2) the creation of development that maintains a rural character while creating real estate value, economic activity, and housing opportunities.

- Connected Farm
- Small Rural Compound
- Large Rural Compound

Each building group should have customized allowed land use activities as of right and by special permit, and permitted building types. Some uses may be subject to performance standards to address potential nuisance from non-residential uses.

Building group standards should include building orientation and placement on the lot, site standards to address driveways, parking and screening, and total number of units of residential and/or businesses permitted. This approach to zoning is incentive-based and an optional tool available to landowners.

As traditional farmsteads developed in Maine, residents can add buildings and roads incrementally over time allowing a building group to evolve.

## RURAL PRECEDENT



## BUILDING GROUP EVOLUTION: LARGE RURAL COMPOUND



A building group might start off with a single-family home. The owner may decide to start a cabinetmaking shop on their property.

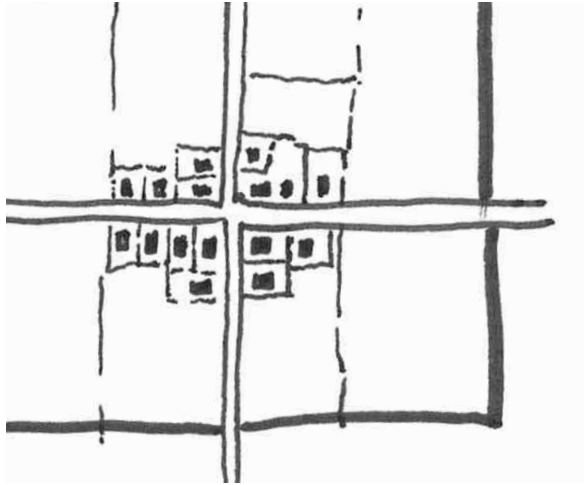


The landowner extends the driveway to the cabinetmaking shop, located toward the center of the property, to minimize conflicts with neighbors.



Later, the landowner decides he/ she wants to generate some rental income and builds a cottage, in addition to some agricultural buildings.

# Rural Hamlet Standards



**Hamlets are a rural place type that allows the creation of fine grain urban form consistent with development found historically at crossroads in rural Maine. Sheepscot Village and Damariscotta Mills are examples of historic rural hamlets.**

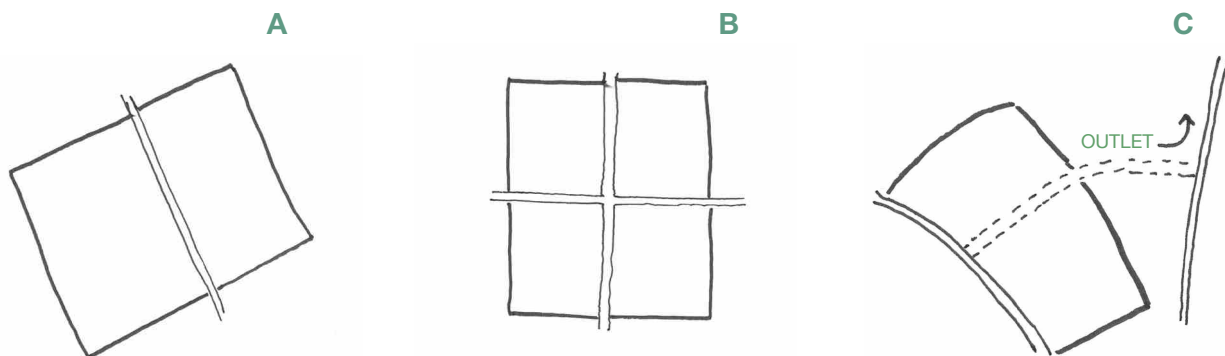
Hamlets may be formed from a group of lots owned by a single owner or multiple owners and may range in size from 100-200 acres. Hamlets are allowed in certain locations, including:

- On more than one side of an existing thoroughfare (A);
- Across and on all sides of an intersection (B); or
- On one side of an existing thoroughfare but bisected by a new thoroughfare with an outlet (C).

Hamlets are created by submitting a Subdivision Plan application to the Town, to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Board.

## CONCEPTUAL HAMLET STANDARDS

Within a hamlet, building lots must be no greater than 1/2 acre in area, be no wider than 100 feet, and front directly on the central thoroughfare around which they are organized. Building lots may make up no more than 30% of the total area of the hamlet. Building lots should be concentrated at the center of a hamlet whenever possible and create a dense cluster of buildings along the central thoroughfare or intersection. When blocks are created, their total perimeter must be no greater than 1/4 mile. Hamlets may not be located closer than 1 mile to any non-rural character districts or other hamlets. Rural compounds may not be constructed within a hamlet.











# IMPLEMENTATION





# Strategy for Implementation



**The implementation of a Comprehensive Plan takes an all-hands-on-deck coordinated effort of staff, committees, elected officials and even community service groups working together to move the visions and goals of the plan into action.**

## **LOCAL LEADERSHIP: Assign an Implementation Committee and Understand Roles and Responsibilities**

After the new plan is adopted, one of the first official tasks for the Board of Selectmen is to appoint a team of dedicated leaders, often called an “Implementation Committee” to champion the plan, coordinate and oversee implementation efforts. The Board of Selectmen may consider appointing a committee comprised of representatives from other town committees and organizations to optimize local coordination and communication of efforts.

It is important that the Implementation Committee understands the robust public process that led to the creation of the

Comprehensive Plan, and that their true responsibility is to move the visions and goals forward, not re-evaluate plan contents and divert from the plan’s vision. Championing the plan is the Committee’s first role, carrying out the plan is the Committee’s first responsibility.

## **SETTING TARGETS: Use the Plan Implementation Matrix**

The plan implementation matrix provides an organizational framework for the implementation of each project, policy or initiative identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The matrix can be used by Implementation Committee, staff and all stakeholders who have a hand in moving the plan to implementation. Each project, policy, or initiative identified in

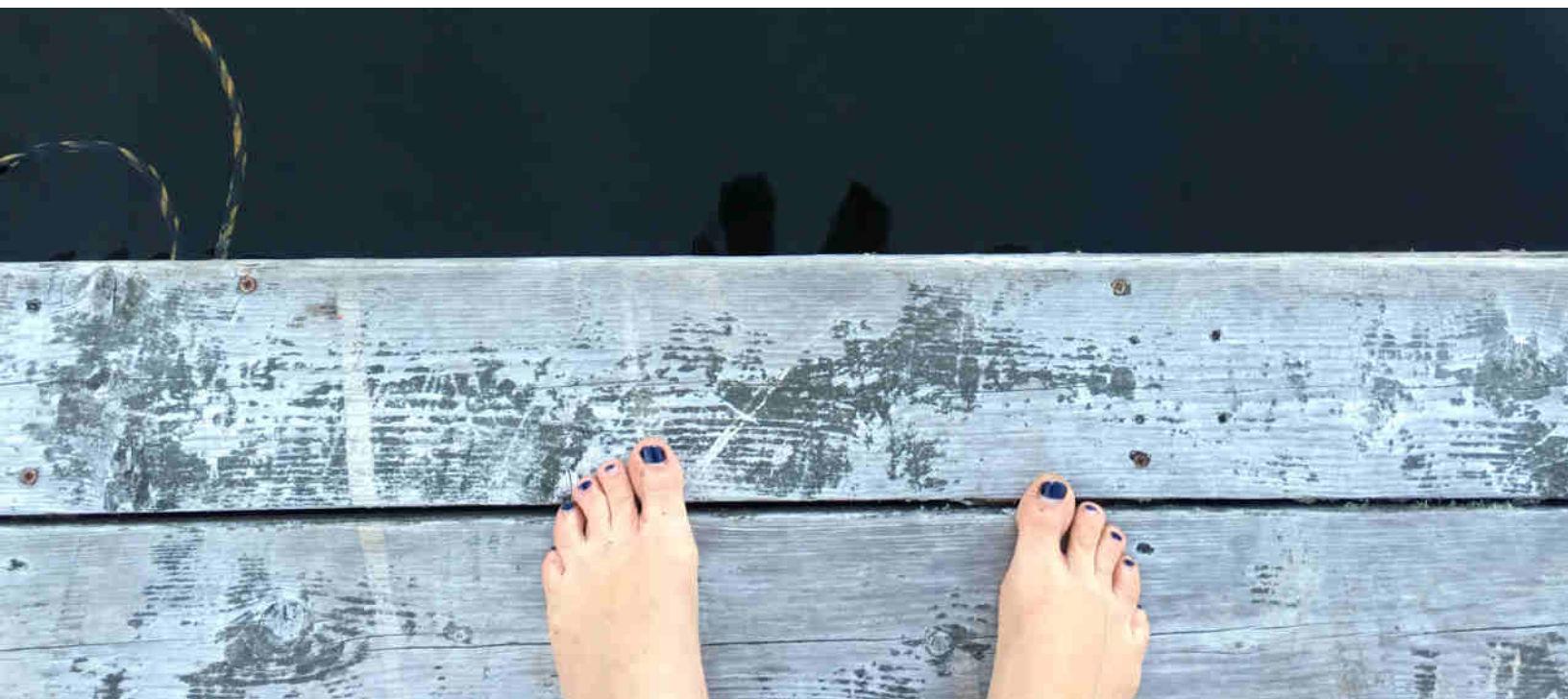
the document is listed in the matrix, including reference to location in plan, responsible party for implementation, potential budget estimate and/or funding options, level of priority, anticipated timeframe for completion, and reference to whether the item can be addressed by Character-Based coding. As a note, Comprehensive Plans in the State of Maine are recognized as being up to date for a period of 12 years. Municipalities have up to 2 years to update zoning ordinances to comply with the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Implement Plan & Policy Recommendations**

The Board of Selectmen will need to take a role in bringing forward for adoption at Town Meeting this Comprehensive Plan and any subsequent land use policy-related recommendations in the plan. Furthermore, the Board will need to coordinate with stakeholders implementing the plan to ensure that additional plans and studies for specific recommendations are considered and appropriately funded in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process. Outcomes of subsequent plans and studies may, too, need Town Meeting action or endorsement or adoption by the Board of Selectmen. Plans or policies affected by recommendations in the comprehensive plan are included in the plan implementation matrix. New initiatives led by the Town or community stakeholders will address a wide range of topics important to promoting economic development, community preservation, and improving residents' overall quality of life.

### **Annually, Use the CIP Process**

The Board of Selectmen's next important role in comprehensive plan implementation is to undertake good budgetary housekeeping on an annual basis, making sure each year the Town keeps a balanced budget and does not borrow significant sums of money to cover general operating expenses. The Town should undertake an annual CIP process to strategize funding for projects, additional plans and studies or other initiatives that are identified as high-value and high priority in the plan. The Town's CIP guides future funding, schedule, and construction of capital improvements so that necessary infrastructure is in place consistent with demand. It distributes expensive projects over time, helping decision-makers coordinate improvements for greater efficiency and assess short-term financing requirements in the context of long-term fiscal needs and constraints. A well-coordinated and regularly updated CIP document protects the community from abrupt tax increases. The CIP should also include any building and infrastructure deficiencies and/or anticipated future year needs, excluding items that are considered part of general operations under the town's budget. For example, funding the renovation of a town building might appear in the CIP, but the cost of operating that building (lighting, heating, cooling, snow removal) should not be included in the CIP. Implementation of key recommended infrastructure projects in the growth sectors depicted on the Natural and Build Landscape Map may directly contribute to the rate and level of investment by private



development. Finally, some of the projects listed in the plan implementation matrix will require coordination with responsible county and state agencies and/or utility service providers, in particular those that affect streets and roads under DOT jurisdiction.

**COMMUNITY REPORT CARD:  
Evaluate the Plan OFTEN and adjust to  
respond to changing conditions**

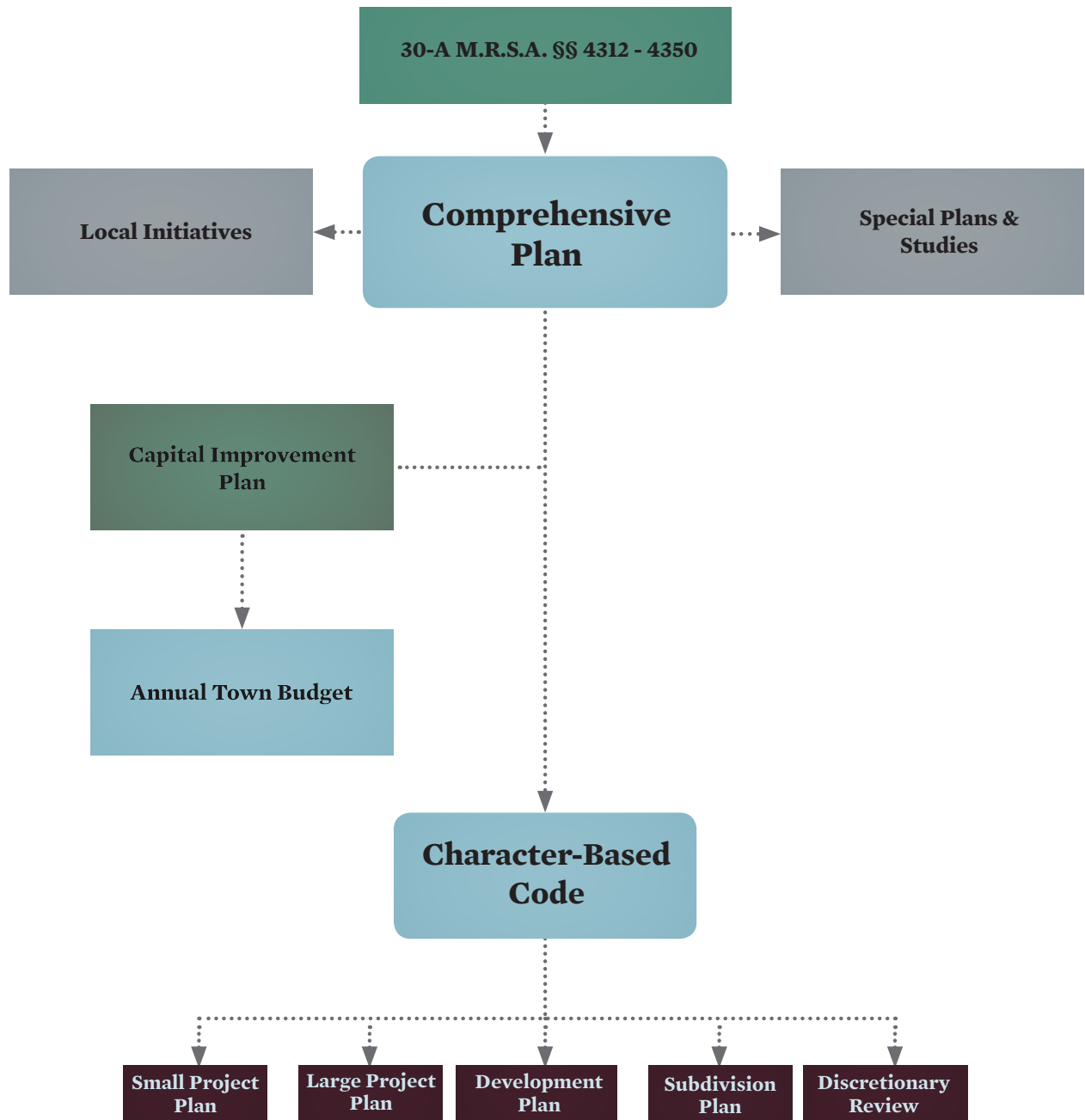
On an annual basis, the Implementation Committee should meet with the Board of Selectmen to check in and evaluate implementation progress. The parties should openly discuss any issues or impediments to plan implementation, monitor performance, measure achievement and reflect up on changes that have occurred as result of the plan or impacts of external market conditions or new trends affecting the community. This should serve as a time to identify any resources, whether human capital or financial capital, needed to implement the plan and – if determined as result of evaluation, shift upcoming priorities or adjust timelines to respond to changing conditions.



# Regulatory Flow Chart

The regulatory flowchart illustrates the relationship between the Comprehensive Plan and planning activities and procedures in Maine, as defined by Maine Statute. The Comprehensive Plan is the keystone document that informs and sets

goals for special plans and studies, local initiatives, Capital Improvement Plan, Annual town budgets and regulatory tools.



# Fiscal Framework



**Collectively, the ideas expressed by the community represent the future that Newcastle residents would like to see and experience, which speaks to the importance of this comprehensive plan not dismissing and disregarding ideas just because the current financial situation of the town does not allow for anything but the fundamentals.**

## **Financial Horizons**

Because Newcastle derives a majority of its annual revenue from private residential property taxes, growing the local economy is a central theme to this Comprehensive Plan. Some residents are concerned that the increasing costs for basic community services is out of alignment with new annual revenues. The Town's overall budget over the last five years has risen between 3-5% every year and across all categories by 3% +/- on average. Staff expect that municipal costs will show moderate growth commensurate with the rate of inflation.

## **Municipal Debt**

State law places a limit on most forms of municipal debt at 7.5% of the Town's state valuation. Newcastle's state valuation last year is \$284,550,000 which places a limit on debt of \$21,341,250. The Maine Bond Bank suggests a limit on debt of 5% which is \$14,227,500. Newcastle is currently only carrying \$808,943 in debt, comfortably under the allowed limits.

## **Local Funding Strategy**

Outside of annual appropriations through the budget, capital items are funded through the recent establishment of capital reserve funds. The Town's small unassigned fund balance challenges the growth of capital reserve balances. Therefore, the use of grants-

in-aid such as those used by the Taniscot Fire Company/Newcastle Fire Department are necessary to fully fund the purchase of equipment and trucks. Additionally, funds for capital investments may be acquired from alternative sources such as grants-in-aid, crowdfunding, philanthropy, and private nonprofit to leverage traditional grants where there is demonstrated value and potential for broad impact to residents quality of life. Within three years of the comprehensive plan's adoption, all long-term debt owned by the Town will be retired. By virtue of the Town's ability to tax, it always has sufficient capacity to borrow. However, the cost of that borrowing must be weighed by its residents as to whether it is in the best interest of the community at that time.

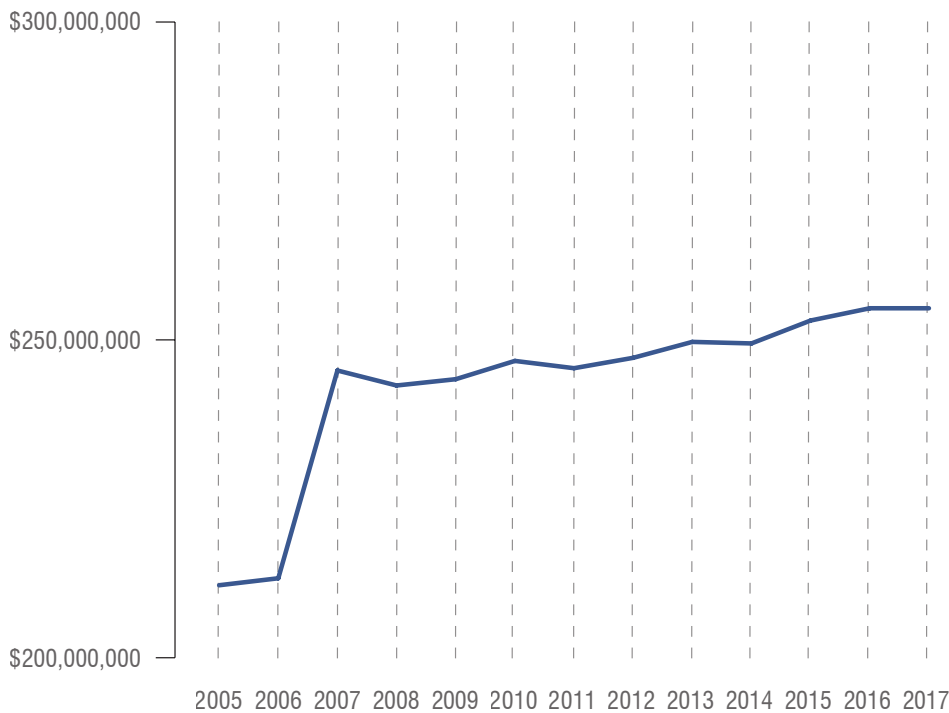
### Lightning Grants

Seed fund a Lightning Grant program for small, community-initiated quality of place enhancements. Examples might include trail improvements, wayfinding, public art making and installations, street amenities, park improvements and tactical intervention efforts such as temporary striping and paint on Main Street. Lightning grants can be used to match or enhance money from other private sources, or be used as first investment into a crowd-funding effort.

### Engage in Capital Improvement Planning

Each year the Board of Selectmen, with input from the Planning Board, should engage in a Capital Improvement Planning process to consider the current and future needs of the community, and financially plan for those needs accordingly.

## Newcastle Valuation



SOURCE: TOWN OF NEWCASTLE ASSESSOR

**In 2017, 87% of Town revenue was generated from property tax**

**MILL RATE = \$18.05 per \$1,000 of taxable value**





## Do It Yourself!

Across the country there is a growing DIY movement that is a direct response to the increasing reality that local governments have stressed financial budgets and limited capacity of staff to get things done. Community fundamentals - roads, storm water, utilities, schools, police, fire and ems - need first priority. Increasingly, annual revenues are not sufficient over the long term to pay for local expenses and anticipated future infrastructure needs. Embracing the DIY Community spirit means shifting how we think about problems and how we approach solutions, tapping our collective abilities to get things done.

## To be A DIY Community, embrace five key strategies:

### 1. CROWD SOURCE

Once you know what you would like to accomplish, use message boards such as Facebook online yard sale pages, craigslist, community email lists, school PTO groups, and local newsletters or message boards in popular community locations to source

materials and make appeals for volunteer human power to get your project done. Setting up a project page on Facebook will allow you to communicate project needs and to celebrate efforts, building further support for your project.

### 2. CROWD FUND

Online platforms such as IOBY (In Our Back Yard), Kickstarter, GoFundMe are popular tools for crowd funding being used successfully by individuals and formal and informal groups of people to accomplish projects of all sizes and complexity. Anyone can start an online crowdfunding campaign and some communities have reported that, by allowing people of all ages and economic demographics to contribute in increments they can afford, projects have generated bigger community support and sense of ownership. The 8 year old can donate his or her allowance and feel a sense of pride for helping to make a community project happen.

### 3. SHARING ECONOMY

Consider every nook and cranny of your town – private and public property - and consider whether an object, a space, a place, a private or public business or organization can serve more than one purpose. The rise of the sharing economy has seen entrepreneurial businesses emerge allowing humans to access goods and services and earn income by providing those goods and services to other humans in an accessible way. This economy has seen rise in sharing of houses, cars, bikes, books, tools, music, movies, software. Citibike, Zipcar, AirBnB, Uber, Lyft, office co-sharing are all contemporary examples of humans doing three things: 1) responding to a need or demand in the marketplace; 2) choosing quality of experience; and 3) choosing quality of goods. Imagine ten years from now, during the lifespan of this Comprehensive Plan – what other innovative entrepreneurial businesses will have emerged?

### 4. CREATIVE REUSE

Take excess parking spaces, a stack of pallets, shipping container and plants culled from an overgrown garden. Put these elements together and transform a vacant parking lot on Main Street into a three-season shipping container restaurant, complete with pallet seating for street-side dining and landscaped planters. Many of Newcastle's residents are craftsmen and makers with skills to transform leftover building and construction materials to serve new purposes. Synonymous

(Far left) A pop-up beer garden was created in Lewiston as part of Build Maine 2016, using recycled wood pallets. (Below) Spotted in the Mills, a Nobleboro resident fashioned flower planters from logs, communicating to road users that this is a walkable, neighborhood street worthy of love, beauty - and slow travel speeds.



with UpCycling, creative reuse transforms leftover goods or by-products into new objects with new value. Simple materials can be turned into public art, adventure playgrounds, street amenities, DIY signage and wayfinding, bike racks, mini-libraries, seating, etc.

## 5. TACTICAL URBANISM

Newcastle native, Mike Lydon is one of the founders of Tactical Urbanism, and travels the world over teaching towns and cities how to do Tactical Urbanism. Similar to creative reuse, Tactical Urbanism (TU) can be described as humans taking short term action, using simple materials, to affect long term change. As experienced in Newcastle during the planning process, you don't need to be urban to do interventions, and you don't need to spend thousands of dollars on engineering studies to explore how changes to a street or intersection will affect the community. Tactical Urbanism

is about testing and demonstrating, often using simple materials such as temporary paint, traffic cones, and other materials to show how a space or place can be transformed. Examples of how TU has affected change in other small communities include: testing protected bicycle lanes, creating temporary pocket parks and pop-up markets, signage and wayfinding, temporary crosswalks, and public art installations (street art, yarn bombing, hydrant painting and decorating utility poles). A plethora of information and examples of TU projects can be found online.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT
<b>BUSINESS EVERYWHERE</b>			
Amend zoning to allow for flexible uses and activities in existing and new buildings.	November	BOS	CPIC
Partner with Lincoln Academy and CLC Adult Education to offer training programs with teens, young adults and adults.	Ongoing	CPIC	CLC AE/LA
Using creative zoning tools/approaches to zoning, unlock the potential to do business where you live.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Allow commercial building types such as fabrication buildings, shop houses and inns in the rural areas.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Create marketing and branding to highlight local artisans, makers and the skilled workforce.	Short	CPIC	TVA
Create a local mentorship program, matching students and adults with experienced professionals and tradespeople to build life skills and on-job training opportunities.	Short	CPIC	CLC AE/LA
Collaborate with local entities to launch an annual start up fair.	Mid	CPIC	TVA
Allow dormitory-style, seasonal housing on farms to accommodate seasonal and migratory workers.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Work with Maine Farmland Trust to preserve working landscapes, to transition farms to the next generation, and to make entrance into farming more affordable for new farmers.	Ongoing	CPIC	DRA/MC/MOFGA
Work with MOFGA to raise awareness for Journeyman's program to train future farmers.	Ongoing	CPIC	MOFGA
Reform zoning rules to allow broader uses on the farm, such as on-farm restaurants, hospitality, education, recreation, retail sales and regularly scheduled events.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Work with industry farmers, harvesters, and dealers to identify issues and needs, and identify potential alternative access points that accommodate diverse users along the river.	Mid	CPIC	DRA/DMC/TVA
Work with Darling Marine Center and Gulf of Maine Research Institute as they plan to develop aquaculture co-ops.	Short	CPIC	DMC/TVA

#### Acronyms

**AA** Assessor's Agent

**BOS** Board of Selectmen

**CLC AE** Central Lincoln County Adult Education

**CPIC** Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee

**DMC** Darling Marine Center

**DRA** Damariscotta River Alliance

**LA** Lincoln Academy

**MC** Midcoast Conservancy

**MOFGA** Maine Organic Farm Growers Association

**NHS** Newcastle Historical Society

**STEM** Sidewalks, Trails, Enhanced Mobility Committee

**SUPT** Superintendent of Buildings, Roads and Grounds

**TA** Town Administrator

**TVA** Twin Villages Alliance

#### Timeframes

**Short** - Up to 2 Years

**Mid** - 2 to 5 Years

**Long** - 5 Plus Years



ACTION	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT
<b>CLAIM MAIN STREET</b>			
Amend zoning to regulate shop fronts and mixed-use buildings as-of-right on Main Street.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Create a generous sidewalk streetscape to encourage restaurants and cafes to locate here.	Mid	BOS	CPIC/STEM
Collaborate with the DOT to re-design key intersections to transition from highway to Main Street conditions at River Road.	Mid	BOS	STEM
Collaborate with DOT to re-establish civic space at Newcastle Square and along Main Street.	Mid	BOS	CPIC
Engage landowners to develop a riverwalk trail.	Long	STEM	CPIC
Embed Tactical Urbanism into public works best practices.	Short	SUPT	CPIC
Make space available for local groups and service clubs to adopt a garden. Partner with businesses such as Lincoln Home to create public-private garden spaces for social gathering.	Ongoing	CPIC	
To ensure compatibility with adjacent historic residential neighborhoods, adopt architectural standards and site standards to control form, character, scale and use.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Encourage community groups to use Tactical Urbanism to enhance public and private spaces.	Ongoing	CPIC	TVA
Adopt a complete streets policy.	Short	SUPT	CPIC
Fix and improve priority sidewalks first.	Ongoing	SUPT	STEM
Prioritize streets as candidates for restriping and speed control using temporary and permanent paint.	Short	STEM	SUPT

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ACTION	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT
<b>LIFELONG LIVING COMMUNITY</b>			
Partner with Lincoln Academy and local businesses to fund marketing efforts.	Short	CPIC	TVA/LA
Amend zoning to allow dense apartments and cottage court developments to be built in the Village, including River Rd, Mills Rd, and Academy Hill Rd.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Work with DRA to expand programming, considering sponsorship opportunities for school groups, elders, and families with financial need.	Mid	CPIC	DRA/MC
Create and fund a sidewalk improvement plan, funding priority sidewalks first.	Mid	STEM	SUPT/BOS
Amend zoning to permit a variety of residential building types, including small accessory buildings on lots with existing primary dwellings and apartments in mixed use buildings.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Each year, continue to appropriate funds for essential amenities that provide improvements to quality of life and social experience, such as the Skidompha Library in Damariscotta and the Ecumenical Food Pantry.	Ongoing	BOS	TA
Amend zoning to give flexibility to the activities being conducted inside buildings.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Adopt a local municipal policy to address, support and clarify rules regarding AirBnB, allowing residents to generate some additional income from residential properties.	Mid	BOS	TA
Amend zoning in designated growth sectors to allow for a variety of residential building types, including dormitory-style housing with shared indoor and outdoor common spaces.	Short	BOS	CPIC

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ACTION	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT
<b>CELEBRATE LOCAL HERITAGE</b>			
Consider nominating Damariscotta Mills to the National Register, and use crowdfunding to raise capital to support the effort.	Mid	CPIC	NHS/DRA
Pursue grant funding to undertake a comprehensive inventory of historic structures.	Mid	CPIC	NHS/BOS
Create a clear and concise Demolition Permit process for historic structures.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Amend zoning ordinance to include building form, scale, massing and components regulations.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Amend zoning ordinance to include an historical easements module, including standards and processes.	Mid	BOS	CPIC
Require that subdivision and large project review applicants determine the potential for archaeological resources by contacting Maine Historic Preservation Commission and the Newcastle Historical Society.	Short	BOS	CPIC

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**Short** - Up to 2 Years  
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ACTION	TIMEFRAME	LEAD	SUPPORT
<b>MAKE RURAL WORK</b>			
Partner with local and regional farmers, brewers and food producers to crowdfund and develop local marketing materials in print and digital media.	Short	CPIC	TVA
Undertake public education efforts about Tree Growth, and amend zoning to allow business in the rural areas, subject to performance standards.	Short	CPIC	DRA/MC/AA
Convene willing landowners to explore building a trail network and reach out to entities like Maine Huts and Trails, DRA, Midcoast Conservancy and NEMBA for guidance.	Mid	STEM	DRA/MC/NEMBA
Amend zoning to allow hospitality-type buildings, subject to performance standards.	Short	BOS	CPIC
Establish an Eco-Adventures Steering Committee to explore public and private partnerships and opportunities to create a network of high-quality mountain biking trails.	Short	BOS	
Establish an Eco-Adventures Steering Committee to explore public and private partnerships and opportunities to improve access to the rivers.	Short	BOS	

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