

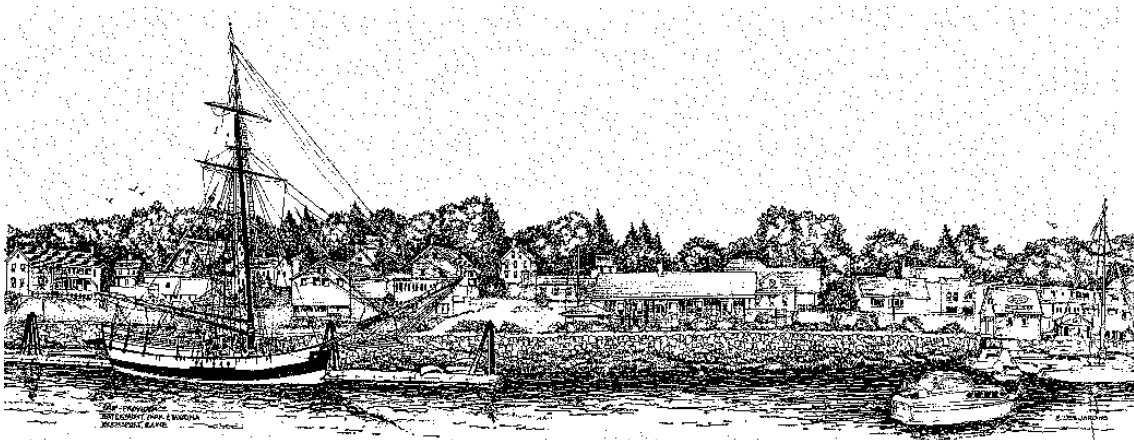


# Town of Bucksport Comprehensive Plan

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## 2017

Draft for Public Hearing and Town Council Review  
**Prepared by the Bucksport Comprehensive Plan Committee**  
With Technical assistance from the Hancock County Planning Commission  
April 10, 2017



Ship "Providence", Bucksport Waterfront Park and Marina by E. Des Jardins.

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## PREFACE

The Town of Bucksport last completed a Comprehensive Plan in 2003. The process for updating and replacing that plan began in 2012 with the search for a consultant to lead the planning efforts. Since then, the town has been through tumultuous times with frequent changes in leadership and the painful loss of the paper mill.

The writing process for this Plan has involved several starts and stops, but got solidly on track in the spring of 2015. The style of this document may appear more eclectic than past efforts as input from many sources has been solicited and compiled. The town website at [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov) has been used as a repository for drafts, maps and other supporting data. Keeping some detailed back up information separate has allowed the Plan to remain shorter and more readable.

### MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

A common feature in many of the coming chapters calls attention to changes brought on by the discontinuance of paper production at the former Verso mill site. The timing of this Plan allows the town to reflect on the many related impacts and to develop a strategy for adapting to the altered present reality as well as the prospective future.



### HIGHLIGHTS

The “highlights” in this document point out significant accomplishments since the last Plan and identify issues for consideration. Bucksport leadership has customarily employed Comprehensive Plans well in order to:

- ★ Guide noteworthy changes to the town’s landscape and infrastructure.
- ★ Solicit grant funds for major projects and local programs.
- ★ Draft policies and ordinances to deal with issues identified in the Plans.

### OVERVIEW/OUTREACH

The comprehensive planning process is thoroughly outlined by the State of Maine. A finding of consistency for a local Plan by the State is important in order for a Plan to fulfill its own goals and objectives. Perhaps more vital is that this Plan suits the needs and expressed desires of the people of Bucksport. That is why the Committee has made great efforts to reach out to the community through meetings and surveys to find out what people have to say. Six public opinion polls were drafted, distributed and tabulated. The results are posted on the web and some are incorporated into this Plan. A further discussion of collaboration may be found in the Goals & Objectives Section.

*Text boxes like this one throughout the Plan contain key questions and criteria that the State requires to be addressed in this process.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks go to those who contributed to the drafting of this Plan since the process was initiated in 2013. The following list identifies members of the Committee as of August, 2016. Some on the list attended every meeting. Others served for a shorter time. Attendance was recorded with each set of meeting minutes. “Former” members and representatives formally resigned from the committee for a variety of reasons.

Name	Status
Mary Jane Bush	Current Member
Kathy Downes	Current Member
Mark Eastman	Current Member
Steve Feite	Current Member
Jef Fitzgerald, Chair	Current Member
David Grant	Current Member
Chris Johnson, Secretary	Current Member
Hans Krichels	Current Member
Brian MacDonald	Current Member
George McLeod	Current Member
Diane O’Connell	Current Member
Michael Ormsby	Current Member
Sandra Robshaw	Current Member
Valorie Schaffner, Secretary	Current Member
Larry Wahl	Current Member
Robert Carmichael	Town Council Rep.
Tom Martin	Consultant
Susan Lessard	Town Staff
Jeff Hammond	Town Staff
Rich Rotella	Town Staff
James Bradney	Former Agency Staff
Jeremy Daigle	Former Member
Glenn Findlay	Former Council Rep.
Paula Kee	Former Member
P. “Butch” Osborne	Former Member
Paul Rabs	Former Council Rep.
Belle Ryder, Chair	Former Member
Daniel See	Former Member
Byron Vinton	Former Council Rep.

# DEDICATION

*1930 - Seaboard Federal Paper Company... Time, Inc... St. Regis Paper Co....  
Champion International Corp... International Paper... Verso Paper - 2014.*

THIS PLAN IS DEDICATED TO ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO LABORED AT THE FORMER PAPER MILL WITH A SPECIAL APPRECIATION TO THOSE WHO REMAIN TO HELP BUILD A NEW FUTURE FOR THE INHABITANTS OF BUCKSPORT.



# 1. POPULATION and DEMOGRAPHICS

## INTRODUCTION

An understanding of population trends is essential to planning for Bucksport's future. Most of the chapters and the recommendations of this plan are dependent upon or strongly influenced by the size and composition of Bucksport's current and projected population. The format of this chapter (and all others) follows the State Comprehensive Plan Criteria Rule as amended in August 2011.

## OVERVIEW

Since World War II, Bucksport's population has grown steadily from about 3,000 souls to almost 5,000 today according to US Census figures for year-round population. The most recent decades, however, have shown a slowdown in growth rate from double-digit percentage increases in the 1970's and 1980's to less than 1% over the last ten years. Furthermore, the Maine State Office of Policy and Management projects that Bucksport's population numbers are likely to decline over the next ten years. This trend could be overcome if there were more incentives for people to move to the area and birthrates begin to climb. There is much more to the story...

## HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Bucksport gains relatively few additional residents for the summer season.
- ★ Bucksport could lose as much as a quarter of its total population by 2030.
- ★ Bucksport's average age is rising, but it is still lower than Hancock County's.
- ★ Bucksport's median income is lower than most neighboring towns, but...
- ★ Bucksport's median income is higher than Hancock County's or Maine's.

## MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

The permanent shut down of the Verso Paper Mill in 2014 was a watershed moment in the town's history. Many lives were disrupted and some families found the need to relocate for employment elsewhere. The statistics and projections in this chapter pre-date, and do not anticipate this major tremor.

The aftermath of the mill's closure will become evident in the coming years. Some predict that Bucksport without a mill will be more attractive for new commercial and residential growth, while others predict that the town may never fully recover from the loss of this major employer. In any event, it is important that we focus on what attracts people and businesses to town and what influences them to stay, and take appropriate steps to protect those benefits.



## ANALYSES

### Population

Historic population trends and future projections are shown in Table 1.1. The 2003 plan projected a year-round population of 5,153 for 2010. The reported US Census population for 2010 was 4,924, which is about 96 percent of the projected population. The town gained sixteen people (a growth rate of about 0.3 percent) between 2000 and 2010. This is a slower increase than the 1.7 percent rate between 1990 and 2000 and the 11 percent rate between 1980 and 1990. The state population projections for Bucksport show a 9.1 percent decrease between 2010 and 2020 and a decrease of about 24 percent between 2020 and 2030. Projections for Hancock County show a decrease of 4.8 percent between 2010 and 2020 and 5.9 percent between 2020 and 2030. The majority of Hancock County towns are projected to lose population. The projections are derived in part from the recent historical growth of the town's share of the county's population. Population projections are subject to error so they should be reviewed periodically.

*Is the rate of population change expected to continue as in the past, or to slow down or speed up? What are the implications of this change?*

The median age is increasing. The median age in Bucksport was 32.1 years in 1990 compared to 38.3 in 2000, and 38.9 in 2010. The median age for the county increased from 35.8 in 1990 to 40.7 in 2000 and 45.2 in 2010. Bucksport has a lower median age than the county.

<b>Table 1.1 Bucksport Historical Year-Round Population Change 1940-2010 and Projections through 2030.</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Ten-year change (%)</b>
1940	2,927	-
1950	3,120	6.6%
1960	3,466	11.0%
1970	3,756	8.3%
1980	4,345	15.7%
1990	4,825	11.0%
2000	4,908	1.7%
2010	4,924	0.3%
2020 (projected)	4,469	-9.1%
2030 (projected)	3,398	-23.9%
<b>SOURCE:</b> U.S. Census 2000, 2003 Comprehensive Plan, and State Office of Policy and Management for projections		

The change by age groups between 2000 and 2010 is shown in Table 1.2. There was a 22 percent decrease in the age 5-17 group and a 14 percent decrease in those between 18 and 44. The first group represents most of those of K-12-grade school age and the second group represents those of prime child-bearing age.

The largest increase (34 percent) was those between 45 and 64 years. This group accounted for about one-quarter of the population in 2000 and about one-third of the total in 2010. It accounted for the largest percentage component of the year-round population in 2010. This is in contrast to 2000 when the 18-44 group had the greatest share.

<b>Table 1.2</b>				
<b>Change in Age Groups in Bucksport, 2000-2010</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Under 5 years	272	275	3	1%
Percent of total	5.5%	5.6%		
5 to 17 years	957	742	(215)	-22%
Percent of total	19.4%	15.1%		
18 to 44 years	1,803	1,543	(260)	-14%
Percent of total	36.7%	31.3%		
45 to 64 years	1,211	1,628	417	34%
Percent of total	24.6%	33.1%		
65 and over	665	736	71	11%
Percent of total	13.5%	14.9%		
Total	4,908	4,924	16	0.3%
<b>SOURCE:</b> U.S. Census				

Table 1.3 shows the county-wide shift in age groups. The town had a faster rate of decrease in the 5-17 and 18-44 groups than the county. There was an 18 percent decrease for the county. The county had a higher rate of increase (20 percent) in those aged 65 and older than did the town (11 percent).

The 5-17 group accounted for a 15.1 percent of the total population in Bucksport in 2010. This is slightly larger than the 14.2 percent share for the entire county. Similarly, the 18-44 group accounted for 31.3 percent of the town's population compared to a 29.6 percent share for the county.



<b>Table 1.3</b>				
<b>Change in Age Groups in Hancock County, 2000-2010</b>				
<b>Population</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Under 5 years	2,516	2,603	87	3%
Percent of total	4.8%	4.7%		
5 to 17 years	9,027	7,374	(1,653)	-18%
Percent of total	17.4%	14.2%		
18 to 44 years	18,074	16,154	(1,920)	-11%
Percent of total	34.8%	29.6%		
45 to 64 years	13,889	18,350	4,461	32%
Percent of total	26.8%	33.7%		
65 and over	8,285	9,937	1,652	20%
Percent of total	15.9%	18.2%		
Total	51,791	54,418	2,627	5%
<b>SOURCE:</b> U.S. Census				

The 2003 plan noted that Bucksport had a higher growth rate than most nearby service centers with the exception of the tourist-oriented communities of Blue Hill, Ellsworth and Bar Harbor. Between 2000 and 2010, the town had a lower growth rate than all of these municipalities with the exception of Winter Harbor, which had a Navy base closure.

<b>Table 1.4</b>			
<b>Comparison of Year-Round Population Growth Rates for Bucksport and Other Service Centers</b>			
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Bucksport	4,908	4,924	0.32%
Bar Harbor	4,820	5,194	7.7%
Blue Hill	2,390	2,649	10.8%
Ellsworth	6,456	7,555	17.0%
Bangor	31,473	33,039	4.9%
Belfast	6,381	6,668	4.5%
Winter Harbor	988	498	-49%
<b>SOURCE:</b> U.S. Census			

Table 1.5 compares population change in Bucksport to other mill towns outside of an easy commute to metropolitan areas. The table shows that Bucksport and Madison are the only mill towns that have not lost population.

<b>Table 1.5</b>			
<b>Comparison of Year-Round Population Change for Bucksport and Other Mill Towns</b>			
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Bucksport	4,908	4,924	0.32%
East Millinocket	1,823	1,722	-5.5%
Madawaska	4,530	4,027	-11.1%
Madison	4,524	4,854	7.3%
Millinocket	5,191	4,502	-13.2%
Lincoln	5,221	5,085	-1.7%
Rumford	6,464	5,832	-9.8%
<b>SOURCE:</b> U.S. Census			

## Education

Socio-economic statistics prepared by the Maine Office of Policy and Management show contrasts between Bucksport and Hancock County. For example, 16.23 percent of Bucksport residents aged 25 years and older in 2000 had a bachelor's degree compared to a 27.13 percent rate for the county. The rate for Bucksport had increased by seven percentage points to 23.3 percent by 2010, while the county's rate was 30.10 percent, an increase just under three percentage points. Educational attainment increased at a faster rate in Bucksport than the county.

## Income

American Community Survey (ACS) data show that 17.9 percent of Bucksport residents in 2010 were below the poverty level, compared to 11.5 percent of the county. This rate is also higher than the 15.7 percent and 14.6 percent respective rates for adjoining Penobscot and Waldo Counties. Census data indicate that Bucksport had a 10.8 percent poverty rate for individuals in 2000 compared to a 10.2 percent rate for the county. In 1990 the town also had a 10.8 percent poverty rate. These data indicate that the town is experiencing an increasing poverty rate. It should be noted that the 2010 ACS data are based on a sample and have a margin of error while the 2000 data are based on a more thorough count.

There are also contrasts in median household income (MHI). The 2000 U.S. Census listed the MHI in Bucksport as \$34,812 compared to \$35,811 for Hancock County. For 2011, the data report that the town's MHI was \$50,261 compared to \$47,421 for the county. Penobscot and Waldo counties had MHI's of \$45,658 and \$41,312 respectively. Table 1.6 compares the breakdown of income by households. About 8.1 percent of households have incomes under \$10,000 compared to a 6.3 percent rate for the county. The most common income range (30 percent) in Bucksport is between \$50,000 and \$74,999. This group accounts for 20.7 percent of all households in the county. The next largest income group in Bucksport (15.4 percent) is the \$15,000 to \$24,999 bracket. This group accounts for 12.4 percent of county households. There are fewer households in Bucksport (9.1 percent) with incomes over \$100,000 than there are in the county (15.1 percent). Bucksport has more households at the lowest income ranges and fewer at the top income than does the county as a whole.

<b>Table 1.6</b>				
<b>Breakdown of Annual Household Income by Group</b>				
<b>Income Group</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	<b>Bucksport</b>		<b>Hancock County</b>	
Less than \$10,000	164	8.1%	1,464	6.3%
\$10,000 - \$14,000	126	6.2%	1,525	6.5%
\$15,000-\$24,999	312	15.4%	2,970	12.7%
\$25,000-\$34,999	220	10.9%	2,713	11.6%
\$35,000-\$49,000	204	10.1%	3,496	15.1%
\$50,000-\$74,999	608	30.0%	4,814	20.7%
\$75,000-\$99,999	207	10.2%	2,787	12.0%
\$100,000-\$149,999	163	8.0%	2,360	10.1%
\$150,000-\$199,000	17	0.8%	704	3.0%
\$200,000 or more	6	0.3%	467	2.0%
<b>Total Households</b>	2,027	100%	23,300	100%
<b>SOURCE:</b> American Community Survey, 2006-2010 estimates				

## Household Size and Composition

Bucksport has a higher rate of female heads of household and non-institutionalized people with a disability than Hancock County. ACS figures for the 2008-2012 period show that female heads of household accounted for 11.9 percent of all households in

Bucksport compared to 8.3 percent in the county. The town's disability rate was 16.9 percent while the county had a 15.8 percent rate.

The town and the county have experienced a decrease in household size. The 2003 plan had projected an average of 2.35 persons per household by 2010. As shown on Table 1.7, the actual size was 2.30. Household sizes have been consistently above the county average.

<b>Table 1.7</b>					
<b>Change in Household Size, Bucksport and Hancock County</b>					
		<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Bucksport</b>	# persons per household	2.74	2.65	2.38	2.30
<b>Hancock County</b>	# persons per household	2.62	2.48	2.31	2.20
<b>Source:</b> U.S. Census					

This is probably due to the town's lower median age, which means there are more families than there are empty nesters. American Community Survey data (see Table 1.8) that about one-third of households in Bucksport have children under the age of 18. This compares to about one-quarter of households county-wide. This is also a higher rate than Waldo and Penobscot counties.

<b>Table 1.8</b>		
<b>Households with children under 18</b>		
	<b>Total households</b>	<b>Percent with children under 18</b>
Bucksport	2,027	33.3%
Hancock County	23,300	24.9%
Penobscot County	62,282	28.6%
Waldo County	16,136	28.6%
<b>SOURCE:</b> American Community Survey 2006-2010 estimates		

Racially, the town was 97.2 percent white in 2010 compared 98.1 percent in 2000. Hancock County shifted from 97.6 percent white in 2000 to 97.1 percent in 2010. There are no large concentrations of minority populations. Racial information is tracked as a required element for some federal grant programs.

*Does your community have a significant seasonal population? Is the nature of that population changing? What is the community's dependence on seasonal visitors? If your community is a service center or has a major employer, are additional efforts required to serve a daytime population that is larger than its resident population?*

The 2003 plan reported that about two-thirds of the second homes in town were owned by year-round residents. Second homes are discussed in the Housing chapter. The town experiences greater traffic during the tourist season. This brings more day visitors into town. Traffic patterns are discussed in the Transportation chapter. Bucksport is a service center community that has an influx of commuters. Employment trends are discussed in the Economy chapter.

## CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Several trends are indicated by the data. First, the town is projected to lose population. This projection does not need to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Rather, it means the town needs to continue with its economic development activities to create and retain jobs. It may also want to promote itself as a retirement community and take other measures to promote in-migration. A second trend is a high poverty rate. Here again, job creation and job training programs may be needed. Third, the aging of the town's population may mean shifts in services for its population. There is likely to be increased demand for services for the elderly. For example, there may be greater opportunities for investments in assisted living facilities.



Gardiner Commons on Elm Street, a school building conversion completed in 2009, may be part of a trend toward more elderly housing in Bucksport.

## 2. ECONOMY

### INTRODUCTION

An understanding of the economy is essential to comprehensive planning. Providing stable, well-paying jobs is necessary in retaining people of working age. It is important to identify economic trends to use in formulating economic development strategies.

**State Goal:** Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.

### OVERVIEW / MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

Since opening in 1930, the paper mill was the largest employer and biggest taxpayer in Bucksport. Over the years, it grew to become a major employer and a powerful economic engine for the region and State. The permanent shut down of paper production by Verso in 2014 was a major blow to the families of its former workers and to the town's tax base. As with Population, the statistics in this chapter pre-date, and do not anticipate this momentous disruption. The lack of a paper mill in town may have both positive and negative consequences in the coming years. It remains to be seen what new industries, commercial endeavors and residential developments will emerge to fill the large void created by the mill's demise. The power plant at the mill site is projected to continue as the paper operations buildings are razed around it. Its owner, Bucksport Generation, LLC remains a major taxpayer, but not near the former levels of the paper mill. The town has been working hard in recent decades to diversify its economy. It now has a full-time Community and Economic Development Director to implement its development strategy. It has also begun expansion of its industrial park and continues revitalization of its downtown and waterfront areas.



### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ 575 mill jobs were lost, 25 percent of which were held by Bucksport residents.
- ★ This loss is estimated by the Maine Department of Labor to have a 2.6 percent multiplier effect as it ripples through the area economy.
- ★ The average mill worker's age was 55-56, and 180 of them were 60 or older. Some have decided to retire instead of retraining for return to the work force.
- ★ As of mid-April 2015, 120 former mill workers were back in the labor force.
- ★ A 17-page development strategy for Bucksport was published in 2008.
- ★ Bucksport has done major work to revitalize its downtown and implement its downtown revitalization plan.
- ★ The Town is adding 8 new lots with utilities in the Heritage Industrial Park.
- ★ Many other town improvements should help boost local economic development.
- ★ The town needs to assess what else it can do to attract new business to the Bucksport area and also explore job training programs.

## ANALYSES

The major change in the economy is job loss at the former Verso Paper Mill. As of 2013, the mill had 600 employees. This compares to 1,050 in 2001. According to the 2003 comprehensive plan, only about 20 percent of the mill employees lived in Bucksport. In July 2008 the mill reported a total of 748 employees, of which 207 (about 28 percent) were from Bucksport. Verso records for 2013 indicate that 146 of its employees (about 24 percent) live in Bucksport. Given the estimated 2,450 people in the Bucksport labor force, the mill accounted for 6 percent of the jobs (146 divided into 2,450) held by residents. Employment data for Bucksport residents (whether they work in town or elsewhere) are shown in the following tables.

*Is the economy experiencing significant change?*



Total employment in Bucksport increased by 8 percent between 2000 and 2010 (see Table II.1). This is a faster rate of growth than that of the overall year-round population (0.3 percent). The largest numeric increase (185 persons or 58 percent) was in retail trade. Educational, health, and social services had the second largest increase (171 persons or 32 percent). The largest decrease was in manufacturing (68 jobs or 16 percent). The 2010 data are based on a sample and have a margin of error.

Educational and related services accounted for the largest numeric increase county-wide (see Table II.2). They comprised the greatest percentage of jobs in both the county (26 percent) and the town (28 percent) in 2010. Professional services accounted for the second largest numeric increase in the county. The largest decrease (192 jobs) county-wide was in manufacturing. Town officials estimate that as of December 2013, there were 74 jobs in the two business parks. Seven of these jobs were in the manufacturing sector. The town has also attracted a research and development firm to one of the parks. Its focus is low emission fuels. These new firms are indicative of the gradual economic diversification taking place in Bucksport.

While there are no employment projections for Bucksport, the Maine Department of Labor prepared statewide estimates for the 2010 – 2020 period. These show that the sectors creating the most new jobs are: health care services; social assistance; food services and drinking places; administrative and support services; and professional, scientific and technical services. The sectors losing the most jobs are: paper manufacturing; computer and electronic manufacturing; wood product manufacturing; food manufacturing; and federal government. These projections can be used in formulating future economic development strategies.

<b>Table 2.1 Change in Employment by Industry, Bucksport Residents 2000-2010</b>				
<b>Sector</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Percent change</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fisheries	69	40	-29	-42%
Construction	179	162	-17	-9%
Manufacturing	426	358	-68	-16%
Wholesale trade	48	13	-35	-73%
Retail trade	319	504	185	58%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	96	37	-59	-61%
Information	29	31	2	7%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	180	101	-79	-44%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative & waste mgmt. services	89	111	22	25%
Educational, health and social services	532	703	171	32%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	161	151	-10	-6%
Other services (except public admin.)	96	139	43	45%
Public Administration	58	122	64	110%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,282</b>	<b>2,472</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> U.S. Census (2000) American Community Survey (2010)				

<b>Table 2.2 Change in Employment by Industry, Hancock County Residents 2000-2010</b>				
<b>Sector</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Percent change</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fisheries	1,315	1,342	27	2%
Construction	2,524	2,999	475	19%
Manufacturing	2,369	2,177	-192	-8%
Wholesale trade	575	414	-161	-28%
Retail trade	3,057	3,430	373	12%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	883	919	36	4%
Information	644	627	-17	-3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,191	1,385	194	16%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste mgmt. services	2,005	2,781	776	39%
Educational, health and social services	5,544	7,325	1,781	32%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	2,252	2,388	136	6%
Other services (except public admin.)	1,672	1,413	-259	-15%
Public Administration	1,003	795	-208	-21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,034</b>	<b>27,995</b>	<b>2,961</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> U.S. Census (2000) American Community Survey (2010)				



Self-employment rates in Bucksport are about half the county average. The rate increased from 8.4 percent in 2000 and to 8.6 percent in 2010. The county self-employment rate increased from 15.9 percent to 16.4 percent.

Table 2.3 shows commuting patterns for Bucksport residents per American Community Survey (ACS) data. These data indicate that about 35.5 percent of the Bucksport residents who are in the labor force work in town. The next most frequent destinations are Waldo and Penobscot counties (16.8 percent and 15.4 percent respectively).

<b>Table 2.3 Commuting Destination Bucksport Residents (where residents work)</b>		
<b>Destination</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Bucksport	907	35.5%
Penobscot County	394	15.4%
Waldo County	429	16.8%
Orland	290	11.3
Verona Island	95	3.7%
Castine	75	2.9%
Ellsworth	68	2.6%
Penobscot town	61	2.3%
Other destinations	231	9.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> 2010 American Community Survey Estimates		

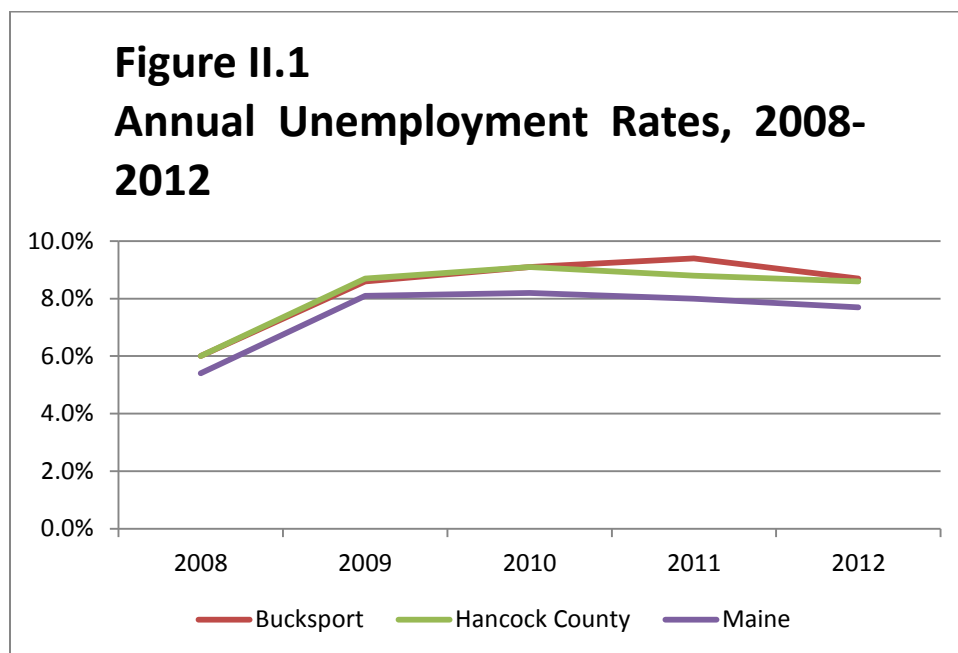
The ACS data in Table 2.4 show commuting data by place of residents for jobs located in Bucksport. There is substantial commuting in both directions. The data indicate that there are 2,550 jobs in Bucksport and 2,228 people in the Bucksport labor force. Just over two-fifths of the jobs in town are held by Bucksport residents.

Some additional commuting data were generated by a 2006 survey by the Chesapeake Group. About one-half of all employers responded that the largest proportion of their employees were Bucksport residents. The survey established a relationship between the type of business and location of employees. In general retail and related services had a greater tendency to employ Bucksport residents. Larger employers, such as contracting and manufacturing businesses had greater proportions of workers living outside of Bucksport.

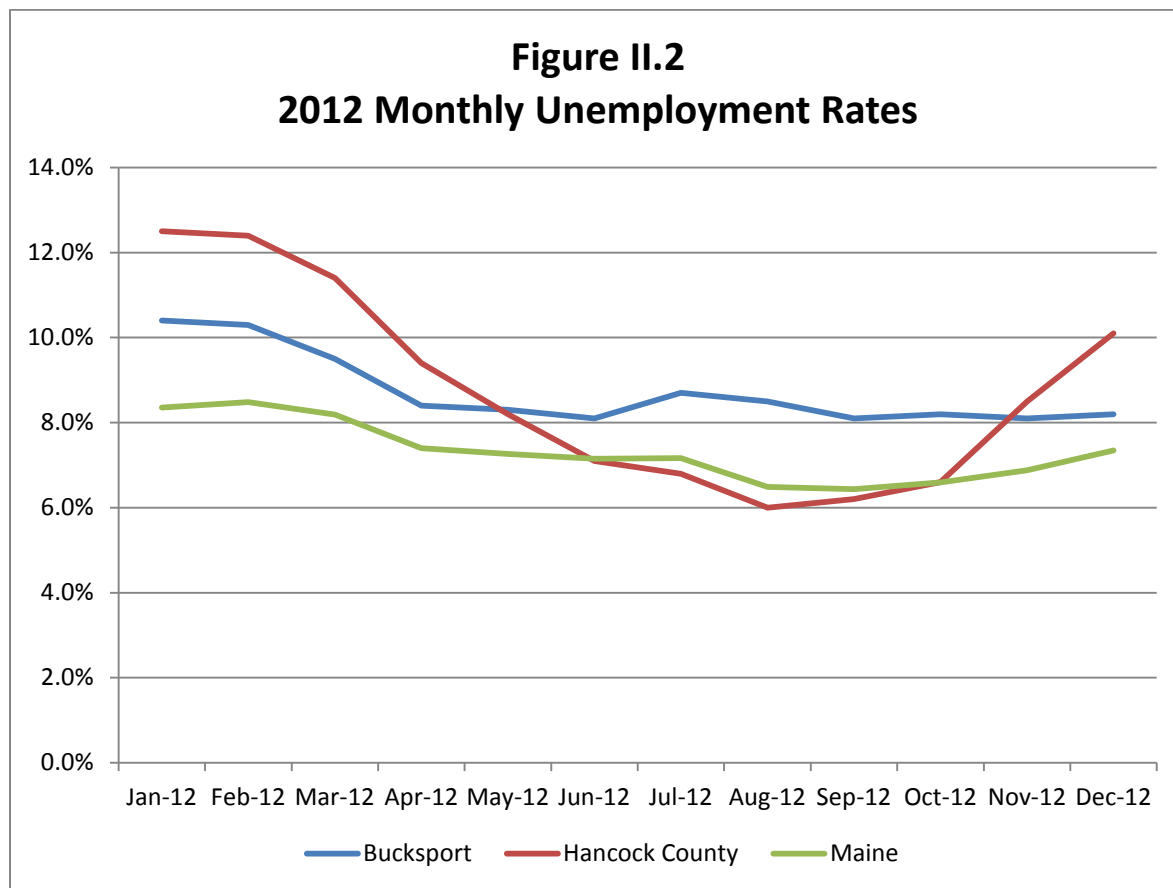
About 87 percent of residents drove to work alone in 2010 compared to 84 percent in 2000. About 11 percent in 2010 used carpools compared to 9.5 percent in 2000. There was a decrease in the percentage who worked at home. In 2000 just over 2 percent worked at home compared to 0.7 percent in 2010.

<b>Table 2.4 Residential Origin of Those Who Work in Bucksport</b>		
<b>Place of Residence</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Bucksport	907	40.7%
Penobscot County	624	28%
Waldo County	59	2.6%
Orland	103	4.6%
Verona Island	10	0.4%
Castine	75	3.6%
Ellsworth	140	6.2%
Penobscot town	31	1.3%
From other locations	279	12.5%
<b>Total Working in Bucksport</b>	<b>2,228</b>	<b>100% (rounded)</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> 2010 American Community Survey Estimates		

Annual average employment trends are shown in Figure II. 1. There are only minor differences between the town and the county unemployment rates. The monthly data for 2012 (Figure II.2) show the town's unemployment is higher during the tourist season than the county. Bucksport is less affected by seasonal swings.



**SOURCE:** Maine Department of Labor



**SOURCE:** Maine Department of Labor

While the town's economy is less dependent on the mill and power plant than it once was, the area is expected to remain important to the town's economy. Commuters and those companies that service the mill patronize area businesses. The mill site is also important to the tax base (see *Fiscal Analysis chapter*). The town's economic development strategy reflects the need for further diversification.

The town has a full-time economic development director who has been active in recruiting businesses to its business parks and diversifying its economy through a comprehensive marketing plan and an economic development strategy prepared in 2008. This strategy identified sectors with potential for growth such as marine resource-related research and development. The regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, updated annually under the leadership of the Eastern Maine Development Corporation, includes projects in Bucksport that are eligible for federal Economic Development Administration funding. The town is also represented at trade shows and national economic development events.

*Does Bucksport have defined priorities for economic development? Are these priorities reflected in regional economic development plans?*

Bucksport has done major work to revitalize its downtown and implement its downtown revitalization plan. This has involved installing new sidewalks, parking, overhead wiring, planters, benches, and lighting as well as the removal of derelict structures. Improvements in the downtown have complemented those in the waterfront area (see the Marine Resources chapter). While local observers note a decrease in the vacancy rate, there are still some vacant buildings in poor repair. Some buildings have been converted to multi-family uses without adequate provisions for off-street parking.

*What are conditions in the downtown?*

The economic development committee estimates that about 75 percent of businesses in the downtown are professional offices. There is not the critical mass of retail operations needed to draw shoppers to the downtown. According to a 2007 survey of residents by the Chesapeake Group, about 29 percent of the population obtained 50 percent or more of their shopping and services needs in Bucksport. Purchases were largely for “convenience goods” or to obtain financial services.

As mentioned above, there is less seasonal fluctuation in employment in Bucksport than there is county-wide. However, the improvements to the waterfront and the downtown are attractions to tourists. The seasonal fluctuations in traffic (see the Transportation chapter) mean that there are opportunities for tourism.

*Is tourism an important part of the local economy? If so, what steps has the community taken to support this industry?*

The Census and other data sources show that there are relatively few home occupations (less than one percent of the workforce works at home according to data cited in this chapter). They are, however, an allowed use in most zoning districts and are an important source of income for some individuals.

*Do/should home occupations play a role in the community?*

Bucksport has two business parks. The land use ordinance specifies standards for commercial and industrial development. Performance standards require that applicants demonstrate that their proposed use will not have an adverse impact on natural resources. There is specific language that states, “The scale and site features of land development in any local area or neighborhood are consistent with existing or planned development patterns.” Any commercial or non-commercial principal structure located on land with frontage on Main Street or Route 1 must meet design standards.

The Commercial 3 zone, which serves the Buckstown Heritage Park, needs to be expanded to accommodate anticipated job creation opportunities. The entire land development review process may need to be evaluated to assure it allows prompt approval of business applications while avoiding any adverse impacts on adjoining properties and the town at large.

*Are there appropriate areas within the community for industrial or commercial development? If so, are performance standards necessary to assure that industrial and commercial development is compatible with the surrounding land uses and landscape?*

This issue is also addressed in the Public Facilities and Services chapter. The focus here is how public facilities affect economic development. The major impediment is wastewater treatment capacity. Presently, Bucksport only offers primary treatment. This requires careful evaluation of the impact of projects on the treatment facility. This will be alleviated with the introduction of secondary treatment.

*Are public facilities, including sewer, water, broadband access or three-phase power, needed to support the projected location, type, and amount of economic activity*

Broadband access is available almost anywhere in Bucksport. Three-Phase power is available in those areas identified for industrial and commercial uses. The industrial park would greatly benefit from the introduction of natural gas.

The volume of water at the industrial park is adequate but the pressure is often insufficient for fire suppression systems and booster pumps are required for many individual buildings. A larger (and more expensive) pump at the park entrance would eliminate the need for these costly expenditures individually. As the park grows, this may be a bigger issue.

As of 2014, Bucksport had four TIF Districts. Two on Verso Paper Company property, one in the Route 1 Commercial area and in the Main Street Commercial area. The two TIFs on the mill site were dissolved in 2015. Municipal land in the Buckstown Heritage Park is given to qualified businesses free of charge in exchange for the development of a business.

*If there are local or regional economic development incentives such as TIF districting, do they encourage development in growth areas?*

Bucksport is the single largest financial supporter of the Bucksport Bay Area Chamber of Commerce and also contributes to a diversity of cultural and recreational activities. These are discussed in the Recreation chapter. It has a regular series of cultural festivals that attract people to the area. Many of these capitalize on the waterfront, a performing arts center, and an historic film archive.

*How can/does the community use its unique assets such as recreational opportunities, historic architecture, civic events, etc. for economic growth?*

### 3. HOUSING

#### INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive plan needs to address several key housing issues. These include changes in conditions and needs as well as projecting future demand for housing. As a service center, Bucksport faces different housing challenges than the smaller, surrounding towns.

**State Goal:** To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.

#### OVERVIEW / MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

Bucksport contains a mix of homes ranging from the late eighteenth century to modern construction. While most houses are single-family, there are more than 100 buildings with 2 or more dwelling units. A large majority of the multi-family complexes are situated in the village area with town water and sewer.



The mill closure directly affected the housing market by creating a situation where some owners needed to sell on short notice. The market had been showing signs of full recovery from the 2008 recession when the announcement was made. Though not a crisis situation, higher property taxes and fewer jobs could bring prolonged concerns.

The number of occupied dwelling units increased by 4.2 percent between 2000 and 2010, but the total number of dwellings (vacant and occupied) increased by about 12 percent. There was a 37 percent increase in the number of duplexes and multi-family units. Bucksport had 222 subsidized rental units in 2011, which was nearly 16 percent of all such units in the county. Home sales and rental prices are below the county median. Given the gradual increase in the median age of residents, more senior citizen housing may be needed. Real estate agents report that there are a limited number of energy-efficient homes and rental units available in the middle-price range. An assessment of the extent of substandard and energy-inefficient housing may be warranted. The town needs to continue to monitor blight and involve neighborhoods in managing sources of blight.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Bucksport was required to adopt the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code.
- ★ Bank foreclosures presently average about 1 property per month since 2008.
- ★ The housing market's future will partly depend on the image that the town creates.
- ★ The town could seek more CDBG and other sources of housing improvement funds.
- ★ Economic pressures may lead Bucksport to become more of a bedroom community if employment opportunities in town do not rebound.

## ANALYSIS

### Change in Dwelling Units

There was a 22.7 percent increase in dwelling units (occupied and vacant) in Bucksport (from 2,079 to 2,551 units) between 1990 and 2010 (see Table 3.1). This is a slower than the 29.5 percent rate of increase for the county. The 2010 Census data show a 4.2 percent increase in year-round occupied units in Bucksport for the 2000 to 2010 period (from 2,049 to 2,135) while there was a 10.7 percent increase for the county. The 2003 comprehensive plan projected that there would be 2,146 occupied units in Bucksport in 2010, which is only 11 more than the number reported that year by the Census. This is very close to the projected number. Bucksport has experienced a slower rate of increase in occupied homes than the county as a whole.

*How many additional housing units (if any), including rental units, will be necessary to accommodate projected population and demographic changes during the planning period?*

<b>Table 1: Change in Total Dwelling Units (occupied and vacant) Bucksport and Hancock County: 1990-2010</b>							
		1990	2000	2010	% change '90-'00	% change '00-'10	% change '90-'10
<b>Bucksport</b>	Occupied	1,811	2,049	2,135	13.1%	4.2%	17.9%
	Percent of Total	87.1%	89.7%	83.7%			
	Vacant	268	233	416	-13.1%	78.5%	55.2%
	Percent of Total	12.8%	10.2%	16.3%			
	Total	2,079	2,282	2,551	9.7%	11.7%	22.7%
<b>Hancock County</b>	Occupied	18,342	21,864	24,221	18.2%	10.7%	32.1%
	Percent of Total	60.3%	65.8%	60.3%			
	Vacant	12,054	12,081	15,963	35.4%	23.1%	33.1%
	Percent of Total	39.7%	35.2%	39.7%			
	Total	30,396	33,945	40,184	11.6%	15.95%	32.3%
<b>Source:</b> U.S. Census							

The number of vacant homes in Bucksport increased by 78.5 percent (from 233 to 416) between 2000 and 2010. This is much higher than the 23.1 percent rate for the county. Table 3.2 shows the estimated breakdown of vacant homes. It shows that 46.6 percent (194) are seasonal or second homes. This is a much smaller proportion than the county, where 82 percent of the vacant units are second homes. The 2003 comprehensive plan reported that there were 137 second homes in town and that there had been little change in that number since 1980. By contrast, the number of second homes increased by 41 percent (57 units) between 2000 and 2010.

<b>Table 2: Vacant Units by Category, 2010</b>				
	<b>Bucksport</b>	<b>% of vacant</b>	<b>Hancock County</b>	<b>% of vacant</b>
For rent	77	18.5%	838	5.2%
Rented not occupied	9	2.1%	85	0.5%
For sale	52	12.5%	681	4.2%
Sold, not occupied	8	1.9%	74	04.6%
For Seasonal, recreational or	194	46.6%	13,134	82.2%
All other vacant	76	18.2%	1,151	7.2%
Total vacant	416	100%	15,963	100%
<b>SOURCE:</b> 2010 U.S. Census, D.P. 1				

An informal survey by the code enforcement office estimated that there are 94 second homes around the town's lakes. Some of the other second homes may not be seasonal "camps." Rather, they may be year-round homes now used for part of the year with owners who spend the cold months out of state.

In 2010 18.5 percent of the vacant units in Bucksport were for rent compared to 5.2 of the units in the county. The town has experienced a significant increase in vacant rental units. The rate is higher than both Waldo County (7.1 percent of all vacant units) and Penobscot County (14 percent).



Water views create some of the most desirable locations for homes. Some shoreline in Bucksport is difficult or impossible to access by land. Over five miles of the Penobscot River front are blocked from land access by the railroad tracks.

## Housing Types and Occupancy

The number of duplex and multi-family units in Bucksport increased by 37 percent between 2000 and 2010 (see Table 3.3). There was a nearly 22 percent increase in the number of mobile homes, while single-family homes increased by under 1 percent. It should be noted that the 2010 data are based on American Community Survey data with a margin of error rate of between 1.8 and 7.2 percent.



<b>Table 3.3:</b> <b>Change in Dwelling Unit Types (Occupied and Vacant)</b> <b>Bucksport: 2000 &amp; 2010</b>					
<b>Total Dwellings</b>	<b>2000</b>		<b>2010</b>		<b>2000-2010</b>
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	Percent Change
Single Family	1,649	72.3%	1,654	66.5%	0.03%
Duplex/Multi-family	382	16.7%	525	21.1%	37.4%
Mobile Homes	251	11.0%	306	12.4%	21.9%
Total Units	2,282	100%	2,485	100%	8.8%
<b>Source:</b> U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS) (2006-2010 average)					

Nearly 30 percent of the occupied dwellings in Bucksport in 2010 were rental units compared to 24 percent of the units county-wide (see Table 3.4). About 11 percent of the county's rental units are in Bucksport, while the town accounts for about 8.7 percent of the total number of occupied units. As a service center community, Bucksport has more rental units than most towns. Local observers note that some of the rentals are single-family homes that were formerly owner-occupied.



With 68 apartments in four buildings, Wenbelle is the largest residential complex in Bucksport.

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<b>Table 3.4:</b> <b>Estimated Tenure of Occupied Year-Round Housing 2000-2010</b> <b>Bucksport &amp; Hancock County (does not include vacant units)</b>						
		2000		2010		2000-2010
Bucksport		Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Percent Change
	Renter-Occupied	534	26.1%	602	29.6%	12.7%
	Owner-Occupied	1,515	73.9%	1,425	70.3%	-5.9%
	Total Occupied Units	2,049	100%	2,027	100%	-0.1%
Hancock County	Renter-Occupied	5,314	24.3%	5,596	24.0%	5.3%
	Owner-Occupied	16,550	75.7%	17,704	75.9%	6.9%
	Total Occupied Units	21,864	100.0%	23,300	100%	6.5%
<b>Source:</b> U.S. Census 2000, ACS, 2010						

The data show that Bucksport has lower housing prices than most parts of Hancock County. The 2010 American Community Survey (ACS) indicated that the median monthly rent in Bucksport was \$548 compared to \$725 for the county. The median value of an owner-occupied home in 2010 was \$129,900, while the county value was \$201,600. Lower prices do not necessarily mean affordable units, since income levels must be considered.

*Is housing, including rental housing, affordable to those earning the median income in the region? Is housing affordable to those earning 80% of the median income?*

Data from the Maine Office of Policy and Management (OPM) indicate that in 2011, 32.7 percent of households in Bucksport would be unable to afford to buy a home at the median sales price. This rate is below Hancock County (51.7 percent), Waldo County (57.5 percent), and the state (52.5 percent). Maine State Housing Authority data maintain that 36 percent of rental households in Bucksport pay more than 35 percent of their income for rent compared to 33 percent of those in the county. About 58.5 percent of rental households in Bucksport cannot afford the average 2-bedroom rent. This is higher than the 56.5 percent rate for Hancock County but lower than Waldo County (64.1 percent). The affordability problem is compounded by high home heating costs.

The town has taken steps to meet its housing needs. It has undertaken housing rehabilitation programs. Also, it had 222 subsidized housing units in 2011, which accounted for nearly 16 percent of all such units in the county. The data provided by the OPM indicate that there are 51 units for senior citizens, but none for the disabled. There may be a greater need for such housing as the population ages.

As mentioned above, the number of seasonal homes increased by nearly 42 percent (57 units) between 2000 and 2010. This contrasts with the

*Are seasonal homes being converted to year-round use or vice-versa? What impact does this have on the community?*

1990 and 2000 period when the number of second home decreased by 1 unit (from 138 to 137). Their impact on the town is minimized by the high rate of ownership by Bucksport residents. The previous comprehensive plan committee estimated that about two-thirds of the seasonal homes in town were owned by residents.

If population growth remains stagnant or declines, the town will not experience a significant increase in new home construction. The town will likely need additional units for the elderly and disabled. One specific need is more opportunities for “aging in place.” This means

*Will additional low and moderate income family, senior, or assisted living housing be necessary to meet projected needs for the community? Will these needs be met locally or regionally?*

offering home care services for the elderly as well as housing developments that provide a continuum of care from assisted living to full nursing care. Nearby towns have very limited land with public water and sewer available to accommodate higher density housing, so most of this need will probably be met locally.

The 2003 plan had detailed data on housing conditions at that time. While the town has received Community Development Block Grants

*Are there other major housing issues in the community, such as substandard housing?*


and other funding to improve its housing stock since 2003, substandard housing remains a problem. The town needs to conduct an updated housing study to document specific housing conditions. This may include an assessment of the presence of lead paint in homes as well as other life-safety conditions and structural deficiencies. This assessment should be in done in conjunction with the housing committee.



The town's housing stock is somewhat older than that of the county. The most recent ACS data indicate that 27.8 percent of the dwellings in town were built before 1940 compared to a 26.3 percent rate for the county (see Table 3.5). About 15.2 percent of the units in Hancock County were built between 2000 and 2009 compared to only 5.9 percent of those in Bucksport. This in contrast to the 1980s and 1990s when Bucksport had a higher proportion of homes built than the county. The town has experienced a slowdown in residential construction. Real estate agents report that most buyers prefer newer homes, which are built to more energy efficient standards.

<b>Table 3.5: Year Dwelling Built</b>				
	<b>Bucksport</b>		<b>Hancock County</b>	
<b>Date range</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
2005 or later	90	3.6%	194	4.8%
2000-2004	58	2.3%	5,919	14.7%
1990-1999	463	18.6%	6,243	15.5%
1980-1989	475	19.1%	5,610	13.9%
1970-1979	343	13.8%	5,154	12.8%
1960-1979	91	3.7%	2,421	6.0%
1950-1959	222	8.9%	2,431	6.0%
1940-1949	53	2.1%	1,723	4.3%
1939 or earlier	690	27.8%	10,571	26.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,485</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>40,266</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> ACS 2008-2010 (Bucksport) ACS 2010-2012 (County)				

Local observers note a prevalence of energy-inefficient homes and dwellings requiring substantial repairs. According to ACS estimates, the most common heating source is fuel oil (65.9 percent), followed by wood (15.2 percent), and electricity (10.5 percent). While fuel oil and wood have comparable percentages county-wide, only 5.4 percent of homes in Hancock County are heated by electricity (see Table 3.6). Bucksport has nearly double the rate of homes with electric heat than the county. High heating costs may discourage people from buying homes.



The Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC) requires efficiency in new Bucksport homes. Extra up-front costs incurred are more than recovered through avoided fuel costs. MUBEC has been in force since 2012.

Real estate agents have reported that there are few homes available in the middle price range built to today's energy efficiency standards. Another problem is a shortage of family-friendly neighborhoods where children can easily walk to friends' houses and have places to play. (See discussion of sidewalks in the Transportation chapter). The town's land use ordinance facilitates the development of affordable workforce housing in several ways. It sets standards for mobile home parks, duplexes, and multi-family developments.



<b>Table 3.6: Home Heating Fuel Source</b>				
	<b>Bucksport</b>		<b>Hancock County</b>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Utility Gas	0	0.0%	159	0.7%
Bottled, tank or LP gas	124	6.1%	2,955	12.2%
Electricity	212	10.5%	1,321	5.4%
Fuel oil, kerosene	1,336	65.9%	15,704	64.8%
Coal/Coke	0	0.0%	52	0.2%
Wood	308	15.2%	3,751	15.5%
Solar Energy	0	0.0%	15	0.1%
Other fuel	38	1.9%	268	1.1%
No fuel used	9	0.4%	23	0.1%
<b>Total Occupied Dwelling Units</b>	<b>2,027</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>24,248</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> ACS 2008-2010 (Bucksport) ACS 2010-2012 (County)				

These assure that housing meets quality standards while not imposing excessive requirements. It also allows for residential care facilities and support services such as adult day care. The town ordinances do not have provisions for an affordable housing density bonus. These provisions are more appropriate for towns with higher real estate prices and a substantial rate of single-family home construction. The data cited in this chapter demonstrate that Bucksport has ample affordable housing opportunities. (Development trends are discussed in the Land Use chapter).

*How do existing local regulations encourage or discourage the development of affordable/workforce housing?*



H.O.M.E., an Orland-based not-for-profit organization, started Covenant Community Land Trust to help people gain access to land and affordable housing with secure tenure and a chance to increase their self-sufficiency. Since the 1970s, H.O.M.E., and the affiliated St. Francis Community have built over 50 homes. The team hosts ten privately-owned rural houses on leased and commonly owned land in various Bucksport locations as well as a seven-unit apartment building on First Street. The land trust homeowners are encouraged to use the leased and common land in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. The rural houses have been built primarily by volunteers, with donated materials, and with very little conventional financial support.

## 4. TRANSPORTATION

### INTRODUCTION

The transportation system serving a community is one of the key factors affecting its growth and development. A comprehensive plan must examine the transportation conditions within a town and the network that connects the town to the broader region.

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

### OVERVIEW / MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

While Bucksport has lost a major generator of commercial traffic, the use of Routes 1, 46 & 15 remains steady, though somewhat diminished. However, Bucksport remains a center of activity with a range of transportation needs. These include improvements to heavily used streets, additional pedestrian facilities, development of alternative modes of transportation and perhaps a multi-modal center.



### KEY FINDINGS AND ISSUES

As observed before the mill closure, traffic increased at much slower rate in recent years than it did in previous decades. There were cases of minor decreases in traffic flow. The area of Route 1/3 between the Verona Island bridge and the Orland town line has seasonal congestion problems. The town has continued to invest in road improvements but still has some outstanding segments in poor condition. There are also some parking problems in the downtown and at the marina.

As the population ages, the town needs to prepare for an increasing number of residents unable to drive vehicles. This will make it important to improve the sidewalk system based on the priorities listed in a sidewalk master plan. Further expansion of public transit may also be needed

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Harbor facilities and rail service are valuable assets for mill site redevelopment.
- ★ Interest has rekindled in building a multi-modal transportation facility in Bucksport.
- ★ The town's input into maintenance of State roads (Routes 1/3 and 46) is crucial.
- ★ A left turn lane would ease congestion at Route 1/Nicholson Ave vicinity.
- ★ A plan to connect Broadway to Park Street is still being developed.
- ★ Recreational trails developed recently received grant funds as safe school routes.
- ★ Survey respondents identified sidewalk needs on Nicholson Ave and School St.

## MAJOR FACILITIES

### Harbor Facilities

The Bucksport fuel pier is used to transfer fuel from oceangoing ships via pipeline to a tank farm located about 0.5 miles north on Route 15. The petroleum is transferred and distributed by truck to commercial and retail customers throughout central and coastal Maine. The pier offers 29 feet of depth at mean low water and a berthing capacity of 700 feet. (See also the *Marine Resources* chapter).

*If the community hosts a transportation terminal, such as an airport, passenger rail station, or ferry terminal, how does it connect to other transportation modes (e.g. automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, transit)? If you are a coastal community, are land-side or water-side transportation facilities needed? How will the community address these needs?*

There is a full-service marina on the waterfront. It offers fuel, water, sewage pump-out, supplies, and 50 seasonal or transient slips for vessels up to 90 feet in length. The town maintains a public docking area with pier, floats, and temporary tie-ups.

The waterfront is connected to the downtown by a mile-long scenic walkway. There is presently one small cruise ship operator that stops in Bucksport during the season. The Penobscot Narrows plan suggests ways to improve connectivity for cruise ship visitors including a water taxi to Fort Knox.

### Rail Service

The only commercial rail in Hancock County is freight service on the 17.5-mile branch line between the mill site in Bucksport and Orrington. It has seven level-grade crossings over Route 15, in addition to level-grade crossings on several local roads. There is no passenger rail service in Bucksport. Rail service and line conditions have seriously deteriorated, resulting in a drop in usage by the mill well before the mill closure. The availability of a rail line is a valuable asset for the future redevelopment of the mill site.



### Airports

The only facilities for airplanes in town are a private air strip off Millvale Road and various opportunities for float plan landings. The area is served by Bangor International Airport, 23 miles to the north from Main Street and the regional Hancock County-Bar Harbor Airport 28 miles to the east.

*If the community hosts or abuts any public airports, what coordination has been undertaken to ensure that required airspace is protected now and in the future? How does the community coordinate with the owner(s) of private airports?*

## STREETS

### Traffic flow

While traffic flows smoothly in most of the town, there are congestion problems on Route 1/3 between the Verona Island bridge and the Orland town line. Transportation planners rank roads according to their Level of Service (LOS). These range from Level A, which is characterized by free-flowing traffic to Level F, which refers to heavily congested roads with frequent delays in traffic, slow travel times, and highest risk of accidents. While most of Bucksport has a LOS A, a small portion of Main Street and Route 1/3 between the Verona Island bridge and the Orland town line is at LOS D. A lane for left turning traffic would ease congestion on Route 1 at Nicholson Ave and Dunkin Donuts.

*What are the transportation system concerns in the community and region? What, if any, plans exist to address these concerns?*

### High crash locations

(HCL's) are another way to identify traffic problems. HCL's are ranked by their critical rate factor (CRF), which measures the extent to which a given road segment has more accidents than comparable road segments. MaineDOT records for 2010 – 2012 showed two HCL's in Bucksport (see Table 4.1). The Hinks Street-Route 1 intersection had a CRF of 1.34 and ranked as the seventh highest CRF in the county. The Millvale-Silver Lake-Williams Pond area had a CRF of 1.25 and ranked tenth in the county.

**Table 4.1 High Crash Locations, Bucksport, 2010 -2012**

Location	Total crashes/ (percent injuries)	CRF	Rank in County
Millvale Rd, Silver Lake Rd, Williams Pond Rd	14 (35.7)	1.25	10
Hinks St & Route 1	8 (25)	1.34	7
<b>SOURCE:</b> MaineDOT			

The 2003 plan reported increased flows of traffic in Bucksport. In 1998, the highest reported average annual daily traffic (AADT) was 14,310 on Route 1/3 at the Verona Island town line. In 2011, the highest AADT reported was 15,030 on Route 1/3 west of the Hannaford entrance (see Table IV.2). The data also show that traffic flows decreased at several locations. The volume of left turns from Route 1 to adjacent business slows traffic. A center-turn lane could ease the congestion.

Since traffic count data are collected irregularly and at different locations, it is difficult to establish definite trends. There is a national trend toward less travel and the 2008 data probably reflect the recession. By comparison, data from the permanent counter in Frankfort show a AADT of 5,050 in 2008, 5180 in 2009, 5120 in 2010, 5060 in 2011 and 5,010 in 2012. Based on these short-term trends, the area is not experiencing the rapid increases in traffic it has in recent decades.



**Table 4.2 Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts, Bucksport**

Location	1991	1998	2008	2011
Rte. 1/3 at Verona town line	9,150	14,310	13,380	-----
Rte. 1/3 at Hannaford's	-----	-----	15,030	-----
Rte. 1/3 Main St. at culvert	-----	13,190	----	-----
Rte. 15 at Main St. at culvert	-----	4,980	4,080	----
Rte. 15 NW/o Franklin St.	-----	5,670	4,530	4,710
Rte. 15 at Orrington town line	4,060	4,960	4,260	-----
Rte. 46 NE of Mast Hill Rd.	-----	1,990	1,230	-----
Route 46 SW of Stubbs Brook	-----	1,960	-----	----
Main Street w/o Bridge Street	----	-----	10,470	10,100
Bucks Mill Rd. NE of Millville	-----	1,170	1,120	----
Central St. NE of Rte. 15	-----	1,200	1,220	1,320
McDonald St. at culvert	-----	950	----	---
McDonald St. north of Main St.	-----	700	640	660
<b>SOURCE:</b> MaineDOT				

## Road Mileage

Bucksport has about 75 miles of public road. The road types are summarized on Table 4.3. These include the following:

**State Highways** are usually arterials and are comprised of a system of connected highways throughout the state, which serve arterial, or through traffic. The state is responsible for all construction/reconstruction and maintenance on the 11 miles of arterial highway in Bucksport. Arterials are further divided in principal arterials (1 mile of US Route 1,) and minor arterials (10 miles of State Route 15)

**State Aid Highways** are usually collectors and are roads that are not included in the system of state highways, but which serve as feeder routes connecting local service roads to the state highway system. The state is responsible for construction, reconstruction, and summer maintenance of 12.6 miles of State Aid collectors in Bucksport. Collectors in Bucksport include Central Street, part of Bucksmills Road, and Route 46.

**Local Roads** include all other public roads not included in the state highway or State-Aid classification system. These roads are maintained entirely by the municipality and, based on the state road classification system, serve primarily as local service roads that provide access to adjacent land. There are 52 miles of local roads in Bucksport. The local roads are further divided into rural roads (40 miles) and town streets (11 miles in the compact area).

<b>Table 4.3: Road Mileage by Functional Classification</b>	
Type	Mileage
Local	51.84
Urban collector	9.96
Minor collector	2.61
Minor arterial	9.49
Principal arterial	1.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>75.05</b>
<b>*NOTE:</b> Town and MaineDOT est. of local road mileage differ.	
<b>SOURCE:</b> Maine Department of Transportation, 2013	

### Major Traffic Generators

Traffic in Bucksport comes from several sources. The Verso mill was the town's single largest employer, generating both freight and employee traffic. There is also a high rate of through traffic especially in the summer months due to the influx of tourists headed toward Acadia National Park and other vacation destinations. Other sources of traffic include the schools and areas with a concentration of commercial development on Route 1/3. There is additional traffic during special events such as festivals.

### Road, Street, and Bridge Conditions

According to the Bucksport Public Works Department Fiscal Year 2014 road evaluation, there are 1.40 miles of unpaved public roads in town. Other road deficiencies are poor base (2.30 miles), poor drainage (1.75 miles), and poor pavement (6.37 miles). The department's top priority is a one-third mile segment of Town Farm Road. It has exposed rock ledge in the ditches. The travel way has an inadequate gravel base overlaying the ledge. The pavement has failed.

Another priority is to pave the remaining unpaved segments. Paved roads require less maintenance. The upfront cost of paving is soon paid off since annual gravel spreading and other road repair costs are no longer needed.

The street evaluation noted about 0.78 miles with poor drainage, 0.04 miles with poor pavement, and 0.27 miles of poor base. Both the roads and the streets are evaluated annually and ranked for improvements. These improvements are included in the capital improvement program. The Public Works Department updates its road inventory annually to reflect changes in road conditions. Damage to roads during a bad winter or from water or sewer line emergency replacement may require a shift in improvement priorities.

*Notes: Due to the ongoing changes in road conditions, some of the priorities noted in this section may have changed by the time this plan is adopted.*

*More transportation data and maps are available at [bucksportmaine.gov](http://bucksportmaine.gov).*

## Parking Areas

There are a total of 650 public parking spaces in Bucksport and an additional 381 spaces in lots adjacent to the downtown. The town owns 343 of the on-street spaces and 180 of the off-street spaces. The town has lease or maintenance agreements with the owners of most of the privately-owned lots that are available for public use.



These data indicate an increase in the number of parking spaces since 2002. The 2003 comprehensive plan reported a total of 146 town spaces compared to 343 in 2014. This increase may be due in part to a different counting methodology. The total number of parking spaces may be adequate, but their locations may not always be convenient.

Specific parking issues include the following:

1. There is insufficient parking in the Elm-Main-Mechanic Block area;
2. There are presently thirteen parking spaces at the marina, which is not adequate. More spaces could be created if the restrooms were relocated;
3. Residential parking can create problems in the downtown. While spaces in public parking lots can be used to meet the parking space requirements of the land use ordinance, this complicates snow removal during the winter;
4. Some potential parking areas face drainage problems;
5. Parking problems continue along Franklin Street in the area beginning at Mechanic Street and extending to School Street. The parking demand is caused by functions at the Public Safety Building, area churches, and a funeral home.
6. Another lot could be developed in the Central Street-Community Pharmacy area.

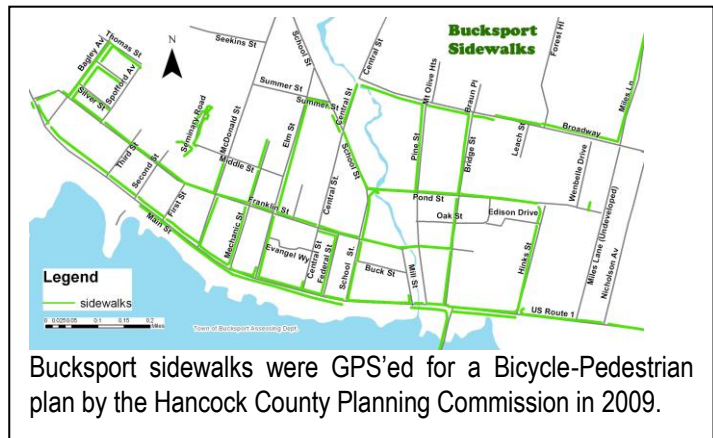
## Parking Standards

The land use ordinance standards for the downtown have provisions to encourage development. The reviewing authority has the discretion to consider off-site parking areas in determining the total number of required spaces. Section 13.15.8.7 states that “public parking spaces in the DT and DTS Districts are deemed sufficient for any proposed commercial or noncommercial use of an existing building on Main Street that is not provided with an on-site.”

*If there are parking standards, do they discourage development in village or downtown areas?*

## Sidewalks

There are 45,303 feet of sidewalk in 2014 compared to 44,616 feet in 2002, and to 27,111 feet in 1990. Approximately 12,300 feet are located along Route 15 and Route 1, and are owned by the state with maintenance handled by the town. This amount does not include the various walkways and pedestrian paths in the Silver Lake, Miles Lane, and waterfront areas.



The current sidewalk system faces several deficiencies. These include poor connections between certain segments of town and limited wheelchair accessibility. There have been complaints from residents of uneven paving that makes walking difficult. The situation is worsened in the winter when snow removal may be delayed since priority is given to the schools. Due to the aging of the population it is important to address sidewalk hazards and assure adequate wheelchair access. The proportion of people without cars is likely to increase. The town needs to develop a sidewalk prioritization plan. This plan would promote safe and efficient pedestrian passage that meets ADA standards. It would also address snow removal and the needs of merchants for adequate pedestrian access.

## Access Management

The land use ordinance and Chapter 10 of the Bucksport Town Code have driveway entrance standards. Chapter 10 requires an entrance permit on any town road, while entrance permits on state roads are subject to Maine DOT requirements. The Planning Board has the authority to require a traffic study for a proposed development, under certain circumstances.

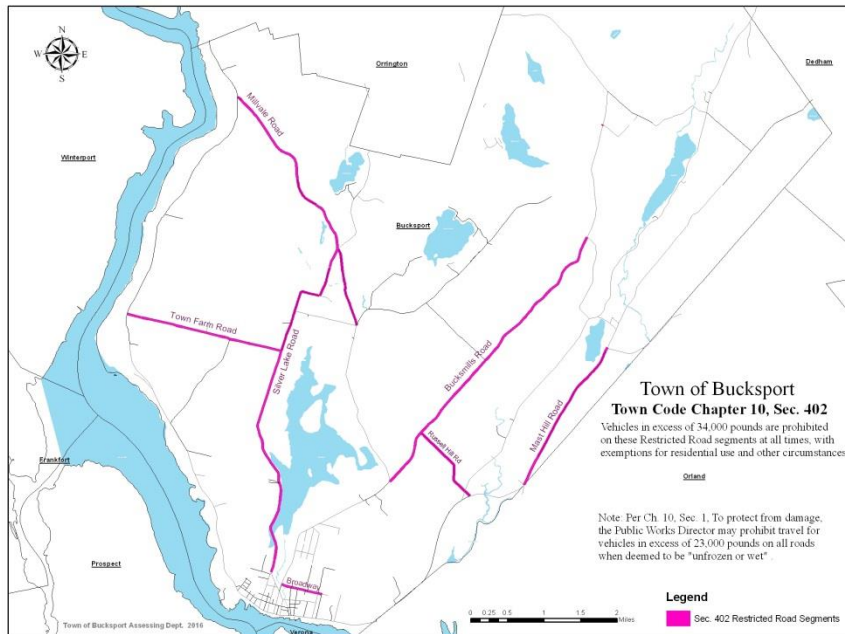
*Does the community have local access management or traffic permitting measures in place?*

## Road Design Standards

While Chapter 10 of the land use ordinance addresses arterial, collector, residential and rural streets, the code enforcement department reports that these standards need further clarification. Recently approved subdivision roads have dead-end streets, but possible expansions would continue from the road's end. In one subdivision, the street was accepted by the town, and there are now plans to connect it with another public street. Standards for bicycle or pedestrian travel paths are not included in the current road design requirements.

*Do the local road design standards support the community's desired land use pattern? Do the local road design standards support bicycle and pedestrian transportation?*

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife recommends that road designs consider habitat block integrity, terrestrial wildlife connectivity and fish passage. More information is located in the Goals and Objectives section on Natural Resources.



Chapter 10 of the land use ordinance cites local road segments that are closed to through travel of large trucks. It also authorizes the Public Works Director to post roads during times when wet conditions would leave roads vulnerable. The language in this section needs to be updated.

The map and ordinance are available on the town website.

*How are walking and bicycling integrated into the community's transportation network (including access to schools, parks, and other community destinations)?*

## ALTERNATIVE MODES

### Bicycle-Pedestrian Facilities

Bucksport has expanded its bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Major accomplishments include the mile-long walkway along the waterfront and a three-mile walking/jogging trail on the Miles Lane and Middle School properties. There are also walking trails at the Silver Lake recreation area. (See Chapter 6 Recreation for more information). The town has installed bicycle racks at some key locations around the built-up area of town, including the schools. Many road shoulders do not offer adequate space for safe passage of bicycles.



Bicycles are welcomed at Miles Lane Trails

One option for assessing the adequacy of sidewalks, pathways and pedestrian crosswalks is to conduct a "walkability" survey. There are guidelines available from groups such as the American Association of Retired Persons ([www.ite.org/Ped/Audits](http://www.ite.org/Ped/Audits)) and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center ([www.walkinginfo.org](http://www.walkinginfo.org)). The survey allows walkers to identify potential problems such as overly narrow sidewalks, missing segments, and poorly marked crosswalks. It also notes obstacles such as low hanging tree branches, placement of signs, and dumpsters.



## Public Transit

Downeast Transportation provides a Wednesday Shuttle between 9:30 AM and 1:30 PM serving the more densely populated areas of the town. It has an average ridership of 24 passengers. There is also Wednesday September-June service between Blue Hill and Bucksport. Washington Hancock Community Agency (WHCA) provides bus service between Bucksport and Bangor one day a month.

*Do available transit services meet the current and foreseeable needs of community residents? If transit services are not adequate, how will the community address the needs?*

The community is working to expand transit services for aging and disabled residents. This is important since this segment of the population is increasing. Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition is particularly active in promoting volunteer driver networks to meet local needs. WHCA provides on-demand transportation services to medical appointments for eligible clients. As of mid-2014, there is a reduced fee Wednesday taxi service that picks up clients in rural parts of town and takes them to the shuttle bus.

Given the changes occurring in the local economy, more commuting to jobs out of town is likely. This means that there may be potential for more ride sharing and van pooling services.



***As described above, some public transit services are available in Bucksport...***

***The biggest mass transit provider however, is RSU 25!***



## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

### Conflict Resolution

Route 1/3 serves local and through freight and tourist traffic. This leads to congestion, particularly in the summer months. There are also conflicts between through traffic, including truck traffic, on Route 15 and local traffic on Main Street. Rail and pedestrian crossings are other sources of conflict that are eased through adequate markings. Bicycle traffic conflicts on major roads can be mitigated by providing wider shoulders.

*Are conflicts caused by multiple road uses, such as a major state or U.S. route that passes through the community or its downtown and serves as a local service road as well?*



RR crossings at back roads offer little to warn motorists.

### Fiscal Planning

The Bucksport Public Works Department's planned capital investments are included in the town's capital improvement plan (CIP). The CIP includes the capital improvements for all town departments. Funding is provided in part through an anticipated \$120,000 annual appropriation to a highway department reserve fund plus annual transfers from surplus that range from \$10,000 to \$240,000. Actual funding is subject to town council approval. The total public works FY-14 annual budget was \$949,133.

*What is the community's current and approximate future budget for road maintenance and improvement?*

### Regional Planning

Bucksport has been an active participant in regional transportation planning. The **2010 Downeast Coastal Multi-Modal Corridor Management Plan** analyzes the major east-west connections crossing Hancock County, southern Washington County and a portion of Penobscot County as a group. Included in this broad corridor are Route 1 from Bucksport to Calais, Route 9 from Bangor to Calais, the Calais Branch Railway from Bangor to Calais as well as major collector highways that serve as connectors and short-cuts. It provides an overview of transportation needs for the broader region. Goals relevant to Bucksport include addressing traffic bottlenecks on Route 1/3 and improving winter maintenance on roads such as Routes 15 and 46. It also supports expanded transit service and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

*How do state and regional transportation plans relate to your community?*

The **2011 Multi-Modal Corridor Management Plan for the Penobscot River Corridor** addresses transportation needs of the greater Bucksport, Bangor and Belfast area. Its goals include improvements to the flow of highway, rail, and marine traffic. Specific

recommendations relevant to Bucksport include improvements to Routes 15 and 46 and addressing congestion along Route 1/3.

The 2006 ***Penobscot Narrows Study: Passenger Transportation Options*** focuses on the immediate Bucksport-Verona Island-Orland-Prospect area. Its recommendations include integrating pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Bucksport with those in adjoining towns. It also proposed a bicycle-pedestrian trail along the Penobscot River connecting Brewer to Bucksport. The study urged the promotion of cultural tourism and the expansion of public transit.



The Maine Department of Transportation provided a tremendous amount of data for this Comprehensive Plan. Much of the information and other facilities are shown on maps at [bucksportmaine.gov](http://bucksportmaine.gov). Other GIS data, in Shapefile format, would need a more intensive set of maps to display. These include crashes and problem areas.



The Highway Maintenance Garage at 360 Central Street



## 5. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### INTRODUCTION

A thorough understanding of a town's public services is necessary to determine any current constraints to growth and development. A plan should assess how changing demographics and development trends will affect the demand for town services and assess their adequacy. A plan should also identify likely future capital improvements.

#### **State Goal:**

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

### OVERVIEW

Bucksport has a fairly complete array of public services for a town of its size. In general, the town has made extensive use of capital improvement planning to keep its services and facilities in prime condition. Continued improvements, such as replacing aging water mains, will be needed. Overall, services and facilities are adequate. However, Bucksport faces several public service and facility challenges.

Bucksport shares many of its various public services and facilities with neighboring towns, including recreation, wastewater treatment and emergency services. Educational services are also provided regionally in Bucksport through RSU 25. There is further discussion of shared services in the chapter sub-sections to follow.

#### **This chapter is organized by six categories:**

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A. Town Government      | D. Health & Social Services |
| B. Emergency Services   | E. Public Works             |
| C. Educational Services | F. Utilities                |

See Chapter 6 for a description of town **Recreational** services & facilities.

### HIGHLIGHTS

Accomplishments since 2003, current regional service sharing as well as key findings and issues are addressed in each Category. Major highlights are listed below:

- ★ Town programs adjust to economic and social effects of the paper mill closure.
- ★ Natural gas lines are extended into downtown commercial/residential areas.
- ★ Secondary wastewater treatment facilities are being built at the WWTP.
- ★ RSU 25 seeking to sustain adequate levels of programming by possible expansion.
- ★ Regional dispatch and a Fire House Sub-station are considered.
- ★ The local Hazmat Team is gone with the mill closure.

## 5.A TOWN GOVERNMENT

The Town of Bucksport adopted a Town Manager/Selectmen form of government in 1946, continuing with the annual town meetings tradition until 1971 when the Council/Manager form of government was approved by the citizenry. The seven-member Town Council serves as the general legislative body of the Town, and the Town Manager, who is appointed by the Town Council, serves as the Chief Administrative Official of the Town. The powers and duties of each are identified in the Bucksport Town Charter. The Town Manager oversees all Town Departments and the administrative staff.

### Regulatory Documents

The functions of town government and the privileges, rights and responsibilities of the public are regulated to a certain extent by ordinances adopted by the Bucksport Town Council and, in some cases, approved by the voters of Bucksport. In 1978, the Town Council codified the ordinances of the town in a document identified as the Bucksport Town Code. This code originally contained twelve ordinances and the Town Charter, but twelve more ordinances were added over the years. The Town Charter requires the Town Code to be codified (arranged in a systematic collection) every five years, but no codification has been done since 1978. The result is a collection of ordinances without a common formatting style, and provisions that are outdated, inaccurate or that conflict with other provisions in the Code, as well with state laws. The same concern applies to the Town Charter, which has been amended with voter approval several times over the years, but it too contains conflicts and confusing provisions that need to be addressed with a full review and revision.



### Town Administrative Offices

The town office building at 50 Main Street houses the town council chamber, management, assessing, clerical, code enforcement, community & economic development, finances, general assistance, licensing & registration, payroll, tax collections and utilities functions. The 5,000 square-foot facility built in 1990 houses ten full-time staff and part-time staff providing janitorial and IT services. A rotation of up to

five people attends the front desk to serve walk-in customers from 8 to 4:30 Monday through Friday.

Overall, current levels of staffing are mostly adequate. A deficiency noted was enough staff to keep websites, local access television, and newsletters updated on a timely basis. Volunteer help has begun to bridge that gap. The public's expectations for timely communications are increasing with improving technology. The need for a full-time staff in positions such as finance director will be weighed by town management moving ahead as it adjusts to fiscal changes.

The size and adequacy of individual rooms in the town office building is described in Table 5.1. The facility was not designed to house all of the current positions. A space utilization study is needed to explore options for future improvements. Expanding the building would be challenging given its orientation and proximity to other buildings, roadways and required parking. Some possible upgrades include air conditioning all rooms and more space for IT equipment and staff.

<b>Table 5.1 Town Office Building Spaces</b>		
<b>Description of room/purpose</b>	<b>Square Feet</b>	<b>Overall Adequacy</b>
1. Main Office Area (Clerical)	800	satisfactory
2. Assessor's Office	289	See note #2.
3. Lobby	264	satisfactory
4. Town Manager's Office	186	satisfactory
5. Upstairs Storage Room	56	satisfactory
6. Conference/Lunch Room	227	See note #6
7. Town Council Chambers	900	See note #7
8. Code Enforcement Office (downstairs)	249	satisfactory
9. Northwest corner office (downstairs)	150	satisfactory
10. Comm/Econ Dev. Office (middle downstairs)	116	See note #10
11. Storage Room (downstairs)	80	satisfactory
12. Information Technology Space (downstairs)	See note #12	See note #12
13. Mechanical Room (downstairs)	122	satisfactory
NOTES (numbers refer to building #'s above) 2. The Assessor's Office is large and shared with other staff. . 6. The lunch room, as such, is not available when occupied by closed meetings. 7. The Council Chamber is not air conditioned and meetings during hot weather can become uncomfortable. It is usually sufficient in size. Larger functions must be held at other venues. 10. This office has no exterior walls or windows and no mechanical air exchange. It is also the only pathway to the downstairs storage vault. 12. IT equipment for computer networking, data storage, local access television and etc. is located throughout the building. The main server is in the clerical office, the local access TV controls are in the code enforcement area and the racks for LATV are in the downstairs storage room. There is no designated office space for IT staff.		

## 5.B EMERGENCY SERVICES (Police, Fire , Ambulance, Dispatch, Management)

### (5.B.1) Police Protection

**Staffing.** Police protection in Bucksport is provided primarily by the Bucksport police department. There are eight full-time, sworn law enforcement officers, including the chief, a detective/sergeant, six patrol officers and an animal control officer. There are also six part-time officers. No additional personnel are hired during the summer.

All clerical work is handled by the dispatch center. The officers comply with the Maine Criminal Justice yearly training standards. New standards are enacted on a regular basis. For example, in 2014 the department was learning new domestic violence assessment tools.

**Facilities and Equipment.** The department is housed at the public safety building on Franklin Street. The facility meets the current and anticipated future needs of the department. It includes a two-bay garage, booking room, interview room, offices, training areas, and storage and evidence rooms.

The current inventory of vehicles and major equipment is shown on Table 5.2. The department anticipates replacing current vehicles and smaller pieces of equipment as they reach the end of their service life. It does not expect to expand its fleet.

<b>Table 5.2 Police Department Major Equipment Inventory, 2015</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Estimated Years of Service Left</b>
Ford SUV	2013	Prime	4
Ford Cruiser	2011	OK	3
Ford Cruiser	2010	OK	2
Ford Cruiser	2008	OK	2
GMC Envoy	2006	Prime	10
Dispatch Console	2006	OK	10
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Police Department			

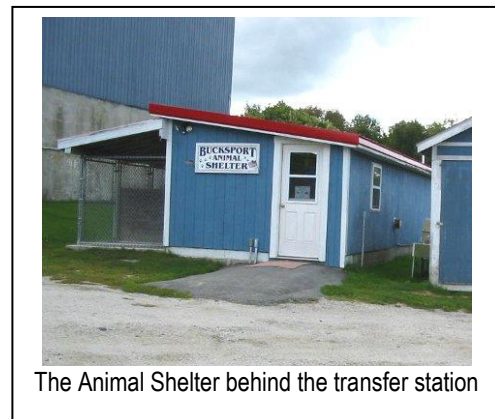
**Level of Service.** The department has worked with other public safety service providers in implementing lock down and disaster/emergency response plans. It has also participated in programs to help the elderly age in place in partnership with Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition. These programs are part of a broader effort to serve the chronically ill and disabled. Police officials also support programs aimed at troubled or at risk youth. These are described in the Recreation Chapter.

The average response time to a call is five to ten minutes. It may take over ten minutes to reach the most remote part of town. Calls for service are summarized on Table 5.3.

The total number of calls has fluctuated rather than showing a steady increase or decrease.

<b>Table 5.3 Police Calls for Assistance</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Calls</b>
2005	6290
2006	6078
2007	5596
2008	5790
2009	6468
2010	6136
2011	5762
2012	5566
2013	4795
2014	4980
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Police Department	

**Future Needs.** The department reports that its major challenge is obtaining sufficient funding to operate an adequate department.



#### (5.B.2) Fire Protection

**Staffing.** Fire protection is provided by the Bucksport Fire Department. There are five full-time staff, (a chief and four fire fighters who are also EMT's). There are also 30 paid on-call staff members.

Like most fire departments, it is difficult for volunteers to meet all the training requirements. About 100 hours of initial training is required. For fire fighter 1 and 2 levels, 200 hours is required. This does not include annual mandatory training or rescue and other specialized training.

The department provides contractual fire protection to Verona Island. It has automatic mutual aid arrangements with Orland, Orrington, and Dedham. There are also mutual aid

agreements with all of Hancock County and the towns of Prospect and Stockton Springs. The mutual aid plans are being updated, including a tri-county agreement with Penobscot and Waldo Counties. This would greatly enhance the department's abilities and its access to additional equipment, especially specialized apparatus such as ladder trucks and haz-mat gear.

**Facilities.** The fire station is located at 89 Franklin Street in the Public Safety building. The facility has approximately 1,800 square-feet of floor space on the first floor plus 4,000 square-feet in the garage (see Table 5.4). These meet the department's current needs.

<b>Table 5.4 Fire Department Rooms</b>	
<b>Description of room/purpose</b>	<b>Approximate sq. footage</b>
Chief's Office	182
Sleeping quarters (2)	88 (each)
Bath	64
Hall	80
Living Quarters	306
Closet	24
Closet	100
Kitchen	234
Training	1536
Closet	168
Bath (2)	72 (each)
Stairwell (2)	128 (each)
Hall	140
Office	126
Work Room	880
Boiler Room	242
Bath/Locker Room	100
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Fire Department	

The station has five heated bays that each hold two trucks. There is also an unheated outdoor shed behind the station used for seasonal storage and excess equipment. These arrangements meet the department's current needs.

The department has an antique station. It serves as storage space for two hand tubs, a horse-drawn pumper, two antique trucks, and other artefacts. This station is not used for fire-fighting purposes.

**Equipment.** The current inventory of vehicles is shown on Table 5.5. Apart from scheduled replacements, no additional vehicles are needed. Ongoing replacement of computers, communication equipment, and breathing apparatus will be necessary.

**Table 5.5**  
**Fire Department Vehicles, 2015**

Type	Year	Condition	Estimated Years of Service Left
International/Rosenbauer Pumper/Tanker	2013	Prime	28
Ford 550 Mini Pumper	2006	Excellent	20+
HME/Central States Pumper	2000	Good	15
Ford Pick-up	2005	Good	10
Ford Rescue	1994	Good	11
International Tanker	1998	Good	10+
Simon Duplex 100' Ladder Truck	1992	Good	15
16' Boat (motor 3-5 years left)	1988	Good	10
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Fire Department			

**Level of Service.** The average response time to a call is 4-5 minutes. It may take up to 15-20 minutes in poor weather conditions to reach the most remote part of town. According to the fire department, two-thirds of Bucksport is located more than five miles from a fire station. This results in higher (sometimes more than double) homeowner insurance rates.

A substation in the outer Millvale area would dramatically reduce the area beyond the five mile radius. The department has the apparatus needed to equip that station. Department officials maintain that the reduced insurance rates would pay back the increase in taxes due to construction costs within two to three years. The annual operation and maintenance costs for the branch station are presently estimated to be under \$10,000.

The department reports that most public roads are accessible for its vehicles. Many private roads and/or drives are not adequate, particular during mud or winter conditions. The older subdivisions sometimes have minor access problems. The more recent ones provide easy access.

The department has several inspection and fire prevention programs. These include conducting licensing inspections of businesses, responding to inspection requests for homes, apartments and woodstove/chimney installations as well as responding to complaints. It does annual prevention classes for pre-K through eighth grade. It would like to expand these programs and increase compliance with basic safety codes.

Call and inspection data are shown on Table 5.6. Calls fluctuated during the period shown. There is no discernable pattern to indicate changing demand for services.



<b>Table 5.6 Fire Department Calls for Service</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Calls</b>	<b>Number of Inspections</b>
2005	137	82
2006	168	93
2007	162	83
2008	138	87
2009	123	99
2010	130	101
2011	123	98
2012	133	81
2013	135	81
2014	108	82
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Fire Dept.		

**Water Supply.** The department has adequate access to water in the area served by hydrants. It is more difficult to obtain water in rural parts of town. The dry hydrants system is limited. The addition of underground cisterns would improve access to water and also lower insurance ratings in those areas. The department recommends that cisterns be installed along Route 15 and at other strategic locations outside of the compact area.

**Hazmat Team.** Until its recent closure, the paper mill used to provide the town access to its hazardous materials clean-up team. The nearest available team now is based in Orono.

**Future Needs.** Department officials feel it is important to continue to seek alternative funding and to retain current budget support in order to maintain quality emergency services for Bucksport and the surrounding areas. Any cutbacks or shortfalls could drastically affect response capabilities. The Department should evaluate the potential need for Hazmat services in light of recent changes.

### (5.B.3) Ambulance and Rescue Service

**Facilities and Staffing.** Ambulance and rescue services are provided by the Bucksport fire department. The department provides contractual services to Orland and Verona Island. It is funded by fees for service and municipal appropriations. Its annual budget for 2012-2013 was \$367,900. This includes a line item of \$103,500 for uncollectible fees.

The service is housed in the Public Safety building on Franklin Street. The building is shared with police and dispatch. The facility is adequate for current needs. As mentioned under the Fire Protection section, there are five full-time EMT's who are also fire fighters. The department would like to expand coverage to one per-diem day-time person seven days a week. This position would also serve the fire department.

Recruitment of on-call EMT's is difficult due to the cost of training. All new employees take their initial training on their own time and at their expense. This amounts to \$900 for 200 hours of training plus travel and study time. EMT-1 certification requires 300 hours of training costing \$2,000. Paramedic certification requires 700-800 hours of training costing \$8,000. There is a limited pool of recruits willing and able to assume these expenses. The department needs to find new funding sources to help with training.

**Level of Service.** The average response time to a call is 5.5 minutes. In poor weather conditions, it may take 15-20 minutes to reach the more remote parts of town. Call data are shown on Table 5.7. The data show fluctuations rather than a definite upward or downward trend.

The department has participated in a voluntary outreach program to the elderly and shut-ins in cooperation with the police department and other service providers. This involves collecting family and friend emergency contact information. This program also gathers any special medical information that may be of value during a call for service.

<b>Table 5.7</b>	
<b>Ambulance Calls for Assistance</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Calls</b>
2005	728
2006	778
2007	801
2008	764
2009	858
2010	761
2011	779
2012	810
2013	852
2014	873
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Fire Department	

**Equipment.** The current inventory of equipment is shown in Table 5.8. In addition to regular replacement of vehicles, the department would like to replace its second stretcher and E-Fib unit.

<b>Table 5.8 Rescue Vehicles, 2013</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Estimated Years of Service Left</b>
AEV/Ford	2008	Good	5+/-
AEV/Ford	2003	Average	<1
AEV/Ford	2014	Prime	10
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Fire Department			

**Future Needs.** Staffing is an ongoing problem. The department needs to explore other funding sources to cover training costs.

(5.B.4) Dispatch

Bucksport Public Safety Communications is a 24-7-365 dispatch center that handles calls involving police, fire and ambulance services for the town of Bucksport, and fire and ambulance services for the towns of Orland and Verona Island. The dispatch center is staffed by four full-time, one permanent part-time and two reserve dispatchers.

(5.B.5) Emergency Management

Authority for emergency management in Maine comes from the Maine Civil Emergency Preparedness Act (MRSA Title 37-B, Chapter 13) that requires each community to appoint an Emergency Management Agency Director. Bucksport's EMA Director is the Fire Chief. His duties are to oversee planning, training, and preparing for emergency response during non-disaster times, and to act as the coordinator of emergency operations during disasters.

All levels of government share emergency management responsibilities. Local government is the front line of emergency management and the County agency serves as a link between local government and the State.

More can be read about the Hancock County Emergency Management Agency at: <http://co.hancock.me.us> .



The Dispatch Center on Franklin Street.

## 5.C Educational Services (Schools and Public Library)

### (5.C.1) Schools

**Overview.** Bucksport is fortunate to have multiple educational offerings available for its citizens, including a pre-K through 12 public school system and an adult education program, all operated by Regional School Unit (RSU) 25, which began in 2009. In addition to the public school system, the Reach School provides an alternative approach to education for those more in tune to a non-traditional curriculum. The town also has a private school that serves students in grades K-12. Bucksport Christian School is a coed school located on the Bucksport Bible Church campus.

**Current Conditions-Facilities.** Bucksport is a member of Regional School Unit (RSU) 25. The other towns in the unit are Prospect, Orland, and Verona Island. RSU 25 budgets are adopted annually by the Regional School Unit through a process outlined in Maine Statutes and then validated by a referendum vote in each member town. The RSU owns four school buildings, a central office, athletic fields, and two storage facilities. It has shared use agreements with the town, allowing access and use of school facilities and defined town athletic fields for both parties.

**The Luman Warren Building** is a two-story masonry structure built in 1923. It currently serves as the central office complex for the RSU. The building has received ongoing improvements in the past 20 years. In addition to regular repairs, energy efficiency and HVAC improvements have been made and fiber optic lines installed. According to the 2013 RSU capital improvement plan, the facility needs further window replacements, a new telephone system, and paving of the parking lot. The facility is expected to remain as an administrative office for the foreseeable future unless declining enrollment makes it feasible to shift operations to another RSU-owned building.

**The G. Herbert Jewett School** was built in 1950, expanded in 1957, and substantially renovated and expanded in 2004-2005. The facility is shared by the town and the RSU. The town's section of the facility houses the head start program, several community use rooms, and recreation department and health planning offices. The school section currently accommodates the all-day kindergarten. It has also housed first grade. It has ten classrooms and a rated capacity of 200 and current (fall 2015) enrollment of 125. The facility is in sound condition. Its priority capital investment needs in 2013 were energy efficiency upgrades, a new telephone system and asbestos floor tile abatement.

**The Miles Lane School** was built in 1989 and is in excellent condition. It houses grades 1-4. The school has a rated capacity of 340 and a fall 2015 enrollment of 306. There are sixteen regular classrooms plus additional rooms for special education, music, art, tutoring, and small group instruction. It also has a library, administrative offices, gym, kitchen, and cafeteria. The major capital improvement needs were replacing the roof and the hot water and telephone systems.

**The Bucksport Middle School** (grades 5-8) was completed in 2003. It has a rated capacity of 380 students and a fall 2015 enrollment of 320. It has fourteen regular classrooms plus rooms for art, music, computer, and technology. There are also smaller rooms for special education, a gymnasium, library, kitchen, and cafeteria. The 500-seat performing arts center is used for a variety of community functions. The major capital improvement need is a new telephone system.

**The Bucksport High School** was built in 1963 and expanded in 1970 and 2000. It has a rated capacity of 420 students and a 2013 enrollment of 311. It has fourteen regular classrooms plus specialized rooms. The RSU 25 communities supported a \$2.5 million renovation plan that began in the summer of 2014. It replaced the existing façade, windows, ceilings and lighting throughout the two older sections of the building. The project also included library renovations, air exchange and heat recovery unit installation, new parking lot lighting and the addition of a sidewalk to improve safety.

**Facilities Maintenance.** RSU 25 has a facilities and maintenance subcommittee of the school board, which includes appointed representatives from each of the four communities in addition to two elected school board representatives. This subcommittee works with the RSU 25 administration to establish priorities for the facilities plan and to advise the director of facilities in the budgeting process associated with the facilities and maintenance program. The director of facilities annually updates and maintains a comprehensive facilities plan that allows for the planned maintenance of all district buildings as required.

**Staffing and Enrollment Trends.** Regional School Unit 25 has about 185 faculty and staff serving approximately 1,100 students from the member towns. The school unit provides programming from Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12. The programming meets the operating requirements of Maine law and Bucksport High School is fully accredited by New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The PK-12 curriculum offers a full range of services to students including special education, gifted and talented programming, advanced placement courses at the high school, and dual enrollment courses that allow students to earn college credit while at Bucksport High School.

Bucksport High School has articulation agreements with the University of Southern Maine, University of Maine at Fort Kent, and Eastern Maine Community College. These agreements allow BHS students to access courses approved by the colleges and taught at BHS for reduced rates. Currently there are twelve courses approved for dual enrollment. In addition, Bucksport High School participates in a program that allows students to access an engineering class offered through Maine Maritime Academy.

RSU 25 houses a welding program, which is a satellite program for Hancock County Technical Center. The welding program operates five days per week and serves students across Hancock County. Students have the opportunity to access this

program for two years and have the potential to earn multiple national welding certifications. There is also an adult education program that provides services to adults for high school completion, work force training, literacy acquisition, higher education distance learning opportunities, and general interest courses.

The RSU participated in a two-year associate's degree program allowing enrollees to earn the skills necessary for work in a paper mill. Tax Increment Financing covered tuition costs. The Program was cancelled following the mill closure.

Enrollment trends are shown in Table 5.9. Total Bucksport enrollment decreased from 841 in 2003 to 694 in 2007. It fluctuated between 2008 and 2013, but remained below 2003 levels. K-8 Bucksport enrollment decreased from 539 in 2003 to 444 in 2007. After some fluctuations it reached 477 in 2013. High school enrollment also fluctuated but total Bucksport enrollment in 2013 was 198, which is a decrease of 104 students (34 percent) from 302 students enrolled in 2003.

**Future Needs.** The RSU has a detailed capital improvement program. Its focus is on maintenance and the needs of current students rather than accommodating additional students. As mentioned in the Population chapter, current projections anticipate an overall decrease in population and an increase in the median age. This means that one challenge will be maintaining the current range of services if the student population decreases.

One option is to have more towns join the RSU. The possible addition of other towns is being explored. The excess capacity means there is space for new programs aimed at older segments of the population and vocational training. Local employers report a shortage of trained cooks and people with background in hospitality services. The RSU coordinates its vocational programs with those in Penobscot County but no student transportation is presently provided.

Before the shift to the RSU, the school system was a municipal department. New channels of communication are being established between the town and the school. The town council has less direct input to the RSU budgetary process.

**Walkability.** Bucksport schools are all located in residential areas. The town has a system of sidewalks and clearly marked cross-walks that make it easier for many students to walk to school. There is more discussion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Transportation chapter. There are further opportunities for residential development near the schools.

<b>Table 5.9 Enrollment Trends, Bucksport and Other RSU 25 Towns</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>K-8</b>	<b>9-12</b>	<b>Total</b>
2003 Bucksport	539	302	841
Other RSU 25 Towns	124	147	271
<b>2003 Total</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>1112</b>
2004 Bucksport	531	305	836
Other RSU 25 Towns	124	150	274
<b>2004 Total</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>1110</b>
2005 Bucksport	515	294	809
Other RSU 25 Towns	126	160	286
<b>2005 Total</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>1095</b>
2006 Bucksport	486	283	769
Other RSU 25 Towns	111	182	293
<b>2006 Total</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>1062</b>
2007 Bucksport	444	250	694
Other RSU 25 Towns	129	189	318
<b>2007 Total</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>1012</b>
2008 Bucksport	466	242	708
Other RSU 25 Towns	119	177	296
<b>2008 Total</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>1004</b>
<b>(Start of RSU 25)</b>	<b>K-8</b>	<b>9-12</b>	<b>Total</b>
2009 Bucksport	514	232	746
Other RSU 25 Towns	269	155	424
<b>2009 Total</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>1170</b>
2010 Bucksport	477	220	697
Other RSU 25 Towns	301	156	457
<b>2010 Total</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>1154</b>
2011 Bucksport	500	214	714
Other RSU 25 Towns	292	167	459
<b>2011 Total</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>1154</b>
2012 Bucksport	510	202	712
Other RSU 25 Towns	305	129	434
<b>2012 Total</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>1146</b>
2013 Bucksport	477	198	675
Other RSU 25 Towns	289	127	416
<b>2013 Total</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>1091</b>
2014 Bucksport	473	178	651
Other RSU 25 Towns	298	133	431
<b>2014 Total</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>1082</b>
2015 Bucksport	478	194	672
Other RSU 25 Towns	288	117	405
<b>2015 Total</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>1077</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> RSU 25. Figures are for fall enrollment.			



## (5.C.2) Public Library

**Current Conditions.** Bucksport is served by the Buck Memorial Library, a non-profit organization. The building of the same name was built in 1887 and expanded in 1990. There is a 1,240-square-foot basement and a 2,340 square-foot main floor. The rooms are described in Table 5.10.

<b>Table 5.10 Library Rooms</b>	
<b>Description of room/purpose</b>	<b>Approximate sq. footage</b>
Reading room	480 square-feet
Reference room	500 square-feet
Children's area	380 square-feet
Adult fiction	220 square-feet
Circulation area & office	180 square-feet
Foyer & computer area	500 square-feet
Bathroom	60 square-feet
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucks Memorial Library	

The library trustees note several problems with the facility. There is limited space for its collections and gatherings. Two walls of the foundation in the old section need repairs. The estimated cost is about \$125,000 per wall. The roof in the new section is in poor condition and will probably need replacement in the near future. There are also persistent leaks in the roof of the old section.

There are two full-time employees and four volunteers (three adults and one high school student). There are no plans to add staff. Volunteers also participate in the annual financial appeal.

The library is presently open 37 hours a week. Monday through Friday hours are 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Saturday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. There are no plans to expand hours. A trial period of evening hours did not attract patrons.

The library has a special collection of Bucksport town history materials. This includes family histories, cemetery records, and vital records for Bucksport, Orland, and Prospect. There is also a collection of early Bucksport newspapers.



The electronic media collection includes audio books, DVD's, and CD's. The trustees have discussed the addition of e-books, but the cost and copyright/publisher issues have delayed efforts. Additional books can be obtained through interlibrary loan. The patron is

asked to pay for postage. Circulation trends are shown in Table 5.11. They show an overall decrease (from 22,717 in 2005 to 12,324 in 2012). This may be due to national trends in library usage. Many libraries are experiencing a decline in circulation due to the advent of e-books and other on-line technology.

<b>Table 5.11 Total Circulation in Buck Memorial Library</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Volumes Circulated</b>
2005	22,717
2006	20,178
2007	18,052
2008	16,639
2009	15,182
2010	12,830
2011	11,648
2012	12,324
Source: Bucks Memorial Library	

The total number of volumes is shown in Table 5.12. While there have been some fluctuations, the overall trends show a decrease. This may be due to a culling of older books. Here again, the national trend has been a shift toward electronic titles.

The library provides various services to the community. It has two public-access computers with high-speed fiber optic connections. There is also an open WiFi connection for lap top users.

There is a story time for children every Wednesday morning and an annual teddy bear picnic. Other children's services include a collection of gift books during Christmas and hosted children's class visits. Adult services include a series of lectures on Bucksport's history. Books are delivered to shut-ins via caregivers.

<b>Table 5.12 Total Volumes in Bucks Memorial Library</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Volumes</b>
2005	29,664
2006	30,000
2007	29,620
2008	27,799
2009	27,194
2010	27,490
2011	27,215
2012	26,243
Source: Bucks Memorial Library	

**Future Needs.** The trustees would like to expand adult programs and seek more volunteers. One option is to create a “Friends of the Library” group. Another is a library newsletter. The library is still assessing options to introduce e-books. As mentioned above, some significant building improvements are needed.

## 5.D Health & Social Services

**Recent Trends.** Significant changes have occurred in the delivery of health care services in the last decade. Today, it is critical for every citizen to be registered with a primary care provider in order for children and adults to have access to services. The ability of primary care practices to respond to these needs is challenging because of the difficulty of recruiting health care providers to rural communities in Maine. Hospitals in Hancock County have gone through a series of reorganizations. Funding for social services has been significantly cut, leading to a reduction or complete elimination of services. Bucksport’s location presents geographic challenges to the delivery of social services by agencies that are usually located in larger service center communities. The capacity of these agencies to extend satellite services in rural areas is limited. These circumstances create a fragmented system of care, which can lead to:

1. Elders being displaced from their communities to receive the level of care needed
2. Families unable to find affordable child care services
3. Limited access to specialty health care services such as pediatric care and adult day service centers
4. Unnecessary use of high cost emergency and hospital services
5. Lack of timely access to mental health care

**Current Conditions.** This section presents a brief overview of current services. More information is available at: [www.bucksportbayhealth.org](http://www.bucksportbayhealth.org). The website also lists local health care providers.

In 2014 Bucksport Family Practice, which was operated by Blue Hill Memorial Hospital, closed its practice. This change launched a collaborative planning process between Blue Hill Memorial Hospital and Bucksport Regional Health Center to plan for the



The Recreation Dept., BBHCC and RSU 25 students “Make a Difference Team” takes on issues like bullying.



Blue Hill Memorial Hospital has a presence on Main Street to provide rehabilitation and other specialties.

needs of patients served by Bucksport Family Practice.

Bucksport Regional Health Center (BRHC) collaborates with Blue Hill Memorial Hospital (BHMH) in providing health care services. BRHC's focus is primary care. BHMH provides specialized services such as rehabilitation. BHMH also leased space at BRHC to provide specialty care. Later in 2014 BHMH moved its specialists from BRHC to its old primary care site downtown with their rehab program.

BRHC contracts with BHMH for a diabetic educator and nutritionist two days a week. The health center collaborates with Aroostook Mental Health to provide a behavioral health manager. Other services are provided on a part-time basis. These include pediatric dentistry, a psychiatric nurse practitioner from Acadia Hospital, and a podiatrist.

BBHCC launched the Thriving in Place program in 2015. This program is designed to help older adult residents and those living with the challenges of chronic illness and disabilities to live happily and safely in their own homes for as long as possible. Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition has partnered with 16 local and regional healthcare and service agencies, combined with a core volunteer support team that will provide resources, support, education, referral to services and more to make this goal possible. This model approach has the potential to significantly improve how services are coordinated between health and social service agencies and reduces duplication of services. Additionally, partnerships can more quickly identify gaps in services. This type of ongoing planning function strengthens the local continuum of care.

For more than a decade the BBHCC's Early Childhood Network has been committed to addressing the community's ability to provide families with access to quality early care and education services. The 2011 Maine Children's Growth Council Report **School Readiness** reported that "65% of Maine Children 5 years and younger have all parents in the workforce. The early childhood system must ensure access to reliable, quality early care and education."

In 2014, the BBHCC's Early Childhood Network further assessed the local area capacity of licensed center-based and home-based day care, as well as facilities that offer formal pre-K programs. The assessment determined that there were existing local pockets of availability at the center-based facilities and with some licensed home-based care providers, but the reduction in MaineCare vouchers had left some agencies forced to cut staff and some families struggling to afford private fees.

RSU 25, in partnership with Child and Family Opportunities recognized the need to increase the number of pre-K classrooms at the Jewett School from two to three classrooms. Bucksport Area Child Care Center also offers a pre-K program. It remains a goal of RSU 25 to offer a true universal pre-K program within the services offered by the



Bucksport Regional Health Center on Broadway has offices for primary medical care & dental services and lab facilities. A major addition was added in 2013.



RSU. Other needs/concerns that arose out of this assessment process included delays in available therapy through Child Development Services, the coordination of resource development and the construction of a comprehensive early care and education plan, as well as integration of private case management services, DHHS programs and funding, and parent or kinship care training and/or coaching. Bucksport Area Child Care Center put off a planned expansion of its building following the closure of the mill. The center plans to continue to assess the need for expansion and will remodel and upgrade as needed.

In 2015, Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities in partnership with RSU 25 received a grant from the Maine Children's Trust to develop and operate a parent coaching program aimed at helping parents and caregivers to effectively prepare their children to succeed in school. This program, The Incredible Years, was extremely successful in attracting over 20 families to participate.

Bucksport is also home to faith-based initiatives that help people with physical, social and spiritual needs. One example is Bucksport Community Concerns, a not for profit, all volunteer agency, dedicated to providing emergency and supplemental food and fuel to individuals and families in Bucksport, Orland and Verona Island. The Food Pantry is located at 31 Elm Street in the basement of the Elm Street Congregational Church. The pantry is a distribution point for 'Coats are for Kids' and also provides baby layettes for first time mothers and backpacks and school supplies to needy children. BCC also coordinates the 'Christmas is for Kids' program along with providing a Christmas dinner, provides limited fuel assistance and the pantry is a site for the University of Maine's Center on Aging Senior Companion Program.

BCC also runs the Talk'n Shop, a thrift shop supported by donations of clothing and household goods. The profit from the Talk'n Shop is used to fund the food pantry. Most of the pantry's funding, however, comes from both private and business donations. Another source of income is monies received by the towns the pantry serves through budget requests. The pantry also receives nonperishable food donations from local food drives organized by the public schools, the post office, the Boy scouts and the Girl Scouts. BCC serves 140 families per year. This volume of service is consistent with previous years. For more information, see <http://elmstreetcc.org>.



The Talk-N-Shop on Main Street is a service of Bucksport Community Concerns.

**Regional Health Care.** In addition to local facilities mentioned, the Bucksport area is served by several major hospitals less than twenty miles away including Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor, Maine Coast Memorial Hospital in Ellsworth, Waldo County General Hospital in Belfast and Blue Hill Memorial Hospital.

## 5.E Public Works (Roads, Maintenance and Solid Waste Disposal)

### (5.E.1) Roads and Maintenance

**Staffing and Contractual Arrangements.** The Public Works Department oversees yearly road maintenance and snow removal. It also is responsible for maintaining all public facilities within the limits of its expertise. Pavement overlay, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and other specialized services are done through contracts.

There are eleven full-time employees year-round. There are three part-time employees in the summer and three in the winter. The only problem noted with the current level of staffing is assuring adequate summer maintenance and landscaping of town grounds, the waterfront, and town managed cemeteries. Specific road maintenance needs are discussed in the Transportation chapter. More is written on cemeteries in the History Chapter

**Current and Needed Future Equipment.** The current equipment replacement schedule is identified in Table 5.13. In addition to regular replacement of vehicles, the department would like to acquire a 4,000-pound forklift.

<b>Table 5.13 Major Equipment Replacement Schedule Public Works Department, 2013</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Year of Replacement</b>
Sterling 5-cy dump truck	2003	FY 2015
Sterling 12-cy dump truck	2003	FY 2016
John Deere 450 dozer	2003	FY 2017
GMC 1500 truck	2006	FY 2018
Case 310 wheeled loader	2006	FY 2018
Case 480 backhoe loader	2009	FY 2018
Ford F550 Truck	2013	FY 2019
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Public Works Department		

### (5.E.2) Street Tree Program

The town has had an ongoing program of planting trees as part of its downtown and waterfront improvement strategy. The program is overseen by the Conservation Commission.



### (5.E.3) Solid Waste Management

Solid waste and recycling operations are handled by the Bucksport transfer station. The facility is also used by residents of Orland. The facility meets all current DEP operating requirements. There are two full-time employees and no plans to hire additional staff. The capped municipal solid waste landfill to the rear of the transfer station has several test wells installed to monitor ground water quality in the vicinity.

Equipment includes a 40-cubic-yard hydraulic ram compaction hopper and two 40-cubic transport trailers. Waste is currently shipped to the PERC plant in Orrington where trash is incinerated and converted to electric power and ash. The transfer station also has five 30-cubic-yard roll-off containers. Two are used for Construction demolition debris. The others are for metals, metal cans, and refrigerators and similar white goods. There are also three 48-foot



The Bucksport Regional Transfer Station off Central St.

freight box trailers and a 300 square-foot Universal Waste storage building. The recycling staging area is adequate for the current level of recycling. The box trailers will need to be replaced shortly with a permanent storage building. There is also a leaf composting site and a waste oil collection shed. The town and staff are constantly looking at ways to make the solid waste & recycling programs more efficient and cost effective as markets change. The recent availability of single-sort recycling to the region is being utilized. No-sort recycling is a future likelihood as a facility is being constructed.

## 5.F Utilities (Water, Wastewater, Stormwater and Other)

### (5.F.1) Public Water System

**Current Conditions.** The Maine Water Company operates the water system that serves the compact area. As of December 31, 2012, there were 653 customer accounts (527 residential, 100 commercial and public authority, six industrial, and 20 fire service and other accounts). The water source is Silver Lake. A 2,500-foot 12-inch cast-iron line carries untreated water to the treatment plant on School Street. In its heyday, the Verso Mill also withdrew an average of 10 million GPD water from Silver Lake. For further discussion of Silver Lake, see the Water Resources chapter.

The treatment plant was completed 1996. It is capable of producing 750,000 GPD. The average production in 2012 was 256,000 GPD, with a maximum day of 436,000 gallons. There is a total of 950,000 gallons in storage capacity in two pre-stressed concrete storage tanks. The 350,000-gallon tank in Birch Heights was built in 1997. The 600,000-gallon Silver Lake Road tank was completed in 2013. The distribution system includes



approximately 13 miles of main ranging in size from 1 to 12 inches in diameter. The system has 77 hydrants. As discussed in the analysis of the fire department, water volumes are adequate for fire-fighting purposes. The treated water is tested and presently complies with all state drinking water standards.

Booster pumps are required to provide adequate water pressure at higher elevations. Most business in the industrial park have booster pumps in order to meet insurance company water pressure requirements for fire suppression systems. The distribution system is

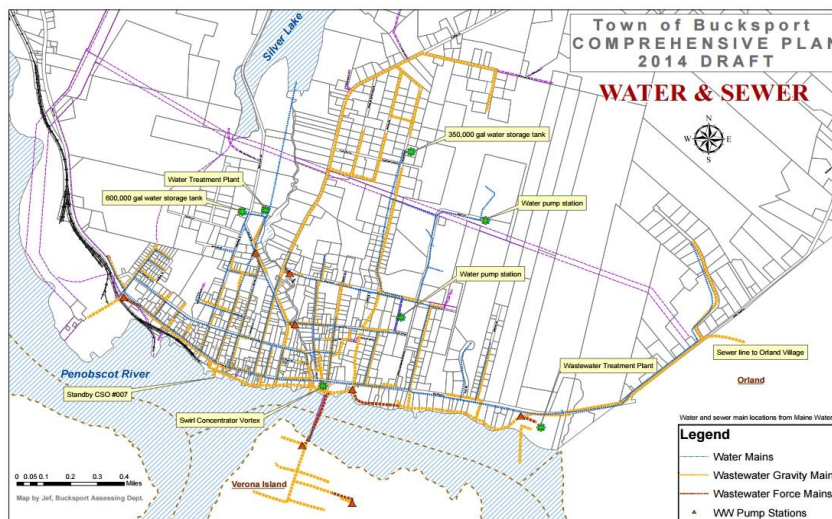


Maine Water's facility off School St. processes water from Silver Lk.

summarized in Table 5.14 (see [bucksportmaine.gov](http://bucksportmaine.gov)). About 39% of the system is over 50 years-old and about 11 percent is between 31 and 50 years-old. The company has been gradually replacing aging mains and has not reported any major problems.

**Future Needs.** It is important to monitor conditions in the Silver Lake watershed to assure that they pose no threats to water quality (see Water Resources chapter). The lake is connected by aqueduct with Alamoosook Lake. Since about 75 percent of the direct drainage area of Alamoosook lies within Orland and a smaller portion is within Penobscot, the town has little control over activities in that lake.

Maine Water Company has a five-year capital budget plan that identifies priority projects. It ranks the value of the project for the water system and also considers any planned street improvements. This helps coordinate street resurfacing with other activities that involve removing pavement. Emergencies (such as a water main break) may require unanticipated changes in the capital investment schedule.



A map of Bucksport's water and sewer system facilities along with a list of system details on pipe sizes and lengths are available on the Comp Plan Web page at: [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov).

(5.F.2) Public Sewer System

**An Overview of Current conditions.** The Bucksport public sewer system serves the built-up area of Bucksport as well as portions of Verona Island and Orland. The sewage is discharged through the wastewater treatment facility at 205 U.S. Route 1. The facility is presently licensed for primary wastewater treatment. It is scheduled for an upgrade to secondary treat by 2016. The facility is managed through a contract with Maine Water.

Wastewater flows are between 100 and 115 million gallons per year. Average daily flows range from 250,000 to 400,000 gallons per day (gpd). The treatment plant currently has a rated capacity of 460,000 gpd. There is no difference between average summer and winter flows. The record flow was 1.2 million gpd. This occurred before the CSO (combined stormwater overflow) improvements were made. About 5.5 to 6 percent of the flows are from the Orland portion of the system. Verona Island accounts for about 3.5 to 5 percent of flows.

Connections are shown on Table 5.15. These numbers are based on the total number of connections rather than the number of commercial or residential units in town. For example, there may be one service connection for a 10-unit apartment building. These data indicate that there are 59 discontinued connections. This may be due to the number of vacant buildings in town.

<b>Table 5.15 Bucksport Sewer Connections by Category, 2014</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Residential	549	63.85
Commercial	249	28.9%
Industrial	3	0.003%
Discontinued	59	6.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Wastewater Treatment Plant & Maine Water		

The system has about 79,204 feet (15 miles) of mains (see Table 5.16 at bucksportmaine.gov). About 71,541 feet are gravity lines and 2,110 feet are forced mains. About 90 percent of the lines are PVC/ductile and six percent are the older clay pipes, which are more vulnerable to infiltration and inflow. The remaining lines are transit, forced mains, and cross-country.

There have been numerous improvements made to the collection system and plant operations since 2003. The town used Community Development Block Grant funds to replace segments of sewer mains on Pine, Bridge, Elm, and Third Streets. This project also removed some roof drains on Main Street. The head works at the treatment facility were upgraded and a Combined Sewer Overflow vortex processor was installed. This processor eliminated all untreated wastewater discharges to the Penobscot River.

Various energy efficiency improvements were made. These included installing a pellet boiler and new lighting fixtures. New technology has resulted in more efficient use of energy in pump and other equipment operation. Plant managers have also reduced costs by restructuring the chemical feed systems.

**Future Needs.** The system needs to address its remaining infiltration/inflow problems. These occur primarily during storm events. Ongoing improvements to the collection system will also be needed. The ten-inch interceptor line between Hannaford's and the treatment plant may have to be replaced with a larger line if there is further land development in that area.

**Sewer Extension.** Section 9.5 of the Town Code addresses sewer extension policy. Extensions may be constructed under public contract if, in the opinion of the Town Council, the number of properties served by the extension warrant its cost. While there is no direct reference to the Future Land Use Plan, designated growth areas lie within areas that are potentially served by sewer.

#### (5.F.3) Septage Disposal

Commercial haulers dispose of septage (the residue pumped from septic tanks) to various licensed sites in the area. There is a commercial septage dewatering facility and a sludge compost area in Bucksport that process waste delivered by haulers. A Town subsidy program to help pay for pumping private septic tanks was discontinued.

#### (5.F.4) Stormwater Management

According to DEP records, Bucksport has eliminated all but one of its CSO's (combined sewer overflows) for up to a 25-year storm event. The remaining CSO is at Perry's landing. It is deployed only during major storms. In recent years, it has been used an average of six times a year. The sewage treatment plant has developed a wet weather management plan to minimize threats to water quality from the CSO.

The current land use ordinances have detailed storm water management standards. These stipulate that to the “greatest extent possible” stormwater runoff from new development be retained on site using natural features.

Stormwater management techniques are evolving across the country. The town may want to explore implementing low impact development standards that provide more detailed guidelines to manage stormwater.

Also, the projected increase in severe storm events may mean that the current 25-year storm event will occur more frequently. This could require designing stormwater infrastructure to higher standards. This would involve reviewing the current and future adequacy of culvert and ditch standards to accommodate anticipated storm events.



2008 Swirl Concentrator CSO Building at 12 Main St.

#### (5.F.5) Telecommunications and Energy Infrastructure

**Internet.** As mentioned in the Economy chapter, broadband access is available almost anywhere near the power grid in Bucksport. The town has the opportunity to obtain faster internet service through the State’s “three-ring binder” initiative to extend fiber optic service along Routes 1, 15 and 46. Fairpoint Communications and other private companies also own cable including a fiber optic loop in the downtown (Central St, Broadway, Miles Ln, and Nicholson Ave) serving schools, businesses and homes. Fairpoint is upgrading for a big boost in Internet speeds for 2016. Grants are available for better Web service through the federal government and Hancock County’s windfarm fund. The town is working with Fairpoint to improve Internet service in Heritage Park.

**Electric Power.** Both Central Maine Power and Emera serve the electric power needs of portions of Bucksport. Three-phase power is available in those areas zoned for industrial and commercial uses.

Bucksport Generation, LLC is the current owner of the “power island” on the River Road mill site. It has a 185+/- megawatt natural gas-fired combustion turbine along with smaller boilers potentially using biomass or other fuels adding another possible 115 +/- megawatts of capacity. The gas turbine is currently used as a stand-by generator for the electric power grid. Supplying direct power to some of the River Road Industrial Area is a possibility that could encourage redevelopment and full utilization of the power plant.



**Natural Gas.** While natural gas service is available in much of the downtown and River Road industrial area, it does not presently serve the Heritage Park industrial area. The availability of natural gas there would enhance business attraction and retention.

**Television.** Bucksport has a long-term contract with Time-Warner Cable to serve the town with cable TV. In return for the right to use the town's rights-of-way, TWC pays a fee and gives the town public access channels and equipment needed to run them. Satellite television providers can access homes without a town contract.



2013 Natural Gas Pressure Reduction Station at 3 River Road serving downtown Bucksport businesses & residences.

**Mail Delivery.** From time to time Bucksport residents have sought for a solution to the lack of delivery service for in-town residents. Paying for and using a postal delivery box has been the only option for many. This policy creates the need for daily trips to the USPS Office on Mechanic Street to collect each household's mail. An organized approach toward getting the rules changed could make a difference.



*Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays  
these couriers from the swift completion of  
their appointed rounds.*

– Unofficial motto of the U.S. Postal Service

## 6. RECREATION and CULTURAL RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes current recreational and cultural resources in Bucksport and assesses the current and future adequacy of these resources. It also assesses the availability of open space areas for public recreation and how public access could be threatened by future growth and development.

**State Goal:** To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.

### OVERVIEW

The Bucksport Parks and Recreation Department offers a large variety of indoor and outdoor programs for all age groups. The community is also served by several other organizations in the recreational and cultural spheres. The town has developed various walking trails for exercise and refreshment in the urban and rural environments, including the ever popular waterfront walkway and two parcels adjacent to Silver Lake.

Recreational facilities and programs are generally considered adequate while there are always more that could be added. For example, there are no town-owned freshwater swimming facilities apart from the municipal pool. More outdoor or indoor options for swimmers may be considered. The town's new fiscal capacity since the mill's closure will surely play a role in any decision-making process going forward. As the population ages, the town may want to offer more recreational services for the elderly. RSU 25, the Public Library, Northeast Historic Film and the Bucksport Area Cultural Arts Society (BACAS) also contribute to the recreational/cultural environment. Initiatives from others add to a rich tapestry of opportunity to learn and enjoy arts, sports and recreation in Bucksport.



### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ A 600-seat cultural arts facility opened at the new middle school in 2003.
- ★ The Youth Programs Coordinator has expanded Rec Department offerings.
- ★ A meals program was begun at the new Bucksport Area Senior Center.
- ★ The Chamber of Commerce began sponsoring an Arts Festival in 2015.
- ★ A regional committee is researching potential for a branch YMCA in Bucksport.
- ★ The waterfront walkway, trails and parks were expanded since the last Plan.
- ★ The public trail systems are better publicized through flyers, maps and signage.
- ★ "Wednesdays on Main" weekly summer cultural events began in 2015.

## CONDITIONS AND TRENDS ANALYSIS

**Public recreational programs** in Bucksport are coordinated by the Parks and Recreation Department. Staff consists of a director and a youth program coordinator. The department offers recreational programs for various age groups. These include team sports for boys and girls from pre-school through high school. There are also programs for senior citizens, including, a low-impact, strength-training exercise program. No deficiencies in programs have been noted by the recreation department.

Parks and Recreation Department management consists of a Recreation Director and a Board of Parks and Recreation. The Director organizes and runs all of the programs offered by the Department. The Board (which is to meet three times yearly) advises the Director and determines the activities that are offered and establishes general policies. The Department is responsible for maintaining various facilities around town.

The major facilities available to town residents are described in Table 6.1. One potential need is a teen center. Winter recreational activities would be enhanced by an indoor swimming pool. It is not clear how construction of this facility would be funded. One proposal involves a new YMCA, which is being analyzed by a regional committee.

*Will existing recreational facilities and programs in the community and region accommodate projected growth or changes in age groups in your community? Is there a need for certain types of services or facilities or to upgrade or enlarge present facilities to either add capacity or make them more usable?*

With the projected aging of the population, it may become more challenging to sustain the current level of programs aimed at youth. With fewer individuals in younger age groups, there may not be enough participants for some activities. Conversely, there may be more demand for programs for senior citizens. Apart from regular maintenance, no other needs have been identified.

The Jewett School Community Center hosts many of the indoor programs. It is also the site of the Bucksport Fitness Center, which features exercise equipment and free weights. Much more on Parks and Recreation Department programming may be found at [bucksportmaine.gov](http://bucksportmaine.gov).

Another major recreational facility is the 500-seat Bucksport Performing Arts Center. It is located in an annex to the Middle School. It hosts a variety of school-sponsored and community events



The Parks and Recreation offices, conference room, gym and exercise facilities are in the Jewett School on Bridge St.



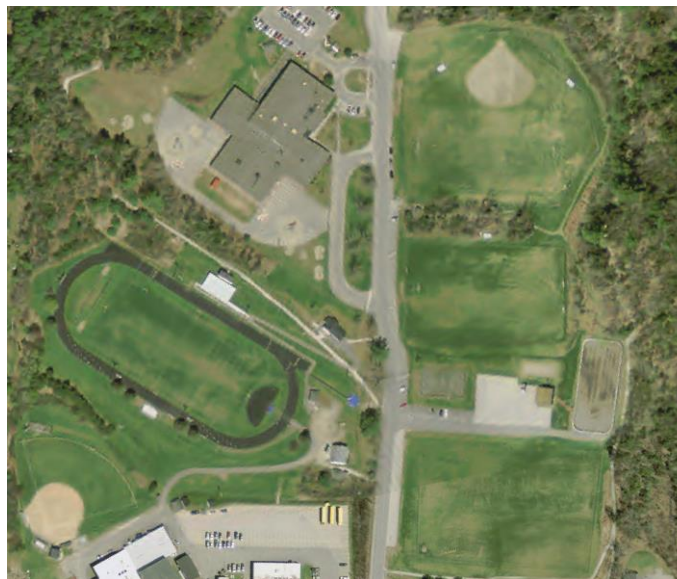
**Table 6.1**  
**INVENTORY OF MAJOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE AREAS IN BUCKSPORT.**

Location and Description	Size	Ownership
Bridge Street Outdoor Swimming Pool & Building at Broadway	1 acre	Town
Bridge Street Jewett School Playground at Broadway	1/2 acre	RSU # 25
Central Street Knights of Columbus Little League Baseball Field	3.5 acres	K of C
Elm Street Recreational Facility - Old Junior High Baseball Field	3 acres	Town
Elm Street Recreational Facility - Ian's Playground and parking	1 acre	Town
High School Softball Field w/ lights, dugouts	1 acre	Town
High School Football/Track Complex w/ lights, stands, concessions	7 acres	Town
High School Outdoor Track	1/4 mile	Town
High School Tennis Courts with Lights	1/2 acre	Town
Miles Lane BMS Athletic Field Complex (baseball, soccer, softball)	4 acres	RSU # 25
Miles Lane School Playgrounds (2)	1 acre	RSU # 25
Miles Lane # 1 Field (Football practice field)	3 acres	Town
Miles Lane # 2 Field (Soccer)	2 acres	Town
Miles Lane # 3 Field (Soccer, Baseball and Softball)	3.5 acres	Town
Miles Lane Outdoor Basketball Court with Lights, parking	1/2 acre	Town
Miles Lane Outdoor Volleyball Court with Lights	1/4 acre	Town
Miles Lane Outdoor Full Size Hockey Rink w/ lights & warming building	3/4 acre	Town
Miles Lane Walking/Nature Trails = 3 miles for walking, biking, skiing	73 acres	Town
Silver Lake East - 2.5 mi. hiking trails, arboretum, primitive campgrnd.	64 acres	Town
Silver Lake West - Canoe and Kayak Landing, future hiking, picnicking	89 acres	Town
Silver Lake Boat Landing and Parking (w, 2,000' narrow lake front lot)	5 acres	Town
Spofford Ave. Reggie Ginn Field – Little League Baseball and parking	4 acres	Town
Upper Long Pond Rd – public access conservation area, trails planned	67 acres	GPMCT
Waterfront Walkway: 1 mile on town-owned lands and rights-of-way	5 acres+/-	Town
Waterfront Rufas Googins Park (walkway connects to Main Street)	1 acre	Town
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Parks and Recreation Department		

Many of the town and RSU's sport facilities are accessed from Miles Lane, including:

- Softball Fields
- Baseball Fields
- Track & Field facilities
- Soccer Fields
- Basketball Courts
- Ice Skating/Hockey Rink
- Beach Volleyball Court
- Multi-use trails
- Playground
- Tennis Courts (at BHS)

More information on Parks and Recreation can be found at [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov)



## Other Recreational & Cultural Resources

Besides the public recreation facilities summarized above, there are other opportunities provided by various local organizations and individuals.

The Bucksport Area Cultural Arts Society (BACAS) sponsors many events. The society is an organization dedicated to support and promote life-long learning experiences in the cultural and performing arts in Bucksport and surrounding communities and schools. BACAS events are described more fully at: [www.bacasmaine.org](http://www.bacasmaine.org) .

*A description of important public and private active recreation programs, land and water recreation areas (including hunting and fishing areas), and facilities in the community and region, including regional recreational opportunities as appropriate, and identification of unmet needs.*

The Bucksport Area Senior Citizens Center at 125 Broadway provides a location and calendar of events for those over 55, including meals, games, music and quilting.

The Bucksport Bay Area Chamber of Commerce organizes its Annual Bucksport Arts Festival in August. Every week in summer, "Wednesdays on Main" features a live event on Bucksport's Main Street from 5-7 pm on the street under a tent or at The Alamo Theatre. Some events are free or have modest admission charge. The Chamber also sponsors other events and helps promote local artists, businesses, lodging and etc.

The Bucksport Garden Club plants and maintains town window boxes and The Buck Memorial Library garden. The club also sponsors community and youth programs including meetings with guest speakers.

The Bucksport Golf Club is a 95-acre privately owned nine-hole golf course and events center that is situated between State Route 46 and the Narramissic River with mountain views. At 3,348 yards, the fully irrigated par 37 design achieves a course rating of 72.5 and could be considered a "championship" course. The golfing facility also boasts a pro shop, snack bar, driving range & 2-chipping greens.

The Bucks Mills Rod & Gun Club, located at 370 Bucksmills Road, holds monthly meetings to promote an interest in conservation in order to ensure good hunting and fishing for future generations. The family oriented group also provides facilities to help youth develop an interest to learn safety afield and on the water. For more information, see <http://www.bucksmills.ws>.

The Family Snowmobile Club promotes safety & ethics and oversees construction, maintenance and grooming on more than 60 miles of trails in Bucksport and Orland. The Club's website at <http://www.familysnowmobileclub.com/> and its Facebook page supply basic trail information and trail condition updates.

Northeast Historic Film (NHF) is another cultural resource. It is a nonprofit archive dedicated to collecting, preserving and sharing northern New England's moving image heritage. The facility includes a three-story vault holding over 10 million feet of film, a public study center, and the historic 140-seat Alamo Theater that regularly provides live entertainment and movies to the public.

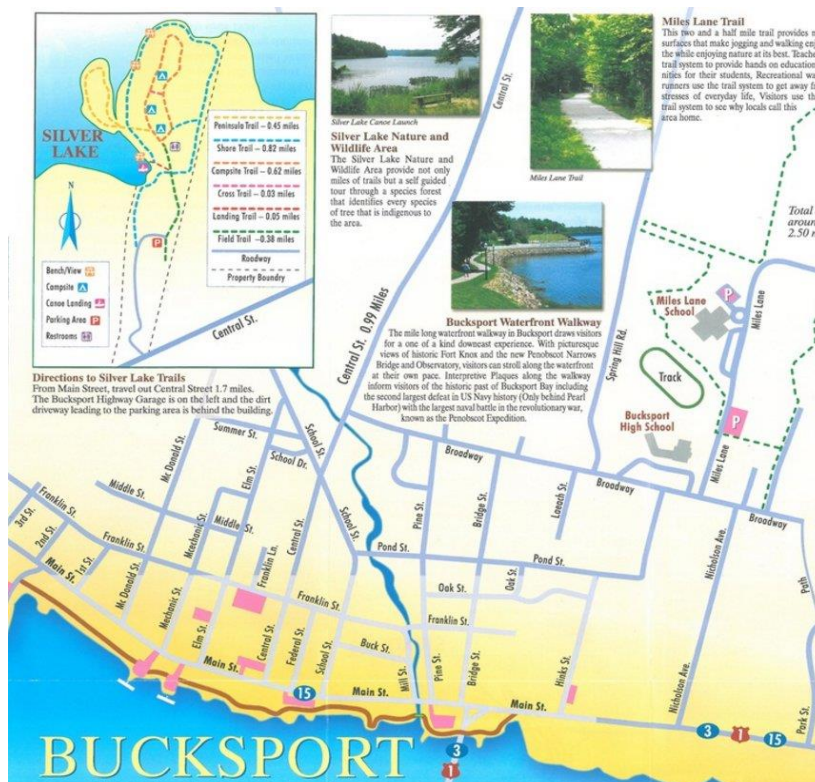


### More recreational & cultural resources of note:

- American Legion, Bucksport Post 39.
- Buck Memorial Library (more in Chapter 5)
- Bucksport Historical Society (more in Ch. 11)
- Churches and other faith-based groups
- Cub Scouts Pack 26
- Duck Cove Community Club (more in Ch. 11)
- Friends of Fort Knox (and the State Park!)
- Girl Scouts
- Great Pond Mt. Cons. Trust (more in Ch. 5)
- Knights of Columbus (Council 5756).
- The Orland Community Center licensed commercial kitchen.



Alderbrook Farm on Route 1 and CBC Stables, Inc. in Millvale are recreational horseback riding facilities that offer horse training and riding lessons for all ages.



The Bucksport Bay Area Chamber of Commerce website hosts some very nice maps of the walking trails in town. View them at: <http://www.bucksportbaychamber.com/take-a-hikehere.html>



### Access to Natural Areas.

The Miles Lane and Silver Lake walking trail areas are on town-owned land and may become permanently conserved. Bucksport conservation areas are described in Chapter 9 Natural Resources. Many more acres of land are available for outdoor recreation in nearby towns including those managed by Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust, State Parks and Acadia National Park.

*Are important tracts of open space commonly used for recreation publicly-owned or otherwise permanently conserved? Does the community have a mechanism, such as an open space fund or partnership with a land trust, to acquire important open spaces and access sites, either outright or through conservation easements? Is traditional access to private lands being restricted?*

More public access land in the Bucksport area is a welcomed trend, even with Maine's unique "open land" tradition. A large majority of the town's rural area remains in private hands, where individuals looking to gain access must observe postings from the ownership. The amount of private land available for others to hunt, fish and hike fluctuates with changes in ownership and attitude. There is no tracking of these happenings. A recent Maine court case defined ocean shore access on private property as limited to those who are engaged in "fishing, fowling, and navigation".



Public trails off Central Street overlook Silver Lake



### ARCHERY HUNTING

Bucksport has established a special archery hunting district in the village area. This area and all parcels to the south also comprise the "No Firearms Discharge Area". Detailed descriptions and maps are available at [bucksportmaine.gov](http://bucksportmaine.gov).

### Public Waterbody Access.

Boat access to Silver Lake, Jacob Buck Pond and the Bucksport Harbor area are clearly marked for the public. Since Silver Lake is the source of the municipal water supply, swimming has been prohibited. The State-owned public boat launch at Jacob Buck Pond was designed for motorboat and canoe access. No provisions for swimming have been made at the site. Table 6.2 shows the status of public access on waterbodies in town. See Chapter 8 Water Resources and Chapter 7 Marine Resources for more information on these waterbodies.

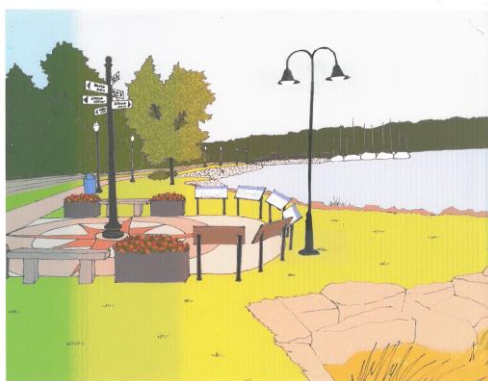
*Does the public have access to each of the community's significant water bodies?*



The Silver Lake boat launch was upgraded in 2014.

**Table 6.2 Public Access to Waterbodies in Bucksport**

Name	Acres	Comments
Brewer Lake	958	Public boat access and swimming at north end in Orrington.
Hancock Pond	62	Informal hand launch and swimming site from Mast Hill Road.
Jacob Buck Pond	182	State-owned Public access for fishing and boating.
Long Pond	160	The town owns a lot on the north end with undeveloped access.
Moosehorn Stream	---	Informal canoe/kayak launch at Route 46 and at Bald Mt. Road.
Moulton Pond	49	Private access only. Permission needed from landowner.
Mud Pond	35	Private access only. Permission needed from landowner.
Narramissic River	---	Public access below Alamoosook Lake dam & in Orland Village.
Penobscot River	---	Town and State-owned Public access for fishing and boating.
Silver Lake	682	Town-owned Public access for fishing and boating.
Thurston Pond	129	Private access only. Permission needed from landowner.
Williams Pond	79	Private access only. Permission needed from landowner.



The "Center of the Known Universe" portion of the waterfront walkway park was nearly completed in 2015 with some alterations from the design sketch at left. The moniker for this informational park may also be amended.

## 7. MARINE RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

Marine resources play an important role in Bucksport's economy. The harbor facilities serve both recreational and commercial users. The waterfront attracts visitors and is also enjoyed by many residents.

**State Goal:** To protect the State's marine resources industry, ports and harbors from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public.

### OVERVIEW / MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

The paper mill was an outstanding feature of the Bucksport waterfront for over eight decades. Water transport options were there for both feedstock and final product. The potential for the development of a major port in Bucksport for a broad range of uses may never have been more promising than it is now.



Located on the eastern shore of the Penobscot River approximately 6.5 miles from the ocean, Bucksport has a deep water harbor which, in recent years, ranked third in the State based on total tonnage handled. Historically, Ocean-going vessels called at the port several times a week to discharge petroleum and liquid sulfur. A Maine Central Railroad line (now owned by Guilford Transportation), serves the waterfront. Good highway connections, including Routes 15 and 1, tie Bucksport to the Bangor area, as well as locations up and down the coast and inland. Oil for much of Northern Maine has been received at Bucksport and transported by truck to points north.

Fishing played only a minor role in the town's economy even before the waters were closed for lobster and crab harvesting due to mercury contamination. The town's marine infrastructure primarily supports industrial and recreational activities.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Bucksport has made many significant improvements to its public waterfront since the last Plan including Veteran's Memorial Park, a walkway extension and a sculpture.
- ★ Further upgrades could include more parking, dock and float space and better pedestrian connections between the waterfront walkway and the Main Street area.
- ★ Other proposals for the area include dredging the harbor and a new mooring plan.
- ★ The marina was acquired by the town in 2014 to enhance its services and visibility.
- ★ A water taxi service to Fort Knox could enhance efforts to boost tourism.
- ★ Water quality in the river has improved, but needs more attention to reach goals.



## ANALYSIS

### Water Quality

For many years; the Penobscot River has been used to receive large amounts of industrial, municipal and other sources of wastewater. A boon and convenience for local economies became a burden to the river and bay downstream. More recent efforts by Federal and State authorities as well as independent groups have made notable progress in the clean-up of the waterway. Public and private agencies continue to study the ongoing issues with the goal of restoring health to fisheries and vibrancy to recreational and economic opportunities.

*Is coastal water quality being monitored on a regular basis?*

*Is there a local or regional plan in place to identify and eliminate pollution sources?*

Some organizations have compiled relevant information that is available online:

Friends of Penobscot Bay: <http://www.eastern.penbay.org>

Penobscot East Resource Center: <http://www.penobscoteast.org>

The Penobscot River Restoration Project: <http://www.penobscotriver.org>

The Penobscot River Mercury Study 2006-2007

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/spills/holtrachem/penobriver/phase1report.pdf>

The Penobscot River Mercury Study 2009 update:

[http://www.maine.gov/dep/spills/holtrachem/penobriver/penobrivermercurystudy\\_phase1update\\_report\\_july\\_2009\\_part%201.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/dep/spills/holtrachem/penobriver/penobrivermercurystudy_phase1update_report_july_2009_part%201.pdf)

Some other testing of the river and bay waters has been performed by the EPA, the University of Maine and the University of New Hampshire. Results of this testing may be made available when obtained. The town has worked with the Maine DEP to address pollution sources. There is more on that in the Water Resources Chapter.

All of Bucksport's waters have been closed to shell fish harvesting since 2013 due to bacterial contamination. The primary source of contamination within Bucksport is the discharge from the sewer system. The town would have to find an alternative means of discharge in order to remove this source. As of February 2014, the waters were also closed to lobster and crab harvesting due to unsafe levels of mercury originating beyond the town boundaries.

*Has closing of clam or worm flats threatened the shellfishing industry, and are sources of contamination known? If so, are sources point (direct discharge) or nonpoint sources?*



The town pier, marina and waterfront walkway at Bucksport Harbor along the Penobscot River Estuary northeast of Verona Island.



## Commercial Fishing

The town dock (described below) was used by commercial fisherman until the closing of the town's waters to lobster and crab harvesting in 2014. While this closure may be rescinded in the future, the commercial fishing sector in Bucksport has a minor impact on the economy. DMR data (see Table 7.1) show that there were a total of 39 marine fishing licenses issued to Bucksport residents. Only a portion of these licenses were for commercial lobster or crab harvesting. The licenses are issued by place of residence rather than the harbor used. All license holders presently fish out of town. Based on historical trends, commercial fishing is likely to remain a relatively small part of waterfront activity.

*Are traditional water-dependent uses thriving or in decline? What are the factors affecting these uses? If current trends continue, what will the waterfront look like in 10 years?*

**Table 7.1 Marine Licenses, Bucksport Residents 2013**

Type	Number
Commercial shellfish	5
Elver-2 fyke nets	1
Elver-dip net	2
Lobster/crab non-commercial	10
Lobster/crab class i	3
Lobster/crab class ii	5
Lobster/crab class iii	2
Lobster/crab over age 70	1
Lobster/crab student	3
Marine worm digging	6
Scallop, non-commercial	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> Maine Department of Marine Resources	



The "Center of the Known Universe", a sculpture, a recreational fishing pier, a veteran's memorial park, more parking and a waterfront walkway extension were all added since the 2003 Plan.

## Waterfront Development

There is a mixture of recreational, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses along the waterfront and the immediately adjacent areas. This means that the needs of each group of users must be addressed in a coordinated manner to avoid conflict. Specific problems and needs are discussed below.

*Is there reasonable balance between water-dependent and other uses, and between commercial and recreational uses? If there have been recent conversions of uses, have they improved or worsened the balance?*

## Zoning

The boundaries of districts are shown on the Bucksport Zoning Map (2 sheets). There are three shoreland zoning district that regulate the harbor area. Portions are zoned as Commercial Fisheries Maritime Activities (CFMA) District. This district designates areas suitable for the development of functionally water-dependent commercial and recreational uses fronting on the Penobscot River. This zoning appears adequate to preserve the current mixture of uses.

*How does local zoning treat land around the harbor?  
Is there a local or regional harbor or bay management plan?  
If not, is one needed?*

Other parts of the waterfront are zoned Downtown Shoreland. The zoning ordinance describes this district as an “area suitable for a dense development of a variety of businesses fronting Main Street on its southerly side and some fronting on the northerly side of Main Street that are within 250 feet of the shoreline of Penobscot River. It is also suitable for businesses operating from the shore side of buildings or properties on the southerly side of Main Street.

The Industry Development Shoreland Overlay district includes existing, intensively developed areas of two or more contiguous acres devoted to commercial or industrial activities. This zone allows the high intensity industrial operations to continue.

## Harbor Planning

There are outstanding issues that need to be addressed through harbor planning. These include parking, dredging, and updating the mooring plan. The marina needs additional floats and docking space. These plans should be coordinated with Main Street improvements. The waterfront walkway needs additional signage and other measures to connect it with downtown sidewalks. The harbor plan should also address two issues in adjoining towns. The first is the boat launching ramp on Verona Island. This facility is used by most of the boaters who visit or are based on the Bucksport waterfront. It needs a floating dock system. The second issue is the proposed water taxi between Fort Knox and Bucksport. This would involve coordinated dock improvements in both Prospect and Bucksport.

The harbor requires major dredging. Certain areas adjacent to the marina now have a full-moon low-tide depth of about four and one-half feet. Some of the boat slips inside the marina are not usable due to accumulation of deposits. Dredging needs to be part of the harbor improvement plan.

*Are there local dredging needs? If so, how will they be addressed?*

There is inadequate parking adjacent to the marina. This situation is likely to worsen if the marina is expanded. The problem might be mitigated through directional signage to the parking area and restricting the duration of parking in certain areas near the marina to loading and unloading of goods and passengers.

*Is there adequate access, including parking? Are there opportunities for improved access?*

Key scenic views are discussed in the Natural Resources chapter and are summarized in Table 9.1. Of the seven views listed, two overlook saltwater. One is a view of Fort Knox and the other of the Penobscot River. Both are protected in places by public ownership.

*Are important points of visual access identified and protected? A list of scenic resources along the shoreline, including current ownership (public or private) and any protections*

Fishing plays a minor role in the town's economy. This was the case even before the waters were closed to lobster and crab harvesting due to mercury contamination. Now, the town's marine infrastructure primarily supports industrial and recreational activities.

## CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Overview: Bucksport is a south-facing river port overlooking the Penobscot River Estuary north of Penobscot Bay. The harbor is fairly well protected from storm surge. The average mean low water is 47 feet. The approach to the port can be difficult due to heavy tides and swift current. The port has a mud and hard bottom with mostly light siltation, and a tidal range of nine to eleven feet. The port now acts as a customs station. One recurring problem is that drift ice coming down the river does not reach the open sea before the tide changes. As a result, the port often freezes over. The major waterfront facilities are summarized in the following paragraphs.

*The location of facilities (wharves, boat ramps, pump-out stations, etc.), with a brief description of any regional or local plans to improve facilities.*

### Town-owned facilities

**The town dock** is 310 feet long and has 80 feet of finger floats. The ramp to the floats is ADA compliant. While there are no records on the number of users, the dock is very busy during most of the summer months. Sixty feet of dock was added in 2014 to allow recreational boaters to use the facility while cruise ships are also using the facility.

**The Bucksport Marina** is about 100 feet from the town dock. Customers are able to purchase seasonal or transient slips to dock their vessel while in town. The Marina has a locked security fence shore-side and has approximately 40 slips with vessels generally ranging up to 40 feet. The facility has electric and water hook ups, public pump-out service, wi-fi and gasoline. As mentioned above, parking is inadequate and it needs additional floats and docking space.

**The small boat and fishing dock** is located down-river in the east channel, about 2,200 feet from the town dock. This facility is grounded out at low water. It is suitable for launching small canoes and kayaks.

### Private facilities

Webber dock serves tankers and barges with lengths over 500 feet and drafts up to 33 feet that dock and unload petroleum products. This dock is located less than 500 feet from the town dock. The former Verso Paper Company dock is located upriver next to the Webber dock and 2,000 feet from the town dock. This dock is generally used by the

state of Maine Department of Environmental Protection's 150-foot, 5,000-barrel, oil recovery barge and one or two tug boats.



The mill site, the Webber Dock (formerly called Sprague South) and the extended town pier form the western end of the town harbor.

### State facilities

The Verona Island boat landing is a state-owned boat launching ramp facility located in the east channel on Verona Island at 1,950 feet from the town dock. Access to the launch ramp by vehicle is from an access road next to the Bucksport-Verona Island bridge off Route 1.

*A description or map showing public access points to the shore. Include a brief description of their use, capacity, physical condition, and plans to improve, expand, or acquire facilities such as parking or toilets.*

### Moorings

There are currently ten permitted moorings in Bucksport harbor with 70 total available mooring spaces. There is no waiting list and the number of mooring spaces is adequate for the current demand. By contrast, the 2003 plan reported that the town issued an average of 32 mooring permits each year. It was estimated that eighty percent were then used for recreational purposes and twenty percent for commercial uses. The town's management of the marina has begun to see increased demand for space and services. Additional moorings are possible with harbor dredging. A new mooring plan would be recommended.



Moored boats in Bucksport Harbor as seen in this 2006 USDA aerial photo.

The State-owned Verona Island boat ramp can be seen at the bottom right.

## 8. WATER RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

The primary focus of this chapter is *fresh* water lakes, wetlands and streams. The Penobscot River Estuary is addressed in the Marine Resources chapter. Both municipal water supply and waste water disposal are discussed in the Public Services and Facilities chapter. Freshwater is vital not only as a source for local drinking water, but also as an essential and pervasive element of a healthy natural environment. Protection of freshwater resources is important in maintaining quality of life for town residents, supporting tourism, and sustaining wildlife, vegetation, aquatic organisms, and natural productivity in near-shore marine waters.

**State Goal:** To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers, and coastal areas.

### OVERVIEW / MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

Bucksport is blessed with nine major fresh water lakes & ponds, the Narramissic River and numerous streams & wetlands. State mandated Shoreland Zoning has provided some protection for these since the 1970's. Overall, municipal ordinances provide adequate protection to the town's water resources. The lake watershed phosphorus control standards are based on 1992 guidelines and need to be updated.



It is important to monitor conditions in all lakes, with a particular focus on Silver Lake, which is the source for the domestic water system serving the village area as well as the industrial fresh water needs of the mill site. With the cessation of paper making, the remaining major industrial fresh water need is the replacement cooling water for the power plant. However, the mill site owners still control far-reaching water rights to Silver Lake and the extended water shed from Alamoosook Lake via a steel pipe aqueduct and could draw upon that entire resource once again should the need arise.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ The paper mill used up to 18 million gallons of fresh water every day from Silver Lake.
- ★ The Silver Lake watershed seems to support current usage, but could be over-taxed.
- ★ The aqueduct requires regular maintenance by the mill site owners to remain operable.
- ★ The extended SL watershed is more than 30 times larger than the natural watershed.
- ★ With less flushing, Maine Water has agreed to do more testing of its SL source water.
- ★ Steps have begun toward forming a lake association to help monitor Silver Lake.
- ★ Water company representatives have stated that limited swimming in Silver Lake would not harm the drinking water quality since sufficient processing is already being done.



## ANALYSIS

Wastewater Discharges. There are three licensed discharges of waste water in Bucksport. These are the sewage treatment plant and two discharges from the mill site.

*Are there point sources (direct discharges) of pollution in the community? If so, is the community taking steps to eliminate them?*

DEP records indicate that there are no licensed overboard discharges (wastewater from individual disposal systems that discharge into a water body) in Bucksport. While no firm data are available, the code enforcement officer has reported cases of homes with older, malfunctioning septic systems that need to be replaced. The status of the discharge from the sewage treatment plant is discussed further in the Public Facilities and Services. As of 2014, the discharge included a Combined Stormwater Overflow (CSO). It operates under a state permit that is effective until 2017. The Verso Mill had a processed water discharge of 18 MGD (million gallons per day). There is also a 72 MGD discharge of cooling water that is drawn from the river. DEP records indicate that these discharges have no adverse impact on the water quality standards established for this segment of the Penobscot River. For discussion on the impacts of these discharges on marine life, see the Marine Resources chapter.

Non-point Pollution. The primary non-point source of pollution is stormwater run-off from the areas of impervious surface or areas

*Are there non-point sources of pollution? If so, is the community taking steps to eliminate them?*

where there has been extensive removal of vegetation. The land use ordinance has provisions regulating stormwater run-off. These include standards for manure storage and spreading, driveway drainage, and parking lots. The standards do not reflect the latest guidelines for low impact development, which offer more detailed options for on-site management of stormwater.

The subdivision ordinance has provisions to manage phosphorus runoff into lakes. It sets the maximum phosphorus export per acre of developed land for each great pond watershed in town. The ordinance requires that phosphorus control measures meet the design criteria cited in the DEP manual ***Phosphorus Control in Lake Watersheds: A Technical Guide for Evaluating New Development***, September 1992 version. The 1992 standards are now out of date and newer guidelines are available.

Water Supply Protection. The Bucksport zoning ordinance prohibits storage or use of hazardous materials within 250 feet of the

*How are groundwater and surface water supplies and their recharge areas protected?*

boundaries of an aquifer. There is not an aquifer overlay district. There is a requirement that no land use may reduce the quality of drinking water sources to below the minimum requirements Maine State Drinking Water Regulations. If existing water quality on a site is nonconforming, no proposed development may increase the nonconformity.

The ordinance prohibits any land use activity that would substantially lower the water table or detrimentally affect the quantity of subsurface water available to wells not under the control of the property owner. It also forbids the discharge of any materials that may contaminate, pollute or harm such ground or surface waters. These include floating or

submerged debris, oil or scum, or any material that may cause discoloration, objectionable odor or taste, or that may be harmful to human, animal, plant or aquatic life.

The subdivision ordinance has standards to protect groundwater resources. These include provisions to protect individual wells from contamination and to assure adequate supply during drought conditions. The planning board has the authority to hire a hydro-geologist to assess groundwater conditions.

The town does not have a source water protection ordinance. This ordinance would protect public drinking water supplies by restricting land uses in the area surrounding a drinking water well or surface water source. As mentioned elsewhere in this Plan, the mill site owners control extensive water rights to and from Silver Lake. The Town may want to clarify its rights to future water supply and to maintain lake levels. The shorefront of Silver Lake, the source of the municipal water supply, is zoned Resource Protection. Surface water is also protected by stormwater management standards.

There is a town ordinance prohibiting swimming in Silver Lake, but there is a possibility of unauthorized recreational use. Water company representatives have stated that limited swimming in Silver Lake would not harm the drinking water quality since sufficient processing is already being done. Any change to that ordinance would require a decision by the Town Council. The roadway along the southwest shore of the lake is a potential source of contamination due to stormwater runoff and accidental spills from vehicular traffic. As discussed below, the lake is connected by aqueduct to lakes outside the town boundaries.



In order to protect Bucksport's water resources, all of its Public Works projects and annual maintenance of roadways comply with the best management practices and other requirements of both MDOT and MDEP.

As is discussed below, Bucksport shares some of its great pond watersheds with other towns. This encourages regional collaboration through lake associations.

#### Verso Paper Corp. Lake Level Management Plan



Original Version 5/2/97  
Revised 9/07, 4/11, 12/11, 8/14, 12/14, 3/15

The Alamoosook Lake Association website hosts a copy of the paper mill's Lake Level Management Plan at: <http://www.alamoosooklakeassociation.com>

*Do public works crews and contractors use best management practices to protect water resources in their daily operations (e.g. salt/sand pile maintenance, culvert replacement street sweeping, public works garage operations)?*

*Are there opportunities to partner with local or regional advocacy groups that promote water resource protection?*



## CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

### Great Ponds

The State defines great ponds as natural freshwater bodies at least ten acres in size or at least 30 acres if man-made. There are nine great ponds in Bucksport. They are summarized in Tables 8.1 and 8.2. Five of these ponds share their drainage area with adjoining towns. This means that activities outside of town boundaries can affect water quality in the lakes.

While the Silver Lake drainage area lies entirely within Bucksport, it is connected by aqueduct to Philips Lake, Toddy Pond, and Alamoosook Lake. It supplies water to the mill site and the municipal water system. AIM presently uses less than 2 million gallons of water per day (gpd). The municipal system uses an average of 256,000 gpd. Representatives from Maine Water believe that the natural watershed of Silver Lake can support this current level of usage. When in full swing, however, the paper mill would consume up to 18 million gpd. This would require the operation of the aqueduct and pumps to avoid exhausting Silver Lake to water levels akin to its original, much smaller form.



The 36" pipeline near Alamoosook Lake has needed some work over the years.

**Table 8.1 Characteristics of Major Ponds and Lakes in Bucksport**

<a href="#">Below: links to lakesofmaine.org</a>	Direct Drainage Area (DDA)	% DDA in Bucksport	Lake Status Quality	Invasive Species	Other Towns in Watershed
<a href="#">Brewer Lake</a>	4,028 acres	28%	Average	None known	Holden & Orrington
<a href="#">Hancock Pond</a>	806 acres	100%	Below average	None known	None
<a href="#">Jacob Buck Pd</a>	1,468 acres	87%	Above Average	None known	Orrington
<a href="#">Long Pond</a>	1,013 acres	100%	Average	None known	None
<a href="#">Moulton Pond</a>	306 acres	55%	Not available	None known	Dedham
<a href="#">Mud Pond</a>	1,013 acres	100%	Not available	None known	None
<a href="#">Silver Lake</a>	2,562 acres	100%	Average	None known	None
<a href="#">Thurston Pond</a>	1,245 acres	72%	Average	None known	Orrington
<a href="#">Williams Pond</a>	1,124 acres	68%	Below average	None known	Orrington
<b>Source:</b> Maine DEP, Lakes Division, updated in 2013					

According to DEP records, Silver Lake has average water quality. Since it is a drinking water source, it must be monitored for any potential threats that would affect water

quality. Maine Water has agreed to do more testing of the source water since the flushing rate is likely to remain much lower than when the mill was fully functioning.

Maine DEP data indicate that there are no records of invasive aquatic species in any pond in town. Water quality data indicate that Jacob Buck Pond is the only pond with above average water quality. Williams and Hancock Ponds are below average in water quality. The major threat to lake water quality comes from development in the watersheds.

DEP records show that Silver Lake, Jacob Buck Pond, and Long Pond are “at risk from new development.” This does not mean that the ponds face imminent threats. Rather, they need to be monitored since they are public water supplies (in the case of Silver Lake) or could be adversely affected by poorly planned future development in their watersheds. Developments subject to a DEP Stormwater or Site Location of Development permit are required to meet additional review standards in “at risk” lakes. (See the stormwater review standards in Section 12.3.8 of the land use ordinance).



Sign at Silver Lake boat launch site.

Water quality monitoring data for Silver Lake have been collected since 1976. Five years of basic chemical information was collected in addition to Secchi Disk Transparencies (SDT). The water quality of Silver Lake is considered to be average, based on measures of SDT, total phosphorus (TP) and Chlorophyll-a (Chla). The potential for nuisance algal blooms on Silver Lake is moderate.

Water quality data for Jacob Buck Pond have been collected since 1980. Five years of basic chemical information was collected in addition to SDT. The water quality of Jacob Buck Pond is considered above average based on measures of SDT, TP, and (Chla). The potential for nuisance algal blooms on Jacob Buck Pond is low.

Water quality data for Long Pond have been collected since 1979. During this period, 4 years of basic chemical information was collected, in addition to SDT. Based on measures of SDT, TP, and Chla., Long Pond is ranked as average in water quality. Its potential for nuisance algal blooms is moderate. For more information on water quality for these and the other ponds in Bucksport, see [www.lakesofmaine.org](http://www.lakesofmaine.org).



Vernal pools are seasonal fresh water ponds discussed in the Natural Resources Chapter.

<b>Table 8.2 Additional Data on Lakes in Bucksport</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Size*</b>	<b>Perimeter</b>	<b>Mean depth</b>	<b>Max. depth</b>
<a href="#">Brewer Lake</a>	958 acres	9 miles	26 feet	48 feet
<a href="#">Hancock Pond</a>	62 acres	1.5 miles	17 feet	25 feet
<a href="#">Jacob Buck Pond</a>	182 acres	2.8 miles	22 feet	52 feet
<a href="#">Long Pond</a>	160 acres	3.5 miles	18 feet	29 feet
<a href="#">Moulton Pond</a>	49 acres	1.3 miles	23 feet	35 feet
<a href="#">Mud Pond</a>	35 acres	1.4 miles	---	---
<a href="#">Silver Lake</a>	682 acres	14.4 miles	---	33 feet
<a href="#">Thurston Pond</a>	129 acres	2.8 miles	11 feet	25 feet
<a href="#">Williams Pond</a>	79 acres	1.9 miles	24 feet	50 feet
<b>SOURCE:</b> Lakes Division, Maine DEP      *Size regardless of town boundaries				

### Streams and Rivers

Bucksport borders on two rivers and contains many streams of varying sizes. The largest by far is the Penobscot River, which is actually an estuary in the vicinity of Bucksport due to the mix of fresh water current from the north and salt water tides from the south.

The lower Penobscot River has several impairments. The level of dioxins, mercury and PCB's in fish exceeds safe consumption limits. The state fish consumption advisories recommend eating no more than two fish meals a month from the river below Lincoln. These contaminants appear largely to be from sources beyond the control of the town. Other fishing restrictions are discussed in the Marine Resources chapter. According to the DEP, the Silver Lake outlet to the Penobscot River (Mill Stream) has impaired water quality. This is due to water withdrawals rather than to pollution.



The northwest shore of the Narramissic River is in Bucksport from Duck Cove to below Alamoosook Lake. It is accessible by canoe from Orland at either end.

The Narramissic River is a navigable waterway on Bucksport's eastern boundary. The river's large adjacent wetlands are home to much wildlife that may be enjoyed from boat launch sites in Orland. The town of Orland is considering whether or not to continue with maintenance of the dam since it was given to the town by the former mill owners.

Other navigable streams include Wights Brook, Moosehorn Stream and Mill Stream above Long Pond. Public access points are discussed in the Recreation Chapter.



Bucksport's larger streams are shielded from development by a 75-foot Stream Protection Overlay buffer strip that is described in the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

#### Groundwater Resources

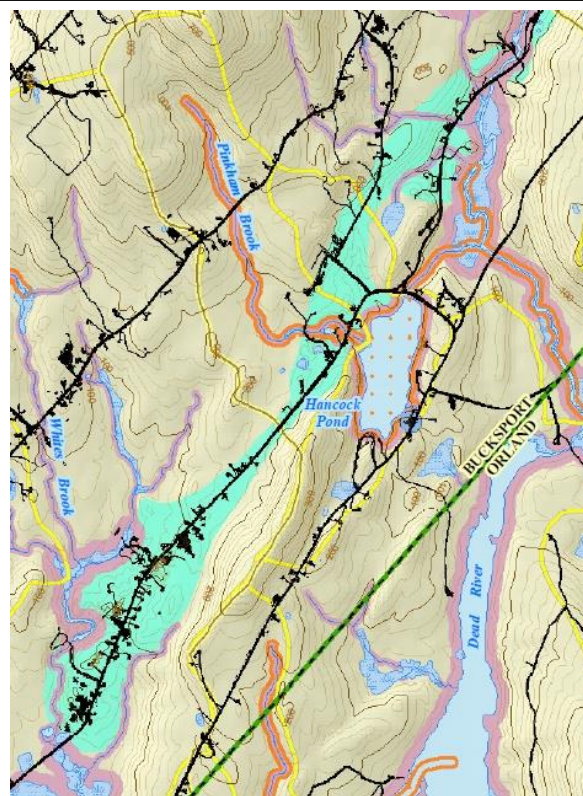
Sand and gravel aquifers in Maine were deposited by glacial melt-water streams thousands of years ago. Wells that are properly constructed in these aquifers have the capacity to yield large volumes of water. The Maine Geological Survey has identified four sand and gravel aquifers in Bucksport, all of which have yields in the range of 10 to 50 gallons per minute. One is located on the town boundary with Orland at Duck Cove. A second is located on the northwest side of Route 46 at White's Brook. A third is located at Long Pond, and the fourth is located on the north side of Jacob Buck Pond. As mentioned in Section D.3 above, the town has standards to protect aquifers from most potential sources of contamination.

#### Public Water Systems

Public water systems are defined as those that serve a given number of the general public even if they are not publicly owned. They may be as large as a system serving a downtown area or as small as one serving a restaurant. These systems are subject to various state regulations and reporting requirements. According to data from the Maine Drinking Water Program, there are four public water systems in Bucksport. The system serving the downtown is discussed in the Public Services and Facilities chapter.

The map shows the "public water supply source water protection area." This area is defined as the "area that contributes recharge water to a surface water intake or public water supply well." Operators of these systems, per state law, must be notified of land use decisions that could affect the source water protection area. This allows the operators to participate in the municipal decision making process and helps reduce the risk of contamination to public water supplies.

It is important to monitor development around the wells that serve these various systems. Particular attention should be paid to those wells with high risk factors for future contamination (see Table 8.3). The Harriman Cove Mobile Home Park system has a high risk factor and deserves careful monitoring. The risk ranking means there is the potential for contamination. It does not necessarily mean that contamination has occurred. Factors contributing to the risk include a septic system and an above-ground



Bucksport's sand & gravel aquifers and other water resources are shown on Beginning with Habitat Map 1 and may be seen at [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov).

oil storage tank within 300 feet of the well. The well owner does not control the land within the source water protection area.

<b>Table 8.3 Public Water Systems, Bucksport*</b>		
<b>State ID #</b>	<b>System Name/Owner</b>	<b>Risk of Acute Contamination</b>
ME0002243	Bucksport Golf Club	Low
ME0002245	Harriman Cove Mobile Home Park	High
ME0015106	Sherwood Forest Mobile Home Park	Moderate
* <b>NOTE:</b> the municipal system is discussed in the Public Facilities and Services chapter.		
<b>SOURCE:</b> Maine Drinking Water Program, 2013		

Note: The Goals & Objectives Section has additional information on fresh water resources including a special focus on Silver Lake and its watersheds.

## 9. NATURAL RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

Bucksport's natural resources are important to the town in several ways. First, careful stewardship of wildlife and fisheries habitats creates opportunities for hunting and fishing. Second, the natural features add to the town's quality of life. Third, managing the natural environment allows land development to occur in a manner that reduces the risk of harm from hazards such as flooding, erosion, and pollution.

**State Goal:** To protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas.

### OVERVIEW

The natural resources in Bucksport have been utilized for sustenance, industry and recreation since civilization took root here. The cessation of paper making in 2014 may signal a time when less pressure is placed on consumption of local natural resources and more attention is put on their enjoyment in place.

The town ordinances generally offer adequate protection for Bucksport's natural resources. The development review process is now more focused on species habitats. Due to state mapping of key natural features, there are far more data on natural resources than was previously the case. The town continues to enjoy a variety of fish and wildlife.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Local bald eagles are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.
- ★ Vasey's Pondweed and Water Stargrass are two rare plants found in Hancock Pond.
- ★ An area of 'Brackish Tidal Marsh' in a Bucksport portion of the Penobscot River has been identified as a Rare and Exemplary Natural Community and Ecosystem.
- ★ The Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust now has two properties in Bucksport and has resources for future planning & management.
- ★ The town of Bucksport has a number of scenic views that could be protected.
- ★ Many of Bucksport's natural areas have been mapped by State of Maine agencies. Some maps are available on the town's website.

Brackish Tidal Marsh ➡



## ANALYSIS

There are no specific threats to Bucksport's critical natural resources. They are largely protected by land development review standards. The threats to water resources are addressed in the Water Resource chapter. The current design of town culverts and bridges needs to be evaluated per the latest Maine Department of Transportation design standards to assure that they allow adequate passage of fish.

*Are any of the community's critical natural resources threatened by development, overuse, or other activities?*

As of 2014, the town is reviewing its shoreland zoning standards to address some minor concerns expressed by the DEP. Communication from the DEP Shoreland Zoning Unit indicates that there are potential inconsistencies between the shoreland standards in Bucksport and the current State Standards but no details on these inconsistencies was available at this time.

*Are local shoreland zone standards consistent with state guidelines and with the standards placed on adjacent shorelands in neighboring communities?*

The zoning ordinance has detailed guidelines to protect natural resources. Section 12.7 stipulates that land uses may not cause any detrimental effect to significant wildlife habitat. If any portion of a proposed development lies within a significant wildlife habitat area, the applicant must submit documentation that assesses the potential effect of the development on the habitat and adjacent areas. The applicant must describe appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that the proposed development will have no detrimental effect.

*What regulatory and non-regulatory measures has the community taken or can the community take to protect critical natural resources and important natural resources?*

There are also standards in the subdivision ordinance that require that applications in areas with wildlife habitat areas include measures to preserve the habitat. The applicant must submit an impact assessment report prepared by a wildlife biologist. This report must assess the potential impact of the subdivision on the habitat and adjacent areas and describe appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that the subdivision will have no adverse impacts.

Some of these resources are subject to state regulation under the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA). For more information on significant wildlife habitats and the NRPA, see <http://www.maine.gov/dep/land/nrpa/>. This act sets standards to protect key natural features such as certain wildlife habitats, wetlands, and other water bodies from adverse impacts of development.

The primary non-regulatory protection measure is public ownership and land owned by the Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust (GPMCT). The town owns 89 acres as part of the Silver Lake trail system and 79 acres in the Miles Lane trail area. The GPMC owns 2 parcels in Bucksport. One is a 67-acre piece on Upper Long Pond Road enrolled in the Maine in Open Space Program. The other is a 29-acre piece on Jacob



Buck Pond Road, which is taxed normally. GPMCT has offered to work with the town to establish a multi-use trail on Upper Long Pond Road and on other potential projects.

The Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust has worked both in Bucksport and adjoining towns in identifying and protecting key natural resources. As this plan is being drafted, there are emerging opportunities to cooperate with Orland on water resource management and fisheries restoration.

*Is there current regional cooperation or planning underway to protect shared critical natural resources? Are there opportunities to partner with local or regional groups?*

## Conditions and Trends

This section discusses the key natural resource features of Bucksport. It also identifies known endangered, threatened, and rare species. “Endangered” means a species is considered in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. “Threatened” means a species is considered likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future, but is not currently in danger of extinction. “Rare” refers to a species that could become threatened in the future.

Bucksport’s natural resources are shown on the series of maps found on the Beginning with Habitat web site: [http://www.beginningwithhabitat.org/the\\_maps/status-b.html](http://www.beginningwithhabitat.org/the_maps/status-b.html) and are summarized below. The maps may also be viewed on the Comp Plan website at [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov). Beginning with Habitat (BwH), a collaborative program of federal, state and local agencies and non-governmental organizations, is a habitat-based approach to conserving wildlife and plant habitat on a large scale. The goal of the BwH program is to help local decision makers create a vision for their community, to design a landscape, and to develop a plan that provides habitat for all species and balances future development with conservation.

### Six available “Beginning with Habitat” natural resources maps:

1. Water Resources & Riparian Habitats
2. High Value Plant & Animal Habitats
3. Undeveloped Habitat Blocks & Connectors
4. Wetlands Characterization (Supplementary)
5. USFWS Priority Trust Species Habitats (Supp.)
6. Regional Map “Building a Regional Landscape”



Excerpt from  
Beginning with Habitat  
Map #2  
High Value Plant  
& Animal Habitats

### An Overview of Bucksport's Natural Features

The town of Bucksport consists of approximately 34,699 acres or 54.22 square miles. The topography is characterized by gently rolling hills and small mountains, interspersed with numerous lakes, streams, and wetlands. The Penobscot River forms the western boundary of the town. The elevations in Bucksport range from zero feet along the Penobscot River, to over 740 feet at the top of Orcutt Mountain. In general, the north and northeast sections of town contain more hills and varied terrain than the flatter and lower southwestern section of town. The town's four mountains with elevations over 500 feet include Jacob Buck Mt. (707 feet), Cobb Hill (560+ feet), Orcutt Mt. (740+ feet) and Stricklen Ridge (555 feet). Bucksport is bordered on the north by the towns of Orrington and Holden, on the east by the town of Dedham, on the south by the towns of Orland and Verona Island, and on the west by the Penobscot River.

Slopes greater than 25 percent are found on portions of Jacob Buck Mountain, Orcutt Mountain, Dresser Mountain, Blood Mountain, and Cobb Hill. Slopes of between 15 and 25 percent are found in these areas as well as in the vicinity of Stricklen Ridge, Swazey Ledge, and along the shores of the Penobscot River. Slopes in the range of 8 to 15 percent are commonly found throughout town, while slopes less than 8 percent are most prevalent in the southwestern section of town.

Topography has influenced the town's settlement patterns, and will undoubtedly continue to do so. In general, the flatter areas in the southern portion of town have been more accessible to development, while the areas of higher elevation have remained relatively undeveloped. The town's southern areas continue to be subject to greater development than the interior and northern sections of the community. Maps showing the topography of the town and other features are at [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov).

Bedrock is at or near the surface of the land in many parts of Bucksport, particularly in the northern part of the community. Formation of the town's bedrock resources began many years ago when marine sediments accumulated offshore from an ancient landmass. As the thickness of the sediments increased, increasing pressures and temperatures caused the sediments to change into metamorphic rocks. All of this rock-forming activity occurred many thousands of feet beneath the surface. After many years of uplift and erosion, the rock either lies just below the surface or has been exposed. According to The Preliminary Bedrock Geology of Maine (Doyle, 1985), all of the bedrock in Bucksport is hard, dense and impermeable.

### Riparian Habitats and Water & Marine Resource

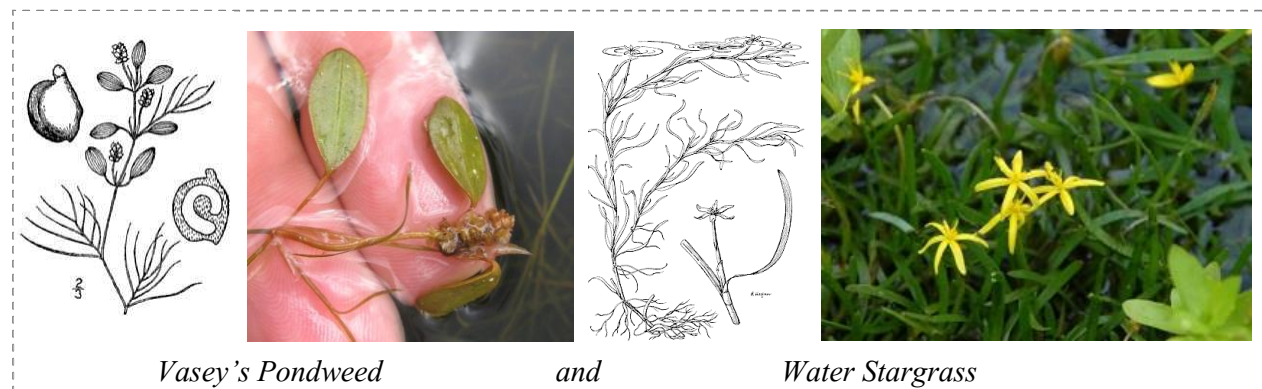
There are approximately 1,295 acres of freshwater wetlands. Wetlands are some of the most productive natural areas in the world, and provide habitat for many types of wildlife, including waterfowl and wading birds; frogs, turtles, and snakes; fish; and shellfish. Wetlands naturally control floods, filter pollutants, retain nutrients, and reduce erosion. They also provide a myriad of educational and recreational opportunities including boating, hunting, trapping, fishing, and photography. Maps showing these features may be found at [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov).



Most wetlands in Maine are protected by state law and local shoreland zoning standards. One change since the 2003 plan was prepared is that significant vernal pools are now protected by the Natural Resources Protection Act. If any alteration of a vernal pool is proposed, the DEP should be consulted to determine if the pool is significant. **Along with other criteria**, significant pool is one that has documented use in any given year by state-listed rare, endangered or threatened species that commonly depend on a vernal pool habitat. Examples these endangered or threatened species include, but are not limited to, Blanding's turtles, Spotted turtles, and Bog haunter dragonflies. Though one small vernal pool has been documented in a powerline right-of-way, no Significant Vernal Pools have been formally identified in Bucksport to date. There are, no doubt many vernal pools awaiting discovery. For more information see <http://www.maine.gov/dep/land/nrpa/vernalpools/index.html> on identification and other criteria. Striped Bass are caught seasonally in the Penobscot River and occasionally mackerel. Harbor porpoises and gray seals are routinely observed.

#### Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Plants

The Maine Natural Areas Program has mapped two rare plants in Bucksport's Hancock Pond: Vasey's Pondweed and Water Stargrass. Both are species of special concern. It is important to protect the water quality of the areas where these species occurs.



#### Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Animals

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) reports that Bald Eagle nest sites are in Bucksport. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has removed the bald eagle from the list of endangered and threatened species. It is protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Both laws prohibit killing, selling or otherwise harming eagles, their nests, or eggs.



IF&W added bats and great blue herons to this list at its 2017 review of this Plan. Several endangered or special concern species of bats may live in Bucksport or migrate through. Several great blue heron nests have recently been identified in Bucksport.



### Rare and Exemplary Natural Communities and Ecosystems

Bucksport has an area of Brackish Tidal Marsh, a rare natural community type in Maine. These marshes host both freshwater and brackish water species, often in bands corresponding to tidal exposure. Tall rushes and bulrushes often predominate over extensive mid-elevation flats. Rosette-forming herbs, including rare species such as such as *lilaeopsis* and spongy leaved arrowhead, may be common on the mudflats. Near the high tide line, there may be a fairly narrow zone of muddy gravel or rock shore sparsely vegetated with low herbs, including other rare species such as estuary bur-marigold or water-pimpernel. Sweetgale and poison ivy are often present at the upper fringes of the marsh, at or above the tidal reach. Tidal marshes provide valuable wildlife habitat. Maintenance of appropriate wetland buffers can help reduce degradation that could result from adjacent land uses. The prospect of sea level rise may also put these systems at greater risk. Brackish marshes provide important nesting habitat for Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrow, seaside sparrow, and the rare saltmarsh sharp-tailed sparrow. These wetlands also provide foraging habitat for a large number of wading birds.

### Significant Essential and Other Wildlife Habitats Subject to NRPA Protection

The three known habitats are deer wintering areas, inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat, and tidal waterfowl and wading bird habitat. Deer wintering areas, commonly referred to as deer yards, consist of forested stands with a dense softwood canopy interspersed with mixed stands of hardwoods and softwoods. They provide shelter for deer by reducing snow accumulation and wind within the stand. Activities that involve soil disturbance may require a DEP permit to ensure that activities are done at a time or in a way that minimizes harm to deer wintering areas. Inland Waterfowl/Wading Bird Habitat areas are used for freshwater breeding, migration/staging and winter habitats for inland waterfowl. The areas are also used for breeding, feeding, loafing, migration or roosting habitats for inland wading birds. Tidal Waterfowl/Wading Bird habitats are used for breeding, migrating/staging or wintering areas for coastal waterfowl. They are also breeding, feeding, loafing, migrating or roosting areas for coastal wading birds. Habitats include aquatic beds, eelgrass, emergent wetlands, mudflats, seaweed communities and reefs. Any Significant Vernal Pools identified in town would also be within this category.

There are no mapped Essential Habitats within Bucksport at this time but future versions of these maps could contain more features. See maps at:

<http://webapps2.cgis-solutions.com/beginningwithhabitat/>



A box turtle seen roaming Bucksport may be someone's run away pet.

### Species of Conservation Need

Table IX.1 lists species identified by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as those of greatest conservation need. These are species with the potential to become threatened or endangered in the future. While not all these species are necessarily found in Bucksport, there is habitat in which they could potentially exist. These species may be subject to additional protection in the future.

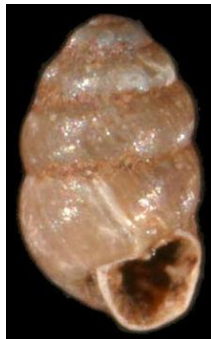
<b>Table 9.1:</b>		
<b>Bird Species of Greatest Conservation Need</b>		
<b>Of freshwater ponds and wetlands</b>		
American Bittern	Common Loon	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
American Black Duck	Great Blue Heron	Pied-billed Grebe
American Woodcock	Marsh Wren	Willow Flycatcher
<b>Of rivers and coastal wetlands</b>		
Common Eider	Sanderling	Ruddy Turnstone
Greater Shearwater	Greater Yellowlegs	Semipalmated Sandpiper
Willet		
<b>Of fields, farms &amp; marshes</b>		
Barn Swallow	Field Sparrow	Horned Lark
Chimney Swift	Vesper Sparrow	Eastern Meadowlark
Eastern Kingbird	Bobolink	Common Nighthawk
<b>Of coniferous woodland</b>		
Bay-breasted Warbler	Red Crossbill	Black-throated Green Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler	Cape May Warbler	Black-billed Cuckoo
Purple Finch		
<b>Of deciduous woodland</b>		
Barred Owl	Great-crested Flycatcher	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Baltimore Oriole	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Scarlet Tanager
Black and White Warbler	Northern Parula Warbler	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Wood Thrush
Eastern Towhee	Northern Flicker	Canada Warbler
Brown Thrasher	Veery	
<b>Fish Species of Greatest Conservation Need</b>		
<b>Of rivers and sea coast</b>		
Alewife	American Shad	Sea-run Brook Trout
American Eel	Atlantic Tomcod	Sea Lamprey
American Salmon	Blueblack Herring	Shortnose Sturgeon
American Sturgeon	Rainbow Smelt	Striped Bass
<b>Of freshwater ponds and streams</b>		
Alewife	American Shad	Rainbow Smelt
American Eel	Brook Trout	
<b>Other Species of Greatest Conservation Need</b>		
Blue-Spotted Salamander	Deep-throat Vertigo (snail)	Graceful Clearwing (moth)
<b>SOURCE:</b> Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, categories by SBF		

Images of some of the Species of Greatest Conservation Need:

***How many of these creatures have you seen in Bucksport?***



Veery



Vertigo snail



Graceful Clearwing



Blue-Spotted Salamander



Barred Owl



Eastern Kingbird



Short-nose Sturgeon



American Eel



American Bittern



## Scenic Views

The town of Bucksport has a number of scenic views. The ones listed in the 2003 plan are shown in Table 9.2

*A map or description of scenic areas and scenic views of local importance, and regional or statewide importance, if available.*

**Table 9.2**

### Scenic Views

Road	Location	Description of View
Route 15	1000 feet from second railroad crossing heading towards Bangor	Penobscot River and Channel
Main Street	From Main Street overlooking dock	River and Fort
Route 46	1.5 miles from Route 1	Alamoosook River in Orland
Route 46	Intersection, East Bucksport Church Road	Hancock Pond
Church Road	1500 feet down road	Hancock Pond, Bald
Bucks Mill Road	On top of Peat Bog Hill	Brewer Lake, Brewer
Hinks Road	Next to wetland	View of hardwood ridge
<b>SOURCE:</b> 2003 Comprehensive Plan		



Great Pond Mountain as seen from State Route 46 in Bucksport.



Very long, narrow “spaghetti” lots east of River Road make development or even timber harvesting of the back land very difficult as road building costs are often prohibitive. Some lots are well over a mile deep and only 300-400 feet wide. This situation acts a lot like conservation land “by default” until parcels are consolidated or owners band together to create shared access to remote areas.

## 10. AGRICULTURAL and FOREST RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

An understanding of a town's agricultural and forest resources is important for several reasons. Farm and forest-based activities contribute to the economy. They are an important component of rural character. Proper management of farm and forestland reduces the risk of stormwater runoff and other sources of water pollution.

**State Goal:** To safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development, which threatens those resources.

### OVERVIEW & HIGHLIGHTS

Farming is not a major land use in Bucksport with about 6% of the land area devoted to cultivation and pasture. There are some small commercial operations and some hobby farms. Interest in purchasing locally grown food is illustrated by the success of the Bucksport Farmer's Market. There is local interest in establishing a "Food Hub" in Bucksport to help develop production and markets.

Forestry is much more significant in terms of acreage with about 80% of the town in woodland, including forested wetlands. About 23 percent of the forest land in Bucksport is dedicated to commercial management. Smaller woodlots account for a large portion of the undeveloped acreage in the rural parts of town. About 18 percent of the town's land area is held in the tree growth tax classification. The Paper Mill used to be a large purchaser of local pulp wood. Verso Paper, LLC still trucks some tree-length logs to its mill in Jay from the log yard it owns off River Road in Bucksport. The volume, however, is only a small fraction of what the mill once bought from local woodlot managers.



### ANALYSES, CONDITIONS, AND TRENDS

The town participates in the Maine Farm and Open Space Program that gives tax breaks to productive farms over 5 contiguous acres. To be eligible for this classification a parcel must yield at least \$2,000 in farm income a year. In 1999 there were 358 acres held in farmland current use taxation. The acreage held in this category has fluctuated in recent years, landing at 444 acres in 2015. The current use program taxes farmland for its value for farming rather than its potential value as developed land. Farm acres in locations that would be more valuable for other kinds of development (adjacent to public ways or waterfront, etc.) provide a tax incentive for enrollment. Back land in Bucksport tends to be taxed similarly within or without the Program.

*How important is agriculture and/or forestry and are these activities growing, stable, or declining?*



While not all active farmland is necessarily enrolled in the current use program, these data indicate that farming accounts for a small portion of the total land area. The 323 acres is just under one percent of the 34,699 acres of land in Bucksport. The land cover analysis presented in Table XII.5 of the Existing Land Use chapter indicates that there are 1,149 acres of cultivated crops (mostly blueberries) and 1,055 acres of pasture or hay fields. Local farming operations include a pick-your-own orchard and a strawberry farm. There is also a Christmas Tree farm and some limited raising of livestock such as beef cattle and pigs. Though small, these operations provide important sources of locally grown food.

Timber harvests as part of a forest management plan present greater challenges when they are conducted in shoreland areas, due to the potential for harmful impacts on natural resources and wildlife habitat. The town currently enforces basic timber harvest standards that may not be able to effectively address excessive or careless harvesting activities. Enforcement assistance from the Maine Forest Service is currently not available to the town, but could be if regulatory changes were made.

Prime agricultural soils account for 2,437 acres or about 7 percent of the total land area. These are soils rated by the Natural Resource Conservation Services as having the best potential for farming. This classification does not necessarily mean that the soils are actually farmed.

There has been a minor decrease in the land held in tree growth taxation, which offers owners of forest land tax breaks comparable to those offered farmers in the current use taxation. In 1999 7,282 acres were held in tree



Changing markets are a challenge for woodlot managers

*Is the community currently taking regulatory and/or non-regulatory steps to protect productive farming and forestry lands?*



### Bucksport Agricultural Resources

Aerial photo taken in 2009

Source: USDA, NRCS, Maine SDCP  
Produced by: USDA, NRCS, Maine SDCP  
Produced by: Municipal Planning  
Assistance Program, SDCP  
October 2013



A map by USDA of prime farmland soils is available on [bucksportmaine.gov](http://bucksportmaine.gov) with the other Comp Plan maps.

growth contrasted with 6,668 acres in 2016, a decrease of about 9 percent. This acreage compares to 6,259 in 2009, 6,203 in 2010, and 6,208 in 2011. As of 2015, 6,584 acres, about 19 percent of the town's land area, was held in tree growth. The land cover analysis in Chapter 12 shows a total of 26,828 acres of forest land. This is about 78 percent of the total town area. About 23 percent (6,208 acres) of the forested areas are held in tree growth. There are 9,287 acres of deciduous forest, 5,899 acres of evergreen, and 9,095 acres of mixed forest. Commercial timber harvesting trends are shown in Table 10.1. These data are based on reports filed with the Maine Forest Service. The largest amount of timber harvested in a given year was 1,316 acres in 2004 and the smallest was 447 acres in 2009. While forestry is an important part of the economy, these harvests are relatively small-scale when compared to some other parts of Maine.

<b>Table 10.1 Reported Timber Harvests, Bucksport 2001 -2011</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Harvested Acres</b>	<b>Change of Land Use Acres</b>	<b>Number of active notifications</b>
2005	652	40	46
2006	634	44	40
2007	595	67	33
2008	267	41	28
2009	447	49	33
2010	669	48	53
2011	959	33	60
2012	336	0	39
2013	300	42	41
2014	585	1	39
2015	544	5	36
<b>SOURCE:</b> Maine Forest Service Year-End Landowner Reports			

Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust owns two properties totaling 96 acres in Bucksport with conserved woodlands. A six-acre blueberry field on one piece is currently being managed traditionally, but may be converted to organic in the near future. Sociosilv, LLC is a woodlot management company with ties to the University of Maine. They seek to grow and harvest trees in a responsible fashion with public access where appropriate. Sociosilv owns two properties in Bucksport with a total of 100 acres of woodland and is seeking to buy a town owned parcel as described below.

*Are there local or regional land trusts actively working to protect farms or forest lands in the community?*

As reported in section X.4.1 just under one percent of the land in town is held in farmland. About 18 percent of the town's land area is in tree growth. The qualification standards for enrollment and penalties for withdrawal may discourage landowner participation.

*Are farm and forest land owners taking advantage of the state's current use tax laws?*

Harvesting of forested areas using modern methods creates noise that is often heard by nearby residents. Currently, such unwanted noise is only regulated by “public nuisance” provisions of local ordinances. Potential damage to public roadways from logging trucks is discouraged through posted weight limits and potential fines. Private ways are protected by the actions of road associations, land owners and civil courts.

*Has proximity of new homes or other incompatible uses affected the normal farming and logging operations?*

As described more fully in Chapter 6, Bucksport owns several larger tracts of land that are primarily dedicated to recreation. Furthermore, the Forest Management Plan written for the town by Licensed Forester Jake Maier, states the “Long-Term Objective” is “to convert the forested part of both parcels to a multiple use forest where aesthetically pleasing recreation and wildlife management have high priority, and where stumpage income from periodic thinning can make the management self-sufficient...” A copy of the Plan is stored in the town assessor’s office. The Miles Lane and Silver Lake walking trail areas contain over 200 acres of field and forest with lake shore access and a budding arboretum. The town also owns 12.5 acres on Orcutt Mountain with unknown access. Sociosilv, LLC has offered to purchase and manage this lot with a public trail to Bucksport’s highest summit.

*Does the community have town or public woodlands under management, or that would benefit from forest management?*

Bucksport’s forest land has seen as much consolidation of ownership as it has division in recent years. The expansion of Heritage Park, potentially converting forty acres of forest to light industrial use, is the largest new development of agriculture/woodland on the horizon.

*Are there large tracts of agricultural or industrial forest land that have been or may be sold for development in the foreseeable future? If so, what impact would this have on the community?*

The Bucksport Bay Farmers market operates during the warmer months on a regular, posted schedule. Its location has changed several times to take advantage of visibility and parking availability. It is supported by area farmers, the Bucksport Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Healthy Acadia, the Maine Federation of Farmers Markets and the Downeast Business Alliance. Farmers, producers of meat, poultry and dairy, fishermen, and makers of value-added items such as baked goods and preserves and craftsmen are eligible to participate. A previous effort to start a community garden was not successful. Some local restaurants buy produce from area farmers.

*Does the community support community forestry or agriculture (i.e. small woodlots, community forests, tree farms, community gardens, farmers’ markets, or community-supported agriculture)? If so, how?*



Pick-your-own fruit farms in Bucksport provide farmers with income, popular family activities and fresh, local food.



## 11. HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive plan should identify significant historical and archaeological resources. These resources are important for their role in remembering Bucksport's history, as well as for their present-day utility and beauty. Historic buildings and sites add to a community's quality of life and help maintain property values.

#### **State Goal:**

To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources.

### OVERVIEW

Bucksport has a storied past which is summarized in this chapter. Some of the wonderful homes, commercial buildings and other improvements constructed here over the years have survived and are enjoyed by owners, residents and visitors. Some ancient sites remain to be uncovered by future archaeologists. The town and its citizens have taken measures to protect and preserve these valuable assets.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Bucksport has nine properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- ★ State records indicate three prehistoric sites along the Penobscot River in town.
- ★ Six archaeological sites have been identified by Maine Historic Preservation.
- ★ 34 additional significant historic properties have been identified locally.
- ★ The town has enacted land use standards to protect key historic sites.
- ★ Efforts to preserve historic properties in Bucksport are ongoing.



Interpretive signage along the waterfront walkway identifies historic sites.

Fort Knox, as seen across the river in Prospect. Photo by Hans Krichels, 2015.

## 11A: A BRIEF OF HISTORY OF THE BUCKSPORT AREA

(With additions since the 2003 plan by local historian Emeric Spooner)

Long before Europeans arrived on the coast of Maine, Native Americans were living in this area. Evidence of them has been found in the form of shell heaps in many coastal towns. Native American prehistoric burial grounds have been excavated at Bucksport's Salmon Point (aka Indian Point) on the paper mill site, around Alamoosook Lake and along the Narramissic River.

Historians speculate that Andre Thevit, a Franciscan Monk and Hugenot from France, sailed in Penobscot Bay in 1556. He visited a Native American village thought to be on the tip of Verona and talked of a French Fort that had been previously established there 50 years prior. The first Englishman John Walker visited the Great Chief Bashaba at his capital city of Arembec later known as Norumbega in 1579, found within Bucksport's limits. Other explorers such as Simon Ferdinando and Martin Pring soon followed from 1580 to 1603. The Frenchman, Samuel de Champlain, followed him in 1604. George Weymouth, an Englishman, sailed through Eggemoggin Reach in 1605 and anchored near Cape Rosier in Brooksville. In 1611 the Jesuit Priest Biard visited Kadesquit thought to be Verona. The French established a short lived Mission near Mt. Desert Island in 1613, known as St. Sauveur, its true location has never been proven. Claude de la tour established a fort, fishing station and trading post in 1613. The trading post was built at the ancient Negue, found in Orono. The fort and fishing station is believed to have been established on Verona.

In 1630, pilgrims from Plymouth Colony, forced La Tour out of his estates on the Penobscot. A fort was thought established at Pentagoet on the Bagaduce Peninsula in Castine to carry on fur trading with the Indians. This settlement changed hands several times between the French and English until 1704 when the English gained final control. The Penobscot changed hands from the pilgrims to Cromwell in the 1650's. Crown and Temple took over until the 1670's. At which time it was handed back to the French and Grandfontaine. He was recalled and baron St. Castin soon took his place. Nelson a son-in-law of Temple sold his lands to Massachusetts and Samuel Waldo became proprietor. He formed the Waldo patent which contained all of the Penobscot up to Eddington bend. In 1759 Governor Pownall with Waldo established Fort Pownall in Stockton Springs and claimed all of this land for Massachusetts.

The first grants of land between the Penobscot and Donauqua (Union) Rivers were granted in 1762 to Deacon David Marsh of Haverhill, Massachusetts and 352 other citizens of Massachusetts and New Hampshire by the General Court of Massachusetts. Each of the townships, numbered one through six, was to be six miles square; they were: (1) Bucksport; (2) Orland; (3) Penobscot; (4) Sedgwick; (5) Blue Hill; and (6) Surry. In 1762 and 1763 a team of surveyors determined the lines of the townships. The first white settler in Bucksport was Joseph Gross, a former soldier at Fort Pownall, who arrived in 1763. He is not considered the first permanent settler because he moved to Orland in 1764.

Colonel Buck, an officer during the French and Indian War and a member of the surveying team, settled in the township in 1764. He is considered by most authorities to be the first permanent settler and it was for him the town was named. He built the first sawmill on the Penobscot River that year (1763), as well as several houses. Later, in 1771, Buck built the first ship on the river, a 60-ton schooner named "Hannah".

The town continued to grow for the next several years. The occupations of the early settlers were milling, fishing, hunting, trapping, haying and trading. The mill that Buck built continued to operate, providing boards, staves, shingles, and clapboards for the settlers and for shipment to Boston and other ports. The settlers were able to catch salmon, shad, and bass in the river and alewives in the smaller streams. The fish were first taken by spearing and nets and later by what were known as half-tide weirs. These weirs and nets were built across deep coves from point to point and were used to catch shad and bass. Fishing continued to be an important source of income for the townspeople for many years. Agriculture was never a very important occupation for the settlers. What crops were grown were usually for personal consumption. Hay, however, was an exception. The harvesting of hay from salt-water meadows, in Duck Cove and in the Winterport marsh, kept hay boats busy all year long, trading along the waterfront.

The year 1775 saw the beginning of the Revolutionary War and a British blockade at the mouth of the Penobscot River. This prohibited supplies from reaching the settlers, causing great hardship. A poor growing season caused their crops to fail, forcing them to seek provisions from the Continental Congress. In 1779, the Americans attempted an attack on the British fort in Castine, but were forced to retreat. In retaliation, the British sailed up the river to Bucksport and burned most of the town (which amounted to a few log cabins and buck's saw mill), forcing the inhabitants to flee. With the end of the war, many of the former residents returned to the town to rebuild it.

The town was incorporated as Buckstown in 1792. Nine years later, in 1801, a valuation of all the towns in the county was undertaken. In that year, Buckstown had 133 polls (male voters), 94 dwellings, 7 shops, 36 horses, 107 oxen and 284 cows. By 1800, the sea had become very important to Buckstown's economy. Shipbuilding was the town's most important business and continued to be so for a long time. Vessels were built for fishing and coastal and foreign trade. In 1905, Commander Robert E. Perry's ship, the "Roosevelt" was launched from a shipyard on the eastern side of Verona Island. Undoubtedly, much of the labor and craftsmanship that was used to build the ship came from Bucksport. Perry used this ship to make two trips to the Arctic, including one in which he reached the North Pole.

During the 1800s, ships would tie up at the docks along the waterfront. Cargoes that were unloaded here included sugar, rum, molasses, hides, tobacco and salted fish. Large ships destined for Bangor but too large to sail up the river would stop in Buckstown and transfer passengers and goods to smaller boats, horses or ox-drawn carts to finish the trip. Passenger sloops sailing from Newbury, Massachusetts to Bangor stopped at Buckstown to unload supplies, passengers and, occasionally, livestock. Shipping and shipbuilding had turned Buckstown into a busy port. The town

was prospering so well that the Penobscot Bank was established in 1806. It was the first bank on the Penobscot River, but four years later poor management forced it to close. Nearly all the businesses in the town closed as a result. In 1814, the British again occupied the town but caused little damage. The name of the town was changed to Bucksport in 1817 to reflect its importance as a port of entry for ships.

The Eastern Maine Conference Seminary was founded in 1848 and three years later constructed its first building. It was founded by a group of Methodists as a co-educational school for their children. The first class contained 27 students, then grew to an enrollment of over 300. Debts, however, forced the school to close in 1933. The Franco-American Oblate Fathers (of Lowell, Massachusetts) purchased the building and grounds in 1940 to train priests to be missionaries.

By the late 1860's, Bucksport was a center of maritime activity. Main Street was lined with many large houses and busy shops and inns. The most famous of Bucksport's inns is "The Jed Prouty Tavern." First known as the Robinson House, it is thought to have been built in 1783. Through the years it has been a major attraction in the town, serving many famous people including John Tyler, Andrew Jackson, Jefferson Davis, and Daniel Webster.

The first railroad was built in the United States in 1828. Eight years later, Maine had its own rail line, running between Bangor and Old Town. A line connecting Bucksport and Bangor was discussed for many years, but it was not until 1869 that the townspeople voted to have rail service in the community. The Northeast American and European Railway Company laid track between Bucksport and Bangor as part of a series of tracks between New York and Nova Scotia. Service by this company began in 1874, but due to financial difficulties, the lease was terminated two years later. The track continued to be used for the next six years by the Bucksport and Bangor Railroad Company. Finally in 1883, the Maine Central Railroad (MCRR) took over the track on a 999-year lease. Each time the track changed hands, the gauge was changed, making it impossible for equipment to be transferred from one line to another. It was changed to the standard gauge when MCRR took control. The Bucksport branch of the MCRR carried goods and passengers inland for many years.

The advent of railroads hurt shipping nationwide, as well as many of the smaller coastal shipping ports including Bucksport. By taking away its commercial importance, the town was deprived of its traditional economic base. Automobiles continued the de-emphasis of shipping and also caused a decline in railroad activity. Bus service between Bucksport and Bangor began in 1934, which forced a reduction in the passenger train schedule. In the 1920's two passenger trains ran daily between the two communities, but by 1942, passenger service had ceased.

While Bucksport lost much of its ties with the sea and the hustle and bustle of a shipping port, it did regain its economic base. In 1930, the Maine Seaboard Paper Company opened a new mill, producing newsprint. Originally employing 450 persons and turning out 100,000 tons of newsprint, it grew, by 1942, to employ 690 persons with

an annual output of 100,000 tons of newsprint, 5,000 tons of specialty products, and 7,000 tons of sulfite pulp. The mill was sold in April, 1946 to Time, Inc., and in August of that same year, it was resold to the St. Regis Paper Company. By 1959, the plant had increased the number of employees to between 700 and 800. In 1984, St. Regis merged with Champion International and in 2002 Champion was purchased by International Paper. In 2007, the mill was purchased by Verso Paper who announced the permanent closure of paper making operations in 2014. Power production continued at the site while mill buildings were demolished anticipating unspecified redevelopment.



A map of Bucksport's historic and archaeological sites and sensitive areas by MHPC is available on [bucksportmaine.gov](http://bucksportmaine.gov) with the other Comp Plan maps.

## 11B HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

This section examines sites listed in the records of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC). Pre-historic refers to sites that predate written history, which began with European settlement. Historic sites refer to those following European settlement.

### Prehistoric Sites.

MHPC records indicate that there are three sites in Bucksport, all located on the bank of the Penobscot River. The exact location is kept confidential to protect from looters. Only a small portion of Bucksport has had a professional archaeological survey. MHPC recommends that surveys be done along the banks of the Penobscot River, Silver Lake, Brewer Lake, Long Pond and their associated drainages. As noted in the 2003 plan, it would be challenging to survey the Silver Lake shoreline since its level has been raised artificially.

### Archaeological Sites.

The six archaeological sites identified by MHPC are shown in Table 6.1. Four of these sites are ship/boat wrecks and two are farmsteads. By contrast, there were only two sites (both shipwrecks) listed in the 2003 plan. MHPC records indicate that no professional surveys for historic archaeological sites have been conducted to date in Bucksport. It recommends that future archaeological surveys focus on the identification of potentially significant resources associated with the town's maritime, agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage. A particular focus would be on sites associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the 18th and 19th centuries.

<b>Table 11.1 Archaeological Sites in Bucksport</b>			
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>MHPC Site #</b>	<b>Site Type</b>	<b>Periods of Significance</b>
Mintora	ME 066-001	wreck, schooner	About 1900 to before 1932
Meddo No. 1	ME 066-002	wreck, scow	12-Sep-1931
Meddo No. 2	ME 066-003	wreck, scow	12-Sep-1931
Mentora	ME 066-004	wreck, schooner	1890
Reuben Stubbs Farm Complex	ME 066-005	Farmstead	early 19th century
Eldredge Colby Farmstead	ME 066-006	Farmstead	shown on Bucksport 1860 and 1881 maps
<b>SOURCE:</b> Maine Historic Preservation Commission, October 2013			

### National Historic Register Properties

There are nine properties in Bucksport that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (see Table 6.2). No properties have been added since data were collected for the 2003 plan. National Register listing offers properties limited protection when federal monies are involved. Consideration must be given to alternatives before federal funds can be used in a project that might alter a property on the Register. There are also certain tax advantages to renovating historical properties. Listing does not restrict the decisions of private property owners to do what they wish with their property. Rather, if a property is altered by an owner in a way that destroys its historic character, that property is subject to removal from the Register.

<b>Table 11.2 Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places</b>		
<b>Description</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Ownership, Current Use</b>
James Emery House	101 Main Street	Private, Residential
Bucksport Railroad Station	92 Main Street	Town/npo, Historical Soc. Bldg.
Wilson Hall	34 Middle Street	Town, Redevelopment
Jed Prouty Tavern and Inn	57 Main Street	Private, Assisted Living Ctr.
Buck Memorial Library	47 Main Street	Non-Profit, Public Library
Phineas Heywood House	77 Main Street	Private, Commercial/Res.
Elm Street Congregational Church and Parish House	31 Elm Street	Church, Church functions
Duck Cove School	429 State Rt. 46	Town, Community Club House
Brown-Pilsbury Double House	106 Franklin Street	Private, Residential
<b>SOURCE:</b> Maine Historic Preservation Commission, October 2013, Town Assessor		

*Note: Some Bucksport historic properties such as the Duck Cove School and Wilson Hall are pictured and described more fully at Wikipedia.com. A more complete listing and photos may be seen at <http://maineencyclopedia.com/bucksport/>.*



## Historic District Study

MHPC sponsored a survey of the village in 2000 and identified a tentative historic district boundary. See map of Proposed Historic District below. According to MHPC, there is also potential for a historic district in the “Town Site” area (the former Maine Seaboard Paper Company mill housing). Further analysis of these areas is needed to confirm their National Register eligibility and the reasons for establishing such a district. MHPC offers some purposes on its website:

*Grouping properties as an historic district provides the opportunity to explore the spatial, cultural, technological, and historical relationships between the contributing properties. As with individually listed properties, historic districts must retain overall integrity of design, workmanship, materials, location, association, setting, and feeling, and be significant within the areas of archaeology, architecture, engineering, history or culture.*



Emery House - Linwood Cottage at 101 Main St, with its restored tower, is listed on the National Register.

## Other Historic Properties

Beyond those already listed on the National Register, Bucksport has many other properties of historic value that could be listed nationally or continue as locally recognized buildings and sites of significance. Buck Memorial Library Staff compiled a list and map in 2015. See Table 11.3.

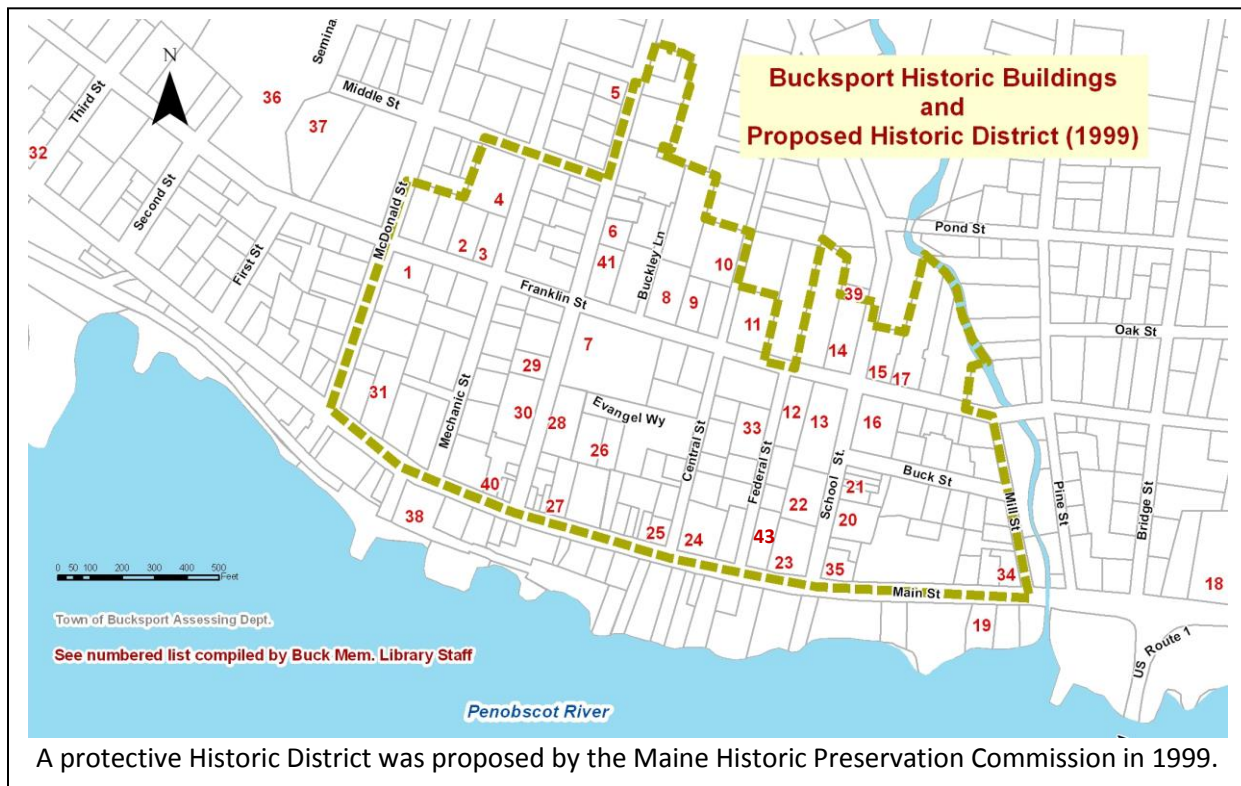


The historic Chase Block on School Street is a rare local example of row housing

**Table 11.3****Other structures of historical value in addition to the National Register (NR) properties:**

No.	Description	Year	Location	(comments)
1.	Brown & Pilsbury	1808	106 Franklin Street	(Old Parsonage) (NR)
2.	Congregational Parsonage	1848	99 Franklin Street	
3.	Gardner House	1850	97 Franklin Street	
4.	Fred Forsythe	1880	38 Mechanic Street	
5.	Old District #1 School House	1835	58 Elm St. (American Legion Hall)	(NR)
6.	Peach House/Octagon House	1845	41 Elm St.	
7.	Congregational Church	1838	31 Elm St. (and Parish)	
8.	N. T. Hill House year	1810	75 Franklin St.	
9.	United Methodist Church	1839	71 Franklin St.	
10.	Rev. M. Blood /Saunders House	1807	36 Central St.	
11.	John N. Swazey	1808	63 Franklin St.	
12.	Dr. Moulton/Edward Swazey	1810	21 Franklin St.	
13.	George Blodget	1833	118 School St.	
14.	Lee House	1792	51 Franklin Street	
15.	Eliakim Darling Jr.	1820	47 Franklin St.	
16.	Amos Darling /Thomas Swazey	1830	119 School St.	
17.	Gibson's Folly & Swazey	1808	45 Franklin St.	
18.	Daniel Buck	1789	34 US Route 1	
19.	River Inn	1799	22 Main St.	
20.	Joseph Bradley	1850	107 School St.	
21.	Chase Block	1835	229-232 School St.	
22.	George L. Bradley	1860	106 School St.	
23.	Buck Memorial Library	1887	47 Main St.	(NR)
24.	Jed Prouty Tavern	1798	57 Main St.	(NR)
25.	Bradley Building (MacLeod's)	1854	63 Main St.	
26.	Judge Caleb Hall, Deacon Darling	1806	14 Evangel Way Apt. Bldg. (Burned/Rebuilt 1820)	
27.	Phineas Heywood	1824	77 Main St.	(NR)
28.	Captain Jabez Snow	1820	9 Elm St.	
29.	Dr. Thegan House	1855	26 Elm St.	
30.	Captain W. H. Spring	1830	20 Elm St.	
31.	Linwood Cottage - Emery House	1853	101 Main St.	(NR)
32.	Captain Mark Ginn House	1834	151 Main St. (Maine Savings Bank)	
33.	Daniel Spofford House	1810	18 Federal St.	
34.	Jonathan Buck House	1785	4 Mill St (Buck Site Ell of current house)	
35.	James Buck House	1830	41 Main Street	
36.	Chase Hall	1853	44 Middle St. (East Maine Conference Seminary)	
37.	Wilson Hall	1851	34 Middle St. (East Maine Conference Seminary)	(NR)
38.	Bucksport Railroad Station	?	92 Main St. (Current Historical Society)	(NR)
39.	Old Union Fire Station	1900	124 School Street	
40.	Alamo Theater	1916	85 Main Street	
41.	Spofford School	1900	83 Franklin Street	
42.	Little Yellow Schoolhouse	1895	429 State Route 46 (old Duck Cove Rd.)	
43.	Moses Buck House	1850	51 Main Street	

BUCKSPORT HISTORIC HOUSE LIST LIBRARY STAFF 2015. See map next page.



Bucksport has capitalized on the historic character of its downtown through its waterfront and downtown revitalization projects. While not all buildings are of historic value, the overall appearance of the area captures the town's history. Elsewhere in town are homes built by sea captains and the first merchants. There are also some rural farmsteads of historic interest. These contribute to the town's overall appeal as a place to live.

**Burial Grounds.** Cemeteries provide records and insights into the town's history. The town website lists ten town-maintained cemeteries and six private ones and describes the functions of the 5-member Cemetery Committee. The public library houses detailed records on many of the town's burial grounds.



The Veteran's Memorial at Peary's Landing was dedicated in 2008.

## 11.C PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Threats to historic resources include development and decay. The high cost of maintaining and heating older buildings also brings challenges. It is often difficult to improve the energy efficiency of older homes without some compromise to their historic character. Maine's State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program can provide some relief in these efforts

*Are there threats to local historic resources and to those of state and national significance?*

**National Register.** As mentioned above, properties placed on the National Register are provided some protection. The downtown improvements are an indirect protective measure. They have resulted in walkways, street furniture, and other amenities that keep the area attractive for further private investment. This investment is essential in keeping older buildings in good condition. Investors are less inclined to maintain and improve properties in blighted areas.

**Bucksport Land Use Ordinance.** There are also specific protective measures in Section 12.9 of the zoning ordinance. It requires MHPC review of any application involving structural development or soil disturbance on sites listed or eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. MHPC comments must be considered in the application review process. The applicant must include appropriate protective measures. The town may require secondary documentation for any required protective measures involving designed structures or other engineered methods of protection.

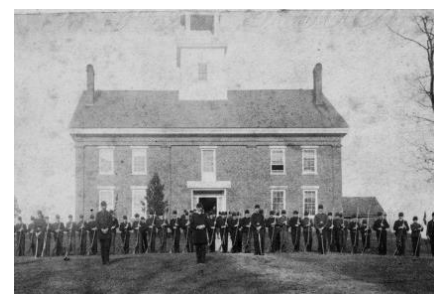
**Bucksport Subdivision Ordinance.** Section 8.12.1 of the subdivision ordinance requires MHPC review if any site of historic or prehistoric importance identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission is within or abuts a proposed subdivision. The planning board may require any measures for the protection of the historic or prehistoric resources recommended by the commission to be included in the subdivision application.

## 11.D HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Some Bucksport historic buildings and sites have received significant attention since the last Comprehensive Plan, including renovations, reconstruction and exploration. Others need care in the not too distant future. It is not within the scope of this plan to chronicle all of the details regarding these properties. A few notable projects are included below.

*Have significant historic resources fallen into disrepair, and are there ways the community can provide incentives to preserve their value as an historical resource?*

**Wilson Hall** housed a seminary and various educational functions from its construction in 1851 until 1971. It was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. The brick and wood-frame structure is situated prominently on Oak Hill adjacent to the original town cemetery, overlooking the village, the Penobscot River and Fort Knox. The long vacant structure, threatened by neglect and water damage, was placed on Maine's Most Endangered Historic Places List in 1999. It has remained on the list since then, awaiting preservation efforts. The property was acquired by the town in 2010, and demolition was considered at one point. A group of citizens donated funds to preserve the building, and these funds have allowed volunteers to stabilize major structural damage from rot. It is believed that the building is still a viable candidate for restoration. Grants and developers are being sought to bring Wilson Hall back into prominence and use for the Community.



Historic photo of Wilson Hall



**The Little Yellow Schoolhouse** on Route 46 was built in 1895 replacing three schools that were in disrepair. As many as 30 first to eighth grade students attended there. The school was closed in 1944 and was in danger of demolition when purchased by Byron Colby and it became the Duck Cove Community Club. It was self-supporting until recent years when the membership began to dwindle. The property was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. In 2012, the school was deeded to the Town and, for \$1, was leased back to the Community Club for 99 years. Per agreement, the Club re-shingled the roof and will provide routine maintenance and operating costs. The Town will take on long-term maintenance such as needed sill and foundation replacement which it contracted to do in 2016. When the Club no longer needs the building, it will be turned over to the Historical Society.



The Little Yellow School House

**The Old Town Office Building** at 52 Main Street was built in the mid 1800's. The Town purchased it from Parker Spofford in 1915 for \$600 to be used as the Selectman's office and location for the town lock-up cell, which is still in the basement today. The east wing of the building was added in 1938. The chamber of commerce occupies the upper floor of the structure which is maintained by the Town.



The original "old town office" building

### **Private home and commercial upgrades**

As mentioned above, maintenance of historic properties can be costly, but the rewards great. Several privately owned historic properties received significant investments in recent years including extensive rehabilitation of the Blodgett House (#13), the Bradley Building (#25) and Emery house-Linwood cottage (#31). Such efforts add value to the properties, neighborhoods and the community at large. The Phineas Heywood House (#27) at 77 Main Street is a good example of a historic home that has been adapted for mixed use with offices and apartments.



The Heywood House

**Norumbega** is described in Wikipedia as “a legendary settlement in northeastern North America... It often appeared on early European maps, lying south of Acadia.” In 2015, A local effort, with help from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC), investigated a site in north Bucksport to determine whether it is the site of the massive native village known as Arembec. Arembec was pronounced by the Natives as N'Arembec'a, which became written “Norumbega”. Some historic map information and massive stonewalls on private property near the Penobscot River led some to conclude that this is indeed the location of Norumbega. The MHPC funded a dig of test holes and did not find enough for it to continue. Another dig found some evidence to corroborate the theory. More exploration of the vicinity may be forthcoming.



The search for the “Lost City of Gold” in North Bucksport was written up by local newspapers. The Bucksport Enterprise published this map that appears to depict Norumbega in Bucksport north of Pentagoet, an old settlement known to have been in Castine.



**The Bucksport Historical Society** houses a museum of local artifacts in the old railroad station on Main St. The group has periodic meetings and a Facebook page.



**The Buck Memorial Library**, owned by a private, non-profit organization, is conducting an on-going restoration of the 1887 building. Re-building of the (pictured) south wall was completed in 2015 using grants and donations. \$200k of needed work remains.



## 12. EXISTING LAND USE

### INTRODUCTION

An understanding of land use changes is essential in planning a town's future. A review of the impacts of recent land development helps determine if the current land use ordinances and other measures used to manage growth are adequate. It may also help determine if town growth patterns are consistent with Bucksport's vision. This involves looking at the town as a whole and its various neighborhoods.

**State Goal:** None required.

### OVERVIEW AND MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

Since its founding, land use patterns in Bucksport have followed the traditional configuration of coastal Maine towns. Villages formed near convenient harbors with other settlements clustered near crossroads and mill sites. Farms spread out in the rural areas where tillable lands and pastures could be found. As roads and automobiles became more plentiful, wayside homes were popularized to enjoy the best of all worlds without close ties to a village. Though Bucksport Village has grown, much of the new home construction in recent decades has been along established through ways, on small subdivisions roads and shorelines.



While the 2003 comprehensive plan called for most new residential development to take place in the growth areas designated in the future land use plan, only six of the 73 residential subdivision lots/units approved between 2002 and 2015 were in the growth area. Many commercial operations have come and gone in recent years. Eighty-three commercial uses were granted permits in existing buildings on Main Street and only twenty of those remained in business as of late 2015.

There were 202 building permits granted for new residential construction between 2002 and 2015. Yet the year-round population increased by sixteen persons between 2000 and 2010. New home construction occurred at a faster rate than the population. The town continues to invest in its downtown. It still, however, faces major challenges in attracting and retaining new businesses to the downtown.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Ordinance changes provide for easier application reviews by Planning Board and CEO.
- ★ New digital flood maps improve administration of floodplain management regulations.
- ★ Homebuilders and developers choose rural subdivisions over designated growth areas.
- ★ Relaxing of some Shoreland Zoning requirements may help downtown development.
- ★ Aesthetic standards may be proposed to enhance the image of commercial areas.
- ★ Some conflicts in the Rural Development Corridor might be eased with realignment.

## ANALYSIS

### Residential Development Trends

According to code enforcement office records, about 71 percent of residential development in the 2002- 2015 period was in single-family lots. The remaining 29 percent was in subdivisions. There were no planned developments. The town issued 202 building permits for new residential construction (see Table 12.1).

*Is most of the recent development occurring: lot by lot; in subdivisions; or in planned developments? Is recent development consistent with Bucksport's vision?*

There were also some conversions of uses during this same period. Town records indicate that seven residential uses were changed to commercial. Three commercial operations were converted to residential uses. Demolition permit requirements were implemented in 2014, and since then 7 demolition permits covering the removal of a total of 11 residential buildings were issued.

**Table 12.1**  
**Number of permits for construction**  
**of new 1-family dwellings, 2002-2015**

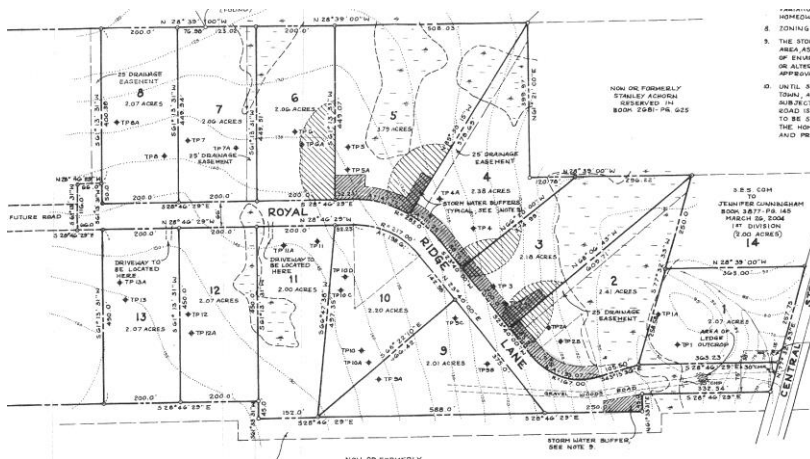
<b>Year</b>	<b># of permits</b>
2002	26
2003	22
2004	26
2005	26
2006	19
2007	16
2008	11
2009	8
2010	13
2011	8
2012	10
2013	6
2014	7
2015	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> Town permit records	

Subdivision activity is summarized in Table 12.2. While the planning board approved 73 residential lots or units, just 39 have been-built-upon as of late 2015. Only six lots/units (8 percent of the total) were approved in the growth area specified in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map and 67 (92 percent) were in the rural area. This trend is inconsistent with the goal of the 2003 plan that the majority of development should occur in the growth area.

**Table 12.2**  
**Approved Subdivisions: Bucksport 2002-2013**

Year	Subdivision Name	Number of approved lots/units	Number of lots built-upon	Location (Growth or Rural Area)
2002	None	0	0	na
2003	East Channel Condos	4 units	(existing bldg.)	Growth
2004	1. Long Pond Stream	4	2	Rural
	2. Meandering Brook	4	2	Rural
	3. Shawna Haskins	3	2	Rural
	4. Singing Creek	4	2	Rural
	5. Town Farm Road	14	14	Rural
2005	1. Buck Housing Develop.	1 lot added	1	Growth
	2. Kings Mountain View	11	5	Rural
2006	Pond View	2	2	Rural
2007	1. Shawna Haskins	1 lot added	0	Rural
	2. Royal Ridge	14	7	Rural
	3. Clements	9	1	Rural
2008	None	0	0	na
2009	None	0	0	na
2010	Buckstown Heritage Park	8 (comm.)	0	Comm. Growth
2011	None	0	0	na
2012	None	0	0	na
2013	None	0	0	na
2014	Buck Housing Develop.	2 lots comb.	1	Growth
2015	1. Kenney Drive	1	0	All Rural
	2. Jacob Buck Pond	1	0	
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>73</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>6 growth</b> <b>67 rural</b> 8 Comm. Growth

**SOURCE:** Bucksport Planning Board records



Two miles from the village off Central Street, Royal Ridge is the largest residential development in Bucksport of the last ten years. There are still some buildable lots available.

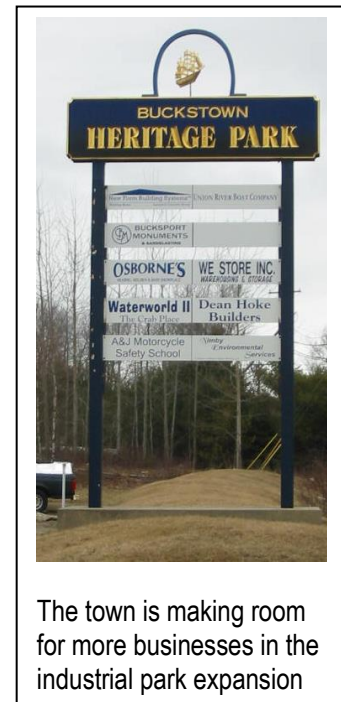
### Commercial and Other Development Trends Since 2003

There was a high rate of turnover in commercial properties in the 2003-2015 period. On Route 15, seven commercial uses opened and two closed. Eighty-three commercial uses were granted permits in existing buildings on Main Street and only twenty of those remained in business as of late 2015. Ten commercial uses opened in the downtown area away from Main Street and six closed. In the rural areas, thirty-two commercial uses were permitted, and seven closed.

Commercial development activity since the last plan included a small retail strip mall on Route 1. The Dunkin Donut building was renovated. A separate commercial building on the same lot was demolished and reused as a parking lot. A Subway franchise moved to a new location from another nearby location on Route 1.

Activity continued along Route 46. A residential building was demolished and replaced with a seasonal seafood restaurant. New construction included a fuel business and a 1,440 square-foot addition to an existing motorcycle repair business. Two Main Street businesses (a gunsmith and a marine service) relocated to an existing building on Route 46, and constructed an addition to create more space.

There was also development in the Buckstown Heritage Industrial Park off Route 46. Some of these businesses opened in new buildings and others in existing structures. Businesses include a plumbing and heating contractor, a motorcycle driving school, a septage dewatering facility, a stone monument operation, a crab processor, a boat builder, a flash freezer and cold storage facility, and a building and electrical contractor. Also locating in the park were a maker of insulated foundation forms, a fuel design and development business, dog food maker, and a specialty automotive service. The building contractor, electrical contractor, dog food manufacturer, and boat building businesses have since closed but a new boat building company now uses the facility occupied by the prior boat building company. As of late 2015, there were two acres of vacant land in the existing business park, with another 20 acres being prepared for future development.



The town is making room for more businesses in the industrial park expansion

Downtown improvements continued including the demolition of eleven buildings on Main Street to make way for site improvements. Five dilapidated buildings were demolished by the town, and the 1 ½ acre site is being marketed for redevelopment. Two buildings were demolished to make way for public parking off Central Street. An old building next to the town dock was demolished and the site was redeveloped with a building occupied with a restaurant and two apartments. A large commercial building and two nearby residential buildings next to the Verona Island bridge were demolished by the town. The site was redeveloped with a municipal combined sewer and stormwater overflow facility, a Veterans' Memorial, and a public parking lot.

One historical building known as the Jed Prouty Tavern and Inn was converted into an assisted living facility. Another historical building was renovated and is now a retail storefront and dwelling. The town acquired an historical building located just off Main Street known as Wilson Hall, and efforts are under way to repair damage from years of neglect. *(For more information on historical resources, see the Historical and Archaeological Resources chapter).*

Other downtown investments included an expansion of a health care facility on Broadway. An old school building on Elm Street was converted into Gardner Commons, a 25-unit senior citizen apartment building. There were also several expansions and renovations to the RSU 25 school buildings. (These are described in the Public Facilities and Services chapter.) Improvements continued to the marina area. Further expansions of the waterfront walkway were completed, as well as other amenities such as landscaping. A sculpture was installed at Flag Point on the waterfront, and informational signs and benches were installed at Picnic Point near the westerly end of the walkway.

### **The 2003 vision statement proclaimed:**

*Bucksport of the future will continue to be a vibrant community where people of all ages will live, work and play. Bucksport will have desirable residential areas. Residents will have safe and sound housing and moderate tax rates. Children will have good educational and recreational opportunities. Senior citizens will have adequate housing and services. Health services will meet the needs of all age groups. Public transportation will be provided for all. Neighborhoods will be pedestrian-friendly and attractively landscaped. New residential developments will be established without burden to the town's natural resources, rural areas or municipal services.*

The following paragraphs present the specific 2003 goals of the vision statement and evaluate the degree to which they have been achieved. Limiting factors include the poor overall condition of the global economy as well as major changes in the operations at the mill site.

*What regulatory and non-regulatory measures would help promote development of a character, and in locations that are consistent with Bucksport's vision?*

#### **□a. Bucksport will have thriving commercial areas.**

Bucksport has actively promoted its manufacturing and commercial sectors. These efforts resulted in new businesses being attracted to town. However, commercial vacancy rates indicate that portions of the commercial area are not thriving. This part of the vision statement has been implemented with limited success.

One recent regulatory change to help implement this goal is delegation of more land use permitting authority to the code enforcement officer (see Section C below). This will expedite the land use permit approval process. The town has had an aggressive economic development program to recruit and retain businesses. This is an effective



non-regulatory measure. Any recruitment program faces challenges during a time of slow economic growth.

Bucksport's long-time major industrial business, a paper mill, was closed in late 2014. Demolition of mill buildings will make way for new development. The site owners and others have opinions as to what that might be. Some promoted plans might not fit the industrial zoning requirements for this area, so consideration may be needed to change the zone or to allow more types of commercial uses.

b. Bucksport will have attractive recreational areas and natural resources

The town's recreation areas are discussed in the Recreation chapter. There is further information in the Marine Resource and Natural Resource chapters. To summarize, the expansion of trail systems and waterfront improvements has improved recreational opportunities and enjoyment of natural resources. While there are still outstanding needs to address, the town has made great progress in implementing this goal.

Further implementation of this goal will depend primarily on non-regulatory measures. These will include continued investment in recreational facilities and waterfront improvements. There is further discussion of the current town regulatory measures in the relevant chapters.

c. Bucksport will have desirable residential areas

As discussed in the Housing chapter, the town's housing stock has improved but there are still some substandard units. The town has not been successful in attracting much new residential development to the growth areas. Only 8 percent of the subdivision units approved between 2003 and 2015 were in the growth areas.

The most effective non-regulatory technique to attract more residential growth to growth areas is continued public investment in pedestrian facilities, streets, and public amenities. The town, however, has already made substantial improvements in its built-up area. The small scale of recent residential development, illustrated by the fact that only three of the approved subdivisions between 2003 and 2015 were over ten units, makes it hard to create a neighborhood.

One possible regulatory measure would be to create incentives for open space or cluster developments. The developer creates smaller individual lots in exchange for a commonly held open space area. Some towns allow developers of open space subdivisions to create additional lots than would be allowed under conventional subdivision standards. Another possible option would be to require the use of open space subdivision under certain conditions. These conditions normally apply to large-scale development (at least ten units and frequently more). As mentioned above, most residential development in Bucksport has been small-scale.

The town has a full-time code enforcement officer (CEO) that meets state certification requirements. Since Bucksport is now subject to the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC), some increase

*Is Bucksport's administrative capacity adequate to manage its land use regulation program, including planning board and code enforcement officer?*

in building inspection activity is likely. This may mean more demands on the code enforcement staff.

The development review process has been recently changed to allow the CEO to review more applications and grant disability permits with variances rather than subject them to planning board review. This allows faster granting of permits.

Bucksport amended its floodplain management ordinance in 2008. It does not include the minor changes made to state model ordinance since that time. These changes include new references to federal forms and minor clarifications of language.

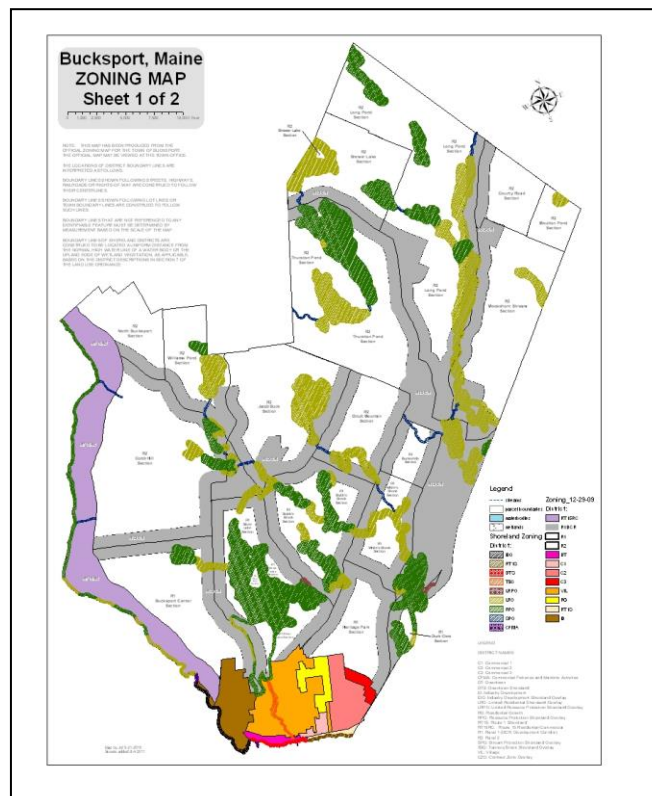
*Are floodplains adequately identified and protected? Is the floodplain management ordinance up to date and consistently enforced? Is the floodplain management ordinance consistent with state and federal standards?*

No problems have been reported in the enforcement of the ordinance. As of late 2015, new floodplain maps are being finalized by FEMA. The town may want to postpone any amendments to the current floodplain ordinance until the new maps are released. The new maps may show a change in the current floodplain boundaries and involve further amendments to the ordinance. It would be more efficient to make all the amendments at once.

## Conditions and Trends

*Existing land use map*

Bucksport's official zoning maps are available at the town offices on Main Street. Colorized unofficial versions are at [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov):



The estimated breakdown of acreage by zoning districts is shown on Table 12.3. The dimensional standards for each zone are summarized in Table 12.4.

<b>Table 12.3 Bucksport: Estimated Acreage of Zoning Districts</b>		
District	Estimated Acreage	Percent of Land Area
Commercial 1	57	0.2%
Commercial 2	345	1.0%
Commercial 3	75	0.2%
Downtown	85	0.2%
Rural 1	4,170	12.0%
Rural 2	14,980	43.1%
Industry Development	462	1.3%
Residential Growth	167	0.5%
Route 1 Shoreland	49	0.1%
Route 15 Residential-Commercial	1,975	5.7%
Route 1 (DCR: Development Corridor)	10,218	29.4%
Village	766	2.2%
Ponds and lakes	1,400	4.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,749</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> GIS analysis of zoning map		

*A summary of current lot dimensional standards.*

The complete set lot dimensional standards can be found at [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov). (see section 14 of the town's land use ordinance). The town is divided into thirteen general districts. There are also six shoreland zone overlay districts that provide additional regulations to specific areas. A seventh overlay district identifies land areas subject to conditional use approval. A brief summary of the inland districts is shown on Table 12.4. Shoreland protection measures are discussed in the Water and Marine Resources chapters.

Minimum lot sizes range from 5,000 square feet to four acres. Lot size requirements vary based on factors such as the type of uses allowed, the presence of public water and sewer, and additional uses on the same lot (see Minimum Land Area Notes below). These standards offer a range of options to encourage denser development in the downtown area while keeping more remote areas at a rural scale.

The zoning ordinance offers additional flexibility through a Contract Zoning Overlay (CZO) district. This district allows certain areas to be zoned conditionally if approved by the planning board and town council. The intent of this overlay district is to mitigate potential adverse effects upon adjacent properties and the town by allowing the addition of specific conditions to a change in zoning. A zone change to CZO may be granted only if the application of the zoning to the property in question meets the same standards of consistency with the town's comprehensive plan required for any other zone change. Questions have been raised about the appropriate use of Contract Zoning, so some clarification in the land use ordinance may be needed.

**Table 12.4**  
**Summary of Lot Dimensional Standards Inland Zones<sup>1</sup>**

DISTRICTS	DT	C1	C2	C3	ID	RG	RT 1S	RT 15 RC	R1	R2	VIL
5,000 SQ. FT.	1.1										1.3
10,000 SQ. FT.	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3							
20,000 SQ. FT.		1.4	1.4	1.4		1.5					1.4
30,000 SQ. FT.							1.6				
40,000 SQ. FT.					1.5		1.7	1.5			
60,000 SQ. FT.							1.8				
1 ACRE									1.11		
2 ACRES									1.12	1.11	
4 ACRES										1.12	

<sup>1</sup>**NOTE:** This summary is for general references purposes only. For details on district requirements consult the land use ordinance. **SOURCE:** Bucksport town code

<b>2.1 DISTRICT ABBREVIATIONS - NAMES:</b>	
C1 - Commercial 1	RG - Residential Growth
C2 - Commercial 2	RT15RC - Route 15 Residential/Commercial
C3 - Commercial 3	R1 - Rural 1
DT - Downtown	R2 - Rural 2
ID - Industry Development	VIL - Village
<b>2.2 MINIMUM LAND AREA NOTES:</b>	
1.1 Per 1-family dwelling or 1 ½-family dwelling. 7,500 square feet per 2-family dwelling.	
1.2A Per principal structure for comm. or non-comm. 2,500 sf per each dwelling unit.	
1.2B Per 3-unit multi-family dwelling. 2,500 square feet per each additional dwelling unit.	
1.3 Per principal structure with public sewage disposal.	
1.4 Per principal structure with private sewage disposal.	
1.5 Per principal structure with public or private sewage disposal.	
1.6 Per one-family dwelling or one & ½-family dwelling. 45,000 sq. ft. per two-family dwelling.	
1.7 Per principal structure for comm. or non-comm. 15,000 sf per dwelling unit in the structure.	
1.8 Per 3-unit multi-family dwelling. 15,000 square feet per each additional dwelling unit.	
1.9 Per dwelling unit.	
1.10 Per principal structure for commercial or noncommercial occupancy.	
1.11 Per 1-family dwelling, 1½-family dwelling or 2-family dwelling, except in a Subdivision.	
1.12A. Per principal structure for comm. or non-comm.. 20,000 sf per dwelling unit.	
1.12B. Per one-family dwelling, one & ½-family dwelling or two-family dwelling in a subdivision.	

Recent development trends are discussed in Section D.1 of this chapter. These trends indicate several themes. First, apart from multi-family housing, the majority of new residential development has occurred in areas that were designated as rural in the 2003 plan. Second, there has been substantial public investment in the growth areas. This includes the schools, parking, waterfront improvements, and pedestrian facilities. Third, there are many vacant commercial properties. This means that there is an opportunity for reinvestment of already developed land.

*A description or map identifying the location of lots and primary structures created within the last ten years. Include residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial development.*

Although Bucksport is a service center with a concentration of development, it is mostly rural. Only 2,112 acres (6 percent of the land area) in town is already developed (see Table 12.5). Forests are the primary land use in town, accounting for about 77 percent of the land in Bucksport.



<b>Table 12.5 Land Cover Analysis, Bucksport</b>		
<b>Land Cover Type</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Developed, High Intensity	253	0.7%
Developed, Low Intensity	386	1.1%
Developed, Medium Intensity	312	0.9%
Developed, Open Space	331	1.0%
Road/Runway	830	2.4%
<b>DEVELOPED LAND subtotal</b>	<b>2,112</b>	<b>6.1%</b>
Cultivated Crops	1,149	3.3%
Pasture/Hay	1,045	3.0%
<b>CROPS AND HAY subtotal</b>	<b>2,194</b>	<b>6.4%</b>
Deciduous Forest	9,287	26.9%
Evergreen Forest	5,899	17.1%
Heavy Partial Cut	1,249	3.6%
Light Partial Cut	722	2.1%
Mixed Forest	9,095	26.3%
Regenerating Forest	576	1.7%
<b>FOREST subtotal</b>	<b>26,828</b>	<b>77.7%</b>
Grassland/Herbaceous	12	0.0%
Scrub/Shrub	523	1.5%
<b>GRASS-SHRUB subtotal</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
Wetland Forest	816	2.4%
Wetlands	419	1.2%
<b>WETLANDS subtotal</b>	<b>1,235</b>	<b>3.6%</b>
Open Water	1,463	4.2%
Unconsolidated Shore	148	0.4%
Bare Ground	32	0.1%
Other	<b>179</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34,546</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SOURCE:</b> Bucksport Assessor's office		

Development trends in different parts of town are discussed below:

### 1. The Downtown and Waterfront

While there have been major improvements to the downtown and waterfront, there are still some outstanding problems. The parking and sidewalk issues are addressed in the Transportation chapter. As mentioned above, there is a high vacancy rate of commercial structures. The town may want to review the current practice of allowing some residential uses on the ground floor of commercial buildings. This could alter the commercial character of the Main Street area.

Another issue involves the limitations on adding more apartments or businesses in existing buildings located in the shoreland zone along Main Street. DEP regulations require lots to provide a minimum amount of land area and shore frontage for each individual commercial and residential occupancy in a building, and most lots on Main Street are already unable to do that for the existing uses on the lots. Seeking a variance to add additional uses is an option for property owners, but in most cases qualifying for a variance is extremely difficult. Another option, which is currently being pursued, is providing justification to DEP for allowing less restrictive land area and shore frontage requirements.

## 2. Lake Watersheds

As discussed in the Water Resources chapter, some of the lakes are vulnerable to phosphorus and other non-point sources of pollution. The town may want to update its phosphorus control standards to reflect the latest model guidelines.



## 3. Route 1/3 Corridor

This corridor faces conflicts between through and local traffic. The town may want to review its access management policies that address curb cuts. As this is a high visibility area for tourists, ordinance standards could be considered to keep the aesthetic quality here at a consistent level.

## 4. Rural Areas

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the rural areas have attracted the majority of new residential development. The town may want to review its current approach to encouraging growth in growth areas. As the population ages more people may be interested in living closer to the downtown.

Bucksport has a comprehensive set of land use ordinances. They appear to manage most land development adequately. Some minor revisions and updating may be needed to address some specific problems such as water resource protection and road

access management. These topics are discussed at greater length in the respective chapters.

The town's land use and zoning ordinance was repealed and replaced with a more comprehensive ordinance in 2010. The most obvious benefit observed was a more efficient and consistent application review process conducted by the Planning Board for new commercial businesses. The ordinance also includes shoreland regulations which previously were in a separate ordinance. Combining these regulations into one document makes it easier to access information, especially for properties that contain both shoreland and non-shoreland areas.

*Provide a brief description of existing land use regulations and other tools utilized to manage land use, including shoreland zoning, floodplain management, subdivision, site plan review, and zoning ordinances.*

Land use ordinances are filled with regulatory language, tables and definitions, and can be a bit overwhelming for those unfamiliar with how these ordinances work. An instructional guide for using Bucksport's land use ordinance was developed to help novice users understand how the ordinance is formatted and where to find the information they are looking for. Continuing efforts should be made to ensure the ordinance is as user-friendly as possible.

The first step in estimating the amount of land needed to accommodate future growth is to assess the amount of land that is available for development. This should be compared to projected growth trends. A realistic amount of land needs to be designated to accommodate most growth. (This is addressed in the Future Land Use Plan).

*Estimate the minimum amount of land needed to accommodate projected residential, institutional, commercial, or industrial development at least ten (10) years into the future.*

Some land is not suitable for development due to natural constraints. These include areas of steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains, and key natural resources. The estimated acreage of development constraints is shown on Table 12.6.

These estimates are general. Site investigations may reveal more specific information about a given parcel of land. For example, a high value wildlife habitat may be discovered on a property. Similarly, a wetland boundary map may be in error.

<b>Table 12.6</b>		
<b>Land Subject to Natural Development Constraints, Bucksport</b>		
<b>Constraint Type</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>% of Town</b>
Steep Slope Areas	2,245	6.5%
Flood Plains (including ponds & wetlands)	2,898	8.4%
Key Natural Areas such as deer wintering areas (est.)	1,000	2.9%
Hydric (wet) Soils not in areas above (est.)	2,000	5.8%
<b>Natural Constraint Totals</b>	<b>8,143</b>	<b>23.6%</b>
Already Developed Areas	2,112	6.1%
<b>Town total</b>	<b>34,546</b>	<b>100%</b>
SOURCE: State and Town data		

Tax-exempt and tax-sheltered land (see Table 12.7) is not normally available for development. About 1.5 percent of the land in Bucksport in late 2013 (nearly 509 acres) was tax-exempt. This compares to the 298 acres reported as tax-exempt in the 2003 plan. The largest tax-exempt landowners are the town (401 acres) and the schools (48 acres). Churches and service organizations account for 27 acres.

About 73 percent of the increase in tax-exempt land was in town-owned property. The 2003 plan reported there were 269 acres of town-owned land. The overall amount of tax-exempt property is still minimal.

Tax-sheltered land refers primarily to land held in current use taxation such as tree growth and farmland protection. It is at least temporarily restricted from development. There is further discussion of this topic in the Agricultural and Forest Resources chapter. About 27 percent of the land in town is in tree growth or farmland protection.

<b>Table 12.7 Tax-Exempt or Sheltered Property, Bucksport, 2013</b>			
<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of Parcels</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Percent of Total Land Area</b>
<b>Tax Exempt</b>			
Municipal (non-school)	54	401	1.1%
Schools (RSU 25 and Reach School)	7	48	Less than 0.5%
Churches, Service Organizations	23	27	Less than 0.5%
State, (Jacob Buck Pond boat launch)	1	2.5	Less than 0.5%
Federal (USPO leases pvt-owned bldg)	0	0	0
<b>Total Tax Exempt</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>508.5</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
<b>Tax Sheltered</b>			
Tree Growth	95	6,462	18.6%
Farmland Program <sup>1</sup>	3	323	0.9%
Open Space Program <sup>1</sup> (2016)	3	76	Less than 0.5%
<b>Total Tax Sheltered</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>6,785</b>	<b>19.5%</b>
<b>Total Land Area (acres)</b>			<b>34,699</b>
<sup>1</sup> <b>NOTE:</b> Farm & Open Space data are from Maine Revenue Services. All other data are from the town.			
<b>SOURCE:</b> Tax Assessor records			

The projected decline in population means Bucksport is not expecting significant rates of new development. Given the available land in the business parks and the vacant commercial properties, most development other than single-family homes is likely to occur on or adjacent to existing developed properties.

As seen in Table 12.1, 202 permits were granted for new residential construction between 2002-2015. Yet the year-round population increased by sixteen persons between 2000 and 2010. This means that some new home construction can be expected even if there is little population growth. To allow for some unanticipated growth, this plan assumes that 200 new single-family homes will be built between 2014 and 2024. The actual growth rate is more likely to be slower.

Table 12.8 shows that 200 additional acres will be needed for new development. This assumes an average of one acre per house. In some parts of town, the zoning ordinance requires more land and buyers may choose to buy more than the minimum lot size. In areas served by public water and sewer, lot sizes are smaller. There is clearly ample developable land. The challenge is encouraging more residential development to take place in the growth areas.

<b>Table 12.8 Bucksport: Available Land for Development, 2015</b>		
<b>Constraints</b>	<b>Estimated Acreage</b>	<b>Percent of Land Area</b>
1. Developed Land	2,112	6.11%
2. Tax-Exempt <sup>1</sup>	479	1.4%
3. Tax Sheltered	6,785	19.5%
6. Natural constraints (from Table 12.6)	8,143	23.4%
7. Total constrained or restricted land	17,519	50.4%
8. Vacant available land	17,230)	49.6%
9. Projected land for new development 2014-2024	200	.005%
10. Balance of vacant land after new development	17,030	50.4%
11. <b>Total</b>	34,749	100.0%
<sup>1</sup> <b>NOTE:</b> there is some overlap between developed land and tax-exempt <b>SOURCE:</b> analysis of other tables		



## 13. FISCAL CAPACITY & CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive plan must summarize fiscal conditions in the town. This involves an analysis of both revenues and expenditures. This section reviews recent and projected future trends.

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

### OVERVIEW and MILL CLOSURE EFFECTS

The permanent closure of the Verso Paper Mill in 2014 has ended an eight decade span over which the town received more than half of its revenues from the mill site owners. There were times during that span when the mill's tax bill amounted to 70 percent of the town's total. In recent years, through improvements & diversification of the tax base and depreciation in the mill valuation, that portion was reduced to about 45 percent. With the town's reduced overall valuation for tax year 2015-16, the remaining power island equipment, buildings and land on the site accounted for about 17 percent of the town's property revenues. The two Tax Increment Financing districts on site were abolished by mutual agreement.



### HIGHLIGHTS

- ★ Verso's abrupt drop in value was about 40% of the total taxable property value in town.
- ★ Maine's "Sudden & Severe" law helped Bucksport recover about 1/2 of the revenue loss.
- ★ Once the site is cleared, redevelopment should begin to rebuild the town's tax base.
- ★ The town reorganized its Capital Improvements Program for 2016-17.
- ★ A 2015 "Ad Hoc" committee studied options for adjusting the town budget going forward.



Paper mill demolition Phase I, Feb. 2016



Once highly-valued buildings and equipment are leaving the town by rail.

## ANALYSES

### Annual Budgeting

Revenue trends are shown in Table 13.1.

*Identify community revenues and expenditures by category for the last five (5) years and explain trends.*

<b>Table 13.1</b>					
<b>Bucksport Revenue History: Every third year for fiscal years 2005 - 2017</b>					
<b>Category</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
Property Taxes	\$8,849,665	\$9,107,173	\$8,749,900	\$9,716,843	\$6,985,840
Excise Taxes	\$712,272	\$724,760	\$650,105	\$703,924	\$785,500
State Revenue Sharing	\$830,000	\$494,397	\$311,061	\$173,070	\$324,500
Homestead Reimburse.	\$139,236	\$109,784	\$72,814	\$78,115	\$95,025
Education Subsidies	\$3,159,311	\$4,155,075	0	0	0
Local Road Assistance	\$69,084	\$74,908	\$67,524	\$67,448	\$62,500
Miscellaneous	\$23,926	\$23,438	\$24,464	\$33,758	0
BETE State Reimburse.	0	0	\$455,120	\$621,946	\$71,082
Other State Revenues	0	\$25,221	0	\$38,537	\$28,500
Department Subsidies	0	\$143,958	\$162,974	\$181,944	\$196,134
Fees for Service	\$591,630	\$696,167	\$746,542	\$718,995	\$684,450
Interest on taxes & invest.	\$155,707	\$499,193	\$182,397	\$105,929	\$68,000
TIF Revenue	0	\$107,500	\$100,895	\$140,196	\$70,000
Other Rev. - Education	\$3,041,694	\$2,232,273	0	0	\$168,000
Other Rev. - General	\$6,284	0	\$38,502	\$697,672	\$410,000
Other Rev. - Special Funds	0	\$12,860	0	0	\$4,500
Carry Forwards	0	\$1,905,375	0	0	0
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$17,578,809</b>	<b>\$20,312,082</b>	<b>\$11,562,298</b>	<b>\$13,278,377</b>	<b>\$9,954,031</b>
<b>Source:</b> Town Manager - Annual Audit Reports					



The Maine Homestead Program is not just for “homesteaders” like those in this idyllic non-Bucksport location. 2016 and 2017 increases in the exemption amount and in participation levels could increase the town’s mil rate by up to 20 cents while giving owner-occupants a welcomed tax break. The State now reimburses municipalities one half of the avoided taxation.

<b>Table 13.2 Breakdown of Property Tax Valuation By Category and Tax Year</b>						
<b>Tax Year</b>	<b>Bucksport and Hancock County (rounded percentages)</b>					
	Real Estate (Land & Bldgs)	Machinery & Equipment	Business Equipmen t	Other personal property	Total personal Property	Total Real & Personal
<b>2015-16</b>	<b>Bucksport</b>					
Amount	\$363,359,000	\$66,710,833	\$2,178,906	\$348,089	\$69,237,828	\$432,596,828
Percent	84%	15%	<1%	<1%	16%	100%
<b>2012-13</b>	<b>Bucksport</b>					
Amount	\$432,649,900	\$267,080,200	\$4,948,500	\$0	\$272,028,700	\$704,678,600
Percent	61%	38%	1%	0%	39%	100%
<b>2002-03</b>	<b>Bucksport</b>					
Amount	\$266,287,200	\$275,721,850	\$96,700	-	\$275,818,550	\$542,105,750
Percent	49%	51%	<1%	0%	51%	100%
<b>2012-13</b>	<b>Hancock County</b>					
Amount	\$12,132,208,700	\$289,503,645	\$51,941,681	\$16,581,036	\$358,026,362	\$12,490,235,062
Percent	97%	2%	<1%	<1%	3%	100%
<b>2002-03</b>	<b>Hancock County</b>					
Amount	\$5,403,751,006	\$334,556,410	\$20,815,082	\$8,174,538	\$364,086,030	\$5,767,837,036
Percent	94%	6%	<1%	<1%	6%	100%
<b>SOURCE:</b> Municipal Valuation Return, Property Tax Division, Maine Revenue Services						

The breakdown of property tax by category is shown on Table 13.2. The percentages are compared to Hancock County. As seen in 2012-13, about 97 percent of property tax revenue county-wide came from land and buildings compared 61 percent in Bucksport. Total personal property accounted for 39 percent of property taxes in Bucksport, compared to three percent county-wide. This is indicative of how important paper making was to the town's property tax base. That changed for 2015-16 when the new mill site owners declared (legally) that all of their former paper-making machinery and equipment was "stock in trade" articles for sale and therefore exempt from taxation. Similarly, the change in "highest and best use" for the non-energy plant real estate (buildings and land) reduced its taxable value considerably.

The 2015-16 figures show the loss in personal property and real estate value totaling about 270 million dollars from the previous year. The portion of value comprised of personal property in Bucksport has dropped to 16 percent.

Expenditure trends are shown on Table 13.3.

<b>Table 13.3</b>					
<b>Bucksport Expenditure History: Every third year for fiscal years 2005 - 2017</b>					
<b>Category</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
General Government	\$984,925	\$1,121,333	\$1,238,822	\$1,342,514	\$1,581,199
Protection	\$1,040,318	\$1,246,702	\$1,311,185	\$1,540,985	\$1,514,916
Public Works	\$801,236	\$840,921	\$869,493	\$893,666	\$1,009,900
TIF	\$0	\$963,633	\$663,303	\$1,165,332	\$6,669
Health & Sanitation	\$365,733	\$369,063	\$374,238	\$292,007	\$312,685
Community/Social Service	\$2,747	\$52,254	\$54,451	\$74,240	\$69,392
Education & County Tax	\$12,405,567	\$13,172,731	\$5,571,376	\$6,233,799	\$4,631,205
Unclassified	\$0	\$117,566	\$111,272	\$262,902	\$6,669
Recreation & Cemeteries	\$207,932	\$196,220	\$186,831	\$219,368	\$224,687
Debt Service	\$28,182	\$6,075	\$0	\$697,672	\$15,412
Capital Expenses	\$0	\$768,000	\$597,575	\$694,474	\$460,500
Transfers in/(out)	\$0	\$269,510	\$22,096	\$37,117	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,836,640</b>	<b>\$19,124,008</b>	<b>\$11,000,642</b>	<b>\$13,454,076</b>	<b>\$9,833,234</b>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue	\$1,742,169	\$1,188,074	\$561,656	(\$175,699)	\$120,797
<b>Source:</b> Town Manager - Annual Audit Reports					

*Identify local and state valuations and local mil rates for the last five (5) years.*

Local and state equalized valuations and local mil rates are shown on Table 13.4.

<b>Table 13.4</b>								
<b>Town and State Valuations in \$millions and Local Mil Rate</b>								
<b>Year</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
<b>State Equalized Valuation</b>	619.0	669.7	681.0	674.5	681.3	669.0	667.4	403*
Town Valuation	694.5	697.1	691.7	704.7	719.5	712.8	363.4	427
Local Mil Rate	12.52	12.52	12.52	12.94	13.56	14.11	17.10	16.7
<b>SOURCE</b>	Bucksport Tax Assessor							

\*This 2016-17 preliminary valuation from Maine was adjusted by a "Sudden & Severe" petition due to a loss in mill site taxable valuation of \$270,000,000 per a professional appraiser hired by the town. The 2015-16 disparity between State and Town valuations (the year that the major change took place) was not able to be adjusted because of the way Sudden & Severe provisions are structured. The town made up for the lack of revenue for that year by using 2 million dollars in "rainy day" reserve funds.

## CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

### Annual Planning

The Town of Bucksport has a long tradition of responsible fiscal practice including a robust Capital Improvements Plan (more detailed than Investment Plans) for its various departments. Recent changes in town financial management personnel have brought a variety of budgeting styles but all with a commitment to serious fiscal planning for known and unknown future needs. The 2015-16 fiscal year appears as a notable break in that pattern where some capital investment saving was suspended for a year while substantial reserves were being used to keep the mil rate from rising even higher than the \$3 increase approved in the budget process. The “Sudden & Severe” relief written about elsewhere in this chapter was expected to restore the long-term CIP schedule. This expectation was realized for 2016-17.

The basic funding scheme for the CIP Program has been to reserve funds ahead of need in order to avoid future borrowing or sudden changes in the mil rate. Bucksport has been very successful in applying for grant funding recently and will continue to pursue supplemental funding when available, particularly for large projects.

*Describe means of funding capital items (e.g., reserve funds, bonding & special assessments) and identify any outside funding sources. How will future capital investments identified in the plan be funded?*

The annually updated Capital Improvements Plan is posted to [www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov).



The Federally required secondary treatment expansion of the town's wastewater facility on Route 1 is being funded by a 10.5 million dollar USDA Rural Development grant & loan package paid for through increases to sewer system user fees over 27.5 years.



### Town Indebtedness and Borrowing Capacity

As of June 30, 2015 the Town of Bucksport carried \$3,639,485 in overlapping debt from Hancock County (\$17,948 or 5.2%) and RSU 25 (\$3,621,987 or 66.99%). Town debt for municipal operations was \$0 and \$1,755,064 was carried in debt for Sewer Operations. The construction of a secondary treatment facility that is due to be online in 2017 will add \$7,800,000 to debt service for Sewer Operations. Sewer operations debt is retired from Sewer user fees. There are no plans at this time for long term debt for municipal operations. The Town has a long term practice of maintaining and funding capital reserve accounts to be used for capital investments and the Town seeks to maintain that practice going forward. As of 6/30/2015 the Town held \$2,017,152 in Capital Reserve funds for these purposes, and budgets funds annually to cover planned capital improvements according to a 5 year plan which is updated annually. Outstanding long term debt for Bucksport for sewer operations is 2.2% which is well within the legal debt limit (7.5% of municipal taxable valuation), and the total debt, including sewer and RSU 25 and County share for the community is at 3.07% which is well within the 15% legal overall debt limit established in Maine law MRSA Title 30-A § 5702.

*How does total municipal debt (including shares of county, school and utility) compare with the statutory and Maine Bond Bank recommended limits on such debt?*

*If the community plans to borrow to pay for capital investments, does the community have sufficient borrowing capacity to obtain necessary funds?*

### Regional Investment Planning

The primary sharing of capital investments is through the Regional School Unit 25. The fire department through its mutual aid plans coordinates its anticipated purchases with departments in other towns. For example, one department might purchase a specialized piece of equipment that is shared among the departments.

*Have efforts been made by the community to participate in or explore sharing capital investments with neighboring communities? If so, what efforts have been made?*



Bucksport High School got a very much needed face lift in 2014 with funding through the regional school unit. The insulated and air tight brick replaced the leaky 1960's glass block façade at a cost of more than two million dollars.

## 14. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & KEY ISSUES

### INTRODUCTION

This section summarizes the issues and trends discussed in detail in the proceeding chapters. This summary is followed by a discussion on the top issues facing Bucksport. These are the issues that will be the primary focus of the goals, objectives and implementation strategies. It presents issues that require regional collaboration.

### SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND TRENDS for 2016 by Chapter

#### Population

Bucksport gains relatively few additional residents for the summer season. The town could lose as much as a quarter of its total population by 2030. Its average age is rising but it is still lower than Hancock County's. Bucksport's median income is lower than most neighboring towns, but is higher than Hancock County's or Maine's.

#### Economy

At the time of Verso mill closing, it was a major regional employer. About 24 percent (144 people) of the mill's 600 employees were from Bucksport, the rest were from elsewhere. About 35 percent of the Bucksport labor force worked in town. There was also substantial commuting into town. About 60 percent of the jobs in Bucksport were held by out of town residents.

There is less seasonal fluctuation in employment in Bucksport than there is county-wide. The number of jobs held by Bucksport residents increased from 2,282 in 2000 and to 2,472 in 2010. Retail trade and the education/social services sector experienced the greatest rates of increase.

- ★ Bucksport has done major work to revitalize its downtown and implement its downtown revitalization plan.
- ★ The Town is adding 8 new lots with utilities in the Heritage Industrial Park.
- ★ Many other town improvements should help boost local economic development.

#### Housing

The number of occupied dwelling units increased by 4.2 percent between 2000 and 2010, but the total number of dwellings (vacant and occupied) increased by about 12 percent. There was a 37 percent increase in the number of duplexes and multi-family

units. Bucksport had 222 subsidized rental units in 2011, which was nearly 16 percent of all such units in the county.

a. Home sales and rental prices are below the county median. Given the gradual increase in the median age of residents, more senior citizen housing may be needed. Real estate agents report that there are a limited number of energy-efficient homes and rental units available in the middle-price range. The town needs to assess the extent of substandard and energy-inefficient housing.

## **1. Transportation**

As observed before the mill closure, traffic increased at a much slower rate in recent years than in previous decades. There were cases of minor decreases in traffic flow. The area of Route 1/3 between the Verona Island bridge and the Orland town line has seasonal congestion problems. The town has continued to invest in road improvements but still has some outstanding segments in poor condition. It has also expanded its recreational trail system. There are also some parking problems in the downtown and at the marina. The rail line and port facilities could be important assets for new businesses locating in town.

As the population ages, the town needs to prepare for an increasing number of residents unable to drive vehicles. This will make it important to improve the sidewalk system based on the priorities listed in a sidewalk master plan. Further expansion of public transit may also be needed.

## **2. Public Facilities and Services**

The town has made extensive use of capital improvement planning to keep its services and facilities in prime condition. Continued improvements, such as replacing aging water mains, will be needed. Overall, services and facilities are adequate. However, the drop in property tax revenue due to the mill closing means that it will be challenging to maintain the current level of service. Bucksport shares many of its various /public services and facilities with neighboring towns, including recreation, wastewater treatment and emergency services. Educational services are also provided regionally in Bucksport through RSU 25.

## **3. Recreation and Cultural Resources**

The Bucksport Parks and Recreation Department offers a large variety of indoor and outdoor programs for all age groups. The community is also served by several other organizations. The town has developed various walking trails including the waterfront walkway and two parcels adjacent to Silver Lake. Initiatives from other organizations add to a rich tapestry of opportunity to learn and enjoy arts, sports, and recreation in

Bucksport. These include RSU 25, the Public Library, Northeast Historic Film and the Bucksport Cultural Arts Society (BACAS).

While recreational facilities and programs are generally considered adequate, there are some deficiencies. For example, there are no town-owned freshwater swimming facilities apart from the municipal pool. More outdoor or indoor options for swimmers may be considered. The town's reduced fiscal capacity since the mill closure will affect funding. As the population ages, the town may want to offer more recreational services for the elderly.

#### **4. Marine Resources**

While Bucksport has made many improvements to its waterfront, it faces several challenges. These include limited parking, a shortage of dock and float space, and poor pedestrian connections between the waterfront walkway and the Main Street area. The mooring plan is out of date. The harbor needs dredging.

Fishing plays a minor role in the town's economy. This was the case even before the waters were closed for lobster and crab harvesting due to mercury contamination. Now, the town's marine infrastructure primarily supports industrial and recreational activities. A water taxi service to Fort Knox would enhance efforts to boost tourism.

#### **5. Water Resources**

Bucksport has nine fresh water lakes, the Narramissic River, and numerous streams and wetlands. State-mandated shoreland zoning has provided some protection for these resources since the 1970's. Overall, municipal ordinances provide adequate protection to the town's water resources. The lake watershed phosphorus control standards are based on 1992 guidelines and need to be updated.

It is important to monitor conditions in all lakes, with a particular focus on Silver Lake, which is the source for the domestic water system serving the village area as well as the industrial fresh water needs of the mill site. With the cessation of paper making, the remaining major industrial fresh water need is the replacement cooling water for the power plant. However, the mill site owners still control far-reaching water rights to Silver Lake and the extended watershed from Alamoosook Lake via a steel pipe aqueduct and could draw upon that entire resource once again should the need arise.

#### **6. Natural Resources**

The natural resources in Bucksport have been utilized for industry and personal use over the generations. The cessation of paper making in 2014 may signal a time when less pressure is placed on consumption of natural resources and more attention is put on their enjoyment in place.

The town ordinances generally offer adequate protection for Bucksport's natural resources. The development review process is now more focused on species habitats. Due to state mapping of key natural features, there are far more data on natural resources than was previously the case. The town continues to enjoy a variety of fish and wildlife.

## **7. Agricultural and Forest Resources**

Farming is not a major land use in Bucksport, about 6 percent of the land area is devoted to cultivation and pasture. There are some small commercial operations and some hobby farms. Interest in purchasing locally grown food is illustrated by the success of the Bucksport Farmer's Market. There is local interest in establishing a "Food Hub" in Bucksport to help develop production and markets.

Forestry is much more significant in terms of acreage with about 80 percent of the town in woodland, including forested wetlands. About 23 percent of the forest land in Bucksport is dedicated to commercial management. Smaller woodlots account for a large portion of the undeveloped acreage in the rural parts of town. About 18 percent of the town's land area is held in the tree growth tax classification. The Mill used to be a large purchaser of local pulp wood. Verso Paper, LLC still trucks some tree-length logs to its mill in Jay from the log yard it owns off River Road in Bucksport. The volume, however, is only a small fraction of what the mill once bought from local woodlot managers.

## **8. Historic and Archaeological Resources**

Bucksport has nine properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. State records indicate three prehistoric sites along the Penobscot River in town. Six archaeological sites have been identified by Maine Historic Preservation. Another 33 additional significant historic properties have been identified locally. The town has enacted land use standards to protect key historic sites. Efforts to preserve historic properties in Bucksport are ongoing.

## **9. Existing Land Use**

While the 2003 comprehensive plan called for most new residential development to take place in the growth areas designated in the future land use plan, only six of the 73 residential subdivision lots/units approved between 2002 and 2015 were in the growth area. Many commercial operations in town have gone out of business. Eighty-three commercial uses were granted permits in existing buildings on Main Street and only twenty of those remained in business as of late 2015.

There were 202 building permits granted for new residential construction between 2002 and 2015. Yet the year-round population increased by sixteen persons between 2000 and 2010. New home construction occurred at a faster rate than the population. The



town continues to invest in its downtown. It still, however, faces major challenges in attracting and retaining new businesses to the downtown.

## **10. Fiscal Capacity**

The closure of the Verso Paper Mill in 2014 ended an eight-decade span over which the town received more than half of its revenues from the mill site owners. There were times during that span when the mill's tax bill amounted to 70 percent of the town's total. In recent years, improvements and diversification of the tax base and depreciation in the mill valuation reduced the mill's share to about 45 percent. With the town's reduced overall valuation for tax year 2015-16, the remaining power island equipment, buildings and land on the site accounted for about 17 percent of the town's property revenues.

## **PRIORITY ISSUES**

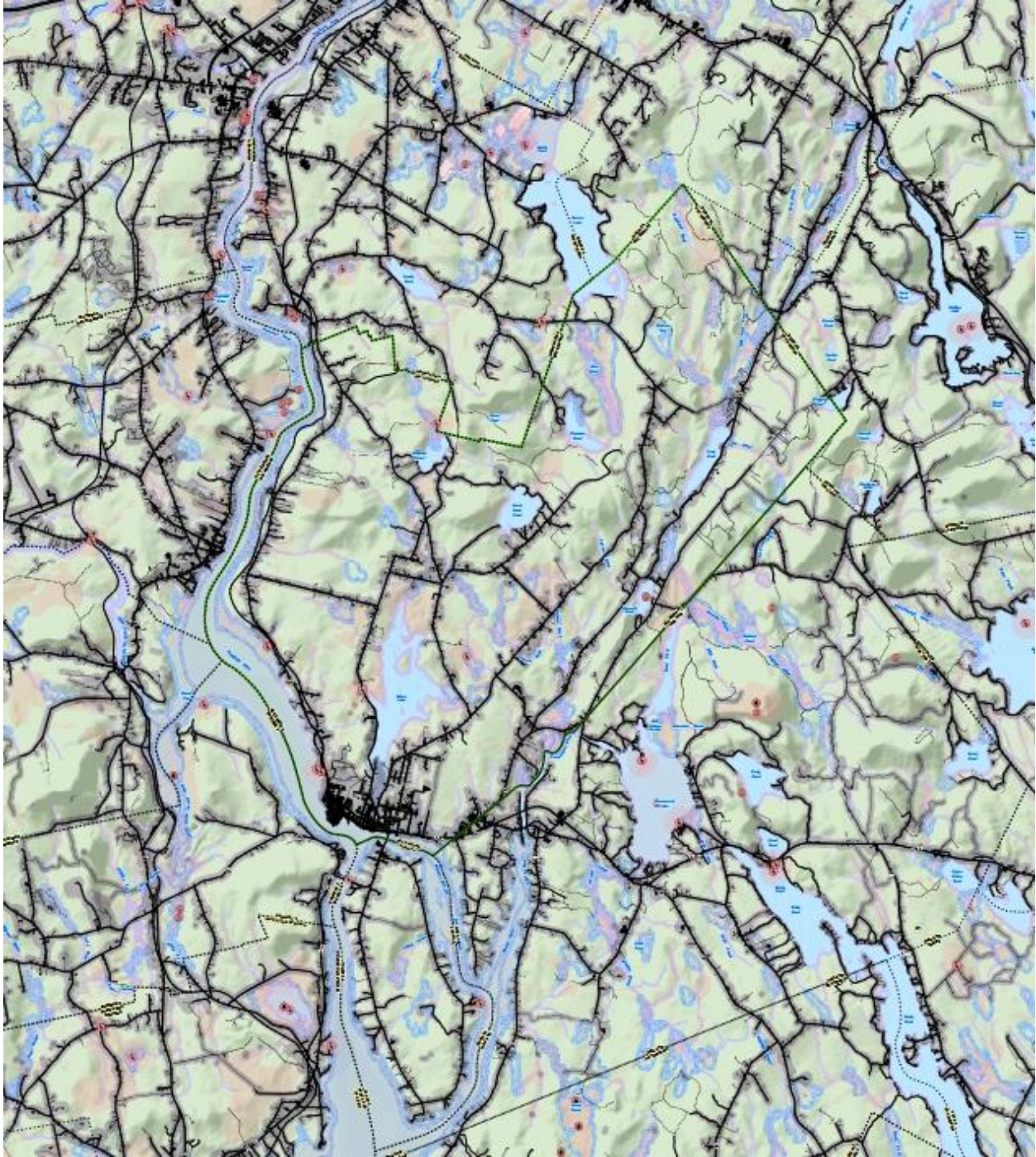
Bucksport faces an interrelated set of challenges. While adjusting to the loss of the town's major employer and tax payer is the immediate challenge, there are other issues that need to be addressed concurrently. These include assuring the town infrastructure and services are able to accommodate new employers. For example, the port needs to be maintained and improved to accommodate the freight needs of future employers. Similarly, the rail line needs to be kept serviceable. High-speed Internet service is also important.

Another top issue is the projected overall decrease in population and the increase in the number of elderly. A drop in school enrollment may make it more challenging for the RSU to maintain the diversity of offerings and reduce its ability to collaborate on vocational training initiatives with employers. Given the high skill level needed for most new jobs, other labor force training programs may be needed.

To accommodate the needs of the elderly, the town will need to take additional measures to assure it is pedestrian friendly such as improved sidewalks and road crossing points. Public transit and ride services may have to be expanded. Health care and social services planning agencies will continue to be important partners in planning the future of Bucksport. There may be opportunities for the town to attract private sector developers to build retirement housing for middle income individuals.

Another top issue is water resources. Silver Lake needs to be monitored to assure its water quality is maintained. Given the uncertain future of the aqueduct and dams, the mill site may no longer have access to the estimated 10 million gallons per day that were used by Verso.

Given the changes in the global economy, the town's future is likely not to include a reliance on one major employer. To attract small-scale entrepreneurs, the town must maintain its quality of life. This means capitalizing on its natural and cultural resources. The town's land use ordinances must strike a balance between having a "user friendly" land use permitting process while also assuring quality development and protection of Bucksport's rural character.



## **Bucksport and vicinity**

A full-size version of this regional planning map by Beginning with Habitat is available at:

[www.bucksportmaine.gov](http://www.bucksportmaine.gov)

## KEY REGIONAL ISSUES

This list focuses on the primary regional issues that Bucksport faces. As a service center, the town is affected by many trends in the region. The size of the region affecting each trend varies. This analysis distinguishes between regional and sub-regional issues. Regional refers to issues that are county-wide or part of the greater Eastern Maine area. Sub-regional issues involve the towns immediately adjoining Bucksport.

### **Economy**

Bucksport is already an active participant in regional economic development endeavors in the Greater Bangor area and Hancock County as well as all of Eastern Maine. This regional collaboration is an essential part of the post-paper mill era. The town also participates in statewide economic development groups.

### **Public Services and Facilities**

These issues are primarily sub-regional. The town shares RSU 25 with adjoining towns. If school enrollment declines, further consolidation of the school facilities may be necessary. There are also mutual aid arrangements on fire protection and rescue services with adjoining towns. The fire department is also participating in a three-county mutual aid plan. The potential for expanded regional dispatching is discussed periodically. Social services and health care planning also require coordination with other towns in the greater Bucksport area. The Bucksport Transfer Station also accepts waste from Orland

### **Transportation**

Transportation planning occurs at both the regional and sub-regional levels. The town is involved in regional transportation planning activities. Examples include the Penobscot River Corridor between Bangor and Bucksport and the Downeast Coastal Corridor between Bucksport and Calais. Public transportation is another important regional endeavor. The Penobscot Narrows Passenger Transportation Plan is an example of sub-regional transportation planning. The plan addressed bicycle and pedestrian opportunities in Bucksport, Verona Island, and Prospect. The needs of the Route 46 corridor also need to be addressed on a sub-regional basis.

### **Recreation and Cultural Services**

While residents from adjoining towns already use many of Bucksport's recreational services and facilities, there is the potential for more coordination. For example, a regional committee exploring options for YMCA services. Other regional groups include the Bucksport Area Cultural Arts Society and the Bucksport Area Senior Citizens Center. The Bucksport Bay Chamber of Commerce also sponsors special events. Other sub-regional groups include, but are not limited to, the Rod and Gun and Snowmobile Clubs, and the Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust. Any long-range recreational planning should address the needs of the greater Bucksport area. This is important if the current level of programs and facilities is to be maintained.

## **Marine Resources**

Marine resource planning occurs at various levels. The broadest scale is the Penobscot River watershed and Penobscot Bay. Bucksport is affected by upstream pollution sources including mercury.

The potential removal of the Orland village dam could enhance fish migration. Harbor planning requires coordination with Verona Island and Prospect. The proposed water taxi service between Bucksport and Fort Knox is another example of a sub-regional issue.

## **Water Resources**

Bucksport shares lake watersheds with adjoining towns. Since activity anywhere in a watershed has the potential to affect lake water quality, it is important to coordinate protection measures on a watershed basis. The Verso Mill used up to 10 million gallons per day of water that originated in Orland. This water will now resume its natural drainage course and flow through the Narramissic and Orland Rivers. Orland is presently undertaking a study of future Route 46 corridor options for these rivers. It is important that Bucksport participate in this study.

## **Natural and Forest Resources**

The Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust has worked both in Bucksport and adjoining towns in identifying and protecting key natural resources. This is an important part of managing those natural features that cross municipal boundaries. The closure of the mill reduced demand for pulp timber. Bucksport may want to work with other towns, forest land owners and state forestry officials in preparing study of options for forest resources.

## **Land Use**

Towns are sometimes affected by land development trends in adjoining towns. One example is the Route 1/3 corridor in Bucksport and Orland. If Orland were to enact town-wide zoning, the two towns may want to coordinate their zoning standards along this section of road.