

**Readfield Comprehensive Plan**

2009 Update

Chapter 5: Public Facilities and Services

**Town Government, Facilities, and Properties**

**General Government:**

Readfield has operated under general statutory authority with a Select Board/Town Manager/Town Meeting form of government since 1967.

The Town Manager is employed full-time. In addition to his duties as manager, he is the appointed Road Commissioner, Treasurer, Tax Collector, Manager of the transfer station and General Assistance Administrator. Six full-time staff work at the town office.

Readfield’s Select Board consists of five members elected to rotating 3-year terms. The appoints a 7-member, 3-alternate member Planning Board. Planning Board members are appointed for 5-year terms with no limit on the number of terms. The town also benefits from the services of a variety of other elected and appointed committees including the state-mandated School and Appeals Boards, as well as Budget, Roads, Recreation, Trails, Cemetery, Library, Economic Development, and Historical Records Committees and a Conservation Commission.

The Town of Readfield owns four principal buildings:

* Town Hall (Gile Hall) located on Old Kents Hill Road,
* Readfield Community Library on Route 17,
* Readfield Elementary School located on South Road, and
* Fire Station located adjacent to Readfield Corner on Route 17.

**Town Hall (Gile Hall):**

Gile Hall was constructed in 1834 and is in good condition. The first floor underwent renovation in 1997 including addition of handicapped access to the second floor via elevator. The renovation of the second floor of the Town Hall has been completed.

**Community Library:**

The Readfield Community Library was started in 1964 by volunteers from the *Little Town Club*, and was incorporated in 1976 as a private nonprofit organization. The Library was originally housed in a portion of the Alice Eaton Community House, which had been conveyed to the Little Town Club, and was moved in 1968 to Gile Hall. In 1989 the Library was returned to its present location in the Eaton Community House.

The 18th Century structure was renovated in 1989. The first floor was not designed for a load of book shelves and is under structural stress. The second floor is in poor condition and is not handicapped accessible. Overall, extensive renovations are needed. Parking is considered adequate though partially on abutting property not under the town’s control.

In 1990 the town voted to turn control of the Library over to a Readfield Library Board. The present Library Board consists of 9 trustees who hold 3-year terms.

With the move out of Gile Hall came the need for a professional librarian, more volunteers and added hours of accessibility. The Library presently has one librarian working 20 hours each week and approximately 30 active volunteers. It is open 16 hours every week. Library hours include 2 evenings: Monday from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M., Wednesday from 2:00 to 8:00 P.M., Thursday from 10 AM to 12:00 PM and Saturday from 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. With 9,700 volumes on its shelves (about 3/4 of what Public Library Standards recommend), the Library currently circulates over 12,000 volumes per year. The Library also offers many community-based activities such as public computer access, children’s summer reading program, poetry readings and Christmas Tree Lighting. Space needs in the Library are critical for the collection, display, seating and storage.

Taken together with building needs, serious consideration must be given whether to renovate or construct new, either as a stand-alone library or in conjunction with other municipal building needs.

**Town Lands:**

Town-owned property includes:

* The lots on which the Town Hall, Community Library, Elementary School and the fire stations are located
* The transfer station (former landfill site now closed-out)
* A small lot by the state-owned boat landing on Route 41
* 7 cemeteries
* Numerous recreation and open space properties (*see table 7-1, Chapter 7)*
* A fire pond on Route 41

The lot adjacent to the boat landing is small and in an environmentally sensitive area and is therefore most suitably left undisturbed as open space. The Town Farm/Forest is a parcel of approximately 100 acres and has been under a timber management plan since 1986 and initially involved extensive thinning. Because of the lot's remote location and difficult access, recreational uses of the parcel have not been emphasized. Two cross-county ski trails were cut on the property in 1991.

There are eight principal cemeteries in Readfield. Seven cemeteries are Town-owned and managed by the Cemetery Committee and Sexton. They include: Case/Barber (Route 17), Dudley Plain (Plains Road), East Readfield (Plains Road), Readfield Corner (Church Road), Huntoons (South East Road), Kent’s Hill, and Whittier (Tallwood Road). In 2003 a two-acre parcel was added to Readfield Corner Cemetery to meet current needs. Other cemeteries are at or near capacity. The one private cemetery is the Armstrong Burying Ground on Route 41, on land originally part of the former Martha Washington Inn property.

***Public Schools:***

At one time Readfield had 14 individual schools. The elementary grades were consolidated in 1955 when the Readfield Elementary School was built. The school originally consisted of 6 classrooms plus office and kitchen space. The school underwent major physical plant additions in 1962, 1967, 1972, 1976 and 1991.

The 1991 expansion added a stage, classrooms, a new library and parking area. The present 23,334 sq. ft. structure houses 14 classrooms, a gym, a library and expanded cafeteria facilities. A 2003 expansion means that the School will continue to be at recommended student capacity with a safe environment for all students.

Elementary enrollment climbed erratically during the late 80s – early 90s reaching a high of 288 pupils in 1995. Elementary enrollment dropped in 2002 with the shift of Grade 6 to the middle school (Table 5-2). Enrollment in the elementary school has continued to increase since then.

 **Table 5-2**

 **School Enrollments**

 **Community School District**

**Readfield Students at Elementary Middle School High School**

 **Year** K-6 (K-5) (6-8) 7-12 (9-12)

Actual Enrollments

(April 1 of School Year) 1979-80 225 250

1984-85 207 219

1989-90 268 210

 1994-95 288 216

1999-00 258 261

2000-01 254 247

* 1. 197 124 168

2002-03 205 122 153

* 1. 228 121 163
	2. 224 122 183

2005-06 214 126 173

2006-07 227 122 168

2007-08 225 110 163

2008-09 202 100 164

Source: CSD Superintendent's Office and Maine Department of Education

In the fall of 1976 the Maranacook Community School, serving grades 7-12 for the towns of Manchester, Mt. Vernon, and Wayne, as well as Readfield, opened its doors. Theschool has been "at capacity" for some time due to cumulative growth trends from the four member communities and the revised classroom size standards mandated by the state. Enrollments climbed substantially in the late 1990s, but have stabilized.

A new middle school was completed in 2001, taking grades 7 and 8 out of the Community School, and grade 6 from the Elementary School. At the same time renovations and an addition were completed at the Community School.

Local citizens generally consider the quality of the public schools in Readfield good. A 1991 survey found that more than half of the respondents (59%) were very satisfied or satisfied with the Elementary School, while less than a quarter (24%) were very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the quality of education at the Elementary School. Satisfaction with the Maranacook School is also high with just under half (44%) of the survey respondents very satisfied or satisfied and 29% very dissatisfied or dissatisfied. These figures support similar surveys conducted in 1986 and 1987.

**Fire, Rescue, and Police Protection:**

Since 1897, when the Readfield Hook and Ladder Company was established, Readfield has relied on a volunteer Fire Department. Today the Fire Department is staffed by 25 members on a pay-per-call basis; it has capacity for up to 30 members. In 2003 members logged over 1,300 hours on the job and another 1,000 hours in training and maintaining equipment and facilities; in 2007 the Department logged in 2,560 job hours and 1500 hours in training and maintenance.

According to the Fire Chief, daytime fire coverage is inadequate and probably always will be with on-call personnel.Readfield has been part of a 6-town mutual aid team for over 30 years.Mutual aid communities – Manchester, Mount Vernon, Wayne, Vienna, and Fayette -- generally respond to calls within 15 minutes. The Chief sees the need for training, especially for structure fires and hazardous materials and the need to pre-plan for railroad and trucking incidents and for fire safety education. The Mutual Aid District is currently seeking grant funding to upgrade their communications equipment and are researching the creation of a full-time administrative assistant position for the District and to perhaps include the towns of Winthrop and Manchester.

The Department also includes a Path Finders first response unit with Winthrop Ambulance providing for transport of patients. Winthrop provides this service on an annual contract basis. There is a need for additional trained personnel. Monmouth Ambulance is a backup to Winthrop, which means substantial delay if Winthrop is unavailable. The town is currently researching options for housing the Winthrop Ambulance Service in town full-time.

Fire operations are housed in a 1978 building in Readfield Corner. The building houses 7 vehicles and provides 2 meetings spaces, which no longer fulfills the needs of the Department. The facility is in good condition but is used to capacity for vehicle storage. A new generation of vehicles may be larger than the current ones. If the town makes the decision to go to full-time personnel, there would need to be on-site living space. The town is currently budgeting for fire station expansions.

The Fire Department's inventory includes 7 vehicles:

* 1976 heavy rescue vehicle;
* 1984 Chevy forestry truck;
* 1987 1,000 G.P.M. tanker/pumper;
* 1988 Chevy 4x4 PU utility;
* 1996 1,500 gallon tanker/pumper truck;
* 2005 mini-pumper; and
* 16 foot aluminum boat with motor and trailer.

Other significant pieces of equipment include an ice sled, a “Jaws of Life” extrication tool and a cascade system for recharging breathing apparatus (owned jointly with other towns). The Department is also responsible for 12 dry hydrants. These hydrants provide adequate water supply for locations in the western part of town, but more supply points are needed in the east.

In 1990 Readfield Fire responded to 127 total calls. In 2004 the Department responded to 207 calls (including 99 for medical assistance, 35 for motor vehicle accidents). In 2007 the Department responded to 254 calls. The town’s ISO rating is generally a “6,” which is a very good rating for a rural town. The ISO rating is assigned on a scale of 1-10, indicating a town’s ability to respond to fires, and influences homeowner’s and business fire insurance rates.

Fire and other emergency calls are handled through the E-911 emergency response system with the answering point previously at the Kennebec Sheriff’s Office, but now being the Regional Command Center at the State Police Public Safety Building. Dispatches are handled by the town of Winthrop. The Fire Department is reasonably satisfied with the arrangement.

Readfield has one local constable who has adequate training to assume full police powers. The constable’s role is currently very limited and ~~T~~ the town relies primarily on the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office and the Maine State Police Department for police protection. The town may want to consider expanding the role of the constable in the future.

The town of Readfield is at work on a Disaster Response/Hazard Mitigation Plan, as are most towns in Maine. This plan would direct public safety responders (and town government in general) in the event of natural or man-made disasters such as ice storms or chemical spills. It would also identify equipment, facilities and training needed at the local level to adequately deal with such threats. The plan would be coordinated with a similar plan for Kennebec County.

At the present time the town has inadequate equipment or supplies to accommodate large groups of people. The Community School and the Alfond Arena at Kent’s Hill School have been used in the past as emergency shelters, but are not stocked with supplies. The Fire Department is well-trained in the event of a hazardous material spill or other localized catastrophe, but there needs to be a plan in place to deal with a widespread emergency situation.

**Land Use Planning and Regulation:**

Readfield is a small town with a very modest municipal budget. With the exception of a full-time Code Enforcement Officer (CEO), the town currently has no funds available for hiring professional community planning and economic development assistance. In recent years the town has benefited from highly motivated and experienced volunteers on the Planning Board, as well as assistance from KVCOG and the Cobbossee Watershed District. However, the Planning Board has increasingly been occupied with reviewing development proposals, and the demands of code enforcement work on the CEO have been mounting. The CEO spends a significant amount of time on permitting leaving little time for enforcement.

Land Use Ordinances in effect as of 2008 are listed in Chapter 10, Land Use.

#### ***Assessing:***

The Readfield Select Board appoints a 3-member Board of Assessors, which is responsible for the assessment of all properties in town. Currently three of the Selectmen hold these positions. The town contracts for the services of a part-time professional assessor who assesses new properties on an annual basis in addition to undertaking periodic re-assessments of existing properties.

A town-wide revaluation was done in 2005 bringing the town up to 100% valuation. In the late 1990s rising land and housing prices challenged that nominal 100% category which by State law cannot fall below 70% of market-value appraisal without triggering another revaluation.

Assessing in Readfield appears to be adequately handled. No significant changes are recommended at this time.

**Solid Waste:**

Readfield constructed a transfer station/recycling facility in 1992 at a cost of $225,000. Readfield and Wayne are partners in the transfer station which is located on the North Road at the site of the old landfill and is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday. The transfer station includes a recycling center, supported by a town recycling ordinance. Recycled items include paper, cardboard, plastic, glass and metals. The town has also been actively encouraging residents to increase their recycling rates. Facilities include a new compactor, bale scale and forklift. A staff of three runs the station, with additional part-time attendants in the busy summer season. Trash collected at the transfer station is hauled to the Waste Management Disposal Services “Crossroads” site in Norridgewock. Tipping fees in 2007-08 were $59/ton.

Wayne and Readfield's estimated combined population of 3,622 generated approximately 1,106 tons of solid “main stream” waste in 2007-08 and another 747 tons of demolition waste. The total cost of running the transfer station in 2007-08 was $302,741. This was offset by $73,142 in fees and recyclable material sales. That resulted in an average net cost per person of $63.39. The net cost per person for the region was $59.07. Half of the net operating cost is allocated to Readfield and half to Wayne.

During 2008, the town recycled 191 tons of residential waste (primarily paper) and 307 tons of bulky waste (primarily wood).

The town’s adjusted recycling rate in 2006 was 43.34 percent—a drop from the 2005 adjusted rate of 48.6 percent.

**Public Health and General Assistance:**

The town's Public Health Officer is responsible for keeping track of all communicable diseases. Public welfare is handled by the Town Manager. Neither of these services has presented major issues for the town in recent years. On the other hand, there are a number of public health concerns which have or will present significant issues to Readfield citizens including land and water contamination, radon threats and the fire safety of structures.

In addition to public health concerns about land and water pollution, the threat of radon and arsenic contamination are issues the town will have to face. Little is known about existing or potential radon or arsenic levels in Readfield homes. A systematic sampling of buildings would provide useful baseline data.

**Utilities:**

There are no publicly-owned water or sewer facilities in Readfield (This is not the same as Public Water Sources, as defined by the Department of Human Services). In 1977 the Southern Kennebec Planning and Development Council recommended a wastewater collection and treatment system for portions of the Torsey Shores subdivision in a regional water quality study. However, no action has been taken on that recommendation.

Leaking petroleum storage tanks have contaminated wells at a number of Readfield Corner homes and businesses since the mid-1970s. In 1984 a private group, the Readfield Corner Water Association, was established to maintain a small water supply system to service up to 20 users in the Readfield Corner area. The system now supplies 22 homes and businesses. Expansion is limited by storage capacity and permit constraints. This may pose a problem since there may be a need for expansion of the system to serve other contaminated properties or to serve general growth in the village. The Association subcontracts with the Winthrop Water District to read meters, take water tests and service the system.

Central Maine Power Company distributes power throughout Readfield. Fairpoint provides the landline telephone service. Readfield is now fully digital with telephone switching equipment including access to DSL (high speed internet service) in many locations. Cable television and cable Internet service are available in most neighborhoods currently serviced by Time Warner Corp. During 2008, a 200 ft. cellular telephone tower was constructed and currently has two carriers, Unicell and Verizon.

**Summary of Public Services**

With the exception of public water and sewer, Readfield's public facilities and services are quite satisfactory for a rural community. They range from a Town Hall with its support facilities to a Community Library, a Town Beach, a Town Farm/Forest, several cemeteries, a local elementary school, a regional middle and high school, a fire department and a solid waste disposal system. The town has its share of public health issues including groundwater contamination from petroleum spills. The privately owned Readfield Corner Water Association may not have the capacity to serve increased demand.

The effects of growth may be seen in the need for careful capital improvement planning and annual budgeting. Growth-related impacts have driven school improvements, solid waste disposal and other public facility needs, as well as general government costs. Even though to date taxes have been kept fairly stable (partly due to property value increases, Table 5-3, below), unplanned growth may at any time trigger unexpected budgetary or capital improvement costs. Even planned growth, such as in and around the villages, must be coordinated with public service capacity. For example, Readfield Corner would have a much greater potential for growth with minimal impacts if a public water supply were available.

#### **Fiscal Capacity**

**Tax Base:**

Any discussion about finances at the local level in Maine begins with property taxes, since this has been the primary source of municipal revenue since Maine became a state. Taxes paid by property owners are the function of two elements: the appraised value of real and personal property and the tax rate. Total taxable valuation in Readfield has mushroomed:

* $653,185 in 1960
* $6,184,380 in 1970
* $33,525,000 in 1981
* $103,218,225 in 1990
* $123,652,330 in 2000
* $128,931,365 in 2003
* $215,140,662 in 2005
* $222,832,062 in 2007.

Increases in taxable valuation (“tax base”) come as a result of two factors: new construction (including renovations and additions) and appreciation in real estate values. Between 1990 and 2003 valuation increased by an average of $1,977,934 per year. At the 2003 mill rate of 23.5, that resulted in additional new revenue of over $46,000 per year.

Readfield’s tax base lacks balance. It consists of mostly residential and seasonal properties with a relatively small percentage of commercial and industrial properties, and a fairly large proportion of rural, undeveloped land. While it used to be true that the ten largest taxpayers accounted for 10.5% of the town's tax base, it is now the case that most of the tax base is in waterfront property. At least 25 percent of Readfield’s valuation comes from waterfront properties on Maranacook Lake. Since property values are so closely tied to lake values, this emphasizes the need to keep the lakes free of pollution. Degradation of water quality has been shown to have a negative effect on property values (and a co-incident shifting of tax burden to non-lakefront properties).

Table 5-3 summarizes municipal valuation data for Readfield. Taxable property includes buildings, land and personal property. In 2005 about $3 million was in personal property, mostly machinery and equipment at Saunders Manufacturing. Tax-exempt properties (not shown in the table) comprise a significant percentage of total property in Readfield (the difference between assessed values and taxable values). By far the largest holdings are Kents Hill and Maranacook Community Schools.

**Table 5-3**

**Municipal Valuation, 1991 and 2005**

 **1991 2005**

Number of parcels: 1,402 1,612

Real estate valuation $119,689,115 $215,140,662

 Land valuation $55,636,450 $72,270,350

 Building valuation $64,052,665 $139,697,812

Personal property valuation $1,748,310 $3,172,500

Exemptions: Veterans $405,000

 Homestead $9,167,900

Source: Readfield Municipal Valuation Returns

State law provides for forest, farm and open space lands to be valued on the basis of current use. The purpose of these provisions is to encourage conservation of these lands. Penalties are assessed when these lands are reclassified. The state reimburses municipalities a portion of the taxes foregone for classified Tree Growth lands, but not for Farm or Open Space lands. Chapter 8 lists the amount of land and valuation for these current-use classifications.

A review of taxes in Readfield suggests the following trends and issues:

* Unlike many municipalities, Readfield does not appear to be overly dependent on any one or a few industries. The largest taxpayer, Saunders Manufacturing Co., accounts for a small fraction of the total taxable assessed value.
* Single-family homes, the source of most of the growth in Readfield’s valuation, historically fail to provide sufficient revenue to offset public service costs, particularly for education. The same is not true of seasonal housing, unless it becomes occupied year-round.
* Undeveloped land, even though it produces only a small amount of revenue, historically has balanced the drain produced by residential development because it demands fewer services than it pays for. As more and more land is developed, this balancing effect is lost and taxes will rise.
* Tax exempt properties in Readfield account for a large portion of the town’s valuation (more than 10%). The responsibility of picking up taxes not paid as a result of these exclusions falls on the owners of taxable properties, mostly homeowners. The town has options for collecting service charges or donations from some of these tax exempt property owners.
* Continued economic pressures are likely to force shifts in land use of high value lands, notably shorelands and pasture lands not classified under the Farm and Open Space Tax Law, to more intensive uses. Seasonal camps will be converted to, or replaced by, year-round homes, and pastures will sprout expensive houses.

**Revenues:**

According to the audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2006, the town had total revenues of $6,547,152. $3,553,853 (54 percent) of that came in the form of taxes. $1,449,245 was governmental transfer (primarily education funding) with the remainder consisting of permit fees, service charges, interest income and miscellaneous.

The $3.5 million in taxes for 2005-06 includes both property and excise taxes. In 2002 the amount raised from property taxes was $2,598,000; in 2001 it was $2,508,000; in 1999 it was $2,289,000; in 1997 it was $2,200,000; in 1995 it was $2,238,000. Over the long term (1995-2002), property tax revenue has been increasing at just over 2 percent per year (below the rate of inflation); however, in the past three years, it has been rising at closer to 4.3 percent per year. In 2007-2008, the property tax revenue was $3,431,613.00

Property tax revenue is collected as a percentage of property value referred to as the “mill rate.” Readfield’s mill rate as reported in 2005 was 14.5 mills, meaning $14.50 for every $1,000 of property value. This is a decrease from prior years. In 2005-06 Readfield’s mill rate was 15.5 and for each subsequent year, through the 2008-2009 fiscal year, Readfield’s mill rate has remained level at 15.4 mills.

Because the value of property is changing constantly, and because each town has authority to set property values on its own (within the guidelines of the state laws), “equalized” or “full value” mill rates are established for comparison purposes. Equalized mill rates allow for a comparison of tax rates with other towns, or with the town historically. Readfield is the only town in this region where the equalized tax rate has dropped steadily and significantly over the past six years.

##### Expenditures:

During fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, Readfield spent a total of $5,600,271 to operate town government, support the Maranacook Community School and pay its proportional share of the operation of Kennebec County. County tax was $234,824 (4+ percent). The cost of education was $3,604,963 or just over 55% percent of total expenditures. The remainder went to operate the town.

**Long-Term Debt:**

According to the Audit Report for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2007, the town had $2,553,650 in general long-term liabilities, including the elementary school, the town’s CSD portion, leases payable, and general obligation bonds and other financial commitments such as the town’s partnership in First Park.

The town’s practice in the past has been to issue a bond for road improvement projects aggregating several projects to keep costs down. At the same time, the town utilizes the practice of reserve accounts for some capital expenditures such as fire station improvements and fire equipment and revaluation costs.

In accordance with 30-A MRSA, Section 5702, as amended, no municipality shall incur debt for specified purposes in excess of certain percentages of state valuation of such municipality. The statutory debt limit for all borrowing combined is 15 percent of the state valuation for the town. Readfield’s state valuation in 2008 was $262,350,000 based on the 2006-07 municipal valuation and the state valuation for 2009 is $282,950,000 based on the municipal valuation for 2007-08. Readfield’s combined long-term debt in 2007 of $2,553,650 represents only about 1% of state valuation.

**Summary of Fiscal Capacity**

The town of Readfield has a tax base consisting of a rapidly escalating seasonal/recreational base, a modest but growing residential sector, a small commercial and industrial sector and a large amount of rural land. Tax-exempt properties, including Central Maine Power Company and the Kents Hill School, equal more than 10% of the town's valuation. The responsibility of picking up taxes for services to these exempt properties falls on the owners of taxable properties, mostly homeowners.

Readfield is heavily dependent on the local property tax to finance the operation of local government. While the ability of the town to utilize other sources of revenue is constrained by state law, the possibility of increased application of user and service fees is one approach to relieving property tax burdens.

The town faces important issues in the fiscal arena. On one hand, the demand for expanded services creates pressure for increased taxes. On the other hand, growth and expansion of the tax base will result in the demand for expanded services with additional costs. One approach to meeting the demand for services is through multi-town activities in which the costs are shared with other communities.

### **Goals and Policies**

|  |
| --- |
| **Goal: Provide a range of public services in a cost-effective manner including education, fire and police protection, emergency rescue, solid waste disposal, roads, recreation, libraries, cemeteries, assessing, public health and welfare, community planning, development review and code enforcement.** |

**Policies:**

5.1 Begin an investigation of long-term building needs to determine how to meet them effectively and economically. Identified needs include the library, fire station, community center and public safety facility.

* Create a committee and appropriate funds for a building needs study.

5.2. Improve staffing and resources of the Fire Department.

* Continue to work with local employers to encourage volunteer participation by employees and target the recruitment of volunteers who are available during weekdays; explore the feasibility of some regionally-supported, full-time firefighters.
* Inventory and assess existing water supply sources and develop plans for acquiring and developing new sources where needed.
* Continue working on other regional collaboration efforts including a regional firefighting training facility.
* Expand the Fire Station for housing of the Emergency Medical Service and as a potential facility for the pending Disaster Response/Hazard Mitigation Plan.

5.3. Continue to seek increased opportunities for regional cooperation with neighboring towns.

* Follow-up on recommendations of regionalization studies (ongoing)
* Establish a protocol to look at opportunities for equipment sharing, including purchases of new equipment.
* Engage neighboring towns in planning for disaster mitigation.

5.4. Work with state and county officials to increase enforcement of traffic laws especially in residential neighborhoods.

* Investigate the possibility of contracting for a sheriff’s deputy for dedicated, part-time coverage.

5.5. Continue to improve the town’s management of solid waste, including increased recycling, by aggressively pursuing waste reduction and recycling efforts.

* Investigate user fees for trash disposal based on volume or weight.
* Continue to work on the recycling strategy including improvements to separation of recyclables, disposal of hazardous waste, home composting and periodic opportunities for disposal of items not normally accepted at the transfer station.
* Evaluate the need for a solid waste ordinance, which might include penalties for illegal dumping.
* Continue to seek opportunities to cooperate with Wayne and other communities for a regional solution to disposal of solid waste, demolition materials, white metal goods, stumps and tires.
* Investigate the feasibility of turning some solid waste activities over to the private sector.

5.6. Develop and/or maintain clear written operating procedures and responsibilities for town boards and committees to facilitate effective decision-making and public involvement.

* Have a written job description provided by the Select Board or Town Manager for each board or committee.
* Review each of the town's ordinances and regulations. Repeal unnecessary ordinances and update outdated ordinances.
* Require that each board periodically review its administrative processes to assure predictable times and cost-effective decision-making.

5.7. Continue to consider the establishment of a town and regional Public Works Department

 to the extent it is in the town’s best financial interest.

|  |
| --- |
| **Goal: Encourage citizen participation in community affairs.** |

**Policies:**

* 1. Keep residents informed of town activities and opportunities for participation.
* Provide wider distribution of school newsletters to the community.
* Continue to publish a monthly newsletter with a synopsis of town board actions and news of other community activities.
* Annually publish a directory of all local officials, organizations, businesses, and services.

5.9. Improve citizen participation in town government.

* Encourage residents to volunteer for local boards, committees and activities.
* Establish a "people resource" bank of volunteers with special skills.
* Annually recognize individual volunteers who have made significant contributions of their time.

5.10 In order to inspire a sense of community spirit, Readfield Heritage Days should continue to be held annually.

|  |
| --- |
| **Goal: Maintain taxes as low as practicable.** |

**Policies:**

5.11 Improve planning for capital expenditures through an annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP) based on the Capital Investment Plan, which appears in Chapter 11. The CIP looks at the needs for maintenance, new, or expanded public facilities, the ability of the town to pay for these facilities and priorities for capital spending. To assist in the CIP process, the town should:

* Work with the school board to undertake long-term school facilities planning.
* Receive from the Fire Department an annual assessment of the adequacy of and need for future replacement of fire equipment.
* Require the Road Committee to establish a long-term plan for road improvements and construction needs using a system such as Road Surface Management System.
* Continue to plan for long-range solid waste disposal and recycling needs.
* Plan for open space acquisition and community park and recreation development.
* Consider funding for a town public works department.

5.12 Promote the use of special assessments or public facility impact fees, which would ensure that new and existing developments requiring improved or expanded town services or facilities pay their fair share of the municipal costs, especially transportation, education, recreation/open space and solid waste disposal.

* Finance open space and recreational facilities acquisition and improvement through impact fees or other sources as recommended in the Open Space Plan.
* Investigate special assessments or impact fees as a means to raise revenue for phosphorous mitigation in lake watersheds.
* Investigate special assessments as a means to raise revenue for downtown improvements in Readfield Corner.

5.13 Protect the town from future public costs by encouraging development in areas where public facilities, such as roads and natural resources, are adequate to service the development.

5.14 Require developers to provide necessary facilities to serve new developments including upgrades to existing public facilities, if necessary.

* Continue to require necessary public improvements and financial guarantees to ensure proper construction as part of the Planning Board review process.
* Incorporate requirements or options for designation of open space and affordable housing into the subdivision review standard.