

A. VISION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

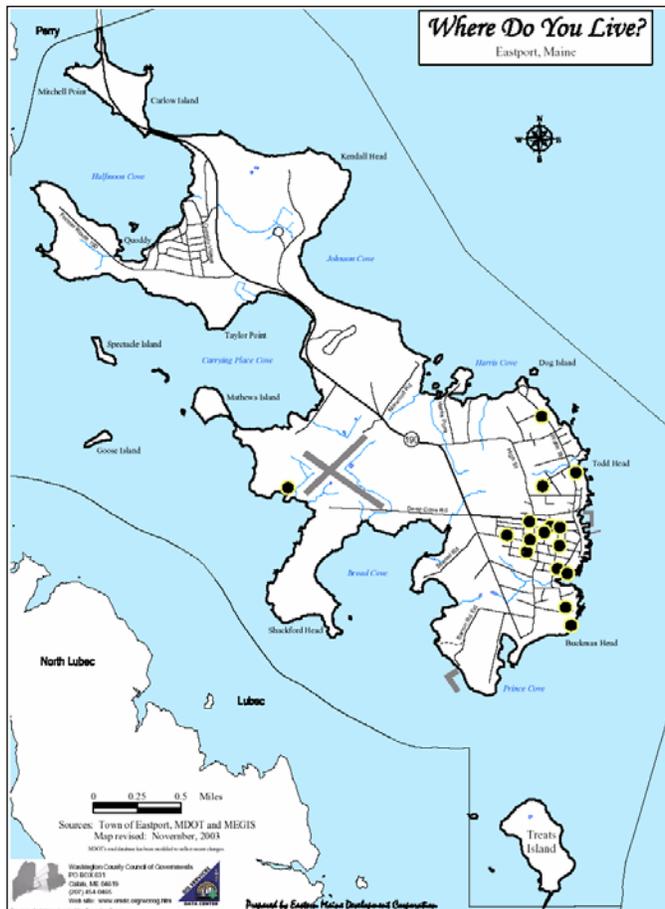
VISION:

Eastport, an Island Community Living, Working and Growing Together

This update to the comprehensive plan is the result of many hours of hard work. The committee worked with a diverse group of individuals to bring the well thought out plan of 1995 into sharper focus. The committee hopes our work takes the city beyond the plan of 1995, which had as its main focus meeting the requirements of Maine law.

To many, Eastport is a place where time has stood still; to many others it is a place where change has been constant. Schooners have been replaced by freighters, fishing boats and weirs share facilities with aquaculture, and families coming home to be together during the 4th of July/Old Home Week share their city with many new visitors.

A comprehensive plan should guide the City through anticipated changes, helping accomplish things we want while avoiding things we do not want. Change is inevitable; preparation for change is only by design.



The 1995 Comprehensive Plan committee held numerous meetings with groups and individuals to hear the wants, needs, and desires of the community. The current committee, tasked with the 2004 update of the Comprehensive Plan, also sought input from many local groups, boards and organizations. They also incorporated the input from the public surveys conducted by Eastport for Pride in 2002, and distributed a public survey in 2003 to a random selection of households and published it in the Quoddy Tides. From this a “visioning” session was held at the elementary school. From that meeting the vision **“Eastport, an Island Community Living, Working and Growing Together”** was developed. **Map 2 – Treasures of Eastport** was created from those in attendance.

Attendance at the visioning public meeting was concentrated with residents of the central core as depicted to the left by the points indicated where attendees live.

Participants at the visioning meeting broke into three groups and identified on several maps the most significant natural and built features of Eastport – the treasures without which Eastport would not be Eastport. **Map #2, Treasures of Eastport**, was extracted that shows the best of the best of that selection. Those features that were identified by all three groups and by two out of the three groups are drawn on the map. Those identified on only one map are included with “honorable mention” in the lists below.

	Natural Treasures	Built Environment	
		Structures	Streets
1 st Tier (on all three groups maps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shackford State Park • Downtown Breakwater Harbor • Seawall Walkway • Dog Island and end of Water St. • Bucknam Head • Estes Head and Prince Cove • Battery Field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures on Water St. – Downtown Historic District • Churches • City Hall • Sea Wall and Overlook Park • Peavey Library • Post Office • The Pier/The Port • Cemetery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water St. • Key Street to Harris Cove
2 nd Tier (on 2 maps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying Place Cove • Causeway • Old RR Track Bed • Views from Pleasant Street • Views from Staniels Road 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boynton Street • Deep Cove Road • Staniels Road • Pleasant St. • Dawson St.
Honorable Mention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kendall Head • Johnson Cove • Half Moon Cove/Quoddy Village • Salt Marsh • End of Toll Bridge Road • Airport • Willoway/The Castle • Redoubt Hill and Corner • Harris Point • Mathews Island • Smiths’ Corner • Seaview Campground area • Planned Old Sow Park (Old Sow) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees on Boynton and Key Streets • Boynton Manor • Downtown • Health Center and Nursing Home on Boynton Street • Historic Buildings on Boynton and Key Streets • The Battery/The Fort • The Barracks Museum 	

Eastport has been a city for such a long time that many participants did not differentiate between its natural and its built treasures. The cemetery, the breakwater and the rail bed were all of particular importance to people. Likewise the roads that were identified as especially indicative of Eastport are those with both extraordinary views and a rich diversity of historic structures.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

2004 Goals and Policy Statements:

- Notes: 1- Implementation strategies, responsibilities and timeframe are shown in individual chapters.
2- 1995 Plan action steps are cross-referenced below and also shown in Appendix D.

History

The history and economy of Eastport is substantially based upon the natural resources that drove the local and regional economy including shipbuilding, port development and the sea. Most of downtown Eastport is on the National Registry of Historic Places. As the record of historic structures reveals Eastport has protected a great abundance of its historic structures, many of which are over a hundred years old. Three fires completely demolished the commercial district of the city, the first and second in 1839 and 1864, the last and worst in 1886. Eastport was rebuilt with masonry the following year and looks very much the same today as it did in 1887. Eastport will continue to protect its remarkable heritage through the protection of historically significant buildings and locations.

Goal: Eastport will preserve the State's historic and archeological resources for future generations to enjoy and pass on to their children as they have been passed on to the present.

- Note: 1- Appendix C- contains interpretive materials in support of heritage tourism

Preservation:

- Protect and preserve known archaeological and historic sites.
- Ensure that archeological and historic sites are not unknowingly destroyed.

Education: (1995 - 31, 42, 43, 44, 45)

- Continue to identify and document Eastport's above ground resources.
- Collect and maintain historic city records.
- Develop and encourage public access to significant historic and shoreline sites within the City.

Regulation:

- Formulate guidelines or land use controls to protect and preserve historic and archaeological resources if identified.

Population

The population of Eastport has decreased significantly over the long term, with a higher rate of decline seen in just the past decade. In addition our population is aging. There are fewer school age children and our city has seen a decrease in the average household size. Numbers of retiree and perhaps single parent households are increasing. Limited employment opportunities help explain the decline in the numbers of young families residing in Eastport. A seasonal influx of approximately 200 people increases demands on services and these individuals may account for some of the future increases in year-round population. The city should continue to make available demographic information to residents and should remain mindful of the needs of our changing population.

Goal: Eastport will use information about its population when making administrative and policy decisions. (1995 - 17)

Monitor actively, the size, characteristics and distribution of its population.

Natural Resources

Eastport currently offers protection to its natural resources with locally adopted shoreland zoning regulations, zoning and subdivision regulations. These ordinances will be updated to be consistent with the minimum requirements of state and federal regulations as is mandated and to ensure that Eastport retains its character as a commercial port and maritime city. Protecting public shore and water access and maintaining a healthy balance between industry and natural beauty is crucial for future economic development. Water quality will be protected and improved through the continued educational, research and regulatory efforts of the city and local resource management agencies. Investments will be made in infrastructure that improves both shellfish harvest opportunities and drinking water quality. Maritime industries, both traditional and new, will be supported through access for the commercial fishing fleet, regulatory districts that support maritime activities and research into ways to diversify aquaculture and other marine trades.

Goal: Eastport will protect and preserve the natural resources on which its economy and quality of life depend.

Water Quality and Resources:

- Protect existing fish and waterfowl/wading bird habitats within the town mapped as Essential or Significant Habitat.
- Support and solicit research on impacts of current marine industries on the marine environment.
- Maintain and improve shellfish management activities.
- Educate landowners about saltwater intrusion and water quality issues where they occur.
- Protect water quality.
- Prevent oil spills; prepare for response if they occur.
- Protect drinking water supplies.

Forest and Street Tree Resources:

- Seek Tree City USA designation for Eastport.

Sustainable Development: (1995 - 11, 12)

- Develop building sites using the best available information.
- Protect and promote traditional maritime uses and activities.
- Buffer new development from existing sources of noise and activity associated with maritime commercial activities.

Education and Traditional Use: (1995 - 26, 28, 44)

- Support marine resources training and research.
- Promote harmony and understanding among newcomers and residents over traditional uses of land and water.
- Ensure that traditional use of lands and access to water are protected as development pressures increase.
- Utilize financial incentive programs.
- Manage wildlife-deer herd

Employment and Economy

Eastport is a port city whose economy has changed and continues to evolve. From an economy that relied on one industry after another, the city has diversified to capitalize on its abundance of existing natural resources. The port is exceeding all forecasted expectations but aquaculture, once thriving, is faced with significant challenges. It is still a critical part of Eastport's future and is

therefore evolving and diversifying much as the city is doing as a whole. The resiliency and determination of Eastport citizens is very much alive in the volunteerism that drives downtown revitalization efforts as well as participation in all areas of Eastport’s civic life. Prospects are also positive for additional light industry and the efforts of city government are paying off.

Eastport is a regional employer but challenges remain to bring employment and sales to levels that will continue to sustain local employment. The policies and strategies in this Comprehensive Plan are diverse and extensive as a result. Primary among them is support for the port and the roads that serve it; support for downtown revitalization efforts through such measures as creation of a Downtown Tax Increment Financing District and coordinated investment in public and private infrastructure; support for the tourism that will bring visitors to the area; and support for the light industrial sector that will provide higher wage jobs to residents and the region.

Goal: Eastport will strengthen economic development through full employment, a prosperous downtown and regional cooperation.

Promotion of Economic Activity: (1995 - 2, 3, 4, 6)

- Forge working partnerships between volunteers and the City
- Promote expansion and diversification of the economic base of the community.
- Improve and maintain city infrastructure
- Encourage and support local maritime businesses to retain access to the resource and get their products to local and regional markets.
- Support increased tourism as an economic development goal.
- Develop and implement incentives, programs, and methods of supporting private, infrastructure investment.
- Preserve public access to salt water beaches.
- Develop infrastructure in support of heritage tourism
- Create a long-term marketing niche and plan to attract visitors, and investors.

Sustainable Development: (1995 - 1, 18, 32)

- Adopt new ordinances or revise existing ordinances as needed in support of revitalization and preservation goals in the existing downtown and, as business needs expand, along feeder streets to the west, Water Street north and south, and Sea Street in its entirety
- Favor the primacy of historic preservation in all revitalization efforts, and recognize preservation as a source not an impediment to recovery.
- Encourage mixed use zoning on feeder streets, on Water Street south and north of the existing downtown, and on Sea Street, as the downtown expands to accommodate business growth.
- Treat scenic views as the common property of Eastport residents and the public at large.

Regional Development and Coordination: (1995 - 15, 33)

- Advocate for infrastructure improvements to enhance the economic competitiveness of Eastport and Washington County.
- Participate in regional organizations that provide technical assistance and information about individual business support and regional economic development opportunities.

Program Awareness:

- Obtain information on programs that provide support for roads, parks, public transportation or other infrastructure and activities that materially aid the city’s economy.
- Assist those who are eligible for assistance and help them to receive it.

Educated Workforce: (1995 - 9, 11)

Ensure that the educational opportunities, both academic and vocational, address the needs of Eastport children.

Encourage and support efforts to provide job training and continuing education.

Housing

The State of Maine defines affordable housing as not costing more than 30% of household income. The data reviewed suggest that the cost of housing in Eastport is affordable for most people in the community but that a sizable minority is paying more than they can afford or losing access as prices rise. The majority of people live in owner occupied single-family housing. The existing zoning ordinance does not impose significant costs on the cost of building homes. There is a range of new housing in the town: mobile or manufactured homes are utilized often. The percentage of homes owned by those in the workforce is likely to decline further while the percentage of homes owned by retirees - both those from away and natives - will increase.

Goal: Eastport will encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for Eastport residents.

Programs and Grants: (1995 - 5, 14)

Pursue programs and grants that can assist in the provision of affordable housing.

Codes and Regulation: (1995 - 19)

Ensure that local codes and ordinances are enforced for the public health, safety and welfare.

Ensure zoning ordinance will not preclude the development of affordable housing.

Recreation

Eastport has many recreational opportunities because of the scenic quality of the city and vastness of the region in which it is located. Residents want the city to encourage expansion of new recreation businesses. Residents rely on public access to use the city's recreational resources and want these resources (moorings, anchorages, trails and water access) to be developed, maintained and expanded. Likewise residents want to use city recreational facilities and sites and expect them to be maintained, improved, and expanded.

Goal: Eastport will maintain and improve access to recreational opportunities, particularly water access.

Facilities and Services: (1995 - 24, 29)

Treat recreation, as a quality of life provider, and as important as education.

Improve the provision of recreational opportunities.

Engage the private sector in the provision of recreational opportunities.

Public Access and Open Space: (1995 - 25)

Encourage recreational opportunities and increase public access to surface water.

Secure public access to the water, including deep water facilities, while maintaining traditional accesses to shell fishing areas.

Encourage the preservation of open space.

Transportation

Transportation linkages in Eastport consist of State Route 190 and the Port of Eastport. Our city is reliant on its road network as the primary means of transportation movement. However, the city looks as much to the water as it does to the land for its livelihood and connectivity to the outside world. Therefore, local roads should provide safe, reliable access to work, school, stores, and residences. But the port at Estes Head and the breakwater downtown must be maintained and supported in their on-going improvements. Looking over the long term, another bridge to the island is envisioned to improve access for safety and diversified economic development.

Overall, Eastport's roadways are in good condition. Given limited funding and the significant expense, the city has done a noteworthy job of maintaining its roads. Since MDOT has jurisdiction over most main roads and both causeways serving Eastport, the city will continue to communicate and cooperate with that department. The city has a paving schedule for roads that are currently unpaved and requires all new roads to be constructed to specific municipal standards.

Goal: Eastport will encourage, promote and develop efficient and safe transportation facilities that will accommodate our city's anticipated growth and economic development.

(1995-3, 4, 20, 36, 46)

Management and Maintenance:

Plan for optimum use, construction, maintenance and repair of roads.

Insure that new development does not negatively impact the capacity or safety of existing roadways.

Port development:

Support port development and inter-modal freight transport.

Trail Development:

Support pedestrian and bike use and connect with regional trail systems.

Regional Coordination:

Cooperate in the development of regional transportation policy.

Support airport development.

Public Facilities and Services

Eastport has a rich variety of facilities and services provided by the public and private sectors. This is the heritage of a once much larger city as well as a strong spirit of volunteerism and cooperation among citizens. It is also the result of prudent investments that will continue with the priorities set in this chapter and in the Capital Improvement Plan. Past efforts at regionalizing services, in waste management and water supply, will serve Eastport well as costs drive towns to consider more cooperative ways to provide health care, education and drinking water to their communities.

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

Local Facilities and Services: *(1995 - 13, 18, 21, 23, 38)*

Maintain or replace local facilities to address immediate community needs..

Coordinate local facilities maintenance and replacement with Downtown Revitalization efforts.

Develop maintenance plans for existing and future facilities.

Develop plans for new services and facilities.

Appropriate funds yearly to adequately maintain facilities to minimize need for more expensive replacement.

Develop plans for new services and facilities.

Services and Education:

Develop, expand and improve services for seniors.

Make local services visible and understood by Eastport citizens.

Regional Coordination: (1995 - 8, 15)

Cooperate on the delivery of regional services and endeavor to achieve economies of scale where feasible.

Fiscal Capacity (1995 - 7, 14)

Eastport has managed its finances well over the last five years and the mil rate has remained within a quite consistent range. In addition, the city (including the Harbor Committee) has created and maintained reserve funds, which has permitted implementation of unbudgeted or urgent operating or capitol projects. Consideration will be given to apportioning some of these resources among two new reserve accounts: 1) Operating Reserves 2) Capital Reserves to cover new capital projects as well as maintenance and repairs on community facilities. An oft repeated priority was adoption of a long-term commitment to preserving improvements through sustained, designated funding for maintenance of the downtown public infrastructure.

Through this Comprehensive Plan, the city is revising and updating a Capital Improvement Plan, as shown in Table J4 (Chapter J), to guide the city's capital investments. Needed to support increased tourism are infrastructure improvements to include parking, phones, restrooms, an information center and better signage. These are included in the CIP. Private sector improvements are also needed including more restaurants, overnight accommodations, docking facilities for different types of pleasure craft including cruise ships and some form of public transportation especially during celebrations or special events. The restoration, rehabilitation and maintenance of privately owned, downtown buildings present more difficult issues. As noted elsewhere in the plan, a façade program is being used as an incentive. Additional funding should be sought to expand both participation and grant awards.

Land Use

Eastport is experiencing some residential development pressure and working diligently to improve the economic opportunities available to its residents through downtown revitalization efforts, port development, and ensuring that a fair cross section of land uses are allowed in its commercial and industrial districts. Existing residential development pressure is concentrated along the shoreline or in areas that command scenic vistas. This results in increased demand for housing that is affordable in non-shore line land areas, and potential loss of shoreline access and public use. Evidence of renovation/ preservation of historic residences can be observed throughout the city neighborhoods.

Minor changes, and the addition of CFMA zones in areas currently utilized for marine activity, to the future land use districts that were designated in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan are proposed. These changes will protect several resources areas that are unsuitable for development and allow some flexibility to residential, especially affordable residential, and commercial landowners along Route 190. The Comprehensive Plan committee has been guided by the vision expressed by those

attending the public meeting in September 2003 as well as the survey responses from 2002 and 2003 to plan for our future. This plan is intended to protect our city's character and to direct residential, commercial and industrial activities to appropriate areas. It also seeks to ensure that residents can continue to support themselves with a mixture of activities necessitated by seasonal

Goals: Eastport will preserve the character of the city that is vital to the continued stability of the local economy. Eastport will revitalize its downtown core. Eastport will continue to be a great place to live, work and vacation

Ordinances and Regulation: *(1995 - 16, 34)*

Prohibit or tightly control incompatible development in or adjacent to critical natural areas.
Develop necessary land (private and city-owned) use regulations, consistent with the goals and guidelines of this Comprehensive Plan.

Downtown Revitalization and Economic Development:

Support downtown revitalization strategies for utilizing vacant downtown buildings.
Support retail and tourism development in the downtown and inhibit retail and “strip” development along Rt. 190.
Support efforts to reinstate ferry service to Lubec

Economic Diversity/Traditional Use: *(1995 - 1, 2, 6)*

Consider and incorporate diverse interests to whom marine resources are of critical importance including traditional fishermen, aquaculturalists, shipping interests, recreational boaters, and those who just love the view.
Support development and expansion of all aspects of aquaculture industry including diversification of species.
Support transportation enhancements that retain viability of the Port of Eastport
Retain affordable and adequate housing options for young people just starting families, elderly people, and low income people appropriate for their needs.
Ensure that shorefront residential development pressures do not overwhelm the limited land area needed for functionally water dependant commercial uses.
Promote and support traditional maritime activities.
Attract new commercial and industrial development in appropriate areas.

Enforcement:

Enforce ordinances fully and fairly.

Regional Coordination: *(1995 - 46)*

Continue to cooperate and coordinate with neighboring communities on issues and opportunities which cross municipal borders.
Correct City Boundary on official maps.

Education about Land Use:

Educate residents about the requirements of local and state regulations.
Educate new and prospective residents about traditional land use issues in Eastport.

City Surveys

Eastport has canvassed its citizens for their views several times in the last two years. The Common Ground Survey solicited input about downtown revitalization and the Comprehensive Plan survey sought to expand that input to the entire city and all of its economic activity. The results of those surveys are provided in charted format but the reader is directed to Appendix A - Town Survey and Written Comments for a full transcript of the many written comments provided to questions

throughout the survey. In addition Appendix E provides the full transcript of the Community Vision meeting that was held on September 29, 2003 at the Elementary School.

Respondents and participants in these various efforts expressed a great deal of affection for Eastport's historic downtown as well as support for its revitalization. Tourism was a supported activity in 2003 but less enthusiastically supported in 2002. Less support was indicated for road-side businesses on Route 190 though results indicate that severe restrictions on such development will be met with some resistance. This is an area to address with care in the interest of maintaining access to affordable properties while also not starving the downtown area from needed investment. The need to maintain Route 190 as a transportation corridor for the city and the port is very well supported and it may be that access management along Route 190 and incentives in the downtown could strike the balance needed here.

The structure of the questions about where and how to encourage development led to confusing results and there is clearly very little general understanding about Pine Tree Development Zones. Support for heritage based tourism is very high and Appendix C provides information about how these opportunities might be developed and promoted.

In terms of keeping people in Eastport, land assessment, affordable housing and livable wages ranked very high in the minds on respondents. Another bridge to the island was both supported and Chapter H – Transportation recommends that one be pursued. Ferry service to Lubec was particularly important as was a ferry to Grand Manan, although not as enthusiastically.

A variety of public improvements were supported but the written comments spoke most clearly about the water system, downtown rehabilitation (including streetlights, lighting, sidewalks and sidewalk maintenance, public washrooms and facilities in support of the working waterfront), and recreation for residents but for young people in particular. Many think the city should financially support the library as well as work towards a regional high school in the very near future.

Map Disclaimer:

The information used to create the maps in this Comprehensive Plan have been derived from multiple sources. The map products as provided are for reference and planning purposes only and are not to be construed as legal documents or survey instruments. EMDC/WCCOG provides this information with the understanding that it is not guaranteed to be accurate, correct or complete; that it is subject to revision; and conclusions drawn from such information are the responsibility of the user. Due to ongoing road renaming and addressing, the road names shown on any map may not be current. Any user of the maps accept same AS IS, WITH ALL FAULTS, and assumes all responsibility for the use thereof, and further agrees to hold EMDC/WCCOG harmless from and against any damage, loss, or liability arising from any use of the maps.