



Welcome to Readfield's Public Hearing for the Development of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan!



Agenda

- **Introduction-** Presented by Jessica Gorton, Chair of the Comprehensive Planning Committee & Enterprise Committee member
- **Public Survey Results-** Presented by Eric Dyer, Readfield Town Manager
- **The More They Stay the Same-** Areas with minimal change: Archeological and Historic Resources, Transportation, & Public Facilities and Services- Presented by Dennis Price, Comprehensive Plan Committee member & Select Board Chairman
- **Land, Water, & Rural Economic Resources-** Presented by Greg Leimbach, Comprehensive Plan Committee member & Trails Committee member
- **Community Profile, Local Economy, & Housing-** Presented by Matt Nazar Vice Chairman of the Comprehensive Plan Committee member
- **Once & Future Land Use-** Presented by Paula Clark, Comprehensive Plan Committee member & Planning Board Chairwoman

Introduction: the Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

- Overview of Where We've Been & Where We're Headed
- A Roadmap of Possibilities
- Goals & Strategies
- Consistent with Other Plans
- Collaborative both with Residents and Neighbors

Basics of a Comprehensive Plan

- Data – from Town, State, Census
- Review of Current Policies, Ordinances, Community Issues, Trends
- Development of plan updates includes input from residents
- Final Plan: a ‘snapshot’ in time of the community’s current issues as well as a path forward with goals, policies and strategies.

Benefits of a Comprehensive Plan



Analysis of Current Trends and Issues



Strategies for Sustainability and Steps to Implementation



Foundation for public policy and future land use decisions



Identifies areas for future growth and investment

Why Have a Comprehensive Plan?

Required by state law, under the Growth Management Act of 1988.

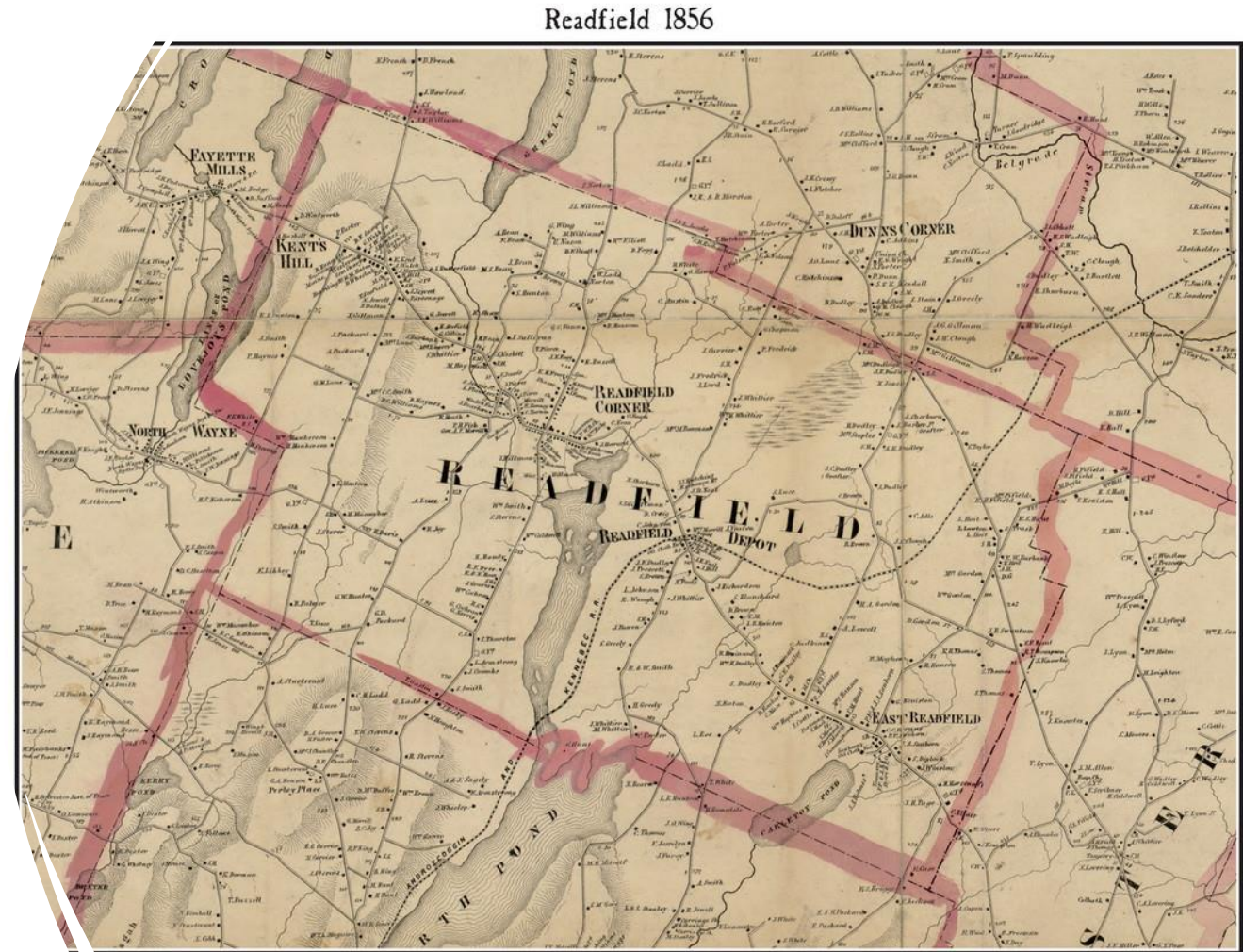
Incentives only available to communities with a certified comprehensive plan:

- Enact legitimate zoning, impact fees, and rate of growth ordinances;
- Guide state growth-related capital investments towards designated growth areas;
- Require state agencies to comply with local zoning standards;
- Qualify for Site Location Development Act exemptions for certain growth-area developments;
- Qualify for authority to issue Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) and Site Location Development permits, and;
- Qualify for relaxed MaineDOT traffic permit standards for certain growth-area development.

In addition, towns with a certified plan receive priority for certain grants and other funding options. There are numerous grant and loan opportunities both state and federal, most of which have some sort of consideration for local comprehensive plans.

Readfield's Vision for the Future:

The Town of Readfield is a scenic, dynamic and diverse community committed to fostering an inclusive, vibrant way of life for people of all backgrounds and ages. This vision commits to preserving the rural character of our community with a plan for a sustainable future.



From *Map of Kennebec County, Maine* 1856 J. Chace Jr. www.old-maps.com

Main St. Readfield, Me.



The Main Topic Areas Covered by the Comprehensive Plan:

- Historic, Archaeological, and Cultural
- Community Profile
- Local Economy
- Housing
- Public Facilities and Services
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Rural Economic Resources
- Natural and Water Resources
- Fiscal Capacity
- Existing Land Use
- Future Land Use

Readfield Community Surveys & Results



Community Survey Background

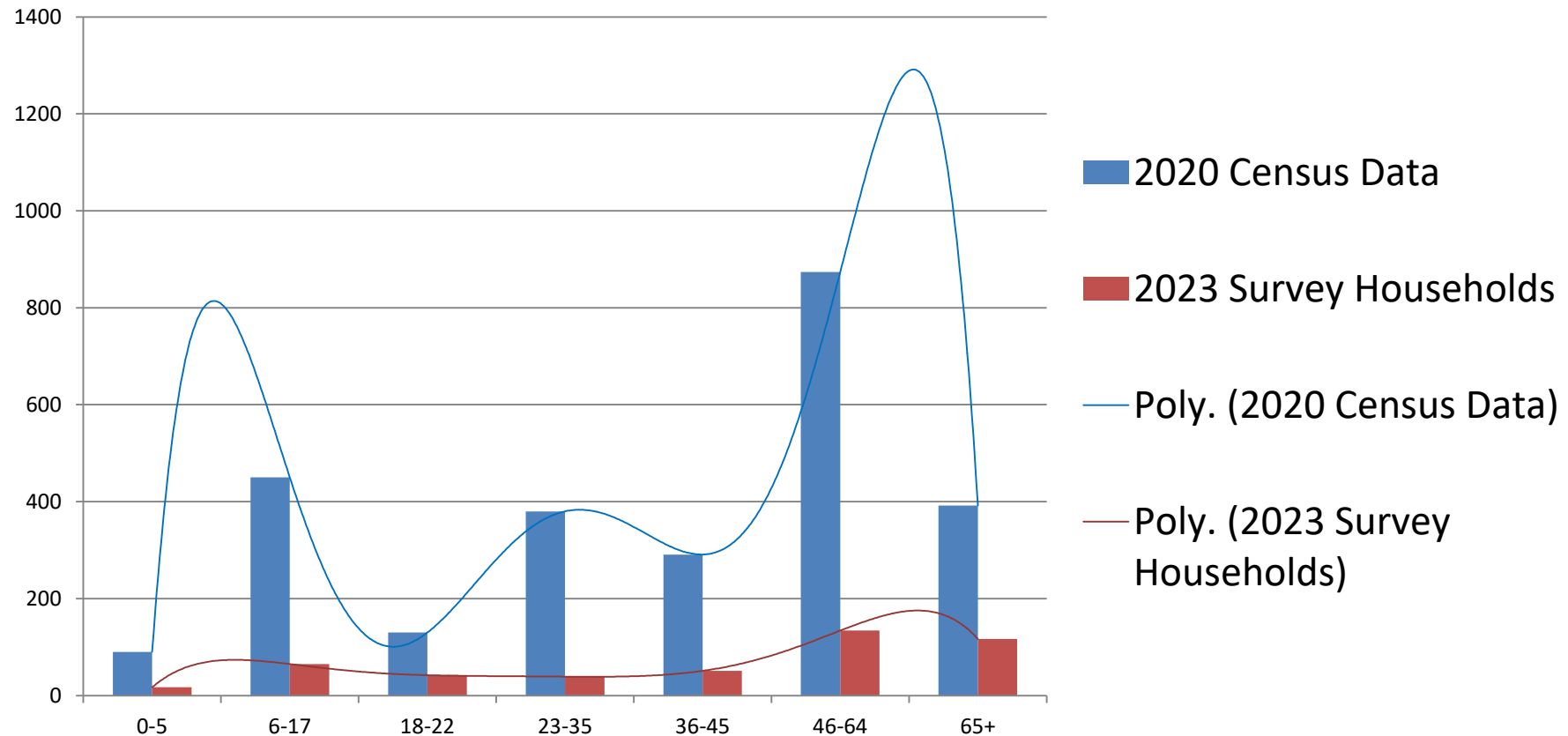
- Surveys are a convenient way to collect information about the community and their perspectives on policy matters.
- For the Comp Plan Update, we developed three surveys with different areas of focus:
 - **Short-Form Survey** (paper) – Intended to be quick, portable, and completed in 5-10 min.
 - **Long-Form Survey** (online) – Intended to collect more detailed data and take 25-30 min.
 - **Business Survey** – Intended to gather information from local businesses and take 5-10 min
- The surveys were designed to help us understand our community but were not “scientific”.
- All three surveys offered open-ended questions in addition to “multiple choice” options.
- Taken together response rates for the non-business surveys represented about 11.3% of the 2,067 adults over the age of 18, response numbers are below:
 - **Short-Form Survey** – 67 (about 3.2% of the adult population)
 - **Long-Form Survey** – 168 (about 8.1% of the adult population)
 - **Business Survey** – 8 responses (unknown percentage of businesses)

Community Survey Data

- A good target response rate for voluntary public surveys is 10%, which we exceeded.
- The online survey data offered insight that helped us trust the survey results:
 - There was a fairly even distribution of responses from different parts of Town.
 - About 87% of responses were from residents living in town for 3 years or more.
 - About 93% of responses were from year-round property owners.
- The household make-up of respondents tracked well with our census data, but there were some anomalies:
 - Over 36% of respondents were retired and the over 65 demographic was somewhat overrepresented.
 - The 23-35 demographic was somewhat underrepresented.
- As with most things, there were some contradictions in the responses.

Community Survey Data

Survey Demographic Comparison



Community Survey Questions

Community survey questions generally addressed the following topics, in most all cases relating to focus areas in the Comprehensive Plan:

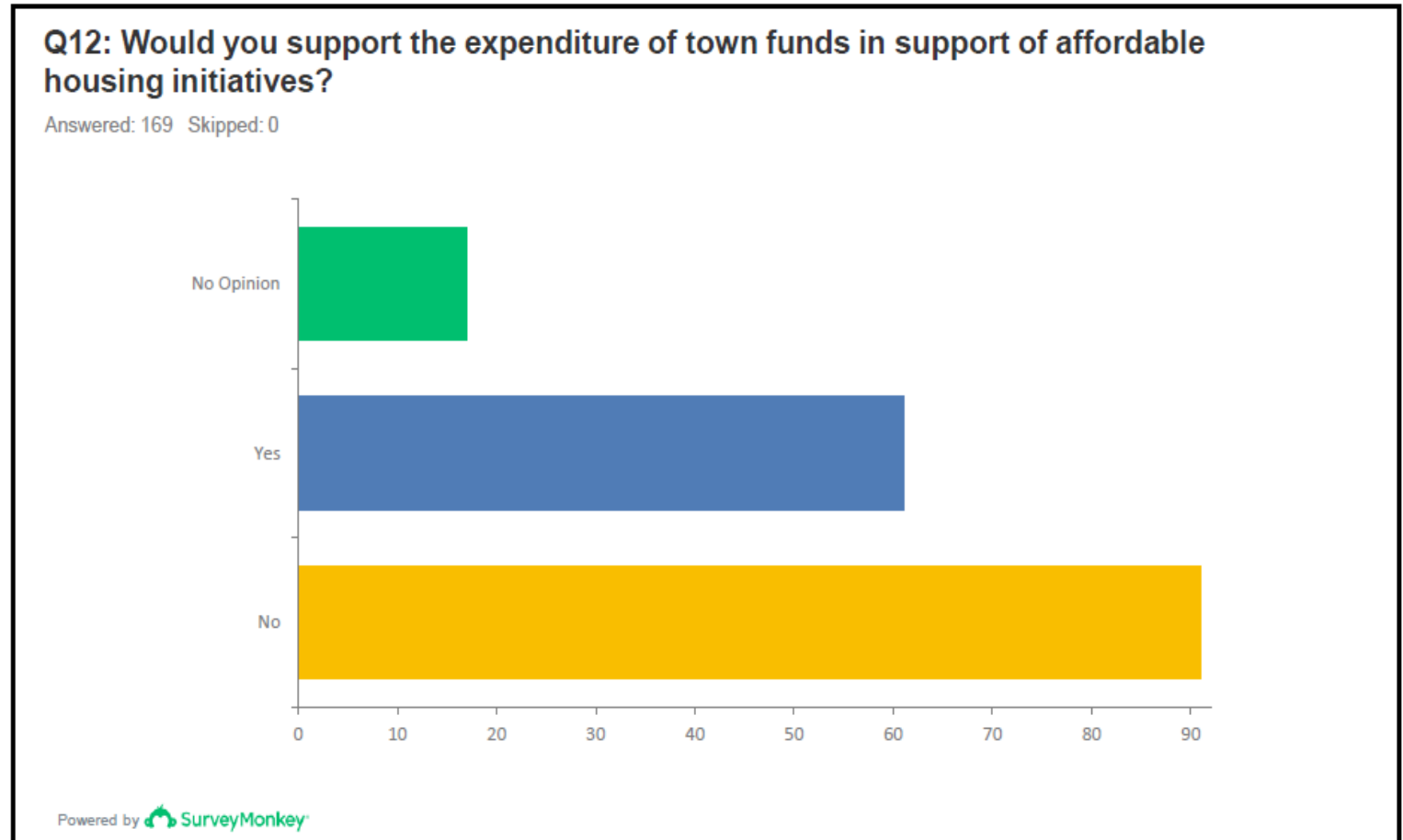
- Demographics/residency/household information
- Community character and identity
- Housing and Transportation
- Town spending priorities and community services
- Existing and Future development and land uses
- Business and economic development
- Natural resources and open space
- Recreation and community activities
- Likes/Dislikes about Readfield

Survey Results: General

- Respondents strongly identified the schools, low population density, rural residential character, and natural and recreational resources as factors in making Readfield their home.
- These sentiments carried through most of the survey results showing that many residents felt we should focus on preserving those assets and maintaining that character.
- Open ended questions were well received, and most respondents took the time to write.
- People want peace and quiet, physically and politically, but differ on the right solutions.
- Taxes were identified as areas of concern for many residents, but so too were maintaining public services. The question of Town spending on services resulted in an average result that was “just right” with a score of 51 on a 0 -100 scale.
- Print media is still important, but electronic media is more popular for communication between the Town and residents.
- As expected, there were some conflicting and polar responses, even in the aggregate.
- **Complete survey results are available on the Town Website: www.readfieldmaine.org**

Survey Results: Housing

- Housing came out as a particularly important issue in the survey results.
- By margins of greater than 50%, respondents supported elderly housing and accessory units, while opposing higher density development and smaller lot sizes.
- 54% of respondents opposed “Town” involvement or investment in housing, with 36% in support.



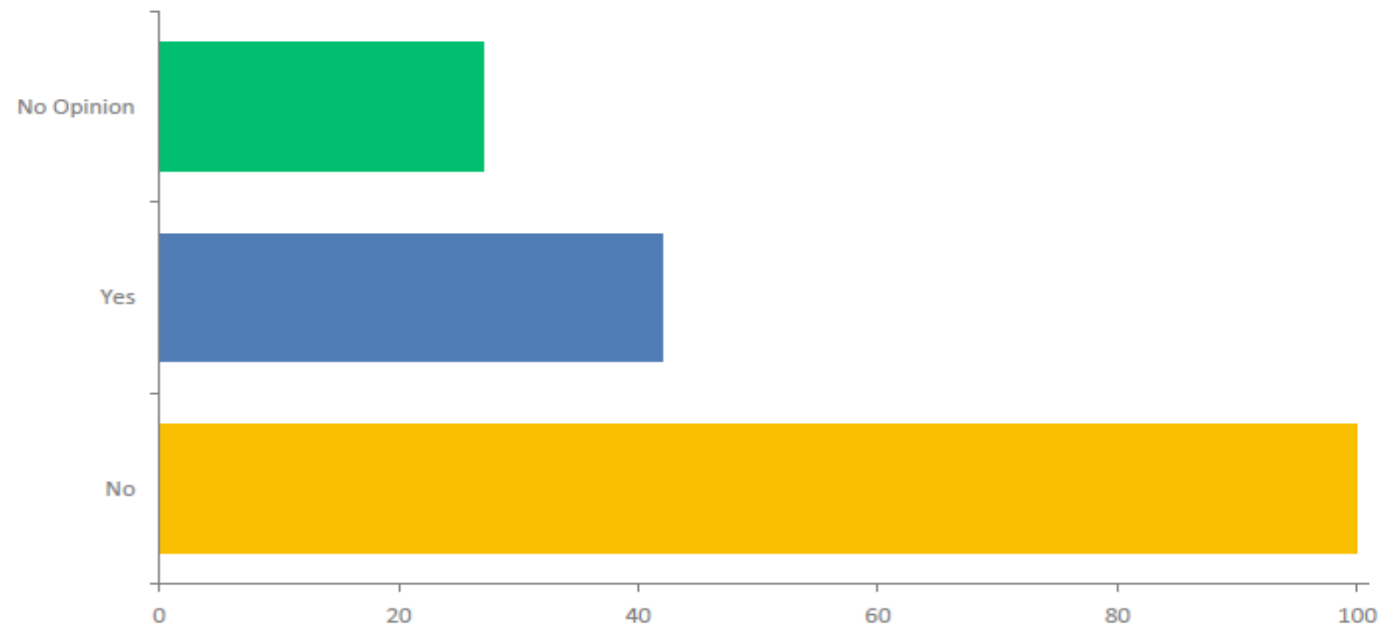
Survey Results: Land Use

- 42% of respondents felt there had been the right amount of development in Readfield, while 34% had no opinion.
- 57% of respondents felt lot sizes should be kept the same, with about 15% each supporting larger or smaller lots.
- About 85% of respondents felt Agricultural and Single-Family Housing uses should be encouraged.
- No uses were strongly indicated to be discouraged but respondents felt that Commercial and Industrial activities, Tourism, Municipal Facilities, and Marine Uses should be limited.
- Notable is that respondents supported light industrial uses slightly more than light commercial but were cautious in their statements wanting any development to be carefully managed, with strong opposition to heavy commercial and industrial uses.

Survey Results: Land Use

Q23: Should the Town rezone existing residential areas so as to increase commercial areas?

Answered: 169 Skipped: 0

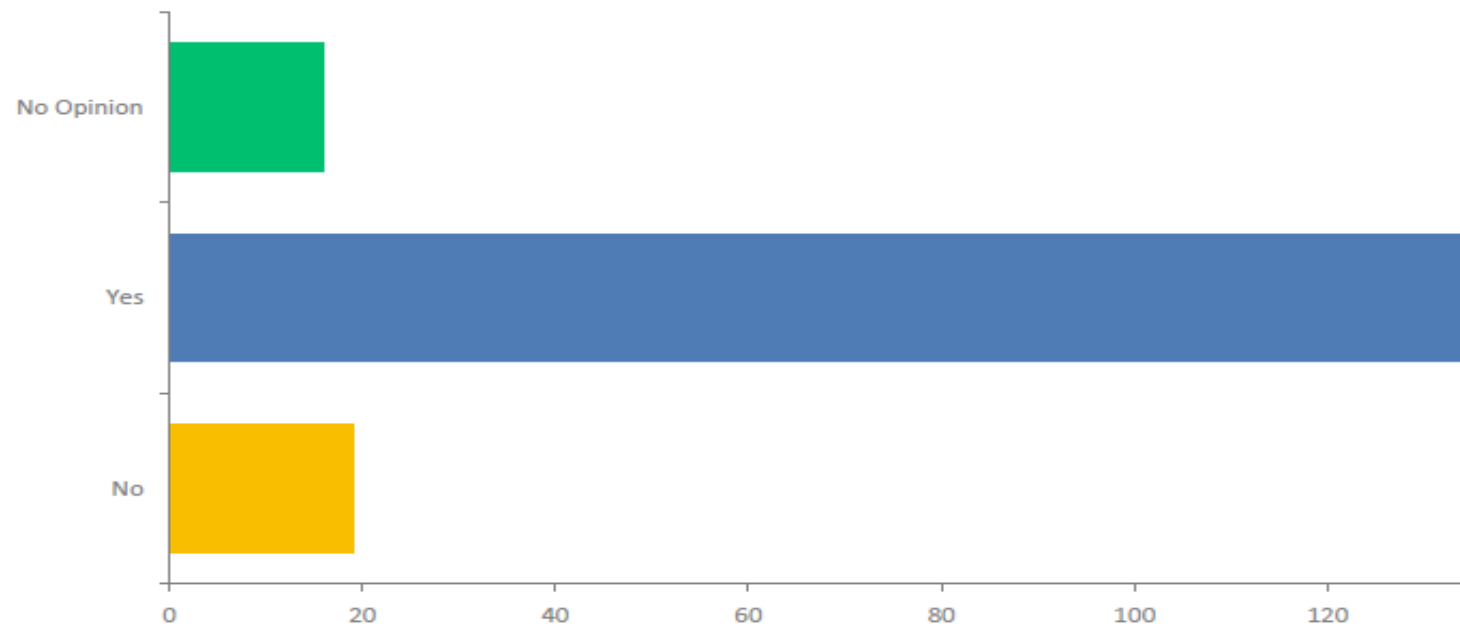


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Survey Results: Natural Resources and Open Space

Q27: Do you feel that there are any specific natural resource areas in town that should be preserved?

Answered: 169 Skipped: 0

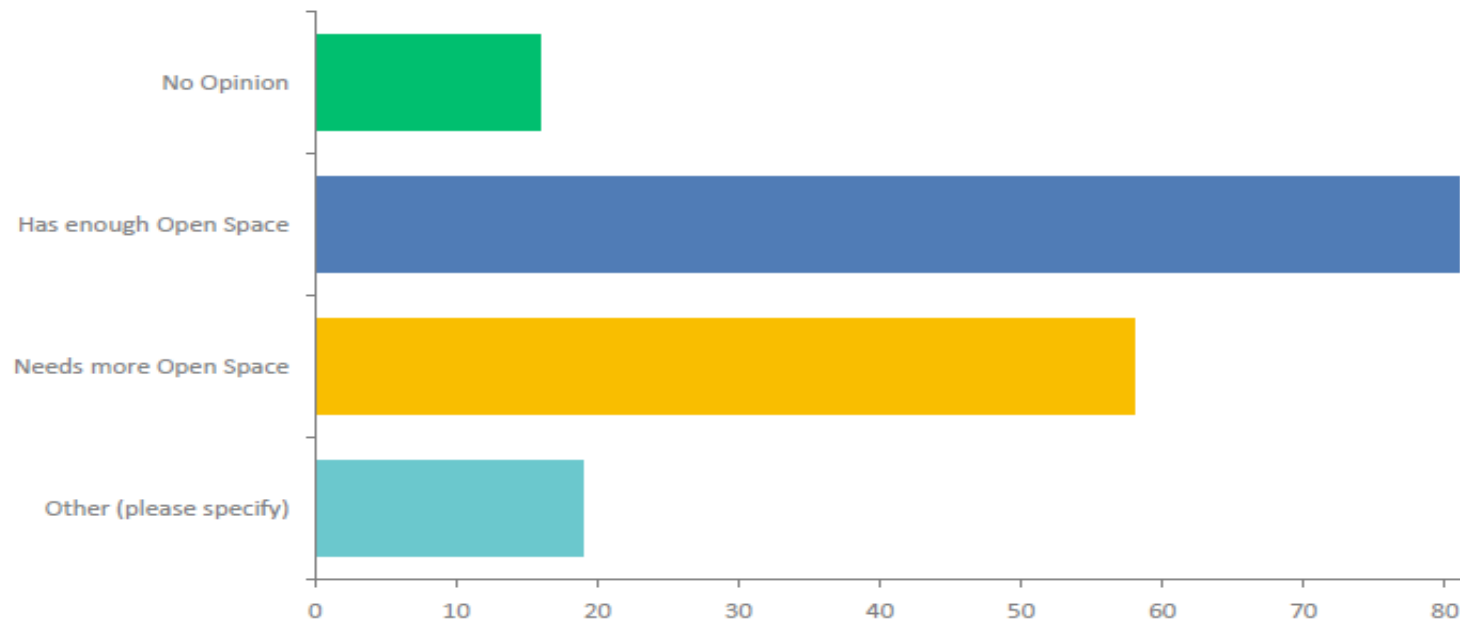


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Survey Results: Natural Resources and Open Space

Q31: Open Space is... Open space planning can link land parcels to form wildlife corridors or protect important wetland systems, or provide trails for passive recreation. In your opinion, the Town of Readfield:

Answered: 169 Skipped: 0

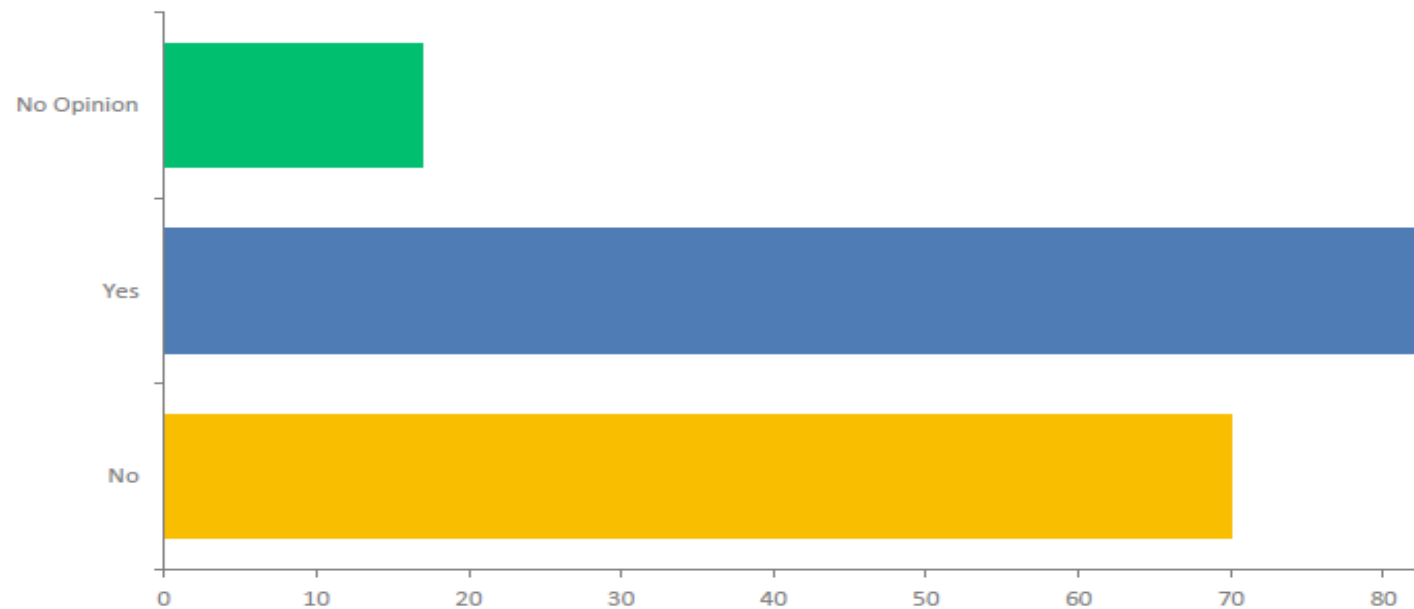


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Survey Results: Natural Resources and Open Space

Q32: Do you think the Town of Readfield should use taxpayer money to buy and maintain open space in the town?

Answered: 169 Skipped: 0



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Survey Results: Economic Development

Well supported Economic Activity:

- Food and grocery stores
- Café, bakery, and restaurants
- Agricultural businesses
- Gas stations

Neutral Economic Activity:

- Hardware stores
- Pharmacies and medical offices
- Financial and banking services
- Personal services
- Marine and water-related uses
- Light manufacturing and Office Space

Survey Results: Economic Development

Less Supported Economic Activity:

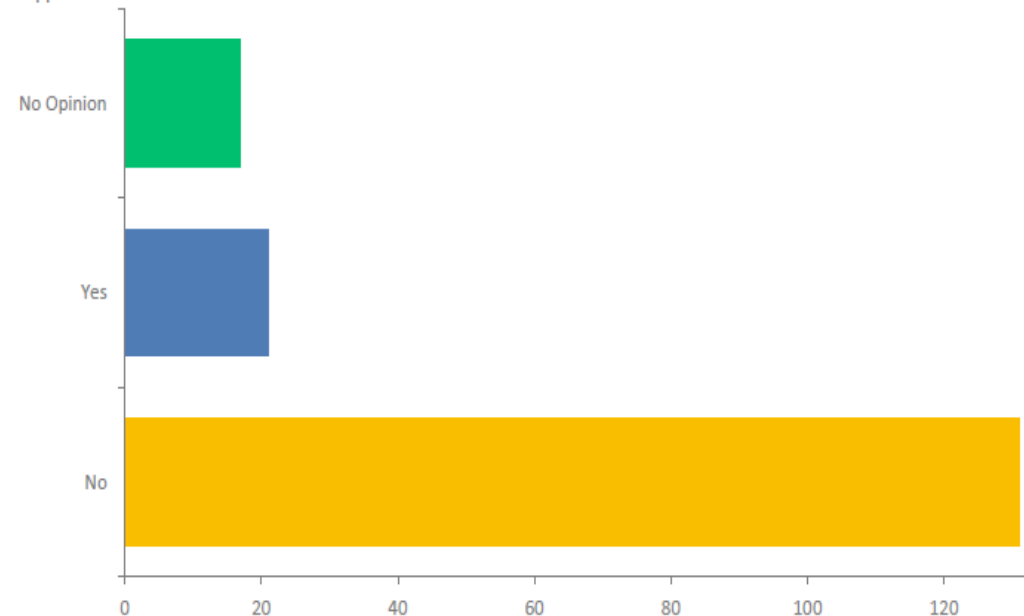
- Clothing and furniture stores
- Automotive and self-storage facilities
- Event centers
- Cannabis stores
- “Air BnB” and vacation rentals
- Solar farms

Survey Results: Public Facilities and Services

- The Fire Department was the most popular Public Service, followed by Solid Waste in a distant second place, and trails and conservation in third.
- Maintaining the public beach was a top priority amongst respondents.
- Policing was not identified as an area needing increased service levels – interestingly despite concerns about speeding.
- The two surveys gave different results on EMS services questions, which may be a result of slight differences in the questions themselves, or respondents.

Q37: Currently, Readfield's police services are provided through the Kennebec County Sheriff's Department and the State Police. Do you think there is a need for additional police services in the Town of Readfield?

Answered: 169 Skipped: 0



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Survey Results: Transportation

- 83% of respondents are satisfied with the network of town roads, 12% are not, 5% had no opinion.
- Ranked as 'very important' for future transportation: 39% snow removal, 30% sidewalks in village areas, 23% bike and pedestrian paths, 19% focused transportation for those with limited mobility, 7% paving publicly owned gravel roads, 5% general public transportation options like bus services, 0% building additional roads.
- Respondents noted their appreciation of the town's sidewalks in open ended questions.
- Respondents noted the following future improvements: bike and walking trails and sidewalks in village areas.
- In open ended responses, many felt that speeding was an issue in Readfield.

Survey Results: Rural Economic Resources

- 63% of respondents felt it was very important to preserve community-based agriculture.
- 85% of respondents felt agricultural uses should be encouraged; 57% felt local farms and farm stands should be encouraged over other businesses.
- 70% of respondents chose farmlands when asked what natural resource areas should be protected.
- When asked what specific tracts of land should be targeted for conservation, large farms and open farmland were top priority.
- Many respondents appreciate Readfield's rural qualities and character, and natural features, all within close proximity to larger service areas.

The more they
stay the
same...

Areas with minimal change
since the last Comprehensive
Plan in 2009

**Historic, Archeological & Cultural
Resources,
Transportation, &
Public Facilities and Services**

Historic, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources

Readfield originally had five distinct villages; by the 1900s only three remained and remain still today: Readfield Corner, Readfield Depot, and Kents Hill.

Since 2020, one prehistoric archeological site and one historic archeological have been identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Readfield is home to two structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Jesse Lee Church and the Union Meeting House.

The village of Kents Hill makes up Readfield's only Historic District, designated as such on the National Register of Historic Places, consisting of several structures.

There are numerous significant historic structures throughout Readfield.

The Readfield Historical Society actively works to identify and highlight historic buildings through the History in the Streets Program and the Historic Home Sign Program.



Transportation

Approximately 47 miles of public roadway.

Over 100 privately owned roads, most commonly camp roads.

Routes 17, 41, 135 & North Road are state maintained.

One High Crash Location (HCL): on Route 17 at the intersection by Readfield Corner.

One blinking traffic light at the intersection of Routes 17 and 41.

Most of the summer and winter maintenance is contracted out.

The town plows a total of 34.26 miles of road in the winter.

The town utilizes a road management plan as part of the Capital Investment Plan, which documents every road and includes a resurfacing schedule.

Public transportation is limited to KVCAP and Neighbors Driving Neighbors, which was established in 2022.

Public Facilities and Services Statistics

Buildings owned by the Town of Readfield: Town Hall (Gile Hall), Readfield Community Library, and the Fire Station.

There are 25 active volunteer fire fighters, with a capacity for 30. The town's Insurance Safety Officer (ISO) rating is generally a "6," which is a very good rating for a rural town.

Readfield is part of a 5-town mutual aid, including: Mount Vernon, Wayne, Vienna, and Fayette.

Ambulance services are provided through Winthrop.

Readfield relies on the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office and Maine State Police for law enforcement.

The transfer station in Readfield serves Wayne and Fayette as well.

The town does not have public water or sewer except for a small, limited public water system in Readfield Corner that serves approximately 22 homes and businesses.

Other town amenities include a town beach, a Town Forest/Farm, several cemeteries, a local elementary school, a regional middle and high school (RSU #38), and numerous recreational and open space properties.





Land, Water, & Rural Economic Resources

Readfield's Land Resources

2009

The state identified four natural heritage areas and critical areas reflecting endangered or valuable plants in 2009.

Beginning with Habitat maps identify several wetlands valuable for waterfowl and wading bird habitat.

In 2009, the biggest threat to natural resources is the same threat they're still facing: development in rural areas or open space.

2023

In 2023, Beginning with Habitat noted a species of Special Concern (Bald Eagle), as well as sites containing an endangered plant species and two others containing rare plants or plants of Special Concern.

Also noted is an exemplary natural community of a northern hardwood forest.

Readfield remains members of the Kennebec Land Trust and continues to work with other organization devoted to protection of natural resources, as was a policy in 2009.



Readfield Values Open Space

The town owns 199.1 acres mostly in conserved lands excluding cemeteries.

The State owns 2.1 acres, including two boat launches and one picnic area.

Kennebec Land Trust owns 809.8 acres of conserved land.

The New England Forestry Foundation is in the process of purchasing 326 acres that abut the Town Forest.

As of 2022, the attractive lands around Carlton Pond have been opened to public recreational use. This property is managed and owned by the Greater August Utilities District.

In 1990, the town established an open space acquisition fund for the purpose of purchasing important natural or recreational areas; however, the account was not funded until 2021, when \$10,000 was added. In 2022, the amount was raised to \$50,000 due to an increased interest in protecting open space.

Readfield's Water Resources

2009

Of Readfield's 21,120 acres, 1,280 are water; this is about 5.8%

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan notes that identifying and mapping vernal pools is an "emerging issue".

A 2009 policy of updating the Floodplain Management Ordinance was achieved in 2011.

Readfield's Land Use Ordinance included language for to protect water resources and prevent water quality degradation. The Land Use Ordinance is still updated frequently.

Readfield participated in the Federal Flood Insurance Program in 2009 as well as currently.

2023

Readfield Conservation Commission is working with an environmental consultant to document and map potentially significant vernal pools. The project is expected to be completed in 2023.

Invasive aquatic plant, Eurasian milfoil has not yet been found in Readfield's waterbodies.

Readfield has remained a member of the Cobbossee Watershed District, as was a policy in 2009.

The Land Use Ordinance was amended to include the strategies to protect water quality, including incorporating low impact development techniques for managing stormwater run off and utilizing the DEP's *Phosphorus Control in Lake Watersheds* into the Land Use Ordinance, as recommended in the 2009 plan

Land & Water Resource Highlights

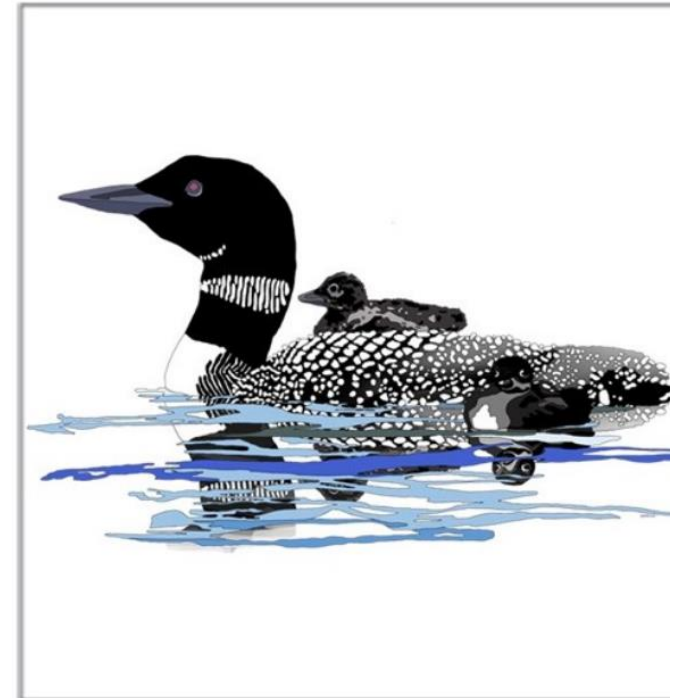
The emergence of potential for PFAS in well water,

All rivers in streams in Readfield are Class B; this has not changed since the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

For the most part, water quality of the lakes and ponds in Readfield have not changes significantly since 2009.

While variable leaf milfoil (*Myriophyllum heterophyllum*) was present in Cobbossee Lake in 2009, the more aggressive Eurasian milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) did not appear until 2018.

Readfield is proactive about protecting natural and water resources through an updated Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Ordinance, and involved boards, committees, and commissions. The town also has an Open Space Plan that will be updated soon.



Rural Economic Resources

2009

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan notes a lack of farming support structure in Readfield, such as no farm supply stores or farmers markets. To date, there are still no farmers markets in Readfield.

In 2009, approximately two thirds to three quarters of Readfield was covered with forest.

2023

The 2017 Census of Agriculture notes that although farm size has decreased by 1 percent, the number of farms has increased by 6 percent.

Readfield's Land Use Ordinance generally allows agriculture in all zoning districts, with a few restrictions on both light and intensive agriculture.

The town adopted a Food Sovereignty Ordinance to promote buying local foods and a Marijuana Establishment Ordinance in 2020.

Rural Economic Resources Highlights

In both the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and the updated 2023 version, Readfield residents have demonstrated that they value farming and forestry.

With few exceptions, the farms noted in the 2009 plan still exist and were noted in the 2023 plan, along with some new farms.

The trend of smaller, micro farms is noted in both plans.

Maine has ranked number one in the United States for wild blueberry production since the 1950s. As of 2020, Maine ranked third in maple syrup production, and ninth for potato production.

Organizations working to protect farmland in Readfield include Kennebec Land Trust, Maine Farmland Trust, and Land for Maine's Future.

Both the 2009 and the 2023 Comprehensive Plans call for agriculture to be included in town economic planning.

Tree Growth Tax Law

	2009	2020	% Change
# Of Parcels	63	79	25.4%
Softwood Acres	418	440	5.26%
Mixed Wood Acres	1674	1,934	15.5%
Hardwood Acres	856	975	13.9%
Total Acres	2949	3,350	13.6%
Total Value	\$643,582	\$1,162,004	80.6%

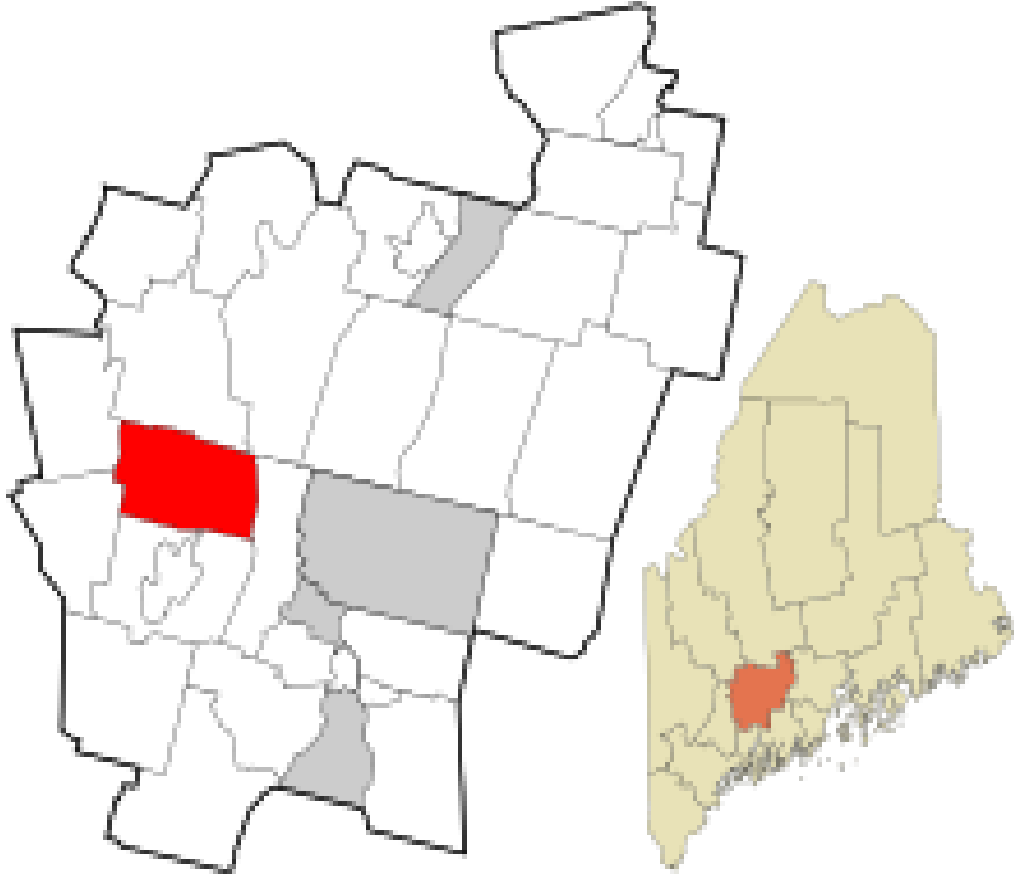
Open Space Tax Law Program

	2010	2020	% Change
Number of Parcels	7	9	28.6 %
Acres First Classified	0	447	100 %
Total Acres	427	451	5.62 %
Total Valuation	\$32,900	\$59,135	79.7 %

Farmland Tax Law Program

	2010	2020	% Change
Number of Parcels	18	32	77.8 %
Acres First Classified	0	0	0
Cropland Acres	420	622	48.1 %
Cropland Valuation	\$70,504	\$130,859	85.6 %
Woodland Acres	633	991	56.6 %
Woodland Valuation	\$170,680	\$359,016	110 %

MORE RURAL ECONOMIC RESOURCE HIGHLIGHTS



Community Profile, Housing, & Local Economy

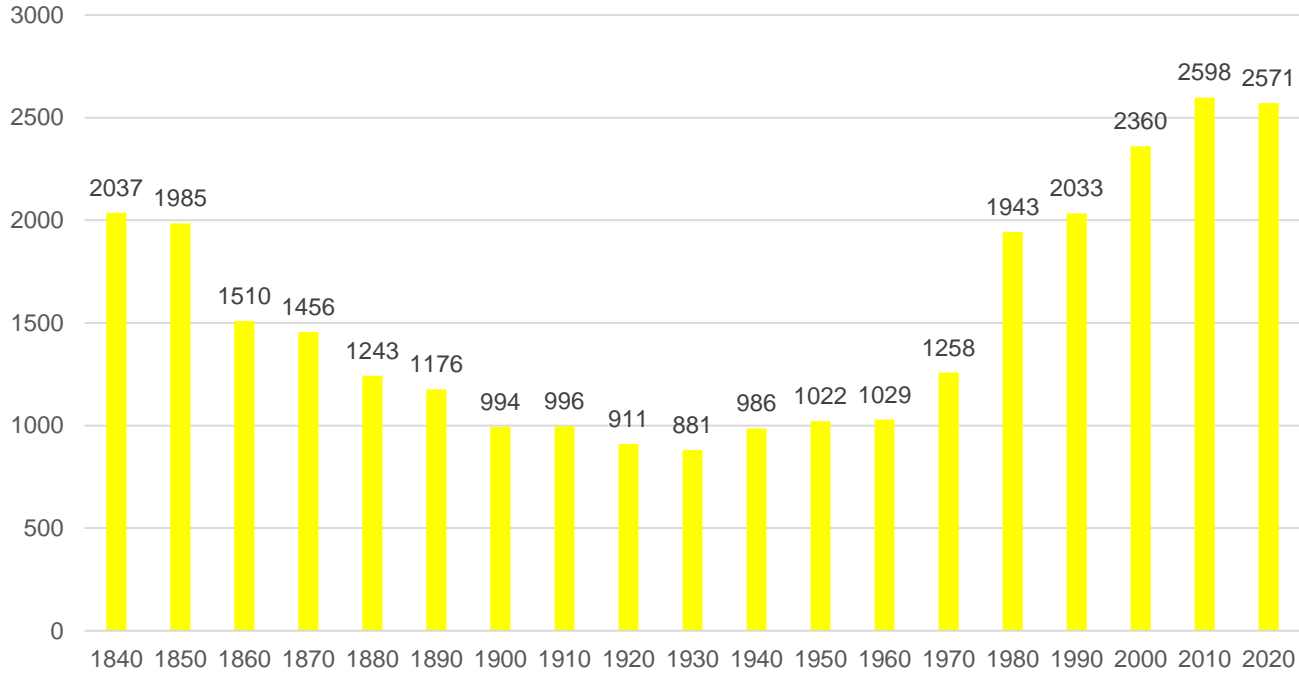
Readfield Community Profile

General Population Characteristics	1990	2000	2010	2020*
Total Population	2,033	2,360	2,598	2,571
Male Population	1,010	1,197	1,240	1,418
Female Population	1,023	1,163	1,308	1,153
Median Age	35.7	38.4	43.4	44.7
Total Households	722	867	998	977
Family Households	577	674	738	699
Married Couple Family Households	512	576	618	581
Nonfamily Households	145	193	260	278
Nonfamily Households Living Alone	120	158	196	168
Households with children (under 18)	302	345	295	295
Single-Person Household 65 years +	40	49	67	56
Average Household Size	2.81	2.31	2.55	2.58

Community Profile- Population Change



Population Change Over 190 Years in Readfield, Maine



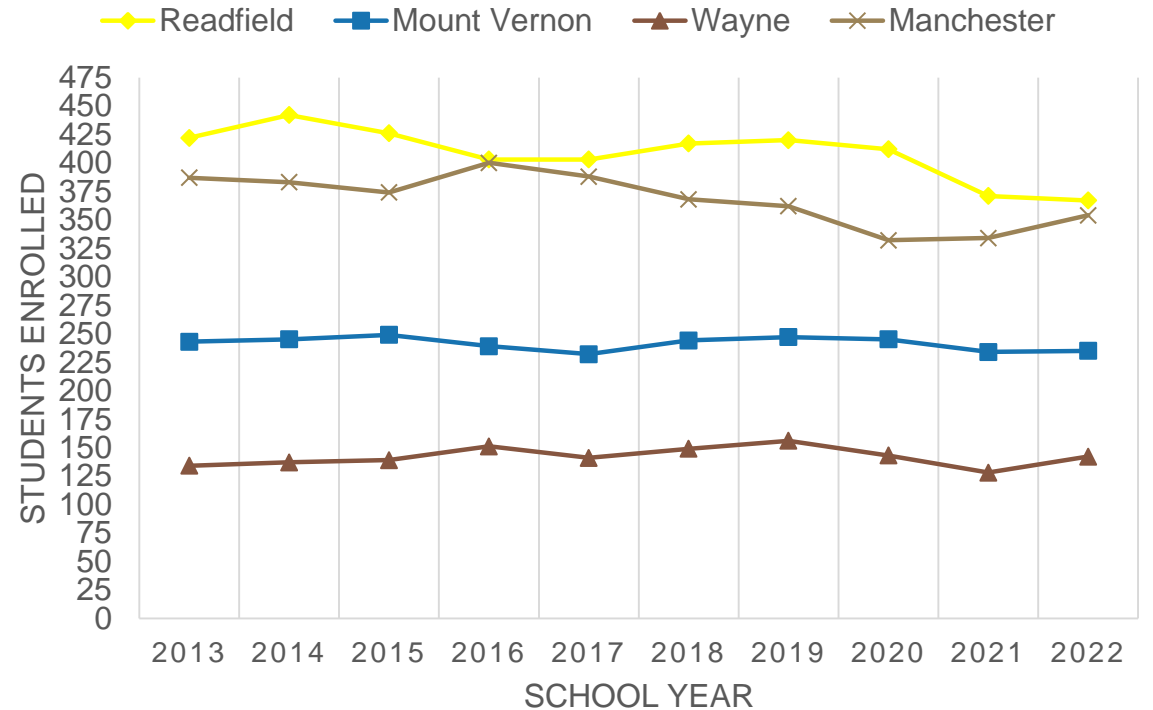
Community Profile Highlights

Age Trends Since 2000:

- Age category of under 5 decreased by 60%
- Age category 25–34 increased 63%
- Age category 35-44 decreased by 27%
- Age category 45-54 increased 6%
- Age category 55-64 decreased 9%
- Age category 65+ increased 54%

The aging population and fewer young people results in a lower school enrollment- pictured at right with Readfield in yellow.

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NUMBER 38 ENROLLMENT



Housing Profile

2009

1,293 Total housing units in Readfield

998 Occupied housing units

90% of houses were owner occupied

\$209,500- median home price in 2010

A house considered affordable, based on 80% of the Area Median Income cost: \$157,134 (Maine State Housing Authority, 2002)

\$633- Median monthly rental cost

2023

1,320 Total housing units in Readfield

977 Occupied housing units

80% of houses are owner occupied

\$330,000- median home price in 2020.
Median home price increased 58% in ten years.

\$1,000- Median monthly rental cost.
Median monthly rental cost increased 58% in ten years.

Housing Highlights

\$330,000- median home price in 2020,

\$279,398- home price affordable to those earning median income,

59.1% of households in Readfield cannot afford a median priced home ,

81.5% of renters in Readfield are paying 30% or more of their income on housing,

93% of houses in Readfield are single family homes,

Currently, the type of housing most need are smaller homes on small lots to accommodate the aging population and those living alone.

Since 2016, there has been a significant increase in permits issued,

Housing sprawl is a concern, as most new houses have been constructed in rural areas and away from intended growth areas.

New legislation to promote affordable housing will be mandatory as of July 2023. Readfield will need to amend the Land Use Ordinance.

Local Economy

2009

Readfield's Per Capita Income (2000): \$20,707

Median household income (2000): \$48,893

Readfield's labor force in 2000: 1,252 (571 women, 681 men)

In 2000, 55 Readfield residents were unemployed for an unemployment rate of 3.1%. In 2005, the unemployment rate was 4.5%.

In 2000, 379 (30%) of Readfield's workers commuted to Augusta; Winthrop was the second highest commuter location at 59 workers.

2023

2020 Per Capita Income (PCI): \$40,608

2020 Median household income: \$86,156- both household and PCI are higher than state and county averages

In 2020, Readfield had 1,477 residents in the labor force (597 women, 880 men)

Readfield's unemployment rate in 2020 was 2.3%

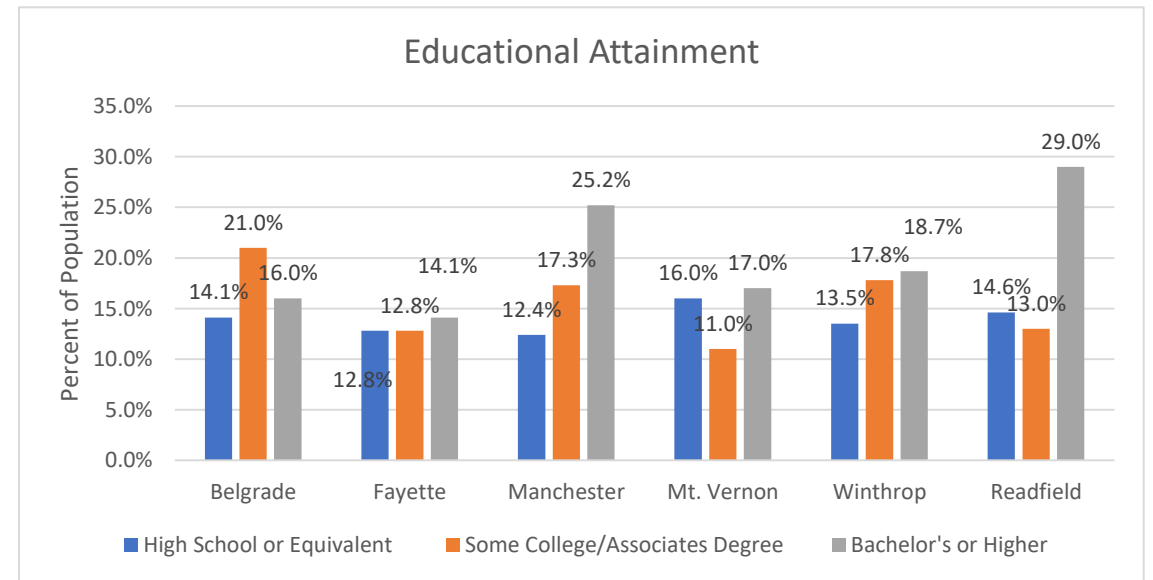
355 (27.8%) Readfield residents commuted to Augusta for work; at 56 (4.4%) Lewiston was the second highest commuter location.

Local Economy Highlights

Percent of workforce in occupational categories has not changed significantly.

Occupation	2010	% Of Total	2020	% Of Total
Management, business, science, and art	550	44.4%	816	57.2%
Service	181	14.6%	82	5.7%
Sales and Office	245	19.8%	219	15.3%
Natural resource, construction, and maintenance	152	12.3%	157	10.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving	111	9%	157	11%

Readfield resident's educational attainment is higher than most surrounding towns. This attribute was noted in the 2009 plan, as well.





Existing Land Use Analysis and Future Land Use Plan

Existing Land Use

Readfield is comprised of 21,120 acres; approximately 1,280 are surface waters (5.8%).

The villages of Readfield Corner, The Depot, and Kents Hill are the most densely settled residential areas, although density is increasing on the lake shores.

Readfield has a complete and thorough Land Use Ordinance that is updated regularly. It includes Shoreland Zoning and subdivision regulations.

The town employs a part-time, fully certified Code Enforcement Officer to carry out and uphold the Land Use Ordinance. Readfield's Planning Board reviews major developments and zoning amendments.



Existing Land Use (cont.)

Readfield's Land Use Ordinance divides the town up into ten zoning districts, each with its own set of standards:

Village	Shoreland Residential
Village Residential	Resource Protection
Academic	Stream Protection
Rural	Commercial/Industrial
Rural Residential	Mobile Home Overlay

Currently, the Village District, Village Residential District, and the Academic District make up the designated growth areas (see map on last slide).

The location of residential development, in recent years, is not in the growth areas; it has been occurring in more rural areas. There is a noticeable upward trend in the number of permits issued since 2016.



Future Land Use Plan

Purpose of the Future Land Use Plan:

Evaluate currently designated Growth Areas to determine if they need to be changed.

Evaluate current land use trends and patterns to be sure they align with the community's vision.

Evaluate the town's effectiveness in protecting critical habitat and natural resources.

Consider the rate of residential and commercial development.

Be based on community input.

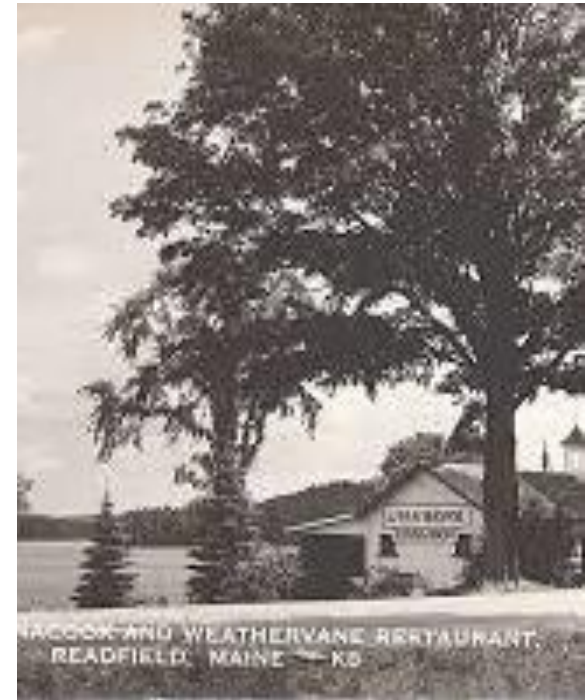
Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan Goal: Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate locations, while protecting natural resources and the Town's rural character.

The following are highlights of the Plan's policies and strategies intended to move the Town towards meeting that goal:

Encourage growth in designated growth areas.

- Capital investment strategy
- Infrastructure improvements
- Focus on Village areas
- Expanded use of "academic district"



Future Land Use Plan (cont.)

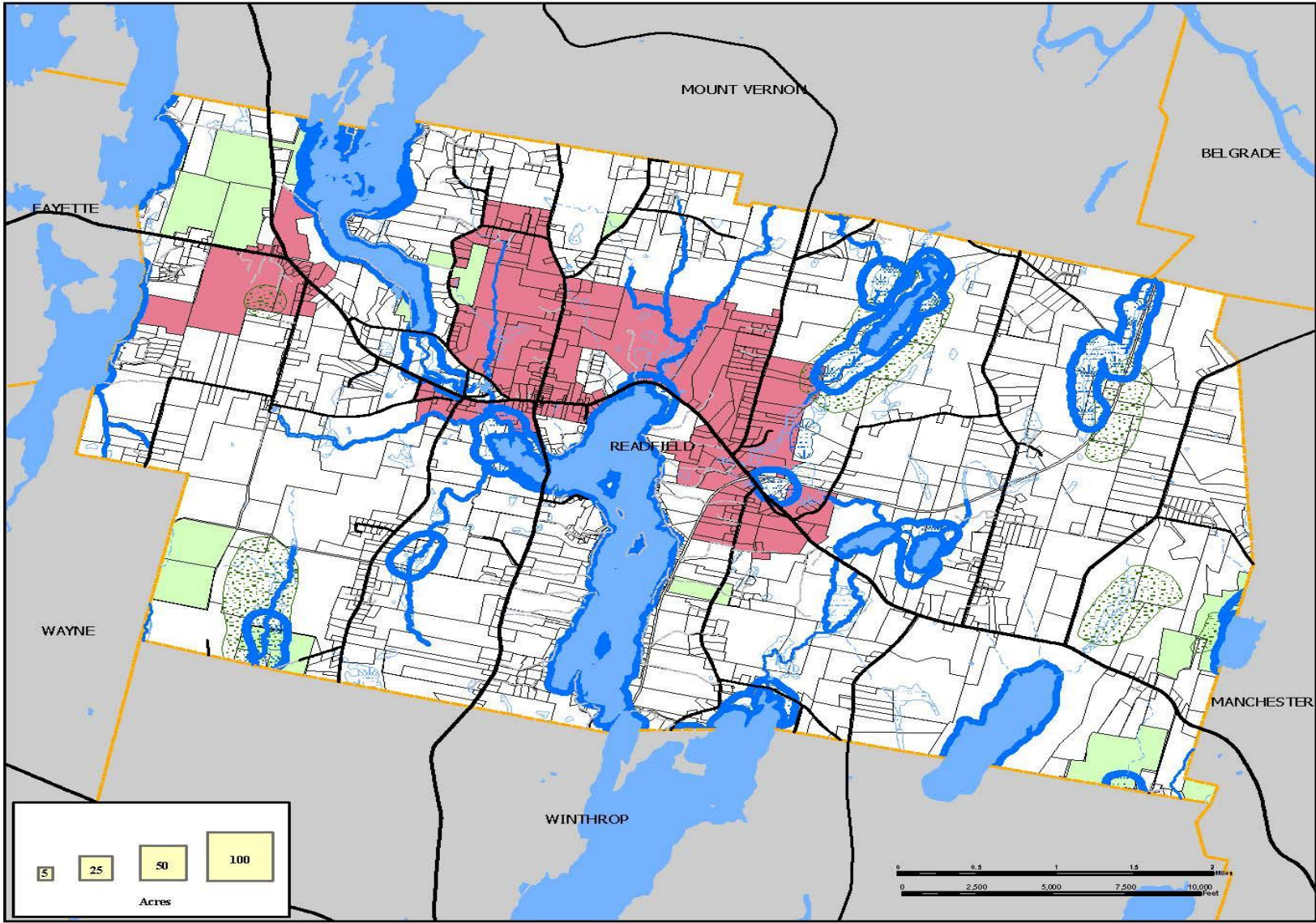
Protect natural resources and maintain the town's rural character.

- Designation of a “rural resource district”
- Directing growth away from significant rural areas and sensitive natural areas
- Support of recreational opportunities

Permit and track growth and development

- Training and support for administration of land use ordinances
- Tracking system with regularly reporting

Evaluate and revise the Land Use Ordinance to ensure consistency with the Plan's goals and policies.



**Town of Readfield
Kennebec County, Maine**

**Basic Future Land Use Map
2023 Comprehensive Plan**

Map Legend

- Lakes, Ponds & Rivers
- Streams**
 - Perennial
 - Intermittent
- Roads**
 - State Highway
 - State aid
 - Local
 - Private
 - Basic Growth Areas
- Development Constraints**
 - Critical Natural Areas
 - Simple Shoreland Zone***
 - Conserved Lands
 - Wetlands



***NOT AN OFFICIAL SHORELAND ZONING MAP**
 The Kennebec Valley Council of Governments is not responsible for the accuracy of the information displayed on this map. The planning process is not a guarantee of accuracy. Boundary lines are based on digital data and may differ from ground-level observations.
 Data Sources: Maine Office of GIS, Maine DOT. Created 10-2023 by JG.

