

BRIDGTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Tuesday, June 9, 2020

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

PLACE: Downstairs Meeting Room; Municipal Complex (10 Iredale Street)

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/457561285>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: 646-749-3129 / United States (Toll Free): 1-877-568-4106

Access Code: 457-561-285

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of Minutes
 - a. May 26, 2020
4. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items (Each speaker *may* be limited to 3 minutes.)
5. Committee Reports
6. Correspondence, Presentations and Other Pertinent Information
 - a. Presentation of Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis by Ryan Wallace
 - b. Welcome to Bridgton Sign at Community Center
 - c. Request from Bridgton House of Pizza
 - d. Request from Depot Street Business Owners
 - e. Correspondence Regarding Opening Bridgton
 1. From Sarah Parks
 2. From Linda Ziemnicki
 3. From Jessica Clayton & Michael Citro
 4. From Kelly Moore
 5. From Ruth-Ellen Matthews
7. New Business
 - a. Awards and Other Administrative Recommendations
 1. Ratification of the Purchase and Sale Agreement and Acceptance of the Winning Bid for the First and Last Motel
 2. Approval of Dam Park Renovations
 3. Approval of Water Reclamation Budget
 - b. Permits/Documents Requiring Board Approval
 1. Victualer's Licenses to Mack's Place, Bridgton House of Pizza, Break Room
 - c. Selectmen's Concerns
 1. Farragut Park
 - d. Town Manager's Report/Deputy Town Manager's Report

8. Public Hearing at 6:00 P.M.
 - a. Special Amusement Permit Application to Tarry-A-While
9. Action Items Following Public Hearing
 - a. Special Amusement Permit Application to Tarry-A-While
10. Old Business (Board of Selectmen Discussion Only)
 - a. Wastewater Status Update
 - b. Streetscape: Upper and Lower Main Street Status Update
11. Treasurer's Warrants
12. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items (*Each speaker **may** be limited to 3 minutes.*)
13. Dates for the Next Board of Selectmen's Meetings
June 10, 2020; June 23, 2020
14. Adjourn

**Town Manager's Notes
Board of Selectmen's Meeting
June 9, 2020**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a. May 26, 2020
***Suggested Motion:** Move to approve the May 26, 2020 Selectboard Minutes.*
6. **Correspondence, Presentations and Other Pertinent Information**
 - a. Ryan Wallace, Maine Center for Business and Economic Research, will be presenting the commissioned Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis.
***Suggested motion:** Move to accept the Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis.*
 - b. The Community Center is seeking approval to remove the Welcome to Bridgton sign sited in front of the building.
***Suggested motion:** Move to remove the Welcome to Bridgton sign sited at the Community Center.*
 - c. Due to the Governor's Executive Orders regarding restaurant openings, Spyro Hronarakis of the Bridgton House of Pizza is requesting use of the entrance to the municipal parking for outside seating. He states that if allowed, four (4) jobs will be created. In your binder, please find his letter stating the need of the space for his business and a sketch.
***Suggested motion:** Move to approve the use of the entrance to the municipal parking lot located between the Bridgton House of Pizza and the Town Park for outdoor seating. Said permission to expire _____.*
 - d. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Governor's Executive Orders, the businesses on Depot Street (in the cited area) are requesting the closure of the street to non-emergency vehicles from the bridge to Tasteful Things. Please see their plan of action and photos in your binder.
***Suggested motion:** Move to approve the closure of Depot Street to non-emergency vehicles between the bridge and Tasteful Things for retail and outdoor seating. Said permission to expire _____.*
 - e. Please see emails from five (5) residents regarding the opening of Bridgton.
7. **New Business**
 - a. Awards and Other Administrative Recommendations
 1. In your binder is correspondence from the Town Attorney advising that the ratify the awarding of the First and Last Motel to Mark Lopez.
***Motion:** Move to accept the bid from Mark Lopez to purchase the former First and Last Resort property (Tax Map 5 Lot 87) for \$41,600 and to ratify the Town Manager's signing of the Purchase and Sale Agreement dated May 15, 2020. The Town Manager is authorized to deliver the deed and any other documents necessary to complete the transfer, all on such terms as the Town Manager and the Town's attorneys deem reasonable, which will include a written agreement with the buyer for the Town to hold \$25,000 refundable deposit in addition to the purchase price to secure the buyer's obligation to demolish the building.*

2. In your binder, please see the design, cost estimate, funding source and Reserve Account Policy for rehabilitating Dam Park.
Suggested motion: Move to approve the expenditure of up to \$20,000 to rehabilitate Dam Park.
 3. A copy of the proposed Water Reclamation Budget and rate are in your binder. Public Services Director David Madsen will be present to discuss the budget and answer questions.
Suggested motion: Move to approve the 2020-21 Water Reclamation Budget and rate as presented.
 - b. Permits/Documents Requiring Board Approval
 1. Victualer's Licenses
 - i. The following businesses are applying for a Victualer License renewal: Mack's Place, Bridgton House of Pizza and the Breakroom.
Suggested Motion: Move to approve Victualer's Licenses for Derrick and Matty Mack dba Mack's Place, Spyridon Hronarakis dba Bridgton House of Pizza and Spyridon Hronarakis- SNDME2 LLC dba Breakroom.
 - c. Selectmen's Concerns
 1. In anticipation of doing work in Farragut Park we commissioned a survey. While doing deed research it was discovered that the Town does not own the Park. I have placed a copy of the surveyor's letter in your binder. I am suggesting that the Board direct the Town Manager to work with the Town Attorney in acquiring the property.
Suggested motion: Move to direct the Town Manager to work with the Town Attorney to acquire Farragut Park.
8. **Public Hearings (6:00PM)**
(Note: 1) Open Public Hearing- a) Anyone to speak in favor; b) in opposition; c) offer comments neither for nor against; 2) close Public Hearing)
1. Special Amusement Permit Application to Tarry-A-While.
9. **Action Items Following Public Hearing**
1. ***Suggested Motion:*** Move to approve a Special Amusement Permit for Tarry-A-While Resort.
10. **Old Business**
- a. Project Updates

Board of Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
May 26, 2020; 5:00 P.M.

Board Members Present: Liston E. Eastman, Chairman; Glenn R. Zaidman, Vice-Chairman, Carmen Lone; Robert P. Murphy

Board Members Remote: G. Frederick Packard

Administration Present: Town Manager Robert Peabody; Deputy Town Manager Georgiann Fleck; Public Services Director David Madsen

1. Call to Order

Chairman Eastman called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The "Pledge of Allegiance" was recited.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. May 12, 2020

Motion was made by Selectman Lone for approval of the minutes from the May 12, 2020 Board Meeting; second from Selectman Murphy. 5 approve/0 oppose

4. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Deb Brusini thanked the staff involved in getting the Planning Board updated iPads.

Public Services Director David Madsen would like to renovate the Dam Park site and will draw up some plans which will include the expense for the next meeting. Town Manager Peabody said that the funding can come out of the Tax Increment Financing as it is an allowable expense. Director Madsen said that upon approval, the project can begin right away with full completion within a month.

5. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

6. Correspondence, Presentations and Other Pertinent Information

a. Request to Purchase Property on Gibbs Avenue

Town Manager Peabody reported that Patricia MacDonald-Scholz is asking to purchase a parcel of land owned by the Town. The intention is to construct a two-car garage. The Board directed the Town Manager to review this property with the Code Enforcement Officer and report back to the Board.

b. Warrant to Call MSAD No. 61 Budget Meeting on June 30, 2020 at Lake Region High School

The Board received a copy of the Warrant to Call MSAD No. 61 Budget Meeting on June 30, 2020 at Lake Region High School.

c. Request from Lakes Environmental Association to Extend Boardwalk in Pondicherry Park

Lakes Environmental Association is requesting permission to extend a boardwalk by approximately eight feet. The area to be spanned is wet. Discussion ensued. The Board requested that the request first be approved by the Steering Committee and back to the Board with a recommendation.

d. Request from Rufus Porter Museum for Eight Granite Stones (from Moose Pond Causeway)

Town Manager Peabody reported that the Rufus Porter Museum is requesting the donation of eight granite blocks from the Moose Pond Causeway to be incorporated in their landscaping. A plaque will be installed acknowledging the contribution. **Motion** was made by Chairman Eastman to approve the donation of eight granite slabs to the Rufus Porter Museum with the installation of a plaque recognizing the donation and history of the slabs; second from Selectman Packard. 4 approve/1 oppose (Zaidman opposed)

7. New Business

a. Awards and Other Administrative Recommendations

1. Set Date for Public Hearing on Secret Ballot Referendum

Motion was made by Selectman Lone to set the date of the Public hearing on Secret Ballot Referendum on June 10, 2020 at 5:00PM; second from Selectman Murphy. 5 approve/0 oppose

b. Permits/Documents Requiring Board Approval

1. New Street Name Request

Motion was made by Selectman Lone for approval of Brewer Trail for the private way sited on Map 8 Lot 33 owned by Mark Lamb; second from Selectman Murphy. 5 approve/0 oppose

2. Victualer's License to Chun Yang, Inc dba Ruby Food

Motion was made by Selectman Lone for approval of the Victualer's License to Chun Yang, Inc. dba Ruby Food; second from Vice-Chairman Zaidman. 5 approve/0 oppose

3. Appointment to Eco Maine Board of Directors

The Board directed the Town Manager to seek public interest in serving on this Board.

4. Warrant to Call MSAD No. 61 Budget Validation Referendum on July 14, 2020

Motion was made by Chairman Eastman to sign the Town of Bridgton Maine School Administrative District No. 61 Budget Validation Referendum Warrant and Notice of Election; second from Vice-Chairman Zaidman. 5 approve/0 oppose

c. Selectmen's Concerns

- **Selectman Packard** asked if the paving on Main Street is being delayed to which Town Manager Peabody responded that the company is required to fix a few things up on the sidewalk and expects to be finished up on Monday.
- **Selectman Murphy** asked if he could put up signs for re-election to which Town Manager responded that political signs can be put up at any time.
- **Selectman Lone** had no concerns.
- **Vice-Chairman Zaidman** had no concerns.
- **Chairman Eastman** had no concerns.

d. Town Manager's Report/Deputy Town Manager's Report

Deputy Town Manger Fleck submitted and read the following into the record:

General On Friday, May 15th there was an onsite auction conducted by Auctioneer Christopher Grant at the **First and Last Motel** property located at 461 Portland Road, Bridgton. There were two bidders participating with winning bid of \$41,600 placed by Mark Lopez.

Opening Monday, June 1, 2020 at 8:00a.m.-4:00p.m.

The Town Office will be opening its doors to customers on Monday, June 1st to resume regular office hours Monday – Friday 8:00a.m. to 4:00p.m. To protect our citizens and staff protocols will be in place which includes appointments for some Department Heads.

Opening Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at 7:00a.m.

The Transfer Station Store and bottle donation bin will be opening on Tuesday, June 2nd. Again there will be a protocol put in place to protect the wellbeing of citizens and staff entering the store and leaving bottles in the donation bin.

We are pleased to announce the **hiring** of the following people:

Liem Opie – Full-time Employee of the Parks and Cemeteries Division of the Bridgton Public Services Department.

Justin Adams – Full-time Water Reclamation Foreman.

Nikki Hamlin – Full-time Executive Assistant.

Linda Goldrup – Part-time per-diem custodian.

Also, once again we have the opportunity for a summer intern so this year **Emily Grazyb** will be starting on June 1st with a primary focus of digitizing selected town records.

The following employees have recently resigned and therefore we would like to wish them the best of luck in their next endeavors:

Sophie Swiatek – Bridgton Police Officer, recently resigned and has taken a position as officer in the Freeport Police Department and

Kari Downs, Administrative Assistant, has recently resigned.

On Wednesday, May 20th, we began weekly **testing of the public beaches**. Included are Highland Lake, Woods Pond, Salmon Point Campground, Salmon Point and Plummers Landing Beaches. This week the results were well below the acceptable limits.

Annual Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 14th 8:00AM to 8:00PM at the Town Hall on North High Street and will be strictly referendum/secret ballot. This is the first year that voting on all the warrant articles will be done by a secret ballot. A virtual Public Hearing will be scheduled prior to July 14th so citizens have the opportunity to ask questions on each of the 38 proposed warrant articles and absentee ballots will be available at least 30 days prior to July 14th.

Elections page on the website is being updated regularly. Questions regarding specifically Ordinance amendments please contact Linda Lacroix, Community Development Director at 595-3550 or email Linda at llacroix@bridgtonmaine.org. To accommodate our voters the office will be open additional hours: Tuesday, June 23 ;4PM to 6PM; Thursday, June 25 ;4PM to 6PM; Saturday, June 27 ;8AM to Noon; Tuesday, July 7; 4PM to 6PM; Thursday, July 9; 4PM to 7PM

!!Avoid long lines, take your time filling out your ballot, VOTE Absentee!!

Bridgton Fire Department The Fire Department would like to note the passing of **Donald Spiller** who was a former department Captain in South Bridgton. The Chief attended the Cumberland/Oxford area **Chief's meeting**. The department received notification of **pending donation from the Lions Club** for personal protective equipment to include masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, safety glasses and a thermometer. The department continues to gain **new members** interested in the department, a new recent applicant has extensive fire service experience and if approved will be another great asset to the department.

Community Development Linda Lacroix, Community Development Director, has initiated a **broadband effort** that includes officials from state, county, and town governments as well as citizens and businesses. The group has had two meetings to date and will roll out a framework in the coming weeks and months. If interested in joining a working group, or receiving updates please contact Linda at 595-3550 or email llacroix@bridgtonmaine.org. The Community Development department continues to update information and links on the town website at www.bridgtonmaine.org. We are anticipating grant funding in June for several initiatives to be carried out by the Bridgton Community Center in partnership with the Town of Bridgton.

Summer Recreation begins Monday, June 8th at 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m. for 9 weeks, **swim lessons** begin on June 22nd. The virtual exercise programs and trivia continue via ZOOM For these and more information about summer recreation refer to our website at www.bridgtonmaine.org or contact Gary Colello at 207-647-1126.

COVID 19 continues to be a dangerous virus with increases of positive testing daily. For the sake of yourself, your loved ones, friends, co-workers, etc. please don't let your guard down! Continue to practice physical distancing and mask when physical distancing is not possible. Observe the CDC's minimum recommendations on physical distancing and personal hygiene. We at the Town of Bridgton are asking the public to please be patient and respectful and follow the rules that have been put in place for the opening of our buildings to the public.

Town Manager Peabody thanked Town Clerk Laurie Chadbourne and staff for extending office hours for absentee voting.

8. Old Business

a. Wastewater Status Update

b. Streetscape: Upper and Lower Main Street Status Update

Town Manager Peabody provided brief updates on the wastewater and streetscape projects.

9. Treasurer's Warrants

Motion was made by Selectman Murphy for approval of the Treasurer's Warrants numbered 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135 and 136; second from Selectman Lone. 5 approve/0 oppose

10. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

There were no public comments on non-agenda items.

11. Dates for the Next Board of Selectmen's Meetings

June 9, 2020; June 23, 2020

June 10, 2020 Public Hearing

12. Adjourn

Chairman Eastman adjourned the meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie L. Chadbourne
Town Clerk



Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis

December 2019
Final Report and Executive Summary

Prepared by
Ryan Wallace, PhD
Laura Yeitz, MPPM
The Maine Center for Business and Economic Research
University of Southern Maine



With
Liz Trice, Owner
PelotonLabs

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REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

In 2014, the Town of Bridgton, Maine finalized a comprehensive plan that establishes a framework to guide and manage “attractive, well-placed, high-functioning commercial development that will enhance our lives as citizens here as well as help balance our tax burden.” With a firm commitment to implementation, the plan prioritizes three core projects: creating a land use ordinance, expanding the Town’s wastewater treatment system, and developing the local economy. In the summer of 2019, the Town enacted a new Land Use Ordinance intended to implement the goals expressed in the Town’s 2014 Comprehensive Plan.

In November of 2018, voters approved the issue of bonds to fund service upgrades of wastewater infrastructure in the Town, as well as infrastructure improvements to downtown Main Street streetscapes. As of the fall 2019, the Main Street streetscape improvements are underway with expected completion date of winter 2020. Upgrades to the wastewater infrastructure are currently underway and are expected to be completed by the end of 2022.¹ In conjunction with these activities, the Town has recently hired a Community Development Director to manage and oversee economic and community development initiatives.

In the Spring of 2019, the Town contracted with the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) at the University of Southern Maine (USM) to conduct an economic market analysis to identify economic and community development opportunities the Town is best positioned to pursue, given the planned upgrades and local, state, and global market conditions. The goals of this analysis are multiple: 1. To provide a robust understanding of Bridgton’s current conditions, assets, strengths, and challenges, 2. To identify potential opportunities to advance community and economic development, and 3. To provide the Town and Community Development Director a roadmap for future implementation. This project will provide a core set of adaptable information and marketing materials the Town can use to respond to and pursue new opportunities.

This analysis is not intended to be a complete economic development strategy for the Town, but it provides the necessary information needed to develop such a strategy. This analysis identifies significant opportunities for development considering the objectives developed in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Ordinance, input from residents and the business community, and within the context of local and regional market conditions. This analysis draws upon a variety of data sources, including existing secondary public and proprietary sources, interviews with over 40 business and community leaders in Bridgton, and a survey of Bridgton residents. These findings and strategic ideas represent the opportunities that align with global trends,

¹ <https://bridgtonmaine.org/wastewater-department/>

existing assets, and expressed preferences of town residents and visitors. We make no judgment on which opportunities the town should pursue but rather simply identify the opportunities that have potential. This Executive Summary reports on the key findings and the strategic opportunities and action items that arose from those findings. The Executive Summary is designed to be a stand-alone document that can be easily reviewed with limited time. The full report provides in-depth analysis and reporting of findings and should be viewed as a supplemental resource.

KEY FINDINGS

The key findings are organized by first discussing the implications of global macroeconomic trends on Bridgton's economy, followed by findings specific to Bridgton that we believe are most significant to Bridgton's future and capitalize on economic and community development opportunities.

1. The nature of economic activity has changed and the future of work has implications for rural communities.

Over the past several decades, the nature of economic activity has changed dramatically and emerging technologies will continue to have significant implications on the future of work in rural areas like Bridgton. It is no secret that traditional manufacturing industries that once served as the economic base for many communities have declined. In today's economy, development and growth in the United States is largely driven by activities focused on innovation and technological development, which are increasingly concentrated in large urban areas. A recent study by the Brookings Institution found that 90 percent of employment growth in tech jobs between 2005 and 2017 were concentrated in just five large metropolitan areas.² Rural places typically lack the advantages of deep pools of high-skilled labor and other benefits gained from dense spatial proximity. Much of the manufacturing that once dominated rural places has shifted operations overseas or has been replaced by mechanization or other labor displacing technologies. For many places, the manufacturing activity that remains is often small, niche advanced production with some geographic connection or requirement to the firm's location. Workforce demands are typically for more specialized skill sets or require higher levels of formal education and training.

Emerging technologies in artificial intelligence, robotics, and quantum computing have raised concerns about the displacement of jobs. Although some jobs will be lost as a result, other jobs will be created and the future workforce will require constant upskilling and retraining if firms

² <https://www.brookings.edu/research/where-jobs-are-concentrating-why-it-matters-to-cities-and-regions/>

and economies are to remain competitive.^{3,4} It is therefore important for firms, particularly smaller businesses that lack internal training capacities, to be connected with job training resources in the region and state.

At the same time, knowledge workers and younger generations now demand greater flexibility in the workplace. New forms of work have emerged where workers can now complete tasks entirely remote of a central office location. Free from locational constraints, remote workers are able to live and work wherever they choose. Recent evidence suggests that places with high levels of recreational and cultural amenities have attracted remote workers at a higher rate and other places.⁵ Internet connectivity is a critical enabling technology to these trends and places seeking to remain competitive in both attracting new economy firms and workers must provide fast and reliable broadband connectivity.

These trends suggest several implications for Bridgton:

- A. Expectations of attracting technology firms should be tempered, and the more likely targets will be small niche firms with some existing presence or personal connection to Bridgton or the region.
- B. Workforce development is and will continue to be a critical component of the health and competitiveness of Bridgton's businesses and the region.
- C. The future of work opens up new opportunities for attracting individuals, families, and information-oriented businesses to live and work remotely in Bridgton by leveraging Bridgton's quality of place attributes and amenities. But this requires excellent and reliable internet/broadband connectivity, and continued attention to amenities such as good public education and healthcare.

2. Rural is no longer defined as a place, but as a lifestyle.

The past several decades have brought about a shift in location preferences of American's and the appeal of rural places. Rural is no longer viewed as simply places of extraction industries, such as agriculture, mining, or manufacturing. Instead, rural areas are home to an increasingly diverse populace and the quality of life many rural places provide is attractive to both retirees and younger generations. Recent evidence suggests rural areas focused on outdoor and nature-based recreation activities are more likely to have experienced greater economic and population

³ https://workofthefuture.mit.edu/sites/default/files/2019-09/WorkoftheFuture_Report_Shaping_Technology_and_Institutions.pdf

⁴ https://corporate.walmart.com/media-library/document/america-at-work-report/_proxyDocument?id=00000168-dec5-d9f9-a7f8-deed73c70001

⁵ Wallace, R.D. and H.R. Renski. 2019. Remote Worker Migration in the United States: The Role of Place-Based and Household Characteristics. Presented at the 2019 annual meeting of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Greenville, S.C.

in-migration than other places.⁶ In Maine for instance, outdoor recreation contributed \$3 billion dollars to gross state product (GSP) compared to \$2.2 billion from construction for instance, and supported approximately 41,000 jobs in the state.⁷ Bridgton is a recreation destination and it is well positioned with stocks of natural assets and geographic location to leverage these trends.

3. The rise of online retail is reshaping retail and downtown spaces that emphasize consumer experiences.

The rise of internet technologies and online e-commerce has resulted in a rapid shift in the growth of online retail. Coupled with the rise of big box stores, this has dramatically curtailed demand for small-scale retail space and altered the use of downtown spaces in rural towns. Downtown is now viewed as an experience where shoppers and consumers go for entertainment and recreation - experiences that are not easily or cannot be obtained online. Online retail is expected to continue exponential growth into the foreseeable future, although currently a majority of products are still purchased at physical retail locations. Store locations that provide experiences to customers or niche, artisan craft products are more likely to thrive. Local retailers may be able to tap online markets to supplement sales and maintain physical storefront viability. Proactive communities and downtown business organizations may also be able to stimulate retail activity by hosting experiential events in the downtown business district, which are generally good for community capital building as well.

In Bridgton, demand is limited and seasonal in nature, which constrains the number and viability of downtown storefront businesses. Resident and visitor survey respondents expressed a desire for a vibrant downtown with more retail, restaurant, and entertainment options. Yet, many respondents also expressed a desire for less traffic and people. The bottom line is that in order for the downtown to bolster and remain vibrant, there must be sources of consistent consumer demand to patronize and support local business storefronts if they are to survive and thrive.

4. Changes in consumer preferences towards experiential, craft, and artisan goods and services, as well as preferences for walkable locations by older and younger generations.

In line with the growth of e-commerce, a cohort of consumers favor shopping of more niche local and artisanal craft goods and experiential services, for example “Made in Maine” or “Made in Bridgton”. On a grander scale, the burgeoning *gastro-economy* and craft beverage industry in the southern and coastal Maine region are powerful examples that Bridgton may seek to piggyback and capitalize. There have also been regulatory and policy changes that present opportunities for manufacturing and production activities. The legalization of recreational

⁶ Headwaters Economics <https://headwaterseconomics.org/economic-development/trends-performance/recreation-counties-attract/>

⁷ US Bureau of Economic Analysis <https://www.bea.gov/news/2019/outdoor-recreation-satellite-account-us-and-prototype-states-2017>

marijuana is one example, however, given the sensitive nature and passionate views around these issues, communities must decide and agree in advance whether these types of activities will be welcomed and their community. A second opportunity pertains to alternative energy development, such as solar arrays that are more sensitive to viewshed disruptions. A number of vacant parcels along Portland Road may be suitable for a utility scale solar development. The extent to which Bridgton can promote and tie its quality of place brand to locally produced craft goods can promote experiential retail opportunities in town.

Younger and older generations are now also exhibiting a greater demand for walkable neighborhoods, multi-family housing, and walkable proximity to recreational and entertainment opportunities. This has driven demand for downtown housing.

5. Bridgton is a key regional hub that is growing while other rural areas are declining.

As a regional hub in southwestern Maine, Bridgton serves as a service center for many communities within a 45-minute drive. Bucking the trend of many rural places, Bridgton has experienced population growth in recent years, while many other communities have experienced population decline and the challenges associated with it. Although forecasts suggest modest population growth of full-time residents in the future, all signs point to Bridgton continuing to be an attractive retirement and seasonal destination which will also add to seasonal population totals. This will present both opportunities and challenges to development. This will increase demand for housing, and increase both foot traffic and revenue for local businesses. The number of retirees will go up, increasing demand for health care and other community services, but only add minimally to the town and region's workforce. As the cost of living in cities and urban areas continue to rise, places like Bridgton are becoming more attractive. As employers allow workplace flexibility as an attraction and retention tool, more workers may seek to live in smaller communities with high amenities such as Bridgton and commute less frequently to office locations in Portland. In order to attract well paid, educated workers and families who can choose to live anywhere, Bridgton schools should be a priority for investment and improvement.

6. Bridgton has a strong brand and based on a small town feel, natural assets, and recreational opportunities.

Bridgton's most important assets are foundational to its identity as a small, quaint town surrounded by an abundance of natural amenities that provide a number of recreational and cultural opportunities. These amenities are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike and make Bridgton an attractive destination to live and play. Although rural in nature, Bridgton is still geographically proximate to the Portland metropolitan area and many of the urban amenities it provides, such as transportation infrastructure, diverse cultural amenities, and employment opportunities. These core natural assets must be protected and cherished.

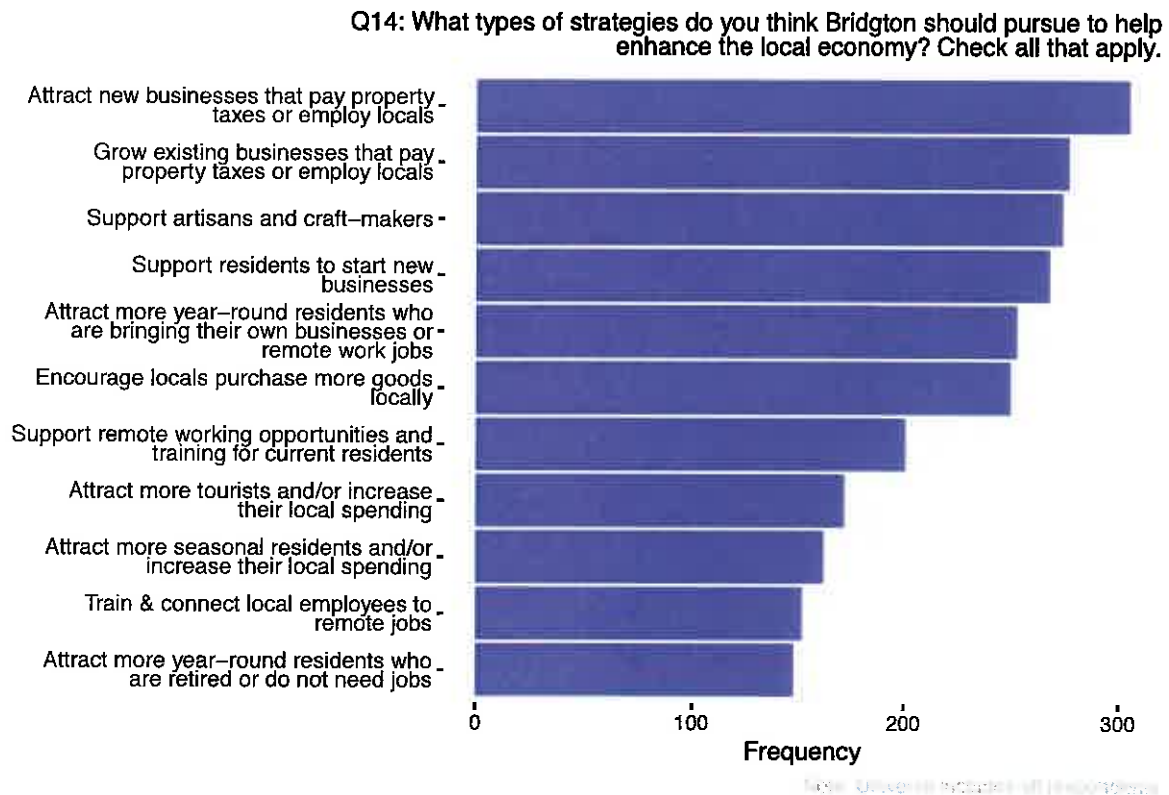
7. People and community are Bridgton's most important assets.

In addition to Bridgton's natural assets, community survey respondents consistently identified people and community of Bridgton as one of the town's greatest assets. Indeed, the town is home to many successful residents and deep wells of experience and knowledge in a variety of capacities that can be tapped or leverage to help advance community development in Bridgton, and in many cases, people work together and help each other. However, there does appear to be a lack of systems allowing information and knowledge to be shared, and for relationships, both professional and personal, to develop. More intentional, centralized catalysts to foster community and social capital building can pay big dividends in terms of community and economic development, especially in small communities such as Bridgton.

8. Bridgton residents are generally supportive of economic development that maintains and does not disrupt the character of the town.

Bridgton residents are generally supportive of economic development in town as long as it maintains and does not disrupt the character of the town. Results from the community survey suggests that residents are overwhelmingly not in favor of big box stores, strip development and to a lesser extent chain or franchise businesses. However, in the event they must come these types of businesses should be located along the gateway corridors, specifically along Portland Road. Some residents also expressed concern that development may lead to a resemblance of places like Route 302 in Windham or Raymond, which they consider to have unattractive "strip-mall" development. Some residents expressed concerns with change more generally. It is important to point out that Bridgton, like most communities, has never remained in a constant state and has evolved in response to a number of economic trends throughout its history.

There also appears to be a disconnect between wanting a nice place to live and lively downtown but not wanting more people, investment, or development. This view often leads to the desire to constrain development in the downtown area, which will ultimately push any new developments to the outer corridors and result in a declining Main Street. It is appropriate and necessary for larger operations to be located in Gateway corridors, but forcing out other businesses that could be accommodated in the downtown only leads to increase cost to taxpayers to the ongoing maintenance of infrastructure, reduced foot traffic in the downtown, and serves as a discouragement to new businesses and industries. Furthermore, lowering tax burdens were also frequently cited as desirable while maintaining existing levels for services. Without additional development, tax burdens will continue to rise with costs and fall largely on residential tax payers. In addition, without investing in education and critical public services, the town becomes less attractive to younger populations and families that view the quality of those services as a central factor in location decisions.



9. Tourism continues to be the key sector economic driver.

Tourism continues to be the key sector economic driver, but the seasonal nature is challenging to long-term development and stable employment opportunities for younger generations. Seasonal population has increased over the past decade, suggesting the seasonal population totals will continue to grow. The growth in seasonal residents, retirees, and other visitors should continue to support tourism industries and business opportunities. On the other hand, tourism jobs typically do not provide stable, year-round employment with living wages that is attractive to younger generations. Finding opportunities to fill gaps in seasonal recreational and cultural offerings continue to be an urgent need for the town.

10. The Bridgton region has modest strengths in manufacturing, health care, and to a more limited extent forest products and agriculture.

Outside of tourism and recreation, Bridgton and the region have some opportunities for new business attraction and development. As a service center, health care continues to be a dominant sector. Although there have been community concerns regarding the future of Bridgton Hospital, the likelihood is still strong that the hospital will remain a viable and critical employer in the years to come. It is essential that the community and broader region support the hospital, as it remains a critical asset and economic base for the town, and if lost, would have a lasting negative

impact on the community and region.⁸ Other key industries include precision and advanced manufacturing, as well as construction, primarily in the residential sector. Outside of Bridgton but in the region are strengths in agriculture production and forest products. Workforce constraints continue to be a major challenge in attracting and expanding existing businesses.

11. Workforce shortages are a critical challenge for the area.

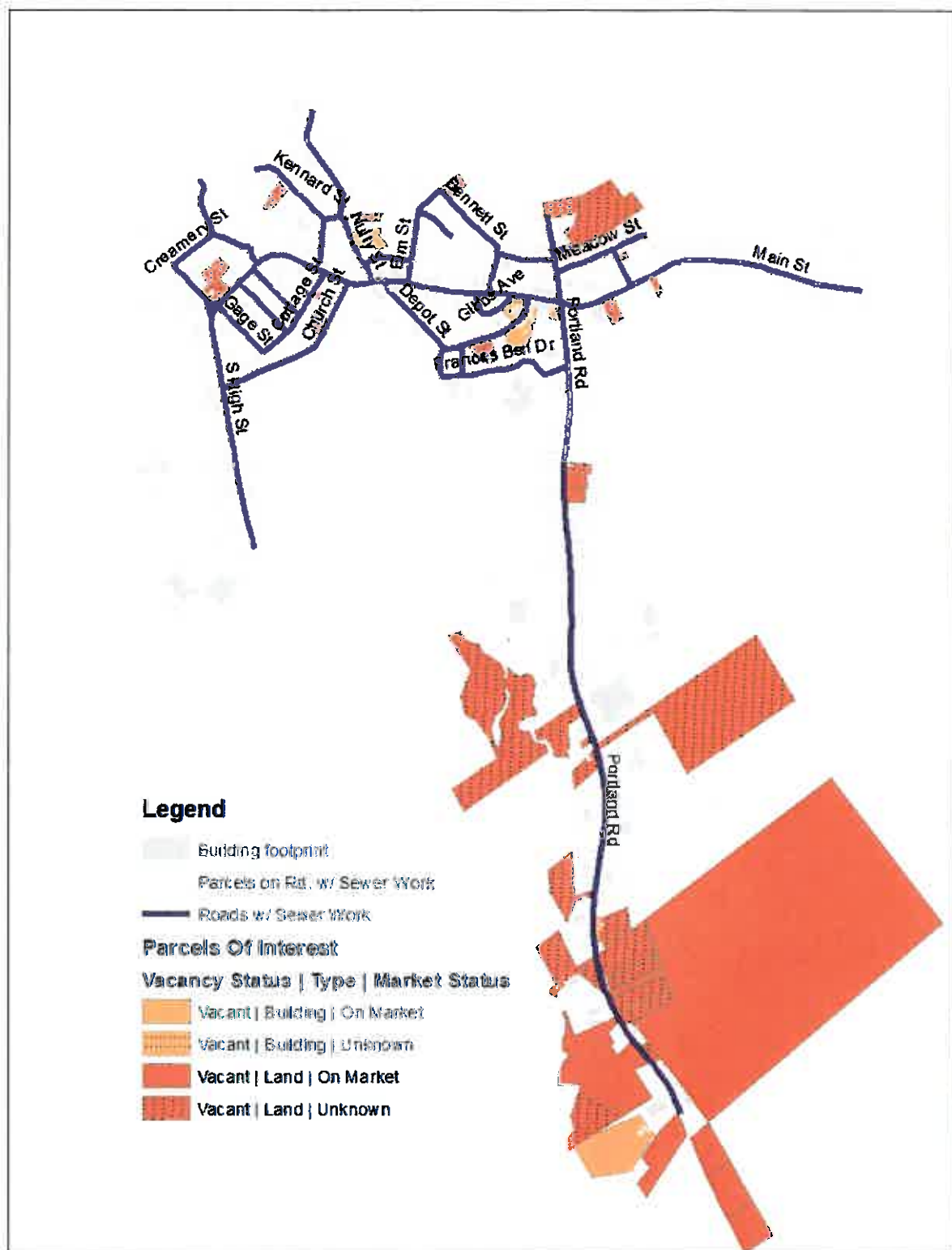
Workforce shortages and availability of skilled labor is the most significant challenge in attracting retaining and expanding businesses in Bridgton and the region. One of the single most important factors for businesses in the site selection process is the availability of a skilled workforce. The limited scale and depth of the Bridgton regional workforce is a real challenge to targeting and attracting new businesses to town. There are only a few training resources in Bridgton in addition to the Lake Region High School and Vocational Center, but there are a number of resources regional and statewide that can be leveraged. Linking workforce training resources to any attraction and retention package will be vitally important as Bridgton pursues development opportunities, especially in manufacturing, health care, and trade-based industries.

12. Bridgton has a fair amount of vacant land to support new development, but more limited in turnkey-ready vacant commercial and industrial buildings.

Bridgton appears to have a large amount of vacant developable greenspace, both publicly and privately owned, in both the downtown surrounding area and Portland Road gateway corridor (Route 302). However, attracting greenfield development to Bridgton from firms without a presence already in the town or region will be challenging. Experts suggest that most businesses of the scale that would target Bridgton as a location will range between 10 and 30 employees. Although this does not suggest locating a business with 100 or more employees is impossible, the likelihood is small and will require new construction, though Bridgton should still be prepared to respond in the event interest is shown. The most likely commercial opportunities will seek an existing vacant building that can be easily adapted and occupied in a short amount of time, rather than greenfield site development.⁹ Approximate building size of a desirable existing building would typically be under 10,000 square feet of space, with good internet connectivity and competitive energy costs.

⁸ <https://mehaf.org/wp-content/uploads/Maine-Rural-Health-Profiles-Statewide-View-Rural-Health-September-2016.pdf>

⁹ Based on personal communications and interviews with Maine and Company, developers, and other site selection experts.



With the exception of hotel and residential development, the low supply of vacant buildings suggests limited opportunities for greenfield development in Bridgton. However, expansion of businesses with a regional presence may require development of greenfield parcels and the construction of new facilities. The town should also consider businesses that are capital intensive, which reduces the likelihood of relocation in the future. As an example, a small CNC manufacturer in the supplier network of large regional Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) may be a good target. Virtually all businesses will seek an incentive to locate in Bridgton so it is critically important to be ready to respond with an appropriate incentive package. Greenfield development opportunities may be limited to lodging and residential construction and potentially commercial or medical office space. There are new opportunities in the emerging recreational and medical marijuana space in the form of cultivation, production, and testing which if appropriately negotiated could provide substantial tax revenues to the town. For the majority of operations, the industry is somewhat restricted by the availability of bank capital because of federal regulations limiting the size of investment a business can make in a new facility. However, more importantly the town should decide early on about whether this use will be acceptable in town and in the locations proposed. Developers, investors, and businesses need predictability and consistency from the town if they are to invest money that will help create jobs and help improve the economic vitality. Another important consideration is the availability and relative affordability of power and broadband infrastructure, in which investments may help bolster strong regional comparative advantages.

13. The Portland Road 302 gateway corridor is well positioned for larger, new development.

The Route 302 Portland Road gateway corridor is a prime location for larger new greenfield development opportunities, including lodging, office and medical space, warehousing, and any other large developments that require large space and parking. Planned wastewater expansion will pave the way for any number of opportunities for development. There are a number of parcels suitable for such development opportunities, while several smaller parcels can accommodate more modest development. The Portland Road gateway corridor is also the first impression people obtain in their approach to downtown Bridgton and thus reflects the health and quality of the town. The corridor desperately needs streetscape upgrades and improvements, such as those proposed in the 2004 economic development strategy. In particular, in many cases there is a lack of definition as to where a property starts and where the highway ends. Safe pedestrian and bike access is also important, particularly as the corridor approaches Main Street and downtown. Streetscape improvements such as tree and shrubbery plantings and signage can make powerful statements about the town and provide a welcoming approach to the town center. These views are reflected in the community survey and interview responses received during the analysis.

14. A crucial need for leadership, professionalism, and proactivity.

Bridgton needs advocates in the economic development space to market and sell Bridgton as a destination for living and working. Likewise, survey and interview findings suggest that there is a perception of a lack of professionalism in some leadership spheres in town and that some town officials may lack a basic understanding of and expertise in the development process and their role in it. This is crucially important. Anecdotal evidence of experiences travels quickly, particularly when negative. Once word gets out, Bridgton could quickly be recognized as a community to avoid by developers and investors. Clear expectations need to be set and adhered to. Developers and businesses need predictability in the permitting and development process and the lack thereof poses a risk to investment. They need to know whether a project or business will or will not be welcomed by the community up front. If development projects are consistently shunned or opposed once well into the permitting and approval process, the town will be avoided altogether.

15. Small business and entrepreneurial support and infrastructure can be improved.

Economic development prospects in Bridgton are largely based on existing small businesses and employers in the community, as well as new businesses to be started. While a variety of technical and support resources for small business exist through various agencies, organizations, and service providers, there is a lack of connectivity or facilitation to help local businesses access or connect to those services. Likewise, creating a culture of creativity and entrepreneurial spirit is important to enabling new opportunities in the community.

16. The 2004 Economic Development Plan and Comprehensive Plan should be followed.

The 2004 economic development plan identifies a number of development opportunities in the downtown Village District. These include sites for housing, parking, redevelopment for retail and office space, downtown sidewalk upgrades, expansion of the community center that includes Recreation Redevelopment opportunities, and extension and improvement to riverside trails. While several of these opportunities have been explored or are currently being implemented, many of them still hold today and should be incorporated or used as a guide for proactive opportunities going forward. Similarly, the recent comprehensive plan provides strong guidance for ways in which to pursue opportunities for community and economic development.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

The strategic opportunities that emerge from key findings emphasize four themes: endogenous growth, network building and connectivity, placed building, and leveraging existing strengths and assets. In line with the desires of the community, the opportunities and action items identified here are aimed at maintaining and protecting the character of Bridgton, while leveraging its strengths and assets considering market opportunities. Many of these strategic opportunities are interrelated with each other, and some action items will advance multiple objectives. Each opportunity and associated action items are described in more detail below and organized in the action plan matrix attached.

- 1. Promote and catalyze development opportunities along the Portland Road 302 gateway corridor.** Given current market conditions and demands for existing buildings, the small number of turnkey ready vacant properties suggests it may be a challenge to attract new businesses from outside of the region. However, there is ample vacant land available for new greenfield development that can accommodate a variety of uses. Fundamentally, however, Bridgton should focus more generally on marketing its quality of place as a reason why a business and workforce should locate in town. The following suggestions are provided to promote development opportunities along the corridor.
 - a. Target industries with the most likely prospects for expansion or attraction.** These include small scale precision and components manufacturing, such as machine fabrication (CNC machining) and food and beverage manufacturing facilities. Production and testing facilities for hemp and marijuana industries should also be considered or pursued, given the in-state market opportunities emerging.¹⁰ Warehousing and logistic facilities supporting large distribution and supplier retail and wholesale industry networks may provide another viable opportunity. Commercial and medical office space are likely candidates for greenfield development. The 302 corridor can accommodate larger scale lodging and conference/banquet center development. The most likely candidates for development and attraction include expansion of existing local and regional firms or businesses whose owner or key staff have some connection to Bridgton or the region. The likelihood of attracting a new business unconnected to Bridgton will most likely be leveraged by marketing Bridgton as a great community to live.
 - b. Explore feasibility of business park for commercial office, medical, and light industrial space.** Opportunities to recruit greenfield development will be enhanced if site ready parcels are available. A business park could provide a key asset for the town to market. Regionally, this appears an outstanding opportunity. Two large blocks of parcels (core parcels are 0010-10/11 & 0009-0065) are candidates, some of which are on-market and others are not or unknown.

¹⁰ <https://www.pressherald.com/2019/10/07/marijuana-testing-labs-will-maine-have-enough/>

- c. **Assist in the marketing and promotion of vacant properties and greenfield sites.** The town should maintain an up-to-date inventory of vacant parcels both off and on-market and make sure that on-market properties are listed on state databases, including the town or economic development corporation's website, so that site selectors and business attraction organizations are aware of opportunities. The town may also use these mediums to promote ideas for uses of specific sites and pitch development ideas.
 - d. **Implement streetscape and aesthetic improvements along the corridor.** Expand the walkable streetscape along the corridor to accommodate multiple modes of transport including sidewalks and bike lanes without limiting freight transport. Consider tree and landscape improvements and maintenance to better define the corridor and set impressions of town. Require new developments to locate parking behind buildings and incentivize clustering of businesses.
2. **Promote and enhance the vibrancy of downtown as an experience.** The downtown corridor is the heart of Bridgton and the community. Ongoing streetscape improvements will have a major impact on the corridor and provide a great foundation to stimulate new investments and enhance the vibrancy and quality of place core to Bridgton's identity. Continuing to invest in placemaking activities that stimulate year-round use and provide an *experience* will help create demand and support vital to downtown businesses. The following action items should be considered as opportunities to support a vibrant downtown corridor.
- a. **Incentivize and encourage multi-unit housing development (including mixed-income) and increases density in the downtown Main Street area.** Both older and younger generations are increasingly choosing to locate in or proximate to walkable downtowns with easy access to amenities. Create and pursue a plan to build more attractive, mixed-income, multi-generational housing that is walkable to Main Street. This will increase foot traffic to businesses, increase the tax base, build the small town community feel, and reduce the infrastructure cost and traffic caused by sprawl.
 - b. **Encourage small businesses and small-scale commercial office space and multi-use redevelopment to locate in the downtown area.** Small service-oriented businesses are demanding smaller square-footage for offices and increasingly are seeking to locate in vibrant downtown areas to attract younger, high-skilled workers to increase connectivity to local communities.
 - c. **Identify and promote appropriate lodging opportunities that are within or proximate to the downtown.** Given that Bridgton is a destination for visitors, there is a lack of lodging options that could bring more visitors downtown and patronize other local businesses. These could include a small boutique hotels and bed and breakfast style lodging.
 - d. **Create a program to incentivize and assist landlords and owners to make improvements to buildings and facades.** Now that Main Street is getting a facelift, the town should consider creating a facade improvement program or leverage local bank

- community reinvestment dollars to assist in updating buildings along Main Street, and when necessary plan for redevelopment.
- e. **Support an online marketplace for Bridgton retail businesses.** Establish a Bridgton branded online store and marketplace in which local businesses are able to promote and sell products and services online to seasonal residents, visitors, and the outside world. This can both help support and market Bridgton by building brand affinity. Examples are currently being experimented with in Rumford, Maine with great success. Also consider the Maine e-commerce Collective¹¹ as a means to promote Bridgton retail businesses.
 - f. **Support alternative work arrangements and opportunities.** Assess the feasibility of community coworking and entrepreneurial hub space. Consider leveraging existing community spaces, such as the town library or renovation of vacant buildings in the downtown area.
 - g. **Increase connectivity with other areas of town and sites of interest.** Example opportunities include, 1) Connect ski area to downtown to bring residents through advertising on-site and other promotional events, and 2) Provide van shuttle service that circulates throughout the town along the Main Street corridor and other points of interest and housing.
 - h. **Increase open space, walkability, and connectivity in the downtown.** Fill in gaps with temporary or permanent “pocket parks” and improve trail connectivity connecting with outstanding assets, such as Payson Park, Willet and Stevens Brooks, and the lakes.
 - i. **Plan seasonal events and activities that stimulate off-season visitation and experiences in the downtown.** Find and enlist local community leaders and artists to host off-season activities in the downtown, such as snowperson building contest, polar bear swims, pond hockey games or tournaments, “Warm-your-heart Valentine’s Day celebration”, and “Planting the seeds of spring downtown clean-up” as examples.
3. **Expand recreational opportunities and cultural offerings that enhance tourism and resident quality of place.** Tourism is Bridgton’s economic base and will continue to be so in the foreseeable future. Exploring opportunities to improve and brand itself as a recreational and cultural destination should be a priority. This includes year-round opportunities for visitors and residents alike.
- a. **Assess the feasibility of recreation center in the former school off of Depot Street.** Create a recreation facility that can accommodate locals and tourists, young and old. The center may include offerings such as fitness classes, indoor basketball, soccer, adult ed, boys and girls club, food pantry, gym for adults, indoor walking track and groomed outdoor trails.
 - b. **Create amenities for year-round outdoor lifestyles.** Explore opportunities for expanding cross-country skiing trails and warming huts, biking and walking trails that

¹¹ <https://www.maineecommercecollective.com/>

- connect across the length of town to restaurants, lodging, and rental facilities for public and tourist paddling. Explore opportunities for off-season uses like mountain biking at Shawnee Peak and coordinate development and resources necessary.
- c. **Connect to and leverage the craft food and beverage economy in the Portland area.** Target opportunities for small craft breweries, pubs, and events in Bridgton. Promote diverse food economy opportunities, including small food craft makers and artisans.
 - d. **Support and encourage community artisans, crafters, and makers.** Consider establishing “Bridgton Works” - a collaborative hub that provides a community, education, shared retail, and exploration space for makers, artisans, ideas, and alternative workers that welcomes visitors and residents - or similar community organizations.
4. **Implement proactive approaches to economic development, marketing, and leadership.** Bridgton needs a champion that is proactive in marketing Bridgton in economic development circles in the state that pursues and promotes initiatives and opportunities for community and economic development in the town and the region, and is able to secure resources that help promote and support economic vibrancy in Bridgton. The recent hiring of a full-time community development professional is a step in that direction. Town leadership also needs to be a champion for Bridgton and recognize its decisions now will have lasting impacts on the economic future of Bridgton.
- a. **Utilize the Community Development Director (CDD) as a ‘face’ of Bridgton that markets and advocates for the town in economic development circles in the state and region.** The CDD should serve as a connector that conducts business outreach and visitation, engages and leverages regional and state economic development resources, and identifies and pursues relevant federal, national organizational, and philanthropic resources for targeted projects and initiatives.
 - b. **Campaign state representatives to adjust income limits under the Pine Tree Development Zone program for Bridgton to better align with surrounding communities.** The Pine Tree Development Zone (PTDZ) program administered by the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development is a powerful business incentive in Maine that grants tax credits in designated regions for certain businesses in industries that create new jobs that meet income thresholds. Currently, income thresholds for Bridgton are based on Cumberland County (\$58,654), the highest in the state and heavily weighted based on Portland wages. In order to make the PTDZ more competitive in Bridgton, the town should solicit state reps and agencies to campaign to lower Bridgton’s income requirements so that they better align with Oxford County (\$36,239) and the communities that surround and are more economically integrated with Bridgton.
 - c. **Update and maintain websites with important relevant economic, demographic, and workforce information.** In today’s marketplace, it is imperative that current business information is provided in a professional manner on town and related websites, including the Bridgton Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce, and Town of

Bridgton's Community Development webpage. The demographic and economic profile in the full report and accompanying data source matrix and maintenance plan provides a foundation for updating data points of interest to developers, businesses, and the community.

- d. **Diversify social media platforms.** Establish a presence on Instagram to market and highlight Bridgton's natural beauty and happenings through images and short video clips. While Facebook is primarily used by the older demographic, Instagram is more widely subscribed to by younger populations - a demographic Bridgton should be catering to. An example of a creative use of Instagram social media is to stage seasonal photography contests (#LoveBridgton) that encourage local artists and hobbyists to take photos of Bridgton to help organically market and build brand affinity.
 - e. **Revamp, align, and utilize the Chamber of Commerce and Bridgton Economic Development Corporation to market and promote Bridgton as a destination for business.** The BEDC should play a primary role in business attraction and retention and should be one of the first stops for interested businesses and site selectors to learn basic profile and background information about Bridgton. These organizations should be used to spark interest and to help coordinate incentive and financial programs, site selection, and other traditional economic development activities.
 - f. **Create a community and business leader economic development committee** that consists of visionary and motivated champions of Bridgton. The committee will be tasked with generating ideas and special projects for marketing Bridgton and creating excitement in the town. The committee could craft narratives of success stories in and around Bridgton to reframe and enforce the narrative that businesses can and are successful in Bridgton.
 - g. **Identify and promote professional training opportunities for town leaders.** Both survey and interview findings suggest concerns with the professionalism of town leadership boards and committees and basic understanding of processes. Provide or identify training opportunities for elected and appointed officials and interested residents in leadership, facilitation, communication, and best practices of public processes and permitting. There are a number of programs and classes provided as local and state higher education institutions, such as in the Muskie School of Public Service at USM.
 - h. **Establish Bridgton as a key regional hub of southwestern Maine.** Explore opportunities under the new Maine Economic Development Strategy to collaborate with state agencies as a "hub of excellence community".
5. **Better utilize financial tools and grant funding opportunities to leverage investments.** Bridgton has financial economic development tools at its disposal. In addition, there are a number of state government, federal, and philanthropic organizations that provide certain types of grants and funding programs for specific projects. These resources can be better targeted and leveraged to achieve specific goals related to community and economic development in town.

- a. **Identify grant and financial opportunities to support and catalyze community development.** Compile and maintain a list of grant programs and funders and then align and prioritize funding opportunities with project goals. This may also include connecting local organizations and businesses with grant and funding opportunities.
 - b. **Market incentives and economic development tools more effectively.** This includes Pine Tree Zone and TIF districts front and center in any targeted attraction package and in marketing materials for the town to potential businesses and investors.
 - c. **Make better use of CDBG allocation and other grant funding opportunities.** Although federal HUD community development block grants (CDBG) are granted with strict criteria, the funds are significant and can be used to leverage larger investments in town and fund large infrastructure projects and other programs and initiatives. Rather than funding multiple small projects each year, the town should consider developing a strategic plan for its HUD CDBG allocation that align with strategic goals.
6. **Bolster workforce capacity and competitiveness.** Workforce availability and training is one of the most important considerations in firm location and expansion. Bridgton should seek to identify training and funding opportunities, connect with regional and state workforce training bodies and service providers, and leverage local school programs, including the Lake Region Vocational Center. There may be opportunities to gain support and funding for the Vocational Center by connecting directly with employers to help build a workforce pipeline and meet training needs. Likewise, exploring the opportunities for the Vocational Center to provide a workforce training program for companies interested in locating in Bridgton may provide an important resource and opportunity to attract businesses. The following specific activities and opportunities are suggested.
 - a. **Connect with state and regional workforce resources and explore opportunities to connect with local firms and meet local workforce needs.** There are a number of regional and statewide resources including, Coastal Counties Workforce Investments (the regional workforce investment board), Southern Maine Community College, York County Community College, and the University of Southern Maine.
 - b. **Engage with local schools to promote employment opportunities and career pathways in Bridgton.** Work with Lake Region High School and its Vocational Center to promote career pathways in the construction trades, health care, and industrial production and machining industries by making sure school leaders, guidance counselors, and instructors are aware of those pathways. Explore and create formal program arrangements with employers to introduce students to career paths and internships. Connect workforce preparation and training opportunities at Lake Region Vocational Center with business attraction and retention activities. Host events like a regional ‘cool stuff’ showcase where businesses and organizations show kids some interesting piece of equipment or tool used in their business like a 3-D printer, medical device, or trade tool.

- c. **Market Bridgton as a live-work destination for younger generations, particularly in the urban areas of Portland and Lewiston-Auburn and to people and families that have a connection to Bridgton.** Pursue low-cost marketing efforts to target and attract migrants based on quality of place assets, emotional affinity, and through existing resident networks. The town should also be connected with Live and Work in Maine and the Governor's new "Welcome Home" program.
 - d. **Promote Bridgton as a destination for remote work.** Almost half of seasonal and part-time residents reported working remotely at least part of the time while staying in Bridgton. Although data currently indicates a relatively small number of people report working from home on a full-time basis, there is new evidence that suggests remote workers are more likely to move to places with recreational and cultural amenities and that offer a lower cost of living and slower 'pace of life'. A number of communities and regions are pursuing strategies to target and cater to these types of workers.
7. **Focus on community network building, social capital, and connectivity.** Aside from its natural assets, Bridgton's greatest resource is its people, their ideas, their creativity, and their experiences. Often social capital goes undetected if not nurtured and proactively developed, particularly with respect to those residents that are new to town. By creating ways for people to connect, share information, and ideas the greater the prospects of leveraging of social capital to promote community vibrancy, inclusion, and collaboration.
- a. **Improve communication and coordination of existing happenings.** Create more ways to share and cross-pollinate events, such as a comprehensive online shared community calendar where events are posted on multiple social media sites as well as a Constant Contact -style Bridgton Happenings email lists. Hire an intern to establish a process for collecting and posting events.
 - b. **Establish a community welcoming social network.** Create a "2 Degrees Program" where local connectors welcome and engage potential and new residents, to engage seasonal residents as potential new employers, leaders, and participants, and to host events and create places for community conversations to connect new and old residents. A number of places, including Portland, have successfully created such programs.
 - c. **Leverage resident networks to target and attract new residents and visitors to Bridgton.** The best marketers and advocates of Bridgton are its people. Find ways to empower and enable Bridgton residents to tell the story of Bridgton to the outside world.
 - d. **Create an "Under 35" advisory council** that help incorporate younger perspectives into shaping the present and future of Bridgton. What young families want and why they choose to make a life in Bridgton is shaped by different reasons and preferences than future generations and it is vitally important to have these perspectives heard in the community.

8. **Establish support and resource networks for small businesses and entrepreneurs.** Small businesses and entrepreneurs are often unaware of the organizations that can help them achieve their dreams and leverage their ideas into commercial opportunities. Likewise, resources to assist in the transition of businesses from owner to owner upon retirement or other life event may help keep stores from closing as owners move on.
 - a. **Connect local businesses and entrepreneurs with appropriate resources in the region, state, and national.** A number of programs in the Portland region and state are available to provide technical assistance and connections to local business experts. Host networking and education events, “Bridgton Business Connection”, for existing businesses to help bridge these connections
 - b. **Engage seasonal and retired people to assist with business challenges or to begin new enterprises.** Bridgton is home to a number of successful people, both seasonal and year-round, with decades of experience and extensive national and global networks. This is a tremendous potential resource to tap, and it will grow as more retirees decide to live in town. Harnessing this social capital could be a tremendous asset.
 - c. **Create programs for kids to learn about being entrepreneurs and to develop skills.** Work with local schools to hold contests in town that enable children to build creative, problem solving, and social skills that solve community and business challenges. Examples include contests for recreation economy innovation ideas, designing public space, or solving community challenges. (eg.. Bridgton Regional Innovation Development for Growing Entrepreneurs program)

9. **Enable broadband infrastructure buildout and use as a competitive advantage.** Internet broadband infrastructure that is both reliable and performs well is one of the most important competitive advantages in today’s economy. Bridgton should engage with state efforts to expand broadband service, quality, and reliability, including the state economic development plan and Cumberland County Broadband Playbook (CCBP).
 - a. **Create a community broadband team and begin a ConnectME precertification checklist to apply for ConnectME community broadband planning grant to identify needs and goals.** This should include a low level feasibility analysis building upon the CCBP materials that investigates the various ownership structure options and regional community partnership options for broadband expansion. Consider an application that includes Bridgton region.
 - b. **Leverage statewide initiatives.** Be engaged with the various initiatives and plans currently underway in the state and region and represent Bridgton in those conversations.
 - c. **Utilize federal resources.** In particular, leverage the USDA toolkit and finance programs currently available.¹²

¹² https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/508_RDeConnectivityToolkit121918.pdf

10. Protect natural resources and increase and promote access and use. Bridgton's natural resources are its most critical place based assets. The health of Bridgton's natural assets will reflect the health of Bridgton as a community. While these assets can be leveraged to support economic vibrancy and quality of place, equal attention should be paid to protecting those resources from activities that may threaten the health of those resources. The town has already taken one step as the upgrades to the Sewer infrastructure currently underway mitigate environmental impacts from the Wastewater system. There are several other steps the town can take to help ensure the protection of natural resources. Also, identifying opportunities that leverage year-round access to natural resources will help bolster Bridgton's identity as a recreation destination.

- a. **Create a regional natural resources access and protection plan.** This should include a plan for creation and maintenance of trails for walking, biking, hiking, snowmobiling, winter and summer recreation facilities, resource protection, agriculture, and conservation. Identify and preserve sensitive ecological areas and connect parcels of conserved land. Work with regional municipalities and land management organizations, such as Echo Land Trust, to establish a committee, secure grant funding (e.g. USDA), and execute plan. A successful case for this type of network is Kingdom Trails in Vermont.¹³
- b. **Support outdoor activities and recreation events like a ice fishing derby, pond hockey events, trail running, biking, rugby, swimming, triathlon, and wildlife and flora oriented activities.** In conjunction with community capital building, these events should connect and help build Bridgton's two most important assets, natural and social capital.
- c. **Continue to monitor water quality and restrict development, boat use, and pesticides as necessary to protect the pristine quality of lakes.** Ensure that existing systems are updated and enforced. Revise land use ordinances as necessary to discourage housing development that creates new roads and runoff.
- d. **Ensure leadership and town resources are adequately staffed and trained.** Ensure code enforcement has sufficient staff and support to address and pursue code violations that affect the pristine quality of streams and lakes. Provide training to planning staff and board to understand regulations and environmental impacts.

¹³ <https://www.kingdomtrails.org/>

ACTION PLAN PRIORITY MATRIX

ID	Opportunity	Action / Task	Priority / Timeframe
1.	Promote and catalyze development opportunities along the Portland Road 302 gateway corridor.	a. Target industries with the most likely prospects for expansion or attraction.	High / Immediate
		b. Explore feasibility of business park for commercial office, medical, and light industrial space.	Medium / Short-term
		c. Assist in the marketing and promotion of vacant properties and greenfield sites.	Medium / Short-term
		d. Implement streetscape and aesthetic improvements along the corridor	Low / Mid-term
2.	Promote and enhance the vibrancy of downtown as an experience.	a. Encourage multi-unit housing development and increase density in the downtown Main Street area.	Medium / Mid-term
		b. Encourage small businesses and multi-use redevelopment to locate in the downtown area.	Medium / Long-term
		c. Identify and promote appropriate lodging opportunities that are within or proximate to the downtown.	High / Mid-term
		d. Create a program to incentivize and assist landlords and owners to make improvements to buildings and facades.	Low / Mid-term
		e. Support an online marketplace for Bridgton retail businesses.	Low / Mid-term
		f. Support alternative work arrangements and opportunities.	Medium / Mid-term
		g. Increase connectivity with other areas of town and sites of interest.	Low / Mid-term
		h. Increase open space, walkability, and connectivity in the downtown.	Medium / Long-term
		i. Plan seasonal events and activities that stimulate off-season visitation and experiences in the downtown.	Medium / Mid-term

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3.	Expand recreational opportunities and cultural offerings that enhance tourism and resident quality of place.	a. Assess the feasibility of recreation center in the former school off of Depot Street.	High / Short-term
		b. Create amenities for year-round outdoor lifestyles.	Low / Long-term
		c. Connect to and leverage the craft food and beverage economy in the Portland area.	Medium / Short-term
		d. Support and encourage community artisans, crafters, and makers.	Medium / Mid-term
4.	Implement proactive approaches to economic development, marketing, and leadership.	a. Utilize the Community Development Director (CDD) as a 'face' of Bridgton that markets and advocates for the town in economic development circles in the state and region.	High / Immediate
		b. Campaign state representatives to adjust income limits under the Pine Tree Development Zone program.	High / short-term
		c. Update and maintain websites with important relevant economic, demographic, and workforce information.	High / immediate
		d. Diversify social media platforms.	Medium / short-term
		e. Revamp, align, and utilize the Chamber of Commerce and Bridgton Economic Development Corporation to market and promote Bridgton as a destination for business.	High / immediate
		f. Create a community and business leader economic development advisory committee.	Medium / Short-term
		g. Identify and promote professional training opportunities for town leaders.	Medium / short-term
		h. Establish Bridgton as a key regional hub of southwestern Maine.	High / Long-term
5.	Better utilize financial tools and grant funding	a. Identify grant and financial opportunities to support and catalyze community development.	High /Short-Long term
		b. Market incentives and economic development tools more effectively.	High /Short-Long term

Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis

	opportunities to leverage investments.	c. Make better use of CDBG allocation and other grant funding opportunities.	Medium / Short-term
6.	Bolster workforce capacity and competitiveness.	a. Connect with state and regional workforce resources and explore opportunities to connect with local firms.	Medium / Mid-term
		b. Engage with local schools to promote employment opportunities and career pathways in Bridgton.	High / Short-Long term
		c. Market Bridgton as a live-work destination for younger generations.	High / Short-Long term
		d. Promote Bridgton as a destination for remote work.	Medium / Mid-term
7.	Focus on community network building, social capital, and connectivity.	a. Improve communication and coordination of existing happenings.	Low / Mid-term
		b. Establish a community welcoming social network.	Low / Mid-term
		c. Leverage resident networks to target and attract new residents and visitors to Bridgton.	Medium / Long-term
		d. Create an "Under 35" advisory council.	Medium / Short-term
8.	Establish support and resource networks for small businesses and entrepreneurs.	a. Connect local businesses and entrepreneurs with appropriate resources in the region, state, and national.	High / Short-term
		b. Engage seasonal and retired people to assist with business challenges or to begin new enterprises.	Medium / Short-Long term
		c. Create programs for kids to learn about being entrepreneurs and to develop skills.	Medium / Short-Long term
9.	Enable broadband infrastructure buildout and	a. Create community broadband team and begin application process for ConnectME planning grant.	High / Immediate
		b. Leverage statewide initiatives.	Low / Mid-term

	use as a competitive advantage.	c. Utilize federal resources.	Medium / Mid-term
10.	Protect natural resources and increase and promote access and use.	a. Create a regional natural resources access and protection plan.	High / Short-term
		b. Support outdoor activities and recreation events.	Medium / Mid-term
		c. Continue to rigorously monitor water quality and restrict development, boat use, and pesticides as necessary to protect the pristine quality of lakes.	High / Short-term
		d. Ensure leadership and town resources are adequately staffed and trained.	Long term
			Medium / Mid-term

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, the Town of Bridgton, Maine finalized a comprehensive plan that establishes a framework that will guide and manage “attractive, well-placed, high-functioning commercial development that will enhance our lives as citizens here as well as help balance out tax burden”. With a firm commitment to implementation, the plan prioritizes three core projects; creating a land use ordinance, expanding the Town’s wastewater treatment system, and developing the local economy. In the summer of 2019, the Town enacted a new Land Use Ordinance intended to implement the goals expressed in the Town’s 2014 Comprehensive Plan.

In November of 2018, voters approved the issue of bonds to fund important service upgrades of wastewater infrastructure in the Town, as well as infrastructure improvements to downtown Main Street streetscapes. As of fall 2019, construction of the Main Street streetscape improvements are underway with expected completion date of winter 2020. Upgrades to the wastewater infrastructure are currently underway and are expected to be completed by the end of 2022¹⁴, followed by the startup of the system and user connections. In conjunction with these activities, the Town has recently hired a Community Development Director to manage and oversee economic and community development activities and initiatives.

In the Spring of 2019, the Town contracted with the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) at the University of Southern Maine (USM) to conduct an economic market analysis that identifies economic and community development opportunities that the Town is best positioned to pursue, given the planned upgrades and considering local, state, and global market conditions. The goals of this analysis are multiple: 1. To provide a robust understanding of Bridgton’s current conditions, assets, strengths, and challenges, 2. Identify potential opportunities the town may pursue to advance community and economic development, and 3. To provide a roadmap for future implementation for the Town and Community Development Director. This project will also provide a core set of adaptable information and materials the Town can use to both respond and pursue new opportunities.

This analysis is not intended to be a complete economic development strategy for the Town, although this report provides most of the necessary information needed to develop such a strategy. This analysis identifies the most significant opportunities for development considering the objectives conferred by the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, from residents and the business community, and within the context of local and regional market conditions. The analysis draws upon a variety of data sources, including existing secondary public and proprietary sources, interviews with over 40 business and community leaders in Bridgton, and a survey of Bridgton residents. The findings and strategic ideas presented in this report represent the opportunities the

¹⁴ <https://bridgtonmaine.org/wastewater-department/>

Town of Bridgton is best positioned to capture that align with global trends, existing assets, and expressed preferences of town residents and visitors. The town may wish to pursue none or all of these opportunities. We make no judgment on which opportunities the town should pursue but rather simply identify the opportunities that have potential.

OVERVIEW OF PLANNED UPGRADES AND PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

New Wastewater System and Infrastructure Upgrades

The existing wastewater system in Bridgton is over 30 years old and operating at near capacity and is currently unable to expand. The proposed new wastewater system will service the downtown area along the Main Street corridor and connector side streets extending east to Oak Street and to the Civil War Monument on the western side of downtown. Figure 1 shows the potential parcels and users the system will be able to service. The sewer line will extend south on South High Street to Bridgton Hospital and south along Route 302 Portland Road to Sandy Creek Road. The new system will greatly enhance environmental protections for the natural environment and water quality so vital to Bridgton's identity. In addition, the new system will enable the potential for economic development that may lead to an increase in tax revenue for the town as well as jobs and overall increased economic prosperity.

Main Street Streetscape Improvements and Upgrades

The Main Street Streetscape project (Figure 2) is focused on design upgrades to sidewalks, streetscape elements, including lighting, landscaping, and pocket park amenities, a redesign of utilities including storm water treatment coordinated with sewer construction and water upgrades. The goals of the project are multiple: 1. To help stimulate economic investment by encouraging those passing through town to stop and spend more time downtown, and to promote businesses; 2. To upgrade and reconstruct sidewalks to make them ADA Compliant; 3. To make aesthetic improvements to lighting and reduce costs through the installation of new energy-efficient lighting; 4. To improve safety of the corridor for a variety of users including pedestrian and bicycles, while calming motorized traffic; and 5. To provide an appealing streetscape for pedestrians to engage, including places to sit and socialize, as well as landscape elements including trees, benches, and other design elements.¹⁵

¹⁵ <https://bridgtonmaine.org/community-development/>

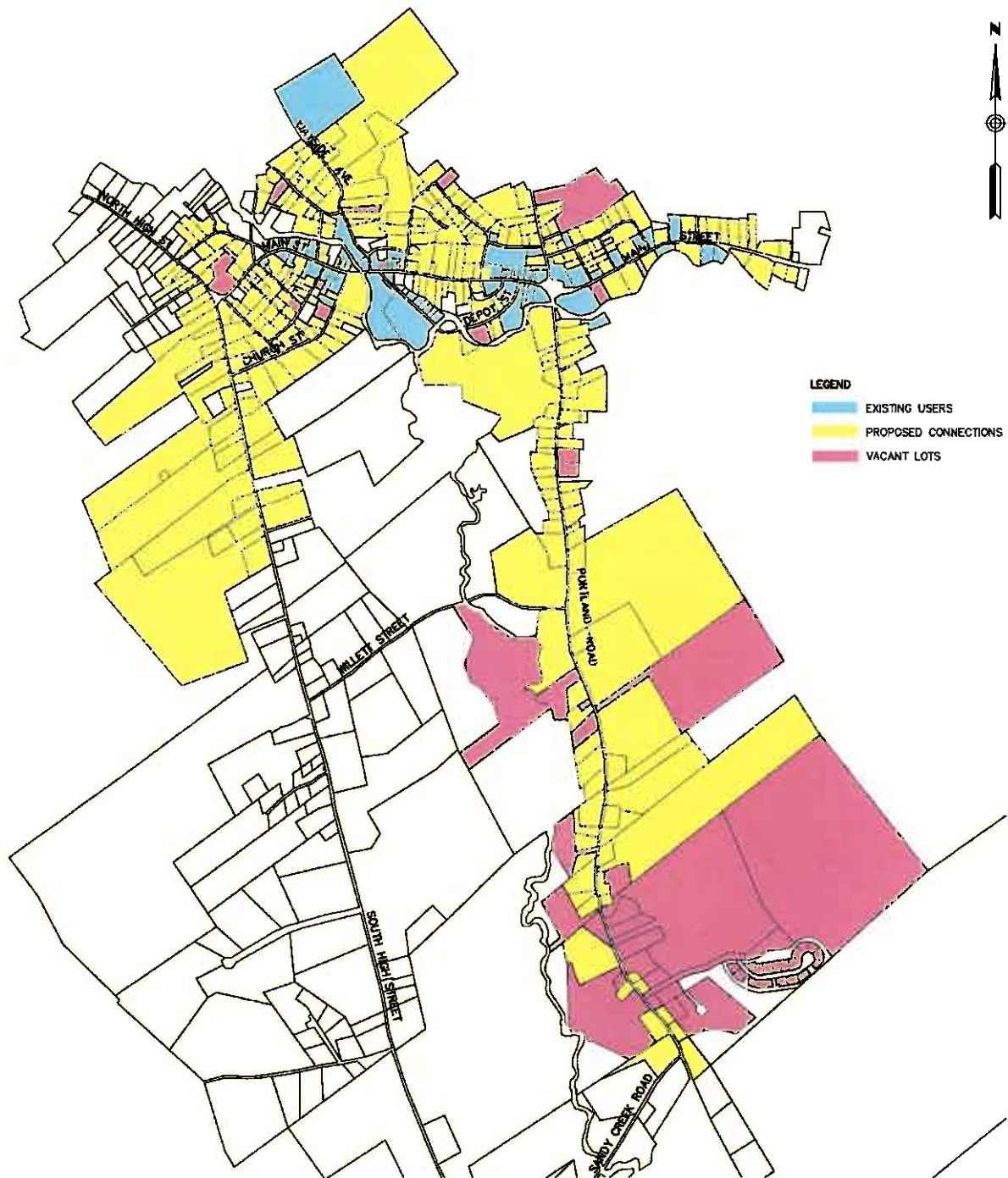


Figure 1: Wastewater Infrastructure Upgrades and Proposed Connections.
(Source: Town of Bridgton).

Lower Main Street Reconstruction and Road Upgrades

The lower Main Street reconstruction project will primarily focus on road and sidewalk improvements and infrastructure reconstruction, such as waste water system, fire hydrant replacement, lighting, parking, ADA compliant benches, and sidewalks.¹⁶ This will extend down to the playing fields at Oak Street. This will provide opportunities for improved densities in the areas and catalyze investments to some homes that have fallen into vacancy and disrepair. Likewise, lower Main Street is a gateway to Long Lake and the public boat launch used for marine recreation.

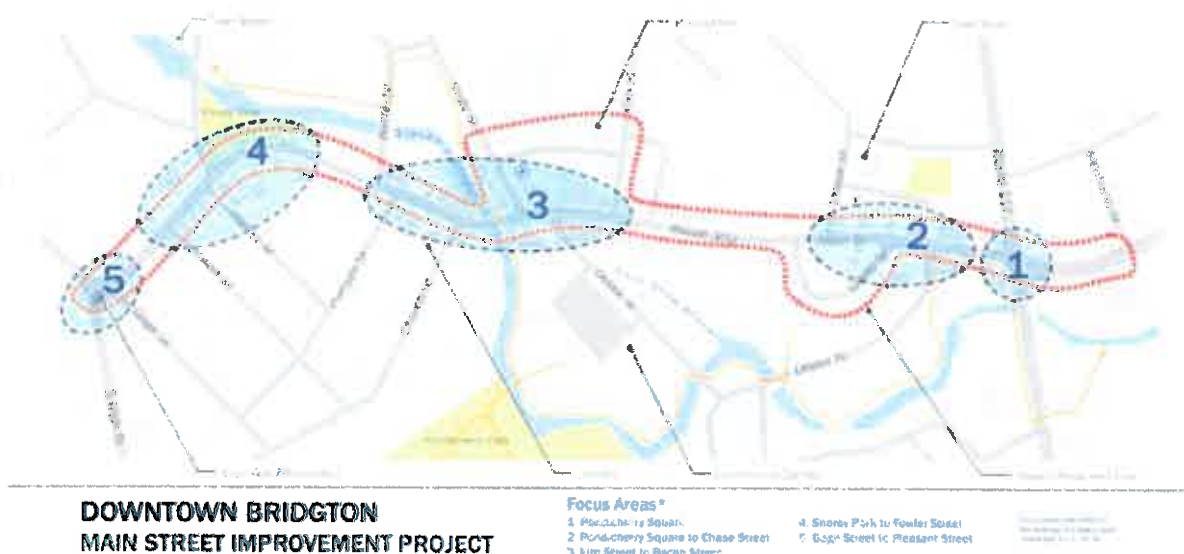


Figure 2: Main Street Downtown Improvement Project Areas.
(Source: Town of Bridgton).

REVIEW OF RECENT DOCUMENTS AND COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

A vision for economic development in Bridgton has been articulated in several recent documents, including the town's comprehensive plan from 2014 and recently enacted land use ordinance. In addition, a 2004 economic development and downtown revitalization study provides a set of recommendations and strategies that are still relevant and can be applied to Bridgton today. Also relevant to Bridgton's economic future are the visions and strategies in the broader region and state. Bridgton sits in the Greater Portland Economic Development District which must produce a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) at least every four years. Given that economies do not stop at municipal boundaries, the regional strategy is at

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

least similarly important as the one for the town itself. Similarly, the recent statewide economic development strategy released in December 2019 provides an important roadmap and context from which Bridgton may look to draw upon. Although broad in scope, it is critical to understand the contents of the plan, Bridgton as a benefactor, and engage in its implementation where relevant. These reports are briefly reviewed below.

Bridgton Comprehensive Plan (2014)

The primary theme that emerged in Bridgton's 2014 comprehensive plan is a desire by residents for a vibrant economy that is consistent with and protects Bridgton's character and natural resources. While there is an openness to bolstering the local economy, there is great concern that any economic growth is appropriately managed to produce the outcomes compatible with Bridgton's character. In particular, the future land use plan (Chapter 12) of the comp plan calls for the following key elements:

- Protect the character of Bridgton while preserving the private property rights of its citizens
- Expand and nurture economic growth in ways that build on the assets we have
- Expand and nurture economic growth that contributes to the vitality of the downtown
- Expand and nurture economic growth with plans for commercial development in designated growth areas along the inner 302 and 117 corridors
- Retain and protect the New England village character of the downtown and the outlying villages through thoughtful planning and the use of development and design standards

These elements serve as a key foundation for the analysis and opportunities identified in this report.

Town of Bridgton Land Use Ordinance (2019)

In June of 2019, the town enacted a new land use ordinance "designed for all the purposes of zoning embraced in the Maine Revised Statutes including, among other things, to promote and conserve the general health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants and to encourage compatible land uses. The purpose of this Ordinance is also to implement the goals of the Land Use Plan contained in the approved Comprehensive Plan as set forth below:

- Protect the character of Bridgton while preserving the private property rights of its citizens
- Using minimal restrictions, protect residents from incompatible uses and preserve the existing character of the landscape
- Provide encouragement and incentives to direct commercial growth to appropriate growth areas
- Expand and nurture economic growth that contributes to the vitality of the downtown

- Expand and nurture economic growth with plans for commercial development in designated growth areas along the inner 302 and 117 corridors
- Retain and protect the historic character of the downtown and the outlying villages through thoughtful planning and the use of development and design standards
- Encourage development that is human-scale, walkable, pleasant, dense and accessible
- Protect the Town's many natural resources
- Protect the character of the Town's rural neighborhoods.

Economic Development Strategy and Revitalization Plan 2004

The Bridgton Economic Development and Downtown Revitalization plan prescribes a “brick-and-mortar” strategy that identifies economic development strategies and potential market opportunities for the town to pursue. The plan is focused on downtown revitalization and the gateway corridors into town. The main goals include: “1. Identify economic development projects that have good potential based on market research; 2. Revitalize and expand the Village Center; 3. Seek out public and private opportunities for new village housing; 4. Maintain mobility and safety on routes 302 and 117 and make attractive gateways to the village; and, 5. Emphasize Bridgton connections to Nature and opportunities for residents and tourists to enjoy the natural world.”

Collectively, a number of recommendations in this plan are relevant today, including improvements to gateway corridors, expanding housing opportunities in the village center, identifying specific location for development, and leveraging Bridgton's natural assets as a component of the town's core identity and economic base. This Economic Development Strategy and Revitalization Plan should still serve as a significant resource for the town, complementary to the Comprehensive Plan and the focus of this study.

Greater Portland Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2018)

The Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) is one of seven Economic Development Districts (EDD) in Maine designated by the US Economic Development Administration, and covers all of Cumberland County. On behalf of the region, GPCOG receives funding and is required to complete a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every four years or less. The latest CEDS highlight several goals that are relevant to Bridgton and coincide with economic focus areas identified in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan. These include:

1. Grow the hospitality economy – including a regional tourism plan
2. Support for start-ups
3. Expanding small business exports through the Maine International Trade Center (MITC).

Maine State Economic Development Strategy (2019/20)

In 2019, the state of Maine completed a statewide economic development strategy for 2020-2029.¹⁷ The plan emphasizes that state must foster a skilled workforce and spur innovation to grow economically. The strategy calls for a number of action items, including bolstering broadband connectivity, supporting education and workforce training from preschool through retirees, embracing remote worker and remote work opportunities, supporting regional hubs of excellence, and cultivating supporting infrastructure. A number of these action items and strategies have implications for Bridgton and the region. It will certainly behoove the town to engage with and monitor the implementation phases of the state strategy to best leverage opportunities for Bridgton as they emerge. For example, there may be grant funding opportunities, organizations, and partnerships that emerge from which Bridgton can directly benefit.

RESULTS FROM INTERVIEWS AND COMMUNITY SURVEY

SUMMARY FINDINGS OF INTERVIEWS WITH COMMUNITY, ORGANIZATION, AND BUSINESS LEADERS

During September and October 2019, we conducted interviews with over 40 community and business leaders to ask them about their vision and hopes for the future of Bridgton. The following summary highlights the key emergent themes. A full reporting of interview findings is provided in the Appendices.

1. Bridgton is headed in the right direction.

It's generally agreed that Bridgton has an amazing and unique collection of assets: a quaint walkable main street, pristine lakes, numerous beaches, a ski mountain, a movie theatre, historical organizations, library, restaurants, a hospital, a vibrant arts scene, a community center, a farmers market, a golf course, and a great community where people work together and care about each other. People were happy with the recent streetscape improvements, sewer improvements and recent development. Almost everyone expressed their great love for both the physical town and the people of Bridgton.

¹⁷ https://www.maine.gov/decd/sites/maine.gov/decd/files/inline-files/DECD_120919_sm.pdf

2. We should protect and improve appearances & walkability on both Main Street and the Portland Road corridor.

We should take an active role in increasing the Town's attractiveness by taking steps to improve the appearance of run-down buildings and empty lots - either through positive incentives, fines, or demolition once they are past repair. It is appropriate for very large businesses to locate on the Portland Road corridor but we need a plan to make it evolve into an attractive gateway and to keep it from looking like Route 302 in Windham.

3. We should support a vibrant main street with local businesses & shops, especially focused on food, arts & creative works

People like having a main street with shops, and especially ones that are locally owned and represent the creativity of individuals. The general opinion is to keep chains and resale shops to a minimum, encourage local purchasing, and encourage and support more shops and restaurants. There were also suggestions to support early stage entrepreneurs and artists of all ages and explore options for collaborative spaces. There was also a lot of discussion about how people buy many things online or in big box stores now, and a sense of loss and longing for the community relationships that came from people shopping for daily needs on Main Street. There were mixed views on expanding marijuana industry and shops; an expanded industry could provide jobs, but people also worry that the industry will boom then bust when it's legal nationally, or that too many retail shops will degrade the main street.

5. We should work to make Bridgton more livable for year-round residents of all ages and incomes.

We should allow change that improves conditions for and attracts more year-round residents. This means seeking ways to bring more jobs, support local entrepreneurs, build more housing in the walkable town area, create recreation facilities, improve the quality of schools, and improve access to quality healthcare. Employers expressed that it's a struggle to recruit employees without these amenities. Many people also mentioned that there are many lower income people struggling, and that for the town to grow, everyone needs to have opportunities and be engaged.

5. We should protect, expand and leverage access to lakes, streams, mountain and forest.

Everyone agreed that natural resources are one of Bridgton's top assets. For the amount of passion, concern, and interest in Bridgton's natural resources, it would make sense to create a natural resources protection and access plan, and use that in policy, promotions for tourism, and to attract year round residents.

6. We need to find ways to welcome new people, new ideas, and visitors

We need to welcome and engage seasonal residents and visitors as future residents, business owners, and recruiters. Many summer residents have been coming for years, sometimes generations, and feel invested in community, and that can be expanded. Welcome young people, new ideas and new businesses that fit with vision of a vibrant, livable, walkable town. Many people lament that they don't have a nice place for business and personal visitors to stay, and think that a hotel would be an asset, particularly in the walkable town center so that visitors will walk to shops and restaurants.

7. We need to improve communication and collaboration around events

There is a lot of collaboration, but also frustration with failed collaborations. There is a big opportunity to coordinate what's already happening and make everything feel like it is part of a larger whole.

8. We need to create good plans and process, and cultivate a high level of professionalism and leadership so public processes go smoothly.

We heard that current processes don't always handle conflict of concerns well, and that some people are frustrated due to lack of vision and clarity by leadership; and that this needs to be addressed for the town to move forward.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

In order to gather a wider view of perspectives on Bridgton's challenges and opportunities related to economic development the project team conducted a survey of residents and visitors of Bridgton, as well as engaged numerous community, business, and other relevant organizational leaders in town. A discussion of research methods, survey questionnaire, and tabulated results are reported in the Appendices of this report. The results are summarized below.

Overview

The final sample includes a total of 417 responses. Of these, approximately 50% of respondents identified as full-time residents of Bridgton, while another 40% identified as a seasonal or part-time resident. The remaining 10% of respondents are proportionately split between people that are employed in Bridgton but live outside the town and people identified as occasional visitors to Bridgton. Well over 80% of respondents reported owning a home in Bridgton, either as a primary residence or seasonal residence. A core theme that resonates throughout survey

responses is an appreciation and recognition of the importance of Bridgton's small town character and natural amenities that are core to Bridgton's identity. It is clear and near unanimous among respondents that protecting and maintaining this core identity is of vital importance. Likewise, the social aspects of place, specifically the people and community, were identified as core components of what makes Bridgton special to its residents and visitors. Collectively the presence of recreational opportunities, cultural amenities, and locally owned businesses are all valued by survey residents and visitors.

Community Attitudes towards Economic Development

Residents and employees support a variety of strategies to help enhance the local economy and to promote vibrancy of the community (Question 14). Full-time residents (Question 15) were supportive of locating retail stores, additional restaurants and eateries, and other cultural amenities, such as the arts, artisans, crafts, and creative activities in the Main Street corridor. Several specific types of businesses were repeatedly suggested, including a bakery, coffee shops and cafes, entertainment and music venues, and family entertainment and recreational activities. Lodging options were also identified as a potential type of business to be located in the downtown area, although specific size, site, and nature of those options did not have a consensus. A number of respondents raised concerns or expressed opposition to the specific location of the proposed hotel, although to a lesser degree there were some respondents that expressed support for the proposed location. A small number of respondents believe the downtown currently maintains a good mix of businesses.

Part-time residents (Question 15) and visitors reported similar preferences for retail stores restaurants and dining as well as support for creative types such as the artists and artisans and craft makers. Coffee shops and cafes are also identified in addition to family entertainment and recreation, bakeries, and various other retail establishments. Lodging was identified by a dozen or so seasonal residents and visitors as a type of business to be located in the downtown area.

With respect to the Portland Street corridor (Question 16), full-time residents referenced hotel and motel establishments as the best type of business to be located along the 302 corridor. This was followed by automotive and related services, and various types of retail. Respondents also mentioned recreation, entertainment, and restaurants, as well as professional office spaces, light manufacturing and industrial.

Seasonal and part-time residents identified retail, lodging, and automotive-related services as the types of businesses that should be located on Portland Road. Likewise, restaurants, recreation and entertainment, grocery and pharmacy, and hardware store were also identified. Professional office space were also mentioned and to a much less degree light manufacturing and industrial.

Survey respondents were also asked to identify what other types of businesses they would like to see located in Bridgton (Question 17). Full-time residents indicated they would like to see unique and upscale restaurants, specialty health and natural food stores, a brewery or brew pub, various artisan stores, as well as support for the farmer's market, coffee shops, and an indoor recreational building. Seasonal and part-time residents similarly identified restaurants, but also placed emphasis on seasonal recreational options, health and wellness, as well as arts and artisan oriented options, brew pubs, bakeries, and other personal service businesses.

For both Main Street and Portland Road corridor, respondents used adjectives such as boutique, local, quality, natural, specialty, and sustainable for the types of businesses they'd like to see. Overwhelmingly respondents appear to oppose big box stores and chain/franchise businesses, though several noted that if they are to locate in Bridgton that Route 302 is the most appropriate location.

However, there is an apparent tension for many respondents between the desire for a more vibrant downtown, fewer empty storefronts, and having additional retail, dining, and entertainment options, versus desiring less traffic and people. Many respondents expressed concerns that development in Bridgton might eventually destroy Bridgton's small town character, referencing communities such as strip development in Windham as examples of the types of development not welcome. It is important for the town to understand that development does not have to equate to sprawl, strip malls, or growth that may be destructive or counter to what makes Bridgton so. This idea that development in and of itself implies sprawl does not have to be the case. There are many good examples of walkable development. Paradoxically, it's by allowing more density and height of buildings on Main Street and restricting development on Portland Road and other areas that sprawl will be prevented.

Also of note is that the vast majority of respondents focused on the types of businesses that serve local markets, rather than the types of businesses that might be exporters in nature. Businesses that serve outside markets may not be on the minds of locals, but often provide more stable and better paying employment opportunities.

Experience of Seasonal Residents

Work requirements are a primary constraint for seasonal residents to extend their stay in Bridgton, although almost half of seasonal and part-time residents reported working remotely at least part of the time while staying in Bridgton. Climate also plays an important factor in the seasonality of visitors as many seasonal residents like to split their stay in places with less harsh winters. Things to do, internet accessibility, and to a lesser extent availability of places to stay also limit people's time in Bridgton.

Seasonal residents were asked what factors prevent them from moving to Bridgton on a permanent basis. Of the 163 responses, the primary factor is related to employment. A large number of people reported planning to move upon retirement, which may range from within the year to up to 10 years. Given broader trends towards retirees moving to high amenity places, retirees may comprise a steady supply of people migrating to Bridgton on a full-time basis in future years. Similarly, the availability of good employment opportunities was listed as a hindrance for people to move to Bridgton. This includes a lack of job opportunities that align with skill sets and occupations of seasonal residents, and the perception that compensation rates in the Bridgton region are not competitive with a seasonal resident's home region. Family restrictions are another factor that prevented people from living in Bridgton on a full-time basis. A large share of respondents reported no interest in moving to Bridgton on a full-time basis, while a large number of other respondents indicated that climate, most notably the winters, would prevent them from a full time residency.

Experience of Business Owners

Although a small sample size (36 respondents), Question 26 asked business owners what led to their decision to start a business in Bridgton. The most prominent themes were to capitalize on an opportunity in Bridgton or they simply wanted to be located in Bridgton. A handful of business owners reported working remotely from Bridgton. When asked what would be most helpful in increasing the success of their business in Bridgton (Question 27), business owners overwhelmingly reported more local employment and housing options for residents and increasing the number of year-round residents. Other thoughts included public infrastructure investments, including more parking and internet accessibility/reliability, as well as marketing and branding of Bridgton. Increasing seasonal residents, lower taxes or more incentives, and lodging options were also mentioned.

DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS, AND WORKFORCE PROFILE

SUMMARY AND KEY ECONOMIC DRIVERS

Bridgton's population has grown in recent years to an estimated 5,346 people, bucking the trend of population loss experienced by many of Bridgton's peer communities and rural communities more generally. Bridgton's population more than doubles in the summer months as seasonal residents and visitors take up residence in town. This population change is primarily a summer phenomenon, although visitors to the town do persist during the fall and holiday seasons. Day visitors during the winter months have a more limited impact on the town's population, as most pass through town en route to Shawnee Peak Ski area. Fundamentally, Bridgton's future population change will be a factor of three things: 1) net-migration, 2) changes of resident status between seasonal and permanent, and 3) the demographic age composition of the town's population. Current population projections for Bridgton suggested a modest increase of year-round residents over the next 10 to 20 years, and likely more seasonal residents, who are not counted in official government statistics. As baby boomers enter retirement, Bridgton will likely experience growth in seasonal residents that will help drive some residential second home construction.

Bridgton's average resident age is older than the nation and the greater Portland region, although there has been an increase in persons in the younger age cohorts driven by what appears a recent wave of births. Without in-migration of younger working aged persons, the labor force in Bridgton and its Commuter Region is expected to shrink as more people exit the labor force through retirement. Unemployment rates have been at historic lows statewide, including Bridgton. Bridgton's labor force participation is quite a bit lower than the rest of the state and some peer communities. Although secondary data does not provide details of labor force participation by age or education attainment for small places like Bridgton, it is likely that at least part of the low participation rate is due to the presence of a greater number of retirees. Workforce shortages are a crisis across the state as employers struggle to find workers, especially those with appropriate skills to fulfill job demands. Workforce shortages are a critical issue in the Bridgton region as well, and given the age profile of the town and region, it is expected to continue as long as migration rates of the working age population remain stable. Fundamentally, the unavailability of a workforce in the area pose significant challenges for business expansion and attraction.

Homeownership in Bridgton is relatively affordable compared to peer communities and the county and state as a whole, an important consideration for attracting populations and a workforce. Although residential construction has ticked up slightly in recent years, overall home/land sales have been relatively modest in the last three years, especially within the areas of focus in this study that include the downtown areas and Gateway corridors from the south.

Tourism and Recreation

One of the most important economic drivers for Bridgton and the surrounding region is as a destination for tourism and recreation. With the presence of natural assets, such as Long Lake, Highland Lake, Moose Pond, proximity to other water bodies, and mountainous landscapes, Bridgton is a prime destination for outdoor recreation and activities. These resources help support important employment opportunities at Shawnee Peak Ski Resort, marinas and marine oriented businesses, and restaurants, retail stores, entertainment venues, and lodging businesses.

The 2016 Comprehensive Plan identifies four types of tourists that increasingly make up Bridgton's seasonal visitors. These include 1) short-term visitors at campgrounds, cottages, and cabins, 2) children's summer camps, 3) day-trippers, and 4) seasonal residents, including second home owners. These various tourists all contribute in different ways and to different magnitudes to Bridgton and the regional economy. According to the Maine Office of Tourism's most recent annual surveys, visitors to the Lakes and Mountains tourism region of Maine continue to increase with about 4.9 million visitors to the region in 2018 – roughly 11 percent of all Maine visitors.¹⁸ Visitors to the region spent over \$670 million dollars in 2018. Visitors to the region are more likely to engage in outdoor recreation compared to visitors in other tourism regions, suggesting a competitive advantage for Bridgton and the region relative to the rest of Maine.

Healthcare and Medical Services

As a rural service center, Bridgton is host to Bridgton Hospital and other medical offices and services that serve the region and an aging demographic. These services are not only important to the health and well-being of the local and regional populace but also serve as important employment sectors of these communities. The economic fate of many rural communities are directly tied to the presence of medical services, particularly those provided by hospitals and critical care facilities.

In recent years there has been increasing concern in the community with respect to the fate and relationship with Bridgton Hospital and its survival. Recent and planned investments in the hospital's facilities, fresh leadership, and a renewed commitment to the community suggest Bridgton Hospital intends to continue to serve and be a vital and integral part of the community and local economy. However, as with the broader industry, health care continues to face challenges with respect to service delivery, costs, and workforce constraints that require its operations and business model to adjust. It is also imperative that the community recognize that industry's success locally depends on patronage from full-time residents and commitment from the community.

¹⁸ <https://motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Lakes-and-Mountains-Regional-Report-2018.pdf>

Shifts in the focus of healthcare towards wellness, nutrition, and prevention all represent new opportunities for service delivery and clustering of services. As the health care industry model continues to evolve, it will remain a key employment driver of the local and region's economy.

Precision and Other Manufacturing

It is no secret that the manufacturing sector broadly has experienced a long decline in employment since the 1970's – an experience well-known to Bridgton and many rural communities in Maine and beyond. The locus of manufacturing in the US has shifted towards more high-tech, high-skilled production focused on innovative products and specialized production supporting industries such as aerospace, communication technologies, chemical and biotech products, as well as other advanced manufacturing. Most routine manufacturing jobs have either been located overseas in low labor cost regions of the world, such as China, Vietnam, or South American countries, or jobs have been replaced by mechanization.

Still, within Bridgton and the region, a number of successful businesses are present and serve as important contributors to the region's traded sector. In Bridgton, there is a concentration of precision manufacturing shops including Howell Labs and its division Shivley Labs. There is also a concentration of manufacturing in the region in fabricated metal production, footwear manufacturing (New Balance), and wood product manufacturing specifically related to sawmills.

Construction

Regionally, residential construction appears to have been experiencing a mini boom in recent years driven by an increase in second home ownership and retirees. This has been tempered to an extent by the critical shortage of construction workers across southern Maine.

OVERVIEW

The socio-economic analysis that follows describes recent trends in the community and regional economy along important indicators and common data points. The community profile helps provide context and identify the town's key assets and challenges that will inform opportunities going forward. Data is compiled from a number of sources, including the US Census American Community Survey (5 year estimates) and Population Estimates Program, the Maine Department of Labor's Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI), the Maine State Economist's Office, as well as proprietary data sources that largely compile existing secondary government data.

A word of caution on data sources and reliability of estimates is in order. As a small place, estimates for Bridgton, particularly from the Census and other survey based data collection programs, are subject to small sample sizes to derive estimates. This often results in larger margins of error in the estimates and results in lower confidence that the estimate represents the actual measure of the population. The reader should use caution when interpreting these statistics. However, secondary sources represent the best source of data available and although they are subject to sampling error, collectively provide a robust picture of community and economic trends.

The report also includes resources for updating and monitoring the data points highlighted in this section, but also data that will be useful in monitoring progress along certain opportunities identified in later sections of the report.

PEER BENCHMARK COMMUNITIES

Throughout this market analysis Bridgton is compared to five peer communities and regions in Maine that allow Bridgton to benchmark itself and measure progress over time. Those communities include: Bethel, Damariscotta, Norway, Paris, and Raymond. While no community aligns exactly with Bridgton's population, industrial, economic, or geographic composition, collectively these peer communities represent similarities with Bridgton.

Bethel, Norway, and Paris are geographically similarly located in western Maine. Bethel is home to Gould Academy and proximate to recreational amenities, such as Sunday River Ski Resort and the Androscoggin River. Norway and Paris are similar size in population and share the same labor market area with Bridgton. Damariscotta is a small, rural coastal community in mid-coast Maine that is a popular tourist destination known for its scenic beauty and oyster production, among other aquaculture and marine products. Damariscotta provides a point of comparison from a tourism-based community in a largely rural area, although it draws tourists with typically different interests than those visiting and living in Bridgton or the broader lakes and mountain

region of western Maine. Raymond is the only peer community that is also located within Cumberland County and the greater Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Raymond is located not far from Bridgton, is of similar size measured by population, and has a similar reliance on lake tourism and recreation. In addition to the peer communities, Bridgton is also compared to Cumberland County and the state of Maine as reference points.

GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT OF BRIDGTON

Bridgton is geographically located in the western end of Cumberland County; the central county of the Portland-South Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and home to Maine's largest city, Portland. Although politically defined within a major metropolitan area, Bridgton is a small community with a 'quaint rural' town feel whose character and economy is more closely aligned with the rural areas of western Maine. Still, Bridgton is a service center in what is commonly referred to as the "Lakes Region" of western Cumberland County and is a core community in the Bridgton-Paris Labor Market Area as defined by the Maine Department of Labor and based on regional commuting patterns.

Bridgton is approximately 40 road miles from the Maine's two largest cities and employment centers, Portland to the southeast and Lewiston to the east, while approximately 140 road miles to Boston, Massachusetts to the south. Portland is home to the Portland International Jetport with direct flights to numerous key destinations in the US and serviced over 2 million travelers in 2018. Portland is also home to the Maine International Trade Terminal; a key gateway for international and domestic shipping connecting to destinations in the North Atlantic, maritime Canada, and locations along the eastern US. Also proximate to Portland is Interstate 95, a major federal highway connecting Maine with southern New England, New York, and mid-Atlantic markets.

Twenty-three miles to the west is the Conway – North Conway area of New Hampshire – a regional gateway to the White Mountains and world class recreational amenities. Closer to home, Bridgton is bordered by several other small quaint rural communities such as Fryeburg, Naples, and Harrison surrounded by scenic lakes, mountains, and natural landscapes. Collectively, these natural amenities bolster a highly attractively quality of life for residents and serves as a key economic driver for the broader region.

Bridgton falls within the service area of Cumberland County government and two regional organizations that are involved in economic and workforce development activities. These include the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), which is the regional planning organization primarily responsible for allocating federal transportation funds among other regional planning activities; and, Coastal Counties Workforce Investments, which is the regional workforce investment board responsible for identifying and supporting federally funded workforce training and development.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

POPULATION HISTORY AND FORECAST

Population and demographic trends are a fundamental driver underpinning a community's current economic state and future. Projections of population change and the demographics associated with a population are a critical aspect of understanding the needs of a community as well as a community's economic potential. Past population trends are readily available from the US Census Bureau, while population projections are prepared and provided by the Maine State Economist, last updated in December 2018. Population change data are reported in consistent five-year increments to align with the most recent population projections data. A summary of key population trends is reported below.

Summary findings:

- Estimates of Bridgton's permanent population show an increase of 255 between 2006 and 2016, growing by 5 percent, on pace with Cumberland County and faster than the state of Maine (Table 1).
- The most recent Census population data for Bridgton (2018) estimates 5,346 – about level with 2016 estimates.
- Although the state's population has continued to increase slightly, virtually all growth has come from modest levels of positive in-migration, both domestic and international. Natural population growth in Maine has recently turned negative (meaning there are more deaths than births), which is largely a result of an old age population. The state's median age is 44.9 (2018).
- Bridgton fared better than all peer communities in terms of population growth.
- Bridgton's population is projected to increase by 131 people by 2026 and 177 by 2036 over 2016 levels; a very modest 3.6 percent over the 20 year period 2016-2036 (Figure 3 and Table 1).
- As a second-home and seasonal destination for part-time residents and tourists, Bridgton's population swells significantly during the seasonal months.
- Based on seasonal home vacancy data, this analysis estimates the seasonal population in Bridgton ranges from 8,700 to 12,200 on an average day during the busy summer months (Table 2). This does not count day trippers or other passive tourists that may add to the town's population on a given day.
- Fundamentally, Bridgton's future population change will be a factor of three things: 1) net-migration, 2) changes of resident status between seasonal and permanent, and 3) the demographic age composition of the town's population.

Table 1: Population History and Projections for Bridgton and Comparison Communities, 2006-2036.

(Source: Maine State Economist (MeSE); US Census).

Place	Population observed			Population projected				Percent change	
	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2006-16	2016-36
Bridgton	5,111	5,245	5,366	5,440	5,497	5,531	5,543	5.0%	3.3%
Cumberland Cty	277,084	282,663	290,905	294,711	298,632	301,376	302,944	5.0%	4.1%
Maine (in 000's)	1,324	1,328	1,330	1,335	1,340	1,341	1,338	0.5%	0.6%
Comparison communities									
Bethel	2,576	2,613	2,661	2,685	2,717	2,742	2,756	3.3%	3.6%
Damariscotta	2,206	2,201	2,135	2,022	1,915	1,811	1,711	-3.2%	-19.9%
Norway	4,938	5,010	4,936	4,838	4,750	4,655	4,546	0.0%	-7.9%
Paris	5,123	5,174	5,126	5,065	5,000	4,928	4,839	0.1%	-5.6%
Raymond	4,395	4,441	4,502	4,504	4,499	4,475	4,433	2.4%	-1.5%

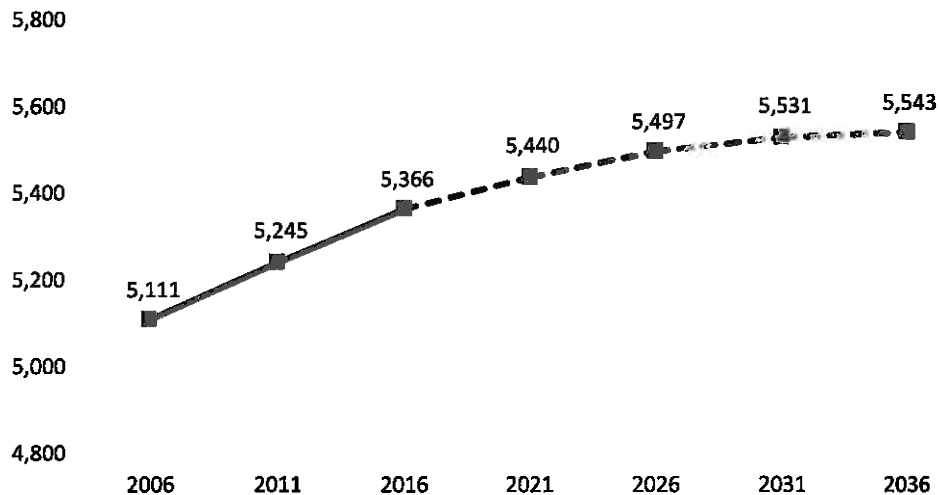


Figure 3: Population History and Projections in Bridgton, 2006-2036. (Source: MeSE; US Census).

Seasonal Population Change

Like many tourism-based communities, Bridgton's population swells significantly during the summer months. Statistical estimates for the seasonal population change are difficult to obtain and not regularly tracked by the Census or other secondary sources. Furthermore, even during the summer months daily population totals can fluctuate quite a bit. While by no means comprehensive, the number of reported seasonal housing units is one means to gauge the magnitude of population seasonality. Table 2 shows the estimated range of population increase associated with seasonal housing in Bridgton and peer communities. Bridgton's population swells between 3,400 to 6,800 persons during the summer, the latter marking an increase of over

120 percent over year-round population totals. These estimates are derived by using a range of an average household size of between 2 and 4 persons per household per seasonal housing unit. It is likely that not all seasonal housing remains occupied during the season. However, any over-estimation of population in this method is likely offset by the fact that these estimates do not include additional population attributable to other types of housing and lodging, such as campgrounds, summer camps for kids, guests that stay with Bridgton residents, and day visitors. Still, seasonal housing provides a good baseline to determine the seasonal fluctuation of population.

Table 2: Seasonal Population Estimates based on Seasonal Housing Units for Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2017. (Source: US Census, MCBER estimates).

Place	Population	Vacant Seasonal Units	Seasonal Population Estimates			
			2 pers/ unit		4 pers/ unit	
			Persons	% Change	Persons	% Change
Bridgton	5,346	1,714	3,428	64%	6,856	128%
Cumberland Cty	289,173	15,578	31,156	11%	62,312	22%
Maine	1,330,158	128,088	256,176	19%	512,352	39%
Comparison communities						
Bethel*	2,690	1,047	2,094	78%	4,188	156%
Damariscotta	2,155	333	666	31%	1,332	62%
Norway	4,964	558	1,116	22%	2,232	45%
Paris	5,100	225	450	9%	900	18%
Raymond	4,495	984	1,968	44%	3,936	88%

* Note: Bethel's tourism season is primarily in the winter months and may have a greater degree of variability throughout those months and the remainder of the year.

AGE AND GENDER COMPOSITION AND PROJECTIONS

Summary findings:

- The median age in Bridgton as of the 2017 Census estimate was 41.7, substantially lower than the 46.7 estimate from 2010. Maine's median age in 2018 was estimated to be 44.9. Estimates for local places for 2018 have not been released as of this writing.
- However, the drop in median age appears to largely be from an increase in young children and/or new births. This is echoed in Census fertility data which show an increase over the same period.
- Table 3 shows an increase in younger age cohorts. The population 19 and under grew by 9.2 percent between 2000 and 2017, while the population of child rearing ages (20 to 34) grew by 13.9 percent over the same period.

- The age distribution shown in Figure 4 suggests an uneven distribution of both age and gender. Generally, Figure 4 depicts an older age population, with females making up a larger share of the older age cohorts, while younger age cohorts (0-9 specifically) have a larger concentration of males pulling down the overall median age of the population.
- Population projections by age cohort (Figure 5) show a modest increase in the population aged 19 and under and a sharp rise in the number of retirement aged people (65+).
- The implications suggest a smaller labor force located in Bridgton in the future. As the workforce exits into retirement, there are a small number of younger aged people to replace them in the labor force, as well as resident population to contribute to support services for an aging population.
- There have been past trends of younger adults leaving Bridgton for college or careers elsewhere. Despite recent upticks in the 20 to 34 age population, models suggest a continued outmigration of these early career populations
- Apart from anecdotal evidence, it is unclear to what extent formerly Bridgton youth return to Bridgton to settle with families later in life, or whether new families are making the move to Bridgton. Migration data for Bridgton is unreliable and does not provide sufficient detail about in- and out-migrants.

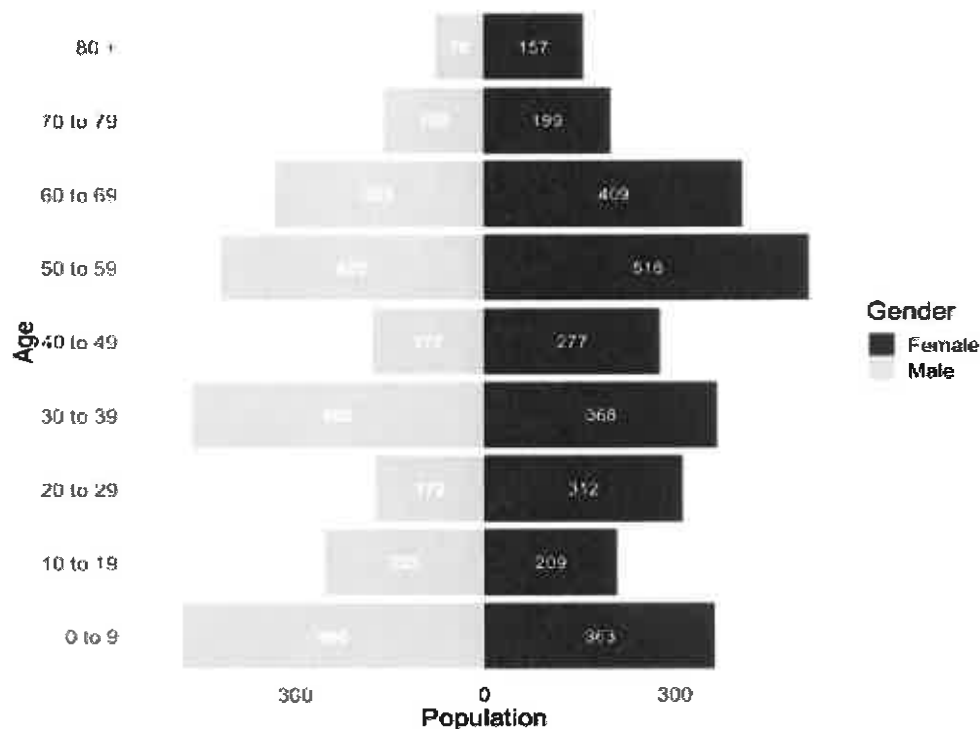


Figure 4: Population by Age Cohort and Gender in Bridgton, 2017.
(Source: Census, ACS 5-year est.).

Table 3: Population Growth by Age Groups in Bridgton, 2010 to 2017.
(Source: US Census, ACS 5-year estimates).

Age group	2010	2017	Percent change
19 and under	1,195	1,305	9.2%
20 to 34	684	779	13.9%
35 to 49	1,000	992	-0.8%
50 to 64	1,300	1,304	0.3%
65 and over	1,031	966	-6.3%

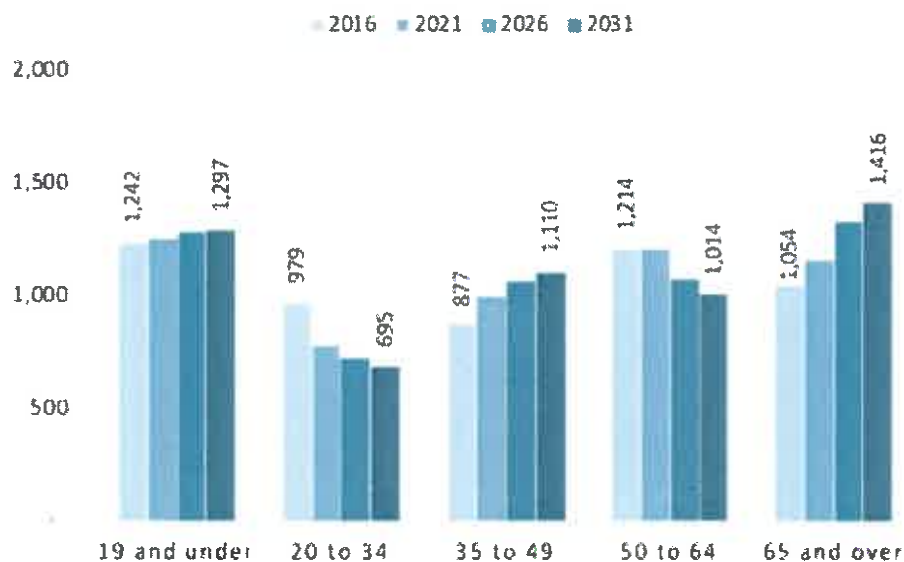


Figure 5: Population Projections by Age Cohort, 2016 to 2031.
(Source: MeSE; CBER calculations).

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Summary findings:

- While the population of Bridgton increased, the total number of year- round households declined to 2,100 between 2010 and 2017 resulting in an increase in total household size to 2.5 people (Table 4).
- Bridgton has a higher share of its population at or below the poverty level - almost 17 percent in 2017 – than the county (10.7 percent) or state as a whole (12.9 percent). The percentage of households in poverty increased slightly from 2010 levels.

- Meanwhile, household income increased by 13.9 percent from \$42,420 in 2010 to \$48,319 in 2017, rising slightly faster than the state, but slower than Cumberland County.
- This means more young families, and a slight widening between rich and poor.

Table 4: Summary of Demographic Characteristics, 2010-2017.

(Source: US Census, ACS 5 year est.).

	2010	2017	Number Change 2010- 17	Percent Change 2010- 17
BRIDGTON				
Population	5,210	5,346	136	2.6%
Median age	46.8	41.9	-5	-10.5%
Total households (HH)	2,240	2,098	-142	-6.3%
Average HH size	2.2	2.5	0	13.6%
Median HH income	\$42,420	\$48,319	5,899	13.9%
% Persons below poverty	16.5	16.9	0	2.4%
CUMBERLAND COUNTY				
Population	281,674	289,173	7,499	2.7%
Median age	41	42.1	1	2.7%
Total households (HH)	117,339	118,807	1,468	1.3%
Average HH size	2.3	2.4	0	4.3%
Median HH income	\$56,799	\$65,702	8,903	15.7%
% Persons below poverty	10.4	10.7	0	2.9%
MAINE				
Population	1,328,361	1,330,158	1,797	0.1%
Median age	42.7	44.3	2	3.7%
Total households (HH)	558,219	554,061	-4,158	-0.7%
Average HH size	2.32	2.3	0	-0.9%
Median HH income	\$46,933	\$53,024	6,091	13.0%
% Persons below poverty	12.5	12.9	0	3.2%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Summary findings:

- Bridgton's educational attainment profile is in line with the current industry make-up in the region. The majority of jobs available in Bridgton and the surrounding commuter shed do not require high levels of formal educational training.
- Over 93 percent of Bridgton's population have a high school degree/equivalent or more. (Figure 6)
- The share of population with a Bachelor's degree or higher in Bridgton is slightly lower than the state, and well below that of Cumberland County – a region with some of the highest levels of educational attainment in the country. (Table 5)

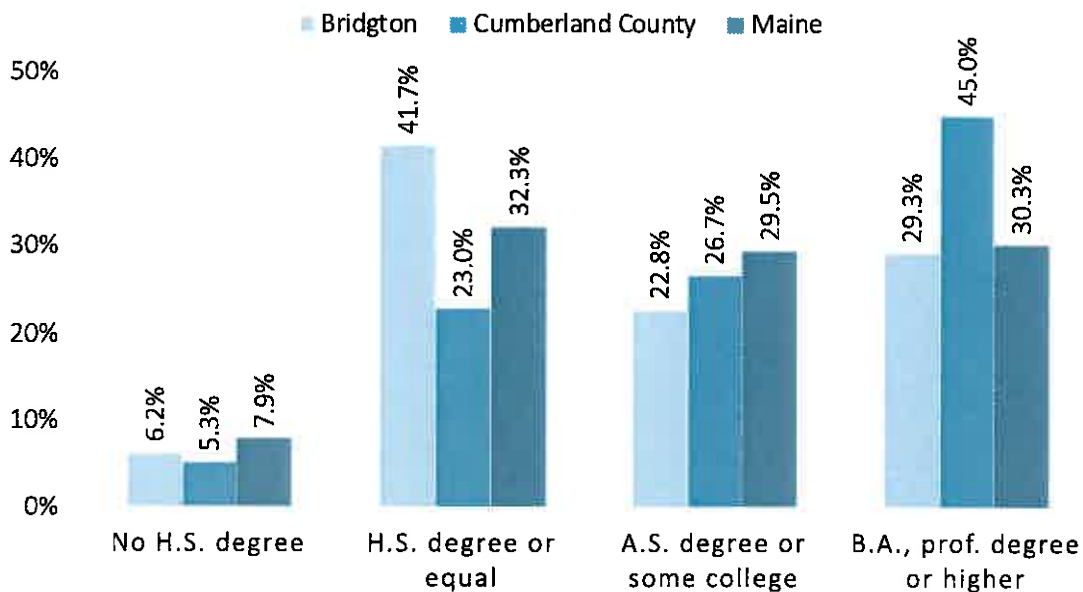


Figure 6: Educational Attainment for the Population 25 and older, 2017.

(Source: US Census, ACS 5 year est.).

Table 5: Educational Attainment for the Population 25 and older, 2017.
(Source: US Census, ACS 5 year est.).

Category	Bridgton	Cumberland County	Maine
Less than 9th grade	0.1%	1.8%	2.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	6.1%	3.5%	5.1%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	41.7%	23.0%	32.3%
Some college, no degree	15.2%	17.5%	19.5%
Associate's degree	7.6%	9.2%	10.0%
Bachelor's degree	17.6%	28.2%	19.3%
Graduate or professional degree	11.7%	16.9%	10.9%

INCOME

Summary findings:

- Relative to peer communities, Bridgton's household income in 2017 (\$48,319) is lower than Raymond and Damariscotta, but higher than Norway and Paris and about even with Bethel (Figure 7).
- Bridgton's household income is below both Cumberland County and the Maine median.
- A similar comparison is found using per capita income. Bridgton's per capita income in 2017 was \$23,545, well below all other peer communities with the exception of Norway and Paris.
- The household income distribution in Bridgton is reflective of these and other measures of economic prosperity in this report. Less than 5 percent of households had income levels above \$150,000 (Figure 8).

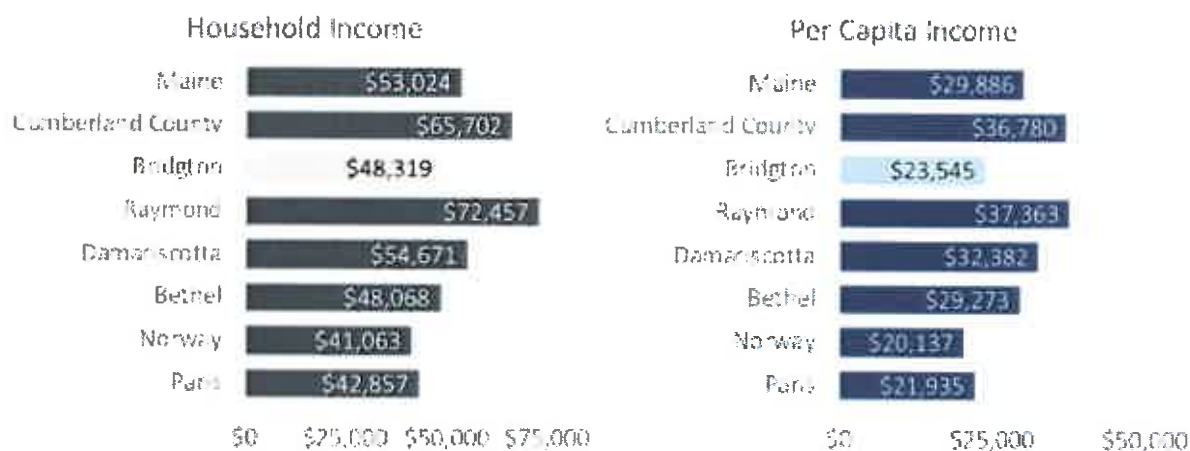


Figure 7: Household Income and Per Capita Income in Peer Communities, 2017.
(Source: US Census ACS 5 year est.).

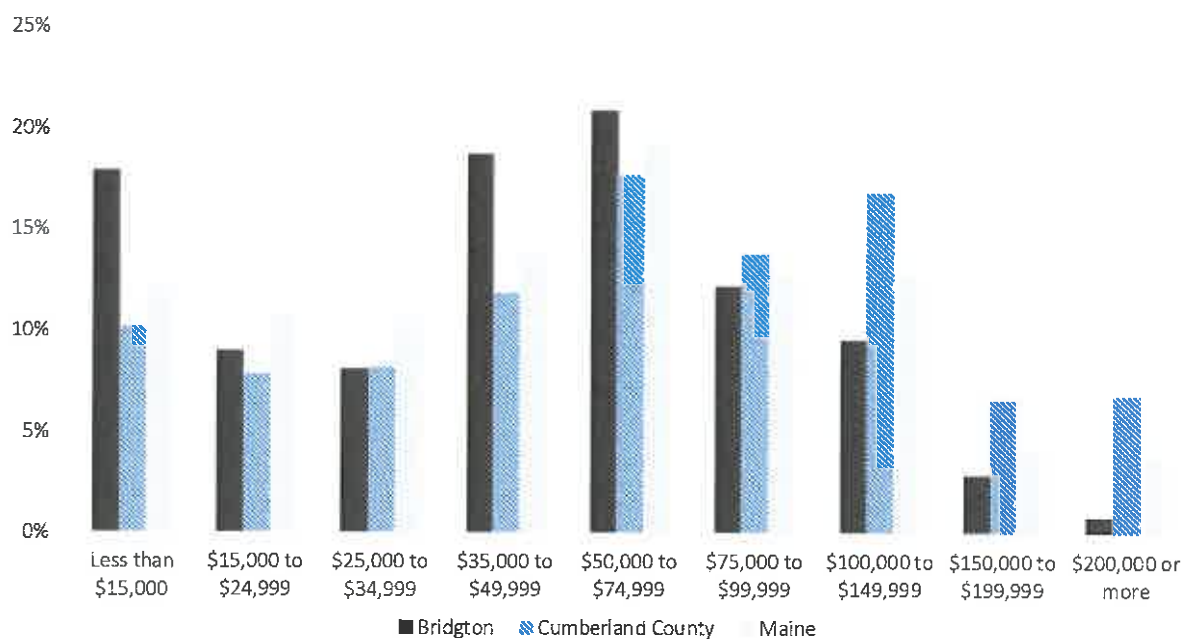


Figure 8: Income Distribution in Bridgton, Cumberland County, and Maine, 2017.
(Source: US Census ACS 5 year est.).

LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

- The unemployment rate in Bridgton has hovered around 3.8 percent, below both the County and the state unemployment rate (Table 6).
- Bridgton's labor force participation, defined as the percentage of working age population 16 and older that are employed or that are actively seeking employment, is well below both the state and County percentage. The employment to population ratio is also below county and state levels.
- Although the unemployment rate is low, this is driven in part by fewer working age people seeking employment or actively working, as they choose not to participate in the labor market.

Table 6: Labor Force Indicators for Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2017.

(Source: US Census ACS 5 year est.).

Geography	Bridgton	Cumb. County	Maine	Bethel	Damariscotta	Norway	Paris	Raymond
Total Population 16+	4,233	239,833	1,104,528	2,213	1,740	3,668	4,362	3,879
Labor Force Participation Rate	56.2%	68.5%	63.1%	59.9%	55.1%	63.5%	47.0%	71.4%
Employment to Population Ratio	54.1%	65.6%	59.6%	58.1%	52.2%	60.7%	41.7%	67.4%
Unemployment Rate	3.8%	4.0%	5.3%	3.0%	5.3%	4.5%	11.3%	5.7%



Figure 9: Labor Force Trends in Bridgton, 2000 to 2018. (Source: Maine DOL, CWRI).

While the Census reports other labor force statistics that may be of interest, such as unemployment rates by educational attainment or by age, small sample sizes result in lower confidence in the estimates. In many cases the margin of errors for these estimates are quite substantial and reporting them may provide a misleading picture of the employment situation for these groups in Bridgton. Therefore, we do not report them here to avoid misinterpretation due to high degrees of sampling error.

HOUSING AND AFFORDABILITY TRENDS

Summary findings:

- Bridgton had an estimated 4,356 housing units in 2017, of which 48% were identified as occupied (Table 7) – a percentage well below the county (84%) and state (75%).
- The high rate of vacant units is largely explained by the number of units used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.
- Bridgton has an above average rate of owner occupied housing units. About ¾ of occupied housing units are owner occupied – a rate higher than the county and state – with the remaining 24% rental occupancy.
- Bridgton’s housing stock is slightly older than the state and county, with just 78 units estimated to have been built since 2010.
- Home ownership is slightly more affordable in Bridgton than the county or state. About 24 % of owner occupied units have costs 30% or more above the household income, compared to a share of 29% for the county and state (Table 8).
- Table 9 shows the homeownership affordability index produced by MaineHousing in which a value of 1 or above implies home ownership is affordable based on current median household income and home sale prices. Bridgton’s value of .97 suggests that homeownership is relatively affordable, especially when compared to other communities, with the exception of Raymond.
- On the other hand, housing is less affordable for renters. Fifty-six percent of rental households are affordable, as defined by MaineHousing’s Index. Rental housing is relatively more affordable than the state and at least on peer community (Norway), but lags Cumberland County as a whole in rental affordability.
- This means that despite the low wages in Bridgton, it can still appear as an affordable place to live, particularly in a region that is increasingly unaffordable.

Table 7: Summary Housing Characteristics in Bridgton, 2017.
(Source: US Census ACS 5 year est.).

Subject	Bridgton		Cumberland County		Maine	
	Number	Pct	Number	Pct	Number	Pct
Total	4,356		142,251		735,711	
OCCUPANCY & VACANCY						
Occupied Units	2,098	48% (Total)	118,807	84% (Total)	554,061	75% (Total)
Owner occupied	1,554	74% (Occ. unit)	81,526	69% (Occ. unit)	399,142	72% (Occ. unit)
Renter occupied	544	26% (Occ. unit)	37,281	31% (Occ. unit)	154,919	28% (Occ. unit)
Vacant Units	2,258	52% (Total)	23,444	16% (Total)	181,650	25% (Total)
For sale	145		1,022		7,748	
For rent	153		1,998		11,500	
For seasonal, recreational, occasional	1,714	39% (Total)	15,578	11% (Total)	128,088	17% (Total)
AGE OF HOUSING STOCK						
Before 1940	1,080	24.8%	35,638	25.1%	180,455	24.5%
1940 to 1999	2,687	61.7%	85,763	60.3%	439,725	59.8%
2000 to 2009	511	11.7%	17,262	12.1%	98,634	13.4%
2010 or later	78	1.8%	3,588	2.5%	16,897	2.3%
HOME VALUE						
Median home value	\$159,600	-	\$259,400	-	\$179,900	-
Average home value	\$189,960	-	\$306,037	-	\$220,044	-
AFFORDABILITY (COST-BURDENED)						
Owner costs 30% or more of HH income*	254	24.4%	16,694	29.3%	72,502	29.2%
Gross rent 30% or more of HH income	249	45.8%	17,282	46.4%	69,359	44.8%

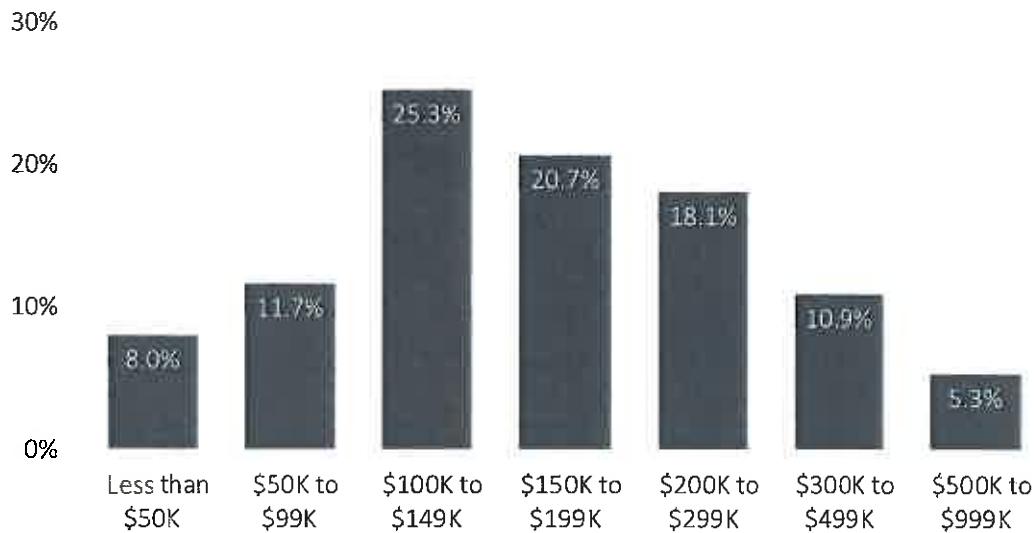


Figure 10: Distribution of Housing Values in Bridgton, 2017.
(Source: US Census ACS 5 year est.).

Table 8: Housing Affordability in Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2017.
(Source: Census 5 year est.).

Median Monthly Housing Costs	Bridgton	Cum County	Maine	Bethel	Damariscotta	Norway	Paris	Raymond
With Mortgage	\$1,200	\$1,697	\$1,357	\$1,151	\$1,440	\$956	\$1,028	\$1,548
% Not Afford.*	24.4%	29.3%	29.2%	40.0%	31.5%	22.3%	28.1%	28.6%
No Mortgage	\$494	\$619	\$483	\$446	\$591	\$498	\$539	\$473
% Not Afford.*	25.8%	17.9%	15.8%	9.8%	15.4%	4.6%	7.2%	9.2%
Gross Rent	\$845	\$1,029	\$808	\$646	\$757	\$718	\$632	\$897
% Not Afford.*	45.8%	46.4%	44.8%	36.1%	35.3%	44.0%	70.8%	43.1%

Note: "*" Not affordable: monthly housing costs are 30% or more of monthly household income

Table 9A and 9B: Maine Housing Homeownership and Rental Affordability Index for Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2018. (Source: Maine State Housing Authority).

Geography	MHA Index	Median Home Price	Median Renter Income	Income Needed to Afford Median Home Price	Home Price Affordable to Median Income	Households Unable to Afford Median Home	
						Percent	Number
Bridgton	0.97	\$189,900	\$55,349	\$56,988	\$184,440	51.2%	1,242
Raymond	1.11	\$259,950	\$83,490	\$75,360	\$287,995	43.9%	813
Bethel	0.82	\$228,000	\$55,366	\$67,321	\$187,512	65.0%	718
Paris	0.81	\$135,000	\$34,355	\$42,514	\$109,091	57.8%	1,281
Norway	0.95	\$137,500	\$40,727	\$42,708	\$131,121	52.3%	1,138
Cumberland County	0.77	\$303,000	\$70,437	\$91,909	\$232,211	63.3%	78,873
Maine	0.89	\$212,500	\$56,987	\$64,367	\$188,138	56.3%	319,595

Geography	MHA Index	Average 2 Bedroom Rent	Renter Household Median	Income Needed to Afford Average 2 BR Rent	2 BR Affordable to Median Income	Households Unable to Afford Median Home	
						Percent	Number
Bridgton	0.83	\$890	\$29,620	\$35,597	\$740	56.4%	339
Norway	0.75	\$912	\$27,206	\$36,472	\$680	64.3%	442
Cumberland County	0.88	\$1,096	\$38,559	\$43,829	\$964	55.1%	22,481
Maine	0.79	\$977	\$30,804	\$39,093	\$770	59.6%	96,448

Notes: The Homeownership Affordability Index is the ratio of Home Price Affordability at Median income to Median Home Price. The Rental Affordability Index is the ratio of 2-Bedroom Rent Affordability at Median Renter Income to Average 2-Bedroom Rent. An index of less than 1 means the area is generally unaffordable. Table shows data only for peer communities in which it is available.

ECONOMIC BASE

Economies do not stop at political borders. Although it is important to understand the industries and employment sectors located within Bridgton, it is equally important to understand the broader region's industrial base. A region's competitiveness and the potential to attract and locate industries in Bridgton may depend on the types of businesses in the broader region. Businesses may often find an advantage to locating near resources or supply chain firms. As mentioned previously, Bridgton is politically defined within Cumberland County and the Portland – South Portland MSA, but in some ways, Bridgton is more closely economically integrated with communities in the Lakes Region, western Maine, and the mountain areas of New Hampshire. As such it is important to characterize Bridgton as part of a smaller economic area in which it serves as a central employment and service destination, but also not ignore the relative proximity to the greater Portland region area with its population of over 530,000 people. Figure 11 below shows the geographic definitions for the Bridgton Commuter Region.

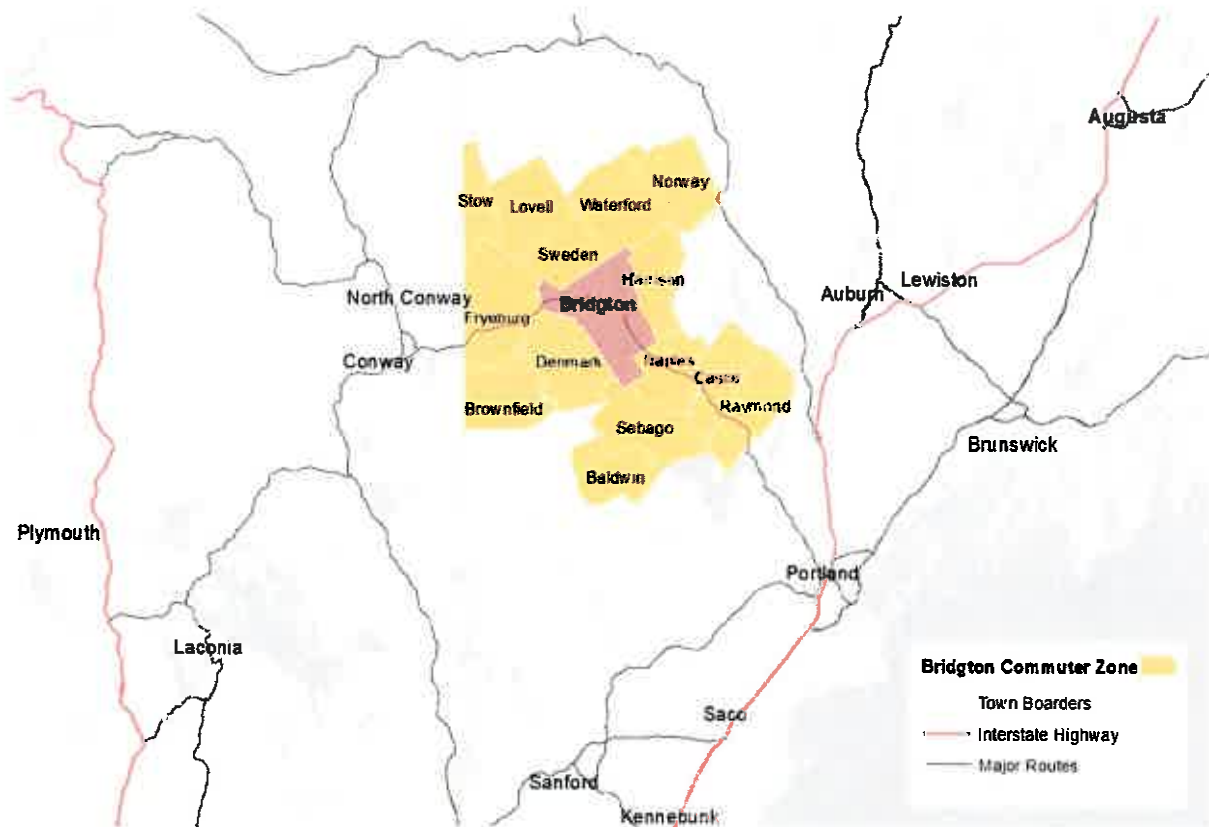


Figure 11: The Bridgton Commuter Region Geographic Definition, 2018 (Source: MCBER).

COMMUTING

Bridgton is a service and employment center in the region. Commuter patterns, or place of work vs. place of residence, helps to visualize the flow of the workforce throughout the region. The number of jobs reflect people employed in the broader commuter region, whereas the number of resident workers is the number of people in the workforce who live in the area. Net commuters, as illustrated in Figure 12, is the difference between the two. A positive number indicates more jobs than available workers and a negative number indicates more workers than jobs.

Summary findings:

- Bridgton had more jobs than workers in 2018, as indicated by a positive number of net commuters in Figure 12, indicating that businesses in the town need to attract people into the area to meet demand.
- The broader Commuting region employed over 12,000 people in 2018 but was home to 19,015 people employed in the larger workforce. With a deficit of nearly 7,000 jobs, there are clearly more resident workers than jobs available in the area.

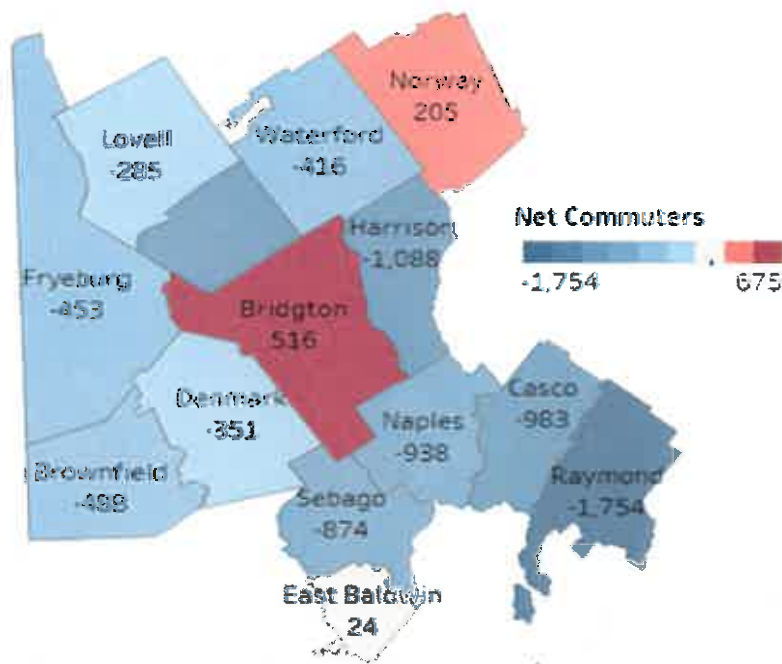


Figure 12: Net Commuters in the Bridgton Commuter Region, 2018 (Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Key findings:

- Employment growth in Bridgton has been relatively strong compared to Cumberland County, the state, and its peer communities (Figure 13).
- Employment in 2018 totaled 3,013 which includes payroll employment and self-employment; 5 percent above the pre-Great Recession levels from 2008 (Figure 14).
- Under existing conditions, employment growth is forecasted to be relatively flat through 2023 (Figure 14; Table 10), which is largely reflective of the forecast in labor force growth and population dynamics in the town and surrounding communities.
- Average earnings in 2018 were \$57,543 per employee; an amount slightly below the county average and that of neighboring Raymond but still above statewide average earnings (Figure 15).
- Over half of Bridgton businesses and employment organizations employ between 5 and 19 persons per establishment (Figure 16). This represents a larger share compared to the average establishment size in the broader commuter region and the state as a whole.
- Bridgton has a relatively small number of large employers with greater than 100 workers; a trait similar to the commuter region and state (Figure 16).

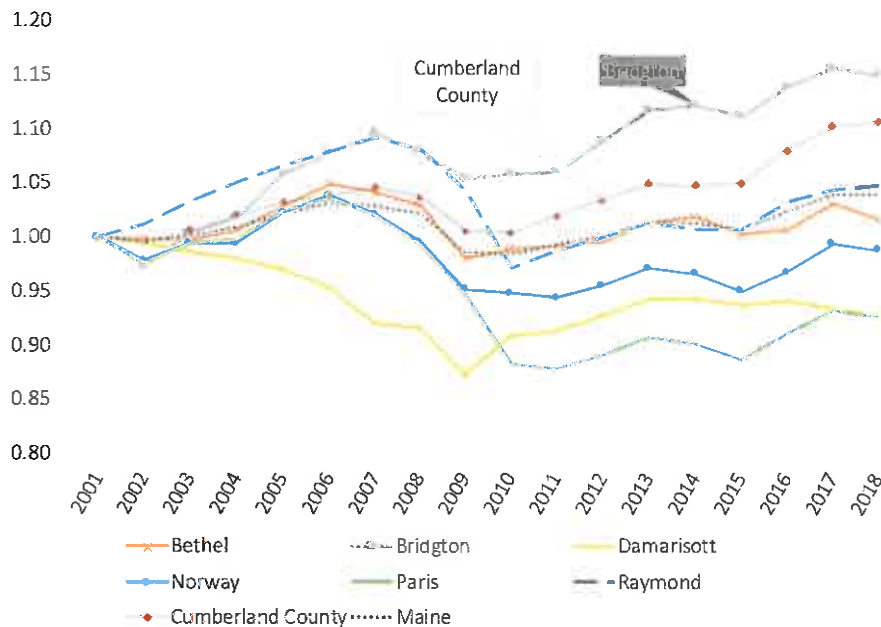


Figure 13: Employment Growth Rate in Bridgton and Comparison Communities, 2001-2018
(Source: Maine CWRI. Note: Growth rates indexed to 2001 baseline for comparative purposes.
Includes QCEW employment only.)

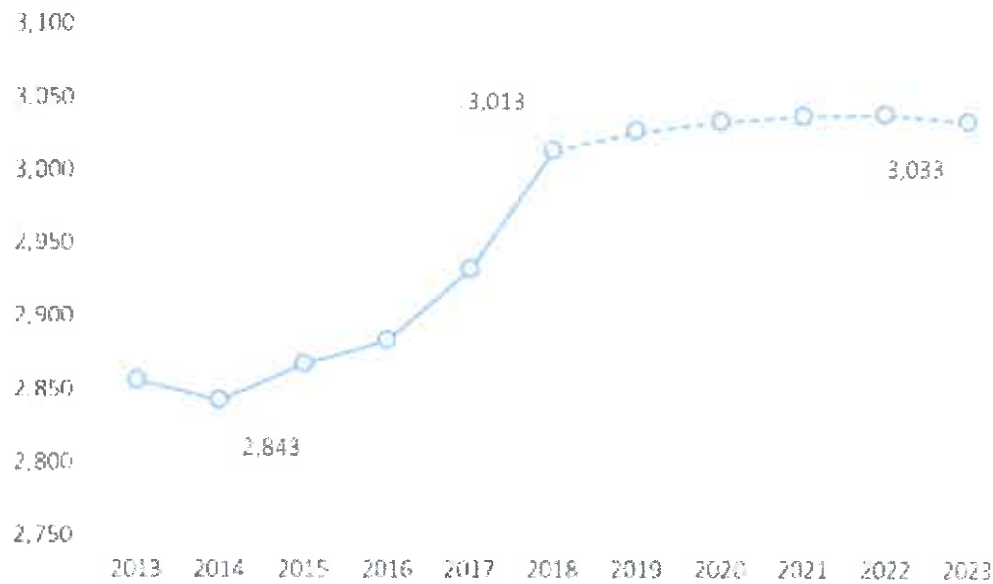


Figure 14: Bridgton Employment Growth, Historical and Baseline Projections, 2013-2023.
(Source: EMSI, 2019.2. Includes QCEW and self-employment).

Region	Jobs, 2013	Jobs, 2018	Jobs, 2023	Change (%) 2013-'18	Change (%) 2013-'23	Total (%) Change
Bridgton	2,857	3,013	3,033	5.5%	0.7%	6.2%
Commuter Area	12,094	12,294	12,426	1.7%	1.1%	2.7%
Maine	651,178	678,578	687,007	4.2%	1.2%	5.5%
Bethel	1,536	1,602	1,636	4.3%	2.1%	6.5%
Damariscotta	2,942	2,847	2,711	-3.2%	-4.8%	-7.9%
Poland	1,680	1,755	1,746	4.5%	-0.5%	3.9%
Standish	1,867	2,054	2,154	10.0%	4.9%	15.4%

Table 10: Employment Projections in Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2014-2023.
(Source: EMSI, 2019.2. Includes QCEW and self-employment).

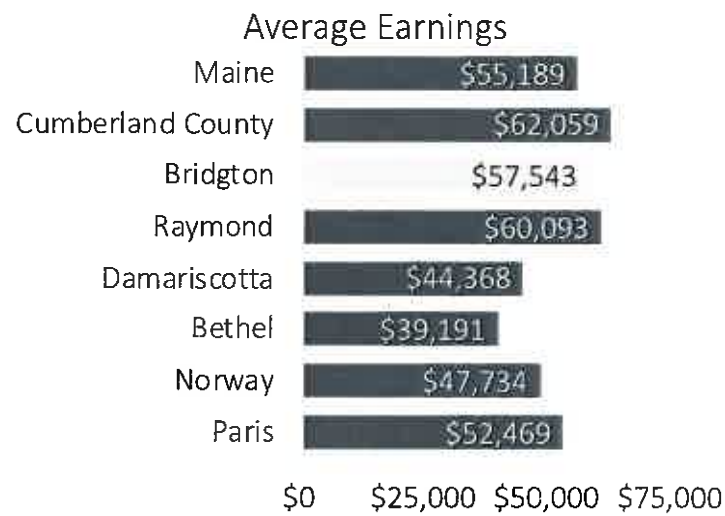


Figure 15: Average Employment Earnings in Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2018.
(Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

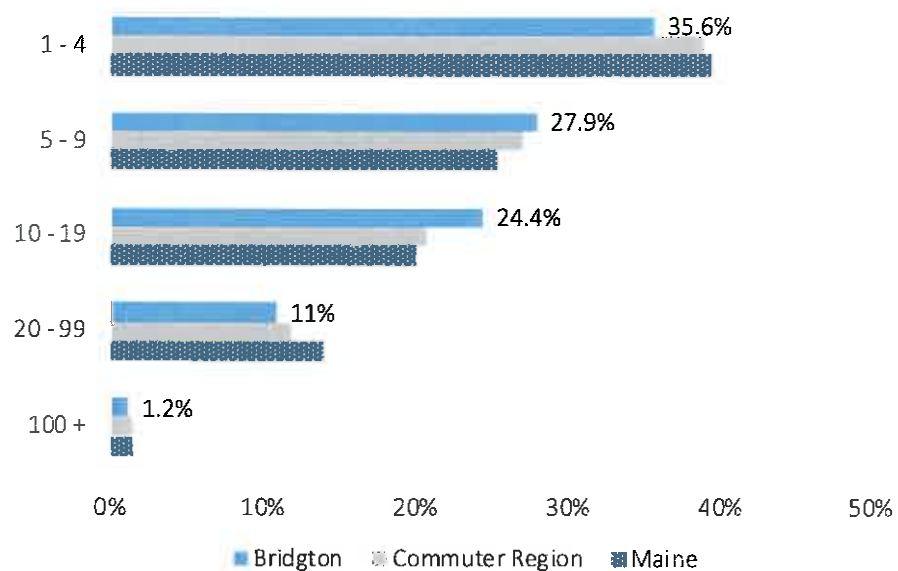


Figure 16: Distribution of Business Size, 2018. (Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

SECTOR EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

This section looks at high level industry sector employment, growth, and projections between the years 2013, 2018, and 2023. It also provides data on average industry sector earnings.

Key findings:

- Combined, the top 3 industry sectors – health care, government, and retail trade – employ nearly 60% of Bridgton’s workforce, and 46% of the Commuter region’s workforce (Table 12).
- This is particularly impressive, considering the Bridgton region holds an above average concentration in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector and education sector.
- Accommodations & food service (9.7%) is the 4th largest employment sector in the town.
- In addition to these sectors, finance and insurance and educational services are industries concentrated in Bridgton indicated by a location quotient of greater than one – often used as an indicator of key sectors or industries in a regional/local economy.
- Between 2013 and 2018, the manufacturing sector experienced relatively strong employment growth adding 82 jobs, while employment in insurance also showed strong growth over the five-year period.
- Although overall employment projections suggest limited employment growth, a few sectors are projected to have job growth including professional scientific and technical services, retail trade, and finance and insurance. With the exception of retail trade, these sectors have relatively high average earnings per worker.
- Employment growth in manufacturing and production oriented industries are projected to remain flat through 2023.
- The broader Commuter region’s top 3 industries are similar to Bridgton, and include health care followed by government and manufacturing (Table 13).
- Combined, the top 3 industry sectors employ 48% of the regional workforce. This is impressive considering the Commuter region holds an above average concentration in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; arts, entertainment, and recreation; and construction sectors. Accommodations & food service (9.9%), construction (9.5%), and retail (9.5%) also employ a fair amount of people in the region, combined they employ 30% of the regional workforce.
- Within the broader Commuter region of Bridgton there are some differences in key employment drivers. Although healthcare and tourism are strong, construction, manufacturing, and agriculture and forestry sectors are highly concentrated in the commuter shed.
- Manufacturing and construction together employed over 2,500 workers in 2018.

- Similar to Bridgton, employment growth is forecasted to be strongest in professional, scientific, and technical services, administrative and support services, health care and assistance, and in the agriculture and forestry sectors.
- Collectively these industry strengths both within Bridgton and the broader commuter shed represent the economic drivers of the region. The sectors and industries that already exist in a region provide foundation competitive advantages of the region, as well as the best opportunities for future employment growth.
- In large part, these sectors map closely with the core competitive advantages statewide (Table 14).

Table 11: Sector Employment Trends and Projections in Bridgton, 2013-2023.
(Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

NAICS		2013	2018	2023	Change	Percent	Change	Percent	Avg.	Location
Sector	Sector Name	Jobs	Jobs	Jobs	2013-18	2013-18	2018-23	2018-23	Earnings	Quotient
									Per Job	2018
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	\$0	0.00
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	\$0	0.00
22	Utilities	10	10	9	0	0.0%	(1)	-10.0%	\$139,439	0.94
23	Construction	159	165	161	6	3.8%	(4)	-2.4%	\$52,476	0.98
31	Manufacturing	108	190	191	82	75.9%	1	0.5%	\$80,566	0.80
42	Wholesale Trade	11	14	13	3	27.3%	(1)	-7.1%	\$71,852	0.13
44	Retail Trade	318	348	359	30	9.4%	11	3.2%	\$36,035	1.14
48	Transportation and Warehousing	7	9	10	2	28.6%	1	11.1%	\$47,290	0.08
51	Information	49	43	35	(6)	-12.2%	(8)	-18.6%	\$53,491	0.78
52	Finance and Insurance	106	144	154	38	35.8%	10	6.9%	\$86,965	1.19
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	15	18	18	3	20.0%	0	0.0%	\$56,229	0.35
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	46	55	64	9	19.6%	9	16.4%	\$78,496	0.28
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	\$0	0.00
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	15	14	14	(1)	-6.7%	0	0.0%	\$48,042	0.08
61	Educational Services	109	123	134	14	12.8%	11	8.9%	\$36,257	1.59
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	877	830	818	(47)	-5.4%	(12)	-1.4%	\$63,938	2.18
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	121	111	116	(10)	-8.3%	5	4.5%	\$17,765	2.12
72	Accommodation and Food Services	274	289	293	15	5.5%	4	1.4%	\$28,538	1.12
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	57	59	59	2	3.5%	0	0.0%	\$35,306	0.41
90	Government	575	590	584	15	2.6%	(6)	-1.0%	\$68,227	1.30
99	Unclassified Industry	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	\$0	0.00
	Total	2,857	3,013	3,033	157	5.5%	20	0.7%	\$57,543	-

Table 12: Sector Employment Trends and Projections in the Greater Bridgton Region (Commuter Region), 2013-2023. (Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

NAICS Sector	Sector Name	2013 Jobs	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	Change 2013-18	Percent Change 2013-18	Change 2018-23	Percent Change 2018-23	Avg. Earnings Per Job	Location Quotient 2018
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	206	255	275	49	23.8%	20	7.8%	\$41,764	1.76
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	\$0	0.00
22	Utilities	16	14	14	(2)	-12.5%	0	0.0%	\$100,499	0.33
23	Construction	1,148	1,172	1,165	24	2.1%	(7)	-0.6%	\$46,087	1.71
31	Manufacturing	1,186	1,353	1,342	167	14.1%	(11)	-0.8%	\$68,393	1.40
42	Wholesale Trade	174	159	158	(15)	-8.6%	(1)	-0.6%	\$63,848	0.35
44	Retail Trade	1,093	1,157	1,150	64	5.9%	(7)	-0.6%	\$33,567	0.93
48	Transportation and Warehousing	132	167	178	35	26.5%	11	6.6%	\$53,274	0.38
51	Information	434	156	157	(278)	-64.1%	1	0.6%	\$57,462	0.69
52	Finance and Insurance	306	325	334	19	6.2%	9	2.8%	\$76,005	0.66
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	130	146	149	16	12.3%	3	2.1%	\$47,417	0.70
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	337	398	430	61	18.1%	32	8.0%	\$55,235	0.50
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	19	30	34	11	57.9%	4	13.3%	\$107,093	0.17
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	235	263	284	28	11.9%	21	8.0%	\$31,901	0.34
61	Educational Services	275	315	329	40	14.5%	14	4.4%	\$40,480	1.00
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	2,781	2,734	2,819	(47)	-1.7%	85	3.1%	\$50,942	1.76
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	244	291	300	47	19.3%	9	3.1%	\$28,944	1.36
72	Accommodation and Food Services	1,145	1,206	1,201	61	5.3%	(5)	-0.4%	\$30,704	1.14
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	470	457	455	(13)	-2.8%	(2)	-0.4%	\$28,305	0.78
90	Government	1,762	1,696	1,651	(66)	-3.7%	(45)	-2.7%	\$64,048	0.92
99	Unclassified Industry	0	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	\$0	0.00
	Total	12,094	12,294	12,426	200	1.7%	132	1.1%	\$49,594	-

Table 13: Sector Employment Trends and Projections in Maine, 2013-2023.
(Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

NAICS		2013	2018	2023	Change	Percent	Change	Percent	Avg	Location
Sector	Sector Name	Jobs	Jobs	Jobs	2013-18	2013-18	2018-23	2018-23	Earnings Per Job	2018
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	13,820	14,268	14,275	448	3.2%	7	0.1%	\$39,579	1.83
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	201	227	245	25	12.5%	18	8.0%	\$72,708	0.08
22	Utilities	1,644	1,651	1,810	7	0.4%	159	9.6%	\$121,815	0.68
23	Construction	40,671	42,382	42,235	1,712	4.2%	(148)	-0.3%	\$48,314	1.10
31	Manufacturing	51,820	53,728	52,409	1,908	3.7%	(1,319)	-2.5%	\$69,125	0.97
42	Wholesale Trade	20,354	20,216	20,212	(138)	-0.7%	(4)	0.0%	\$75,203	0.78
44	Retail Trade	85,063	84,931	82,494	(132)	-0.2%	(2,437)	-2.9%	\$33,660	1.20
48	Transportation and Warehousing	17,180	17,675	17,643	495	2.9%	(32)	-0.2%	\$49,815	0.72
51	Information	8,244	8,412	8,068	168	2.0%	(344)	-4.1%	\$64,345	0.65
52	Finance and Insurance	24,462	24,031	23,722	(431)	-1.8%	(309)	-1.3%	\$87,686	0.90
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	8,460	8,740	8,778	279	3.3%	38	0.4%	\$44,837	0.74
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	29,652	33,070	35,206	3,418	11.5%	2,136	6.5%	\$74,118	0.73
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	7,418	10,923	12,331	3,505	47.3%	1,408	12.9%	\$95,979	1.09
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	33,263	35,624	37,740	2,362	7.1%	2,116	5.9%	\$40,424	0.81
61	Educational Services	13,274	15,165	16,586	1,891	14.2%	1,421	9.4%	\$50,276	1.14
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	106,031	109,705	113,741	3,675	3.5%	4,036	3.7%	\$56,567	1.24
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	11,570	12,340	12,897	770	6.7%	557	4.5%	\$26,200	1.01
72	Accommodation and Food Services	55,117	60,032	61,689	4,915	8.9%	1,656	2.8%	\$24,709	0.99
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	27,139	27,290	27,364	151	0.6%	75	0.3%	\$31,210	0.93
90	Government	95,748	96,052	94,149	304	0.3%	(1,903)	-2.0%	\$68,200	1.01
99	Unclassified Industry	47	2,115	3,414	2,068	-	1,299	61.4%	\$67,083	2.23
	Total	651,178	678,578	687,007	27,400	4.2%	8,429	1.2%	\$55,189	-

DETAILED INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

A closer look at the detailed industries that comprise the most important employment sectors in Bridgton and the broader region provide greater insight into the key economic drivers of the region's economy. Table 15 and Table 16 show the highest concentrated industries relative to the nation in both Bridgton and the commuter region relative to the nation. These industries represent regional and local employment strengths relative to other regions, which may serve as focus areas for business expansion or industry location. Although this approach to identifying regional competitive advantage is used often in regional economic development studies, we are cautious in drawing excessive inference given the relatively small employment sizes of these industries and the size of the region as a whole. Nevertheless, these industries represent the industrial base of Bridgton and the greater Bridgton region. The key findings are highlighted below.

Key findings:

- The most concentrated industries are hospitals, nursing and residential care facilities, insurance carriers, as well as tourism related industries including amusement and recreation industries, accommodation, and food and beverages.
- Industries that stand out include computer and electronic product manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, insurance carriers and related activities as well as building materials and construction services.
- With the exception of tourism and personal service oriented industries, the industries in Table 16 pay relatively higher average earnings than other businesses in the region.
- In the broader region, there are several industries of importance with high concentrations indicating a competitive advantage for the region. Several manufacturing industries are highly concentrated in the region, including leather and allied product manufacturing, forestry and logging, wood product manufacturing, in addition to manufacturing, fabricated metal products, and computer and electronic products which are primarily located within Bridgton's borders.
- With the exception of wood product manufacturing, these industries have experienced strong growth from 2013 through 2018.
- Another noteworthy industry trend has been the growth and concentration in crop production in the region. Within the greater Portland region and southern Maine more generally, there has been significant growth of a food economy that emphasizes local, artisan craft, and farm to table food products. Most prominent is the craft brewing industry, which is also an important regional driver of tourism.
- Although not directly situated within the broader Portland Area, Bridgton is within a relatively short distance to this growing sector of the State's tourism economy.

Table 14: Key Industries in Bridgton, 2013-2018. (Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

NAICS Sector	Sector Name	2013 Jobs	2018 Jobs	Change 2013-18	Percent Change 2013-18	Avg. Earnings Per Job	Location Quotient 2018
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	77	146	69	89.6%	\$88,670	7.45
622	Hospitals	540	525	-15	-2.8%	\$73,865	5.61
713	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	119	108	-11	-9.2%	\$17,271	3.26
447	Gasoline Stations	53	57	4	7.5%	\$27,894	3.24
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	209	165	-44	-21.1%	\$40,542	2.66
524	Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	91	131	40	44.0%	\$88,169	2.51
444	Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	57	60	3	5.3%	\$49,657	2.40
903	Local Government	512	529	17	3.3%	\$67,768	2.00
236	Construction of Buildings	72	77	5	6.9%	\$48,088	1.94
721	Accommodation	69	65	-4	-5.8%	\$39,809	1.73
611	Educational Services	109	123	14	12.8%	\$36,257	1.59
445	Food and Beverage Stores	80	89	9	11.3%	\$29,856	1.53
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	24	35	11	45.8%	\$51,725	1.29
441	Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	44	49	5	11.4%	\$54,739	1.27
722	Food Services and Drinking Places	205	224	19	9.3%	\$25,283	1.01

Table 15: Key Industries in the Greater Bridgton Region, 2013-2018. (Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

NAICS Sector	Sector Name	2013 Jobs	2018 Jobs	Change 2013-18	Percent Change 2013-18	Avg. Earnings Per Job	Location Quotient 2018	Share in Bridgton
316	Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing	134	204	70	52.2%	\$35,144	89.97	0.0%
113	Forestry and Logging	131	137	6	4.6%	\$48,372	23.97	0.0%
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	485	568	83	17.1%	\$75,135	5.10	6.2%
721	Accommodation	638	605	-33	-5.2%	\$37,171	3.95	10.7%
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	113	105	-8	-7.1%	\$68,722	3.26	0.0%
447	Gasoline Stations	210	228	18	8.6%	\$26,102	3.20	24.8%
622	Hospitals	1,060	1,086	26	2.5%	\$69,192	2.85	48.3%
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	113	213	100	88.5%	\$88,670	2.67	68.3%
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	613	647	34	5.5%	\$37,486	2.55	25.6%
236	Construction of Buildings	344	372	28	8.1%	\$42,364	2.31	20.6%
624	Social Assistance	595	624	29	4.9%	\$27,389	1.89	6.3%
713	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	244	249	5	2.0%	\$27,270	1.84	43.5%
454	Nonstore Retailers	89	96	7	7.9%	\$47,979	1.78	9.0%
238	Specialty Trade Contractors	751	774	23	3.1%	\$46,904	1.75	11.4%
111	Crop Production	62	100	38	61.3%	\$34,089	1.64	0.0%
811	Repair and Maintenance	180	174	-6	-3.3%	\$38,775	1.35	9.6%
445	Food and Beverage Stores	294	316	22	7.5%	\$26,804	1.33	28.1%
444	Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	111	125	14	12.6%	\$43,758	1.23	47.7%

SELF-EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

In total there are approximately 130 self-employed workers in Bridgton and approximately 700 in total across the Bridgton commuter shed region. Self-employment in Bridgton is primarily concentrated in construction jobs and educational services, followed by jobs in health care and social assistance and various professional service industries (Table 17). Self-employment within the broader Bridgton commuter region is similarly concentrated in construction and professional services but also in agriculture, healthcare, and to some extent retail trade and manufacturing (Table 18). This employment represents independent contractor workers as well as self-employed persons with no employees. However, they represent opportunities for increased growth if those individuals decide to expand, particularly if Bridgton is able to attract self-employed workers from other areas of the commuter region to locate a physical business within Bridgton's borders.

Table 16: Self-Employment (Non-employer) Industry Sectors in Bridgton, 2013-2018.

(Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

NAICS		2013	2018	Change	Percent	
Sector	Sector Name	Jobs	Jobs	2013-18	Change 2010-18	Avg. Earnings Per Job
23	Construction	49	43	-6	-12.2%	\$24,461
61	Educational Services	13	20	7	53.8%	\$15,754
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	15	13	-2	-13.3%	\$47,048
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5	9	4	80.0%	\$21,999
52	Finance and Insurance	7	8	1	14.3%	\$54,907
51	Information	8	8	0	0.0%	\$77,548
44	Retail Trade	4	7	3	75.0%	\$33,003
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	7	7	0	0.0%	\$15,358
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5	5	0	0.0%	\$26,235
31	Manufacturing	0	4	4	-	\$79,693
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	2	2	0	0.0%	\$13,469
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3	1	-2	-66.7%	\$18,345
48	Transportation and Warehousing	1	1	0	0.0%	\$39,589
72	Accommodation and Food Services	1	1	0	0.0%	\$25,905
	All Occupations	119	128	9	7.5%	\$31,792

Table 17: Self-Employment (Non-employer) Industry Sectors in the Bridgton Commuter Region, 2013-2018. (Source: EMSI, 2019.2).

NAICS Sector	Sector Name	2013 Jobs	2018 Jobs	Change 2013-18	Percent Change 2010-18	Avg. Earnings Per Job
23	Construction	493	436	-57	-11.6%	\$24,461
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	151	150	-1	-0.7%	\$17,922
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	92	121	29	31.5%	\$28,140
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	87	107	20	23.0%	\$27,906
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	128	101	-27	-21.1%	\$28,544
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	85	82	-3	-3.5%	\$15,320
44	Retail Trade	55	74	19	34.5%	\$29,831
31	Manufacturing	20	58	38	190.0%	\$43,241
61	Educational Services	22	33	11	50.0%	\$17,015
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	36	33	-3	-8.3%	\$26,579
51	Information	24	32	8	33.3%	\$45,714
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	21	18	-3	-14.3%	\$15,347
52	Finance and Insurance	10	18	8	80.0%	\$55,112
48	Transportation and Warehousing	23	12	-11	-47.8%	\$40,407
72	Accommodation and Food Services	18	10	-8	-44.4%	\$26,113
42	Wholesale Trade	3	3	0	0.0%	\$33,701
	All Occupations	624	701	78	12.3%	\$47,871

THE WORKFORCE AND OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

This section reports the employment in occupations of residents of Bridgton and the Bridgton Commuter region, as opposed to employment by place of business as reported previously. Employment in major occupational sectors for residents in Bridgton are shown in Table 19, while Table 20 shows employment in the major sectors for residents residing within the Bridgton commuter region. Table 21 shows the specific occupations most frequently held by Bridgton residents.

Summary findings:

- Employment levels of Bridgton *residents* has decreased by 16% since 2010. Given population levels have risen during this period, declines in employment levels of residents suggest more residents are moving into retirement, while more non-residents are commuting into Bridgton for work, rather than living there.
- The occupations in which people are employed largely reflect the sectors and industries present in Bridgton and the broader region. For example, the occupational sectors with the largest employment totals are found in food preparation and serving occupations, healthcare and support, office and administrative support, education and training, as well as construction and management jobs.
- With the exception of registered nurses, management occupations, and teachers, these occupations do not require an advanced degree. Likewise, most occupations that are reflective of the tourism and recreation base of Bridgton in the region pay wages that are below the median.
- Figure 17 documents the growth of occupations from 2010 to 2018 by educational requirements. The jobs that grew fastest require a four-year degree or higher, while jobs with no formal educational requirements also experienced strong growth over this period. Jobs that declined over the period are representative of middle skill jobs. A similar trend has occurred in the commuter region and state, although middle skill jobs have only seen declines in Bridgton.
- These trends are expected to continue as jobs with higher degrees of skill and formal educational requirements are believed to be the drivers of today's economy while supporting low-skilled service jobs.
- Overall, there is a shortage of workers in the region and the long-term trends suggest that this may remain the case given the demographic situation and disconnect between employers and workforce training in the area.

Table 18: Occupational Employment Trends of Bridgton Residents by Major Category, 2010-2018. (Source, EMSI, 2019.2).

SOC	Description	2013 Resident Workers	2018 Resident Workers	2013-18 Change in Resident Workers	2013-18% Change in Resident Workers	Median Hourly Earnings	2018 Location Quotient
11-0000	Management Occupations	164	146	-18	-11.0%	\$39.77	0.97
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	95	77	-18	-18.9%	\$30.52	0.54
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	45	43	-2	-4.4%	\$34.53	0.59
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	38	33	-5	-13.2%	\$38.15	0.80
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	12	8	-4	-33.3%	\$31.01	0.44
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	53	45	-8	-15.1%	\$22.41	1.12
23-0000	Legal Occupations	10	6	-4	-40.0%	\$32.41	0.21
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	272	252	-20	-7.4%	\$22.80	2.19
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	47	38	-9	-19.1%	\$16.38	0.90
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	225	190	-35	-15.6%	\$31.43	2.30
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	122	89	-33	-27.0%	\$14.53	1.98
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	62	50	-12	-19.4%	\$18.11	0.71
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	289	248	-41	-14.2%	\$11.32	1.24
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	130	104	-26	-20.0%	\$13.74	1.01
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	128	116	-12	-9.4%	\$11.99	0.93
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	281	229	-52	-18.5%	\$13.50	0.90
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	441	344	-97	-22.0%	\$17.72	0.86
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	18	13	-5	-27.8%	\$13.83	0.10
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	150	148	-2	-1.3%	\$18.74	0.97
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	117	100	-17	-14.5%	\$20.86	0.82
51-0000	Production Occupations	149	125	-24	-16.1%	\$18.18	0.46
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	134	102	-32	-23.9%	\$15.54	0.38
55-0000	Military-only occupations	9	5	-4	-44.4%	\$0.00	0.00
	All Occupations	2,992	2,510	(482)	-16.1%	\$20.15	-

Table 19: Occupational Employment Trends of Bridgton Commuter Region Residents by Major Occupational Category, 2013-2018. (Source, EMSI, 2019.2).

SOC	Description	2013 Resident Workers	2018 Resident Workers	2013-18 Change in Resident Workers	2013-18 % Change in Resident Workers	Median Hourly Earnings	2018 Location Quotient
11-0000	Management Occupations	1,289	1,191	-98	-7.6%	\$32.87	1.11
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	766	637	-129	-16.8%	\$28.83	0.57
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	336	305	-31	-9.2%	\$32.92	0.44
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	266	216	-50	-18.8%	\$33.72	0.69
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	71	53	-18	-25.4%	\$29.19	0.54
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	394	319	-75	-19.0%	\$20.32	1.11
23-0000	Legal Occupations	89	73	-16	-18.0%	\$30.91	0.54
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	1,472	1,314	-158	-10.7%	\$20.73	1.06
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	288	274	-14	-4.9%	\$16.17	0.97
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	1,315	1,111	-204	-15.5%	\$29.22	1.44
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	798	579	-219	-27.4%	\$13.57	1.53
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	447	368	-79	-17.7%	\$18.17	0.96
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	2,262	1,987	-275	-12.2%	\$11.05	0.86
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	1,043	864	-179	-17.2%	\$12.56	1.25
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	1,035	969	-66	-6.4%	\$11.51	1.62
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	2,349	1,968	-381	-16.2%	\$13.07	0.75
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	3,441	2,755	-686	-19.9%	\$16.64	0.85
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	204	222	18	8.8%	\$16.61	1.92
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	1,351	1,257	-94	-7.0%	\$16.34	1.68
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	964	842	-122	-12.7%	\$19.80	1.16
51-0000	Production Occupations	1,263	1,097	-166	-13.1%	\$19.22	1.21
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	1,180	1,012	-168	-14.2%	\$15.54	0.61
55-0000	Military-only occupations	103	73	-30	-29.1%	\$0.00	0.00
	All Occupations	22,726	19,488	(3,237)	-14.2%	\$18.32	-

Table 20: Occupational Employment of Bridgton Residents, 2013-2018. (Source, EMSI, 2019.2).

SOC	Description	2018 Resident Workers	2013 - 2018 % Change	Median Hourly Earnings	2018 Location Quotient	Typical Entry Level Education
29-1141	Registered Nurses	74	-14%	\$31.86	3.14	Bachelor's degree
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	66	-25%	\$11.65	0.81	No formal educational credential
41-2011	Cashiers	61	-19%	\$10.14	1.23	No formal educational credential
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	57	-11%	\$10.55	1.46	No formal educational credential
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	49	-17%	\$14.22	1.18	No formal educational credential
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	49	0%	\$17.75	2.94	Some college, no degree
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	48	7%	\$12.15	1.03	High school diploma or equivalent
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	46	-21%	\$16.61	0.71	High school diploma or equivalent
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	45	-18%	\$18.17	0.99	High school diploma or equivalent
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	44	-12%	\$40.62	1.07	Bachelor's degree
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	44	-28%	\$13.89	3.40	Postsecondary nondegree award
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	40	-2%	\$28.48	3.47	Bachelor's degree
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	39	-15%	\$10.52	0.63	No formal educational credential
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	38	-5%	\$28.28	2.38	Bachelor's degree
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	34	-11%	\$17.20	0.77	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	31	-11%	\$12.13	0.83	High school diploma or equivalent
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	30	-17%	\$11.64	2.57	No formal educational credential
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	28	-15%	\$15.72	1.49	No formal educational credential
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	26	-26%	\$19.47	0.84	Some college, no degree
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	24	-4%	\$13.46	1.21	No formal educational credential

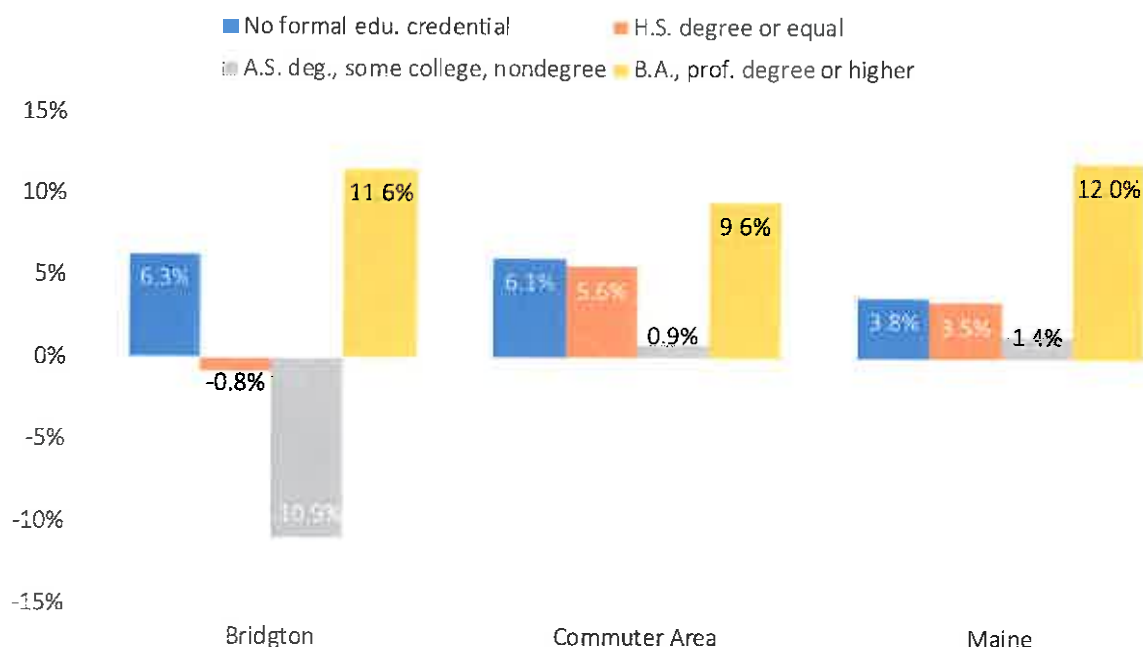


Figure 17: Occupational Growth by Educational Requirement, 2010-2018.
(Source: EMSI, 2019.2; US BLS; CBER calculations).

INTERNET AVAILABILITY AND COMPUTER USAGE

Information accessibility and connectivity are critical components in today's economy. Much like telephone cables in the last century, internet and broadband infrastructure is a foundation to the success of communities, particularly in more rural areas that lack advantages of proximity found in larger urban areas. Table 22 shows the percentage of Bridgton households that report internet accessibility as well as computer and internet usage, in comparison to peer communities. As Bridgton has over 2,000 households, 77.3% report having an internet subscription while just over 19% report having no internet access.¹⁹ Compared to most peer communities, internet accessibility is lower in Bridgton. Approximately 84 percent of Bridgton residents have access to a computer, a rate below all peer communities.

In 2019 the Cumberland County government commissioned a study, referred to as the “Playbook”, that provides communities in Cumberland County with relevant information to build out broadband internet services that includes high-level cost estimates and a resource map throughout the county of where fiber and broadband services currently exist.²⁰ While not an

¹⁹ ConnectME broadband mapping public map <https://www.maine.gov/connectme/communities-resources/Broadbandmapping>

²⁰ http://cumberlandcounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/4640/CC_Playbook_FINAL

economic development study per se, connectivity is of utmost importance to businesses and increasingly to attracting and retaining residents and businesses, so the report can be used as a guide by the Town as it considers current expansion of services.

Table 21: Internet Accessibility in Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2017.
(Source: US Census, ACS 5 year estimates).

Internet Accessibility	Bridgton		Cumb. County	Maine	Bethel	Damariscotta			
	Number	PCT HH				Norway	Paris	Raymond	
Total Households	2,098								
With an Internet subscription	1,621	77.3%	84.6%	78.7%	81.5%	80.3%	76.5%	68.2%	89.0%
Broadband of any type	1,586	75.6%	83.9%	77.7%	80.9%	77.9%	75.9%	68.2%	88.5%
Internet access w/o subscription	74	3.5%	3.6%	3.9%	1.5%	5.2%	3.0%	11.7%	3.1%
No Internet access	403	19.2%	11.8%	17.4%	17.0%	14.5%	20.5%	20.1%	7.9%

Table 22: Computer and Internet Usage in Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2017.
(Source: US Census, ACS 5 year estimates).

Computer and Internet Usage	Bridgton		Cumb. County	Maine	Bethel	Damariscotta			
	Number	PCT HH				Norway	Paris	Raymond	
Total population in households	5,144								
Households with a computer	4,301	83.6%	94.4%	91.7%	92.8%	92.5%	90.8%	88.6%	97.9%
With a dial-up internet subscription alone	69	1.3%	0.5%	0.8%	0.8%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
With a broadband internet subscription	4,018	78.1%	88.4%	82.9%	86.3%	83.9%	81.5%	77.1%	91.7%
Without internet subscription	214	4.2%	5.5%	8.0%	5.7%	6.6%	9.3%	11.5%	6.0%
Households with no computer	843	16.4%	5.6%	8.3%	7.2%	7.5%	9.2%	11.4%	2.1%

Table 23: Cumberland County Broadband Playbook Number of Households Unserved in Bridgton and Peer Communities. (Source: Cumberland County Play Book).

Town	Bath	Bridgton	Brunswick	Cape	Calais	Falmouth	Free Island	Gorham	Gray	Hallowell	Harrison	Long Island	Naples	Portland	Raymond	Scarborough	Sebang	South	Standish	Winthrop	Yarmouth	Grand Total
Number of unserved households	60	129	12	6	17	40	82	5	2	7	91	243	46	17	12	2	100	5	59	121	12	1,068

*Data not available for: Cumberland, Freeport, New Gloucester, North Yarmouth, and Powna!

REAL ESTATE MARKET CONDITIONS

RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITY

Summary findings:

- According to data from online real estate databases (MLS, Zillow, and Realtor.com), the number of home and land sales in Bridgton is relatively small - just 78 in the last year - only a handful of which were in the downtown corridor and a few more south along 302. For comparison, the town of Norway had 128 home sales over the same three year period, Paris had 47, Raymond had 178, and Damariscotta had 36.
- There were a total of 23 home sales in the downtown area in the last 3 years.
- The Zillow Home Value Index, a measure of the market value of a place based on recent home sales and a comparable home valuation methodology, shows that home values in Bridgton have risen since the bottom of the Great Recession, and appear to be increasing at a faster rate over the last several years (Figure 18). This has been fueled by a long period of record low interest rates, an overall strong economy, and growth in the number of new seasonal high value homes in Bridgton.
- Since 2008, Bridgton has added a modest number of housing units, experiencing a light spike in 2018 that included multi-unit apartment housing on Portland Road. Much of the demand in new residential construction has been driven by second home owners and retirees locating in the region (Figure 19).
- The number of vacant units is high relative to other places at 52%, driven largely by the seasonal nature of many residents (Table 26).
- The overall vacancy rate is up from 45% since 2012, though seasonal rates remains same.

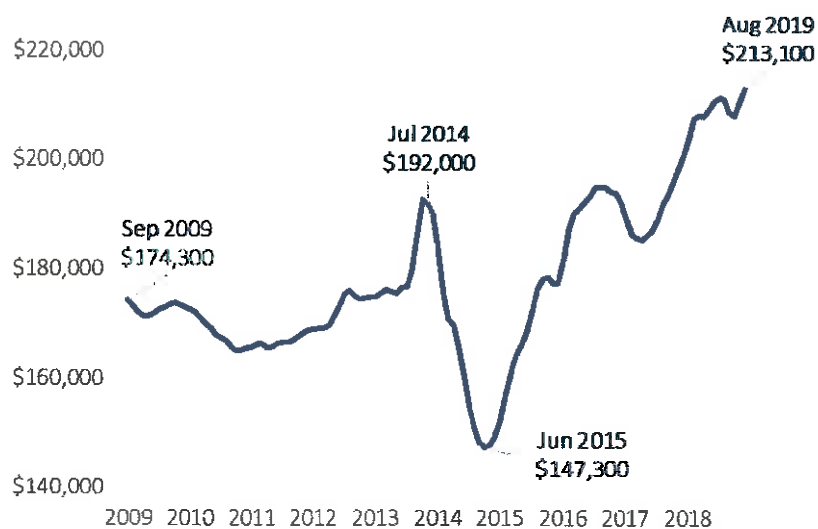


Figure 18: Zillow Home Value Index for Bridgton, 2009-2019.
(Source: Zillow.com. Note: See website for index methodology).

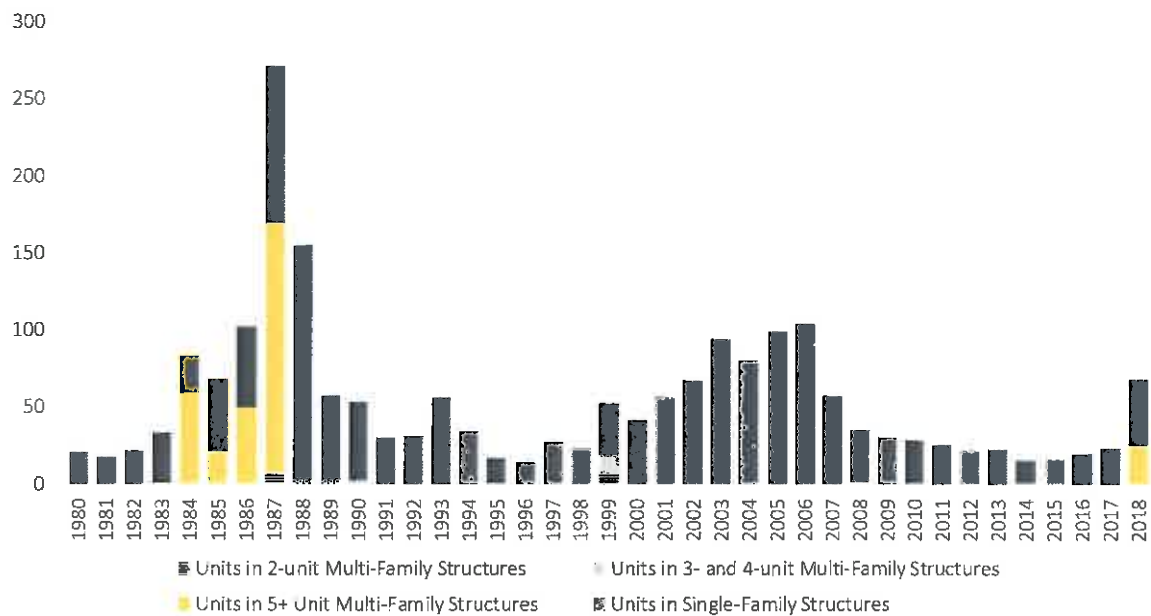


Figure 19: Building Permits in Bridgton, 1980 to 2018.
(Source: US Census).

Table 24: Housing Occupancy in Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2017.
(Source: Census 5 year est.).

Housing Metrics	Bridgton	Cum. County	Maine	Bethel	Damaris-cotta	Norway	Paris	Raymond
Housing Units	4,356	142,251	735,711	2,351	1,464	2,382	2,287	2,866
Occupied (%)	48%	84%	75%	47%	63%	70%	83%	64%
Owner	74%	69%	72%	76%	62%	77%	65%	86%
Renter	26%	31%	28%	24%	38%	23%	35%	14%
HH Size - Owner	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.9	3.0	2.5
HH Size - Renter	2.4	2.0	2.1	2.3	1.8	2.9	2.0	2.1
Mortgaged (%)	67.1%	70.0%	62.3%	49.7%	52.2%	63.9%	68.4%	75.1%

Table 25: Housing Vacancy in Bridgton and Peer Communities, 2017.
(Source: Census 5 year est.).

Vacancy	Bridgton	Cumb. County	Maine	Bethel	Damaris- cotta	Norway	Paris	Raymond
Total Housing Units	4,356	142,251	735,711	2,351	1,464	2,382	2,287	2,866
Vacant Units	2,258	23,444	181,650	1,254	539	720	399	1,037
Vacancy (%)	51.8%	16.5%	24.7%	53.3%	36.8%	30.2%	17.4%	36.2%
For Rent	153	1,998	11,500	136	62	-	-	11
For Sale	145	1,022	7,748	62	46	40	-	-
Seasonal	1,714	15,578	128,088	1,047	333	558	225	984
Other	246	4,846	34,314	9	98	122	174	42

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

There has been more limited demand for commercial buildings, including office space and light industrial development, in recent years in Bridgton. Some notable exceptions include the expansion of the Hannaford's Supermarket on Portland Road and upgrades at Bridgton Hospital, among others. This is not necessarily a surprise given the relative demand for such space in the region. However, there are some notable proposed projects in the development pipeline, including the proposed Bridgton Hotel proximate to the downtown corridor.

In the greater Portland region and southern Maine, vacancy rates in commercial office space have fallen to very low levels. This has largely been driven by the lack of inventory in commercial office space as demand has risen quickly. A number of large construction projects are underway which will add to inventory and help ease some pressure, but it remains to be seen how market demand will respond as interest rates eventually tick up and the more traditional business cycle slows growth. However, there is a strong argument to be made and a general consensus that the Portland region will continue to experience relatively favorable growth in demand for commercial office space in the near future.

There is also a glut of demand for small industrial space particularly that can support the craft food and beverage production industries. Although locations proximate to the Portland and coastal food scene has typically been an important consideration for producers, escalating rents and lack of adaptable space make it difficult for many producers to scale. Those firms seeking to grow may find space more affordable and available in places outside the urban core of Portland.

PROPERTY VALUATION TRENDS

Total valuation of Bridgton's tax base grew substantially between 2006 and 2010 before pulling back slightly (Figure 20). It remains lower than the 2010 peak. Mill rates in town have crept up slowly. Municipal costs are expected to continue to rise and expanding the tax base will be a necessary component of keeping tax burdens of residents and businesses in check. Table 26 shows the relative tax burden share falling on various sectors of the tax base. A similar exercise was presented in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan and the distribution of tax burden has changed relatively little, although there has been some offset on the residential side by commercial taxpayers. Overall, the vast majority of the tax burden still falls on residential taxpayers (92%).

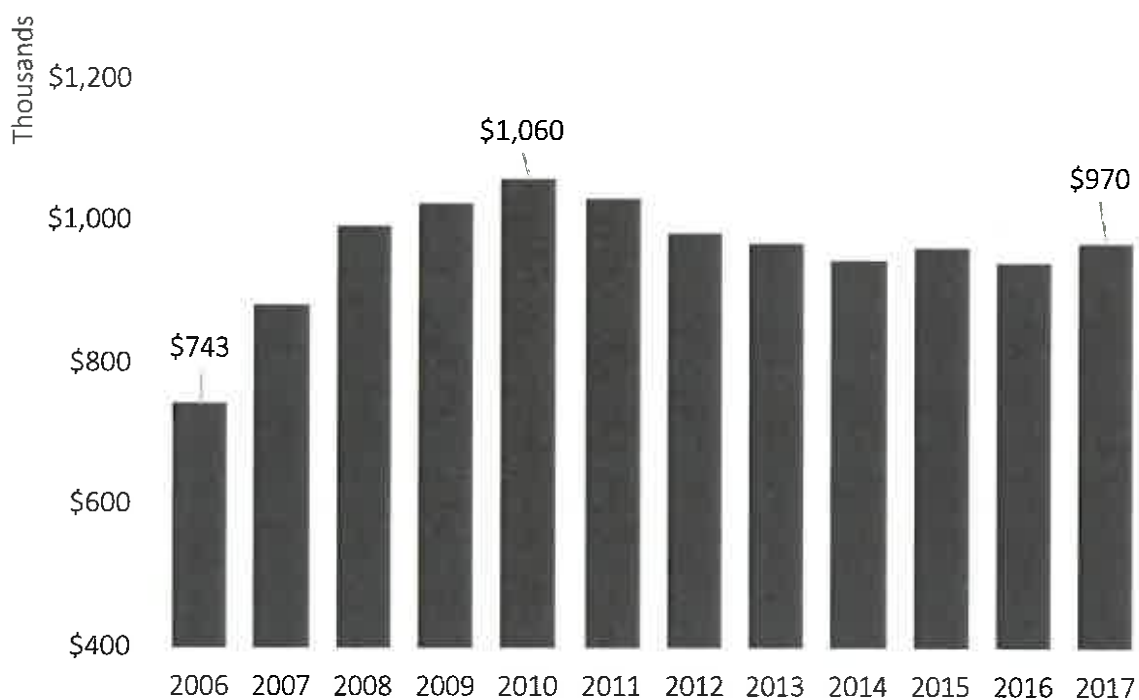


Figure 20: Bridgton Property Valuation 2006-2017. (Source: Bridgton Town Assessor).

Table 26: Relative Tax Burden Distribution by Property Sector, 2017.
(Source: Bridgton Town Assessor; MCBER Calculations.)

Category	Sum of Land Value	Sum of Building Value	Sum of Exemption Value	Total values	Total values (minus exemptions)	% total values	% Total values (minus exemptions)
Commercial	\$ 21,331,491	\$ 56,337,853	\$ 1,428,512	\$ 77,669,344	\$ 76,240,832	7.9%	8.4%
Residential	\$158,798,155	\$329,519,941	\$ 70,789,597	\$488,318,096	\$417,528,499	49.5%	46.2%
Waterfront/Waterfront Influence	\$291,868,296	\$128,491,198	\$ 11,471,785	\$420,359,494	\$408,887,709	42.6%	45.3%
Condo	\$ 25,208	\$ 112,871	\$	\$ 138,079	\$ 138,079	0.0%	0.0%
Grand Total	\$472,023,150	\$514,461,863	\$ 83,689,894	\$986,485,013	\$902,795,119	100.0%	100.0%

LAND AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Existing parcels within the sewer project area with developable land opportunities, as well as parcels with developable buildings opportunities, are identified in the Route 302 Corridor and Main Street Corridor through town assessor's data, real estate listings, and physical inventory counts of parcels and properties in Bridgton. Fundamentally, Bridgton holds a large inventory of vacant land and space for new greenfield development, but is very limited in the number of vacant buildings available for light manufacturing, production, and office space. The vast majority of site selections that occur in Maine are typically seeking already constructed space that can be accessed and utilized in a short period of time. Greenfield development is typically occurring to facilitate the expansion of existing businesses, whether in town or in a proximate location.

As of mid-November 2019, approximately 216 acres of vacant land have been identified along the new sewer line; 94% are located along the Route 302 Corridor and 6% along the Main Street Corridor. After excluding acreage with potential development restrictions such as wetlands and FEMA designated high-risk flood zones, around 56% or 127 acres have been identified as developable land (90% in Route 302 Corridor and 10% in Main Street Corridor). An additional 16 acres of vacant land are located within high-risk flood zones and could be developable but require mandatory flood insurance. Table 27 summarizes developable land for sale and developable land that is not currently for sale (labeled as unknown).

Table 27: Summary of Developable Acres.
(Source: Town Assessor; MCBER calculations).

Corridor/ Market Status	Number of Parcels	Total Acres	Developable Acres
<u>302 Corridor</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>202.95</u>	<u>114.40</u>
On Market	8	141.32	65.94
Unknown	15	61.64	48.46
<u>Main St. Corridor</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>12.81</u>	<u>12.42</u>
On Market	1	0.67	0.67
Unknown	12	12.14	11.75
Total	36	215.76	126.81

Main Street Corridor

The Main Street Corridor features several potential parcels available for development as well as vacant storefronts and office space for lease. Opportunities are located mainly within the Downtown Village Business District (DVBD) I and II and the Downtown Village Neighborhood District zones that were enacted June 11th, 2019. Figure 21 identifies existing parcels along the Main Street Corridor and notes developable land for sale and developable land that is not currently for sale as well as existing parcels with buildings for sale or lease and vacant buildings not currently for sale or lease. Highlights include:

- All land identified as vacant and developable (13 parcels, 12.5 acres) is not currently for sale.
- Approximately 7 buildings (4 parcels) are for sale or lease and 6 buildings (6 parcels) appear vacant and are not currently for sale or lease.
- Parcel # 0023-0108 & 0023-0109 (247 and 257 Main Street) includes 4 buildings and a total of 15,420 square feet. Across from 247 Main Street are several vacant storefronts (parcel # 0023-0088 and 0023-0087) undergoing redevelopment and possibly available to lease in the future.
- Another property worth mentioning is located at 67 Main Street (parcel # 0022-0095). The owner of this retail store is preparing for retirement, though not currently on the market, the property is worth keeping an eye on for future development possibilities.

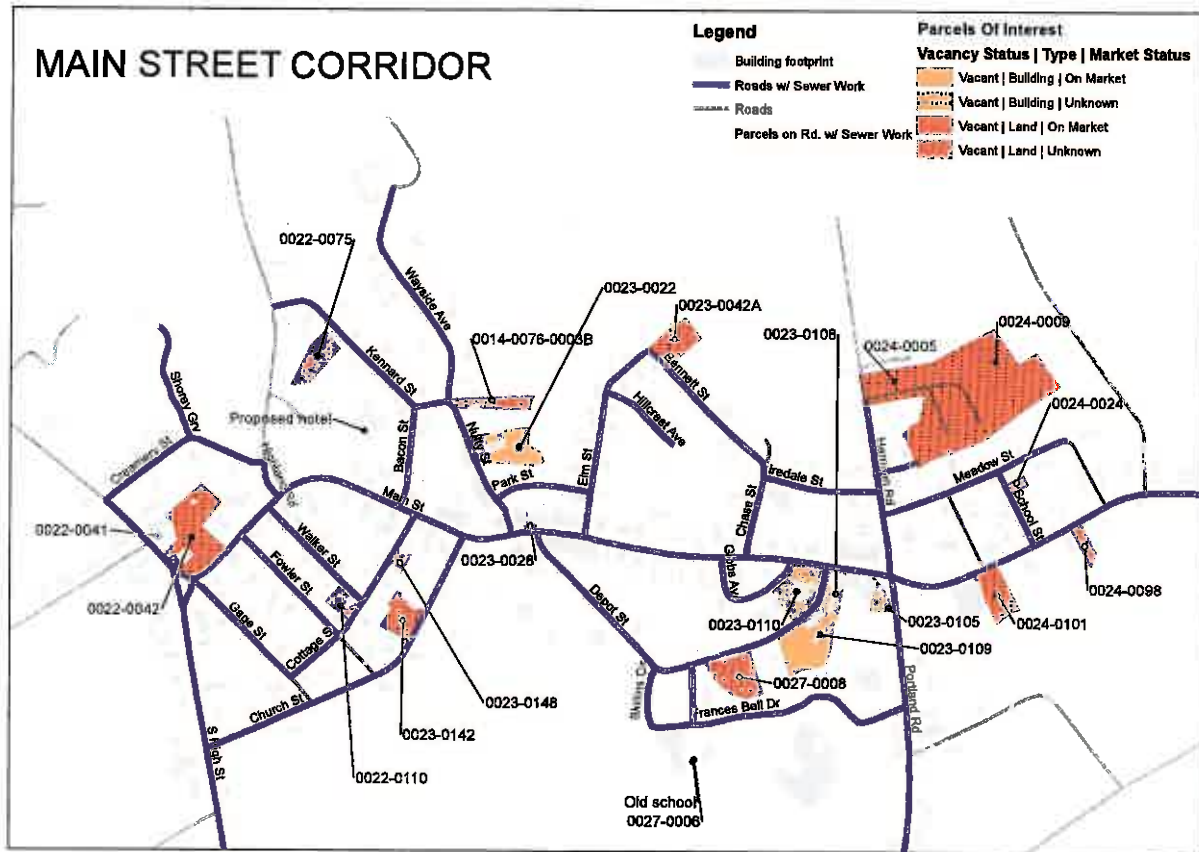


Figure 21: Potential (Re)Developable Land and Vacant Properties in the Downtown Main Street Area. (Source: MCBER).

Route 302 Corridor

The Route 302 Corridor features several undeveloped parcels and buildings along Portland Road that are available for development as well as vacant office space for lease. Most of these parcels are located within the Inner Corridor zone, a designated growth area that supports mixed use development, or located in the Downtown Village Business District II. Figure 22 identifies existing parcels along the Route 302 Corridor and denotes developable land for sale and developable land that is not currently for sale as well as existing parcels with buildings for sale or lease and vacant buildings not currently for sale or lease. Highlights include:

- Several parcels to explore for the potential of a business industrial park including 0009-0065, 0010-0010/11, and 0010-0001A.
- A number of properties along the western side of Portland Road are located within a FEMA designated high-risk flood hazard zone and wetland areas which may limit future development opportunities for several identified vacant parcels.

- Also worth considering are the prospects of three (3) undeveloped parcels (0010-0003-0001-3) totaling 9.2 acres which are located on Portland Road just below the intersection of Sandy Creek Road. These parcels do not have any development restrictions. However, based on the most recent project map the new line will not extend to these properties but close enough to consider extending.

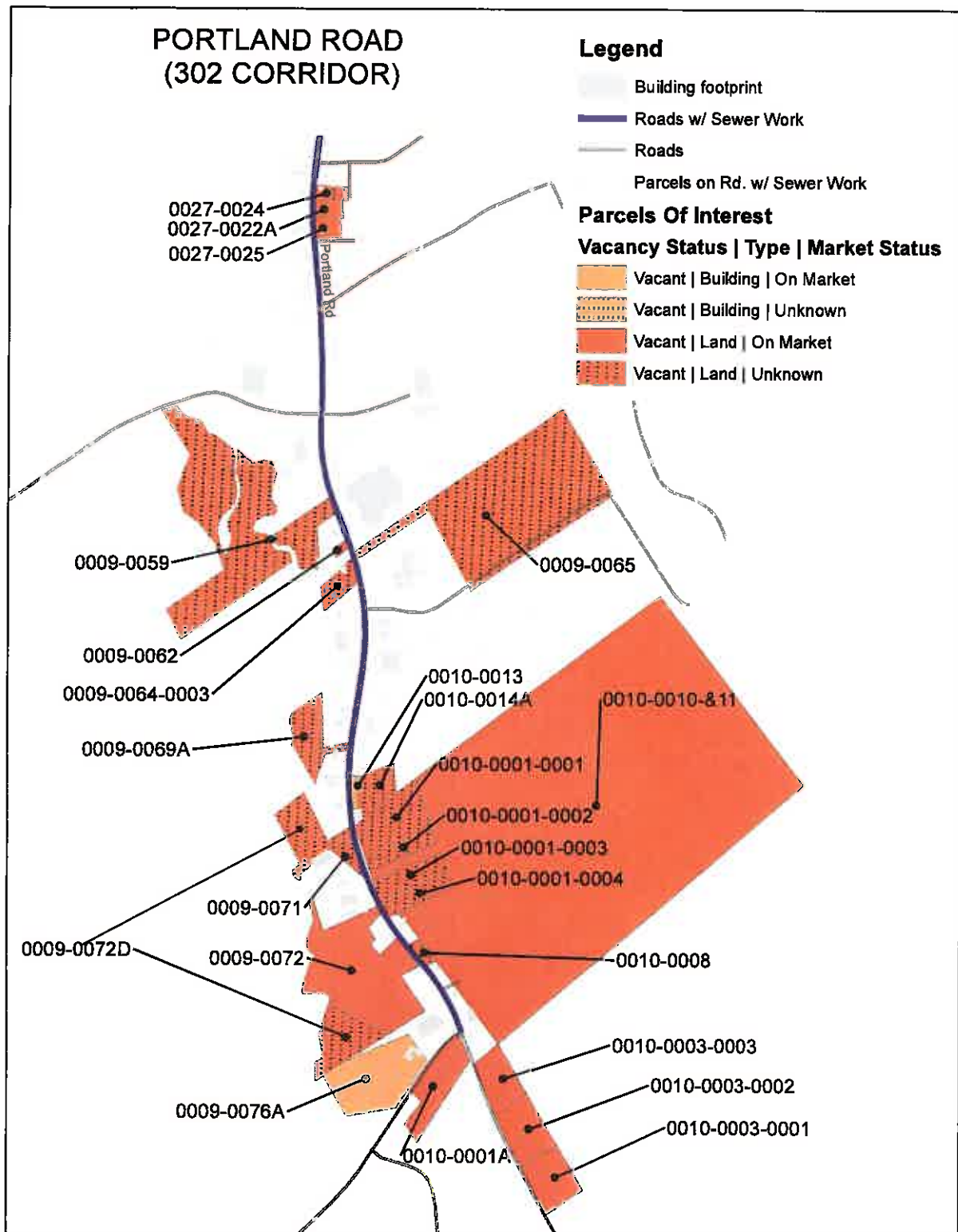


Figure 22: Potential (Re)Developable Land and Vacant Properties route 302 Portland Road Gateway Corridor. (Source: MCBER).

KEY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DRIVERS AND INDUSTRIAL TARGET OPPORTUNITIES

The following industries represent the key drivers of Bridgton's economy and the most appropriate areas for targeted attraction, recruitment, and development initiatives identified through secondary data, interviews, and community surveys. An additional listing of key industrial clusters in the Bridgton commuter region that represent additional important regional industrial strengths are included in the Appendices.²¹

Tourism and Recreation

One of, if not the single most important economic driver for Bridgton and the surrounding region is as a destination for tourism and recreation. With the presence of natural assets, such as Long Lake, Highland Lake, Moose Pond, and proximity to other water bodies, mountainous landscapes, Bridgton is a prime destination for outdoor recreation and activities. These resources help support important employment opportunities at Shawnee Peak Ski Resort, marinas and marine oriented businesses, and restaurants, retail stores, entertainment venues, and lodging and accommodations businesses.

The 2016 Comprehensive Plan identifies four types of tourists that increasingly make up Bridgton's seasonal visitors. These include 1) short-term visitors at campgrounds, cottages, and cabins, 2) children's summer camps, 3) day-trippers, and 4) seasonal residents, including second home owners. These various tourists all contribute in different ways and to different magnitudes to Bridgton and the regional economy. According to the Maine Office of Tourism's most recent annual surveys, visitors to the Lakes and Mountains tourism region of Maine continues to increase with about 4.9 million visitors to the region in 2018 – roughly 11 percent of all Maine visitors.²² Visitors to the region spent over \$670 million dollars in 2018. Visitors to the region are more likely to engage in outdoor recreation compared to visitors in other tourism regions, suggesting a competitive advantage for Bridgton and the Lakes and Mountain region relative to the rest of Maine.

Healthcare and Medical Services

As a rural service center, Bridgton is host to Bridgton Hospital and other medical offices and services that serve the region and an aging demographic. These services are not only important to the health and well-being of the local and regional populace but also serve as important employment sectors of these communities. The economic fate of many rural communities are directly tied to the presence of medical services, particularly those provided by hospitals and critical care facilities.

²¹ See Industry Cluster Identification derived from EMSI data in the Appendices.

²² <https://motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Lakes-and-Mountains-Regional-Report-2018.pdf>

In recent years there has been increasing concern in the community with respect to the fate and relationship with Bridgton Hospital and its survival. Recent and planned investments in the hospital's facilities, fresh leadership, and a renewed commitment to the community suggest Bridgton Hospital intends to continue to serve and be a vital and integral part of the community and local economy. However, as with the broader industry, health care continues to face challenges with respect to service delivery, costs, and workforce constraints that require its operations and business model to adjust. It is also imperative that the community recognize that industry's success locally depends on patronage from full-time residents and commitment from the community.

Shifts in the focus of healthcare towards wellness, nutrition, and prevention all represent new opportunities for service delivery and clustering of services. As the health care industry model continues to evolve and undergoes significant changes to delivery of services, it will remain a key employment driver of the local and region's economy.

Precision and Other Manufacturing

It is no secret that the manufacturing sector broadly has experienced a long decline in employment since the 1970's – an experience well-known to Bridgton and many rural communities in Maine and beyond. The locus of manufacturing in the US has shifted towards more high-tech, high-skilled production focused on new innovative products and specialized production supporting industries such as aerospace, communications technologies, chemical and biotech products, as well as other advanced manufacturing. Most routine manufacturing jobs have either been located overseas in low labor cost regions of the world, such as China, Vietnam, or South American countries, or jobs have been replaced by mechanization.

Still, within Bridgton and the region, a number of successful businesses are present and serve as important contributors to the region's traded sector. In Bridgton, there is a concentration of precision manufacturing shops including Howell Labs and its division Shivley Labs. There is also a concentration of manufacturing in the region in fabricated metal production, footwear manufacturing (New Balance), and wood product manufacturing specifically related to sawmills.

Construction

Regionally, residential construction appears to have been experiencing a relative mini boom in recent years driven by an increase in second home ownership and retirees. This has been tempered to an extent by the critical shortage of construction workers across southern Maine.

APPENDICES

BRIDGTON COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS LEADER INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Prepared November 18, 2019 by Liz Trice, Peloton Labs

Summary of Bridgton Interviews

During September and October 2019, we conducted in-person interviews with 40 community and business leaders to ask them about their vision and hopes for the future of Bridgton. We've organized this report to show in broad strokes the themes we heard, and then to list ideas that came from residents on how Bridgton might get there.

Even though each person we talked to was focused on only some of these themes, all of them are interconnected. Retirees like that there's a hospital in Bridgton, but the hospital depends on businesses who have employees with insurance, and employees won't stay in the area without good schools and year-round recreation opportunities. Seasonal residents like the quaint nature of the town, but shops can't stay open without year-round business. People don't like having to walk too far to parking, but far prefer the nature of a walkable main street to parking-rich strip development like in Windham. All the parts fit together, and it will be the job of this and future efforts to integrate them into a vision that effectively communicates the tradeoffs in each choice as the town moves towards that vision.

Key Themes:

1. Bridgton is headed in the right direction.

It's generally agreed that Bridgton has an amazing and unique collection of assets: a quaint walkable main street, pristine lakes, four town beaches, a ski mountain, a movie theatre, historical organizations, restaurants, a hospital, a vibrant arts scene, a community center, a farmers market, a golf course, and a great community where people work together and care about each other. People were happy with the recent streetscape improvements, sewer improvements and recent development. Almost everyone expressed their great love for both the physical town and the people of Bridgton.

“Good things are happening”

“I have great faith in what the future holds for Bridgton. “

“Everyone is invested and truly cares about this place.”

“It's a wonderful place to live and I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.”

“At the end of the day, people love Bridgton. Do more with that motto!”

2. We should protect and improve appearances & walkability on both Main Street *and* the Portland Road corridor.

We should take an active role in increasing the attractiveness of Bridgton by taking steps to improve the appearance of run-down buildings and empty lots - either through positive incentives, fines, or even tearing down buildings once they are past repair. Some people think it's inevitable that Portland Road will become ugly like North Windham, but many others have a vision for it to become an attractive gateway. It's appropriate for very large businesses to go on Portland Road corridor, but we need a plan to make it evolve into an attractive gateway and to keep it from looking like route 302 in Windham. The walkable main street is one of the key aspects of attractiveness, and as the town develops, that walkability should be extended throughout the town.

“Visuals are very important – you can't see the sewers, but you can see the streetscapes.”

“There's nothing endearing about seeing a bunch of decaying empty buildings”

“Get lower Main Street fixed up – it would help everyone.”

“Once people have to get into a car for something, they'll just as likely drive to the next town.”

Take action to improve attractiveness of Main Street

- Find ways to improve the appearance of old buildings: Incentivize, assist, or tear down
- Offer microloans and facade improvement grants to landlords and businesses to upgrade themselves, add light posts, flags, flowers & flowerboxes for businesses
- Host a window decorating contest at Christmas time + event.
- Allow larger buildings behind the small buildings on Main Street so that larger businesses can be in the walkable main street area but still be attractive.
- Incentivize future chain stores to fit into walkable Main Street like Freeport did with McDonalds.
- Fill in gaps in Main Street with temporary or permanent “pocket parks” – the Stone Surface could be set up like a little park with just potted plants and benches.
- Take down the little building across from Food City, and build a little park with granite benches
- Hire artists to transform shops and parks.

- Place emphasis on the brook – make the bridge more exciting, better railings, make the brook more visible.
- Address the flood zone issues on Main Street – we need flood planning infrastructure or plan for new buildings that are higher up.
- Give Lower Main Street a nicer name.
- Communicate to residents that since walkability is part Bridgton's charm, that means you might have to walk a block or two - people will walk a half mile to LLBean in Freeport!
- Create good signage to direct people to parking and add additional public parking areas as necessary.
- Hanover and Littleton, New Hampshire were suggested as models.

Make Portland Road an attractive gateway with small town appeal

- Expand the walkable streetscape : add sidewalks and make a biking loop
- Require nice architecture if visible from road, put parking behind buildings, cluster businesses, screen unattractive buildings with trees
- Buy up and protect view corridors as farms go up for sale.
- Make a plan so that all areas of town can be safely accessible by pedestrians and bikes.
- “When people want to develop a property, that’s the opportunity to make things nice - add sidewalks, bike paths, shrubbery. This is a beautiful rural area - you want it to feel that way. If every time something new comes in, they do that, then it supports the whole area. On 302 we could at least have a bike path and row of trees the length of it. Make a decent bike loop.”

3. We should support a vibrant main street with local businesses & shops, especially focused on food, arts & creative works

People value having a main street with shops, and especially shops that are locally owned and represent the creativity of individuals. The general opinion is to keep chains and resale shops to a minimum, encourage local purchasing, and encourage and support more shops and restaurants. There were also suggestions to support early stage entrepreneurs and artists of all ages and to explore options for collaborative spaces. There was also a lot of discussion about how people buy many things online or in big box stores now, and a sense of loss and longing for the community relationships that came from locals shopping for daily needs on Main Street.

There were mixed views on expanding marijuana industry and shops; expanded industry could provide jobs, but people also worry that the industry will boom then leave as soon as it's legal nationally, or that too many retail shops will degrade the main street.

“We need to find a balance between protecting the character of town, and welcoming businesses - regardless of what kind of businesses - and use land use [zoning] to keep things from changing drastically.”

“Part of what’s been lost with the people not shopping locally is the relationships that people developed by going to so many different shops to buy their daily needs. How do we create places for daily relationships and conversations that used to happen in shops, and how do we keep those spaces open?”

Fill storefronts and support main street businesses

- Ideas for new retail shops include: a hair salon, stores that sell women's dresses, jewelry, shoes, office supplies, bed & bath products, toys, nice resale clothing, a shop that repairs furniture and curtains, facials, massage, acupuncture, “artsy fartsy” shops, cell phone repair, hardware, and “cafes and things young people congregate around.”
- Ideas for new outdoor related shops: ski shop, sporting goods, center with fishing lures, licenses, ammo, biking equipment
- Ideas for new food-related businesses: coffee shop, bistro & food market, a brewery, bakery, local market and deli, a restaurant like Oxford House, specialty food places, wood-fired pizza, raw bar/sushi bar, more foodie businesses, “quick good food”, health food store, indoor winter farmers market, “more specialty options like Gastro Pub and the Depot Street Tap House – things that are simple like food truck food with atmosphere, something eclectic, whimsical, good value.”
- Recruit the most successful food places in Portland and have them all open satellites in a shared space, maybe with shared front of house
- Experience-oriented businesses: a bowling alley, arcade, a museum focusing on the industrial history of Bridgton, signage along the stream, a place to relax and listen to live music, indoor play space for kids like Jokers in Westbrook, kayak and boat rental club, maybe the ski mountain could provide lifts rides in the summer
- Any business that depends on growth has to be able to wait 3-5 years – find ways to make the first few years easier: provide grants or community barn-raising to help put businesses in new shops, offer empty spaces for free for a few months to groups of artists or others that will activate it, “give free storefronts to businesses for a year like Norway did.”
- Move trades businesses back in to storefronts on Main Street.
- Have chamber or other organization focus just on Bridgton businesses
- Promote existing businesses to help them survive year round
- Talk to Susan Collins to make Main Street an Opportunity Zone
- Take an inventory of businesses that have left town, and find out what the disconnect was: Stone Guy moved to Naples, Grow Shop next to Campfire moved to Fryeburg

because cannabis ordinance wasn't passed yet, Lighting Store, Butcher, Cigar Shop, Tea Room.

- Start having community discussions about what it takes to buy locally; admit the challenges posed by Amazon and big box stores, and educate people about the multiplier effect of buying locally.

Support Shop Owners and Entrepreneurs

- Tell the story of entrepreneurs in the paper so that others can learn and be inspired to do the same
- Create an incubator for entrepreneurs, new businesses, & startups
- Create shared creative spaces like coworking or shared retail, and/or maker space for people doing cottage businesses, crafts, and Etsy-like businesses at home
- Host seminars and professional development opportunities for existing businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs
- Engage seasonal and retired people to assist new businesses. They have financial and professional resources, and could provide guidance and advice
- If there was a program that offered free storefront rent, housing and a small grant, so many young people would try that. Millennials around the country are looking for opportunities.
- Create a support group for small businesses and institutions where they can work together on their shared challenges, give and get mentorship, and bring in outside assistance as needed.
- Provide professional development and project management trainings. "People want to be part of something, create, make something but they don't know how to do it, and they don't have the resources to learn."
- Create programs for kids to learn about being entrepreneurs
- Host conversations about what types of shared spaces might be a good fit for Bridgton: retail booths, coworking, and maker space. The art gallery is a good model.

5. We should work to make Bridgton more livable for year-round residents of all ages and incomes.

We should allow change that supports and attracts more year-round residents of all ages. This means seeking ways to bring more jobs, support local entrepreneurs, build more housing in the walkable town area, create recreation facilities, improve the quality of schools, and improve access to quality healthcare. Employers say it's difficult to recruit educated employees without these amenities. Many people also mentioned that there are many lower income people struggling here, and that for the town to grow, everyone needs to have opportunities and be engaged.

“Shopkeepers move here because they want to be year-round residents. . . so we can't just have the cute shops without a vibrant year-round population.”

“You need a mix, you need industry. You can't build a long term sustainable economy on retired people – you need families, and families need jobs.”

“Access to hospital is a great amenity, but we need more year-round amenities to keep the doctors and nurses here.”

“Having children in the school system is very eye-opening; everything is focused on tourism, but there are people really struggling, a lot of addiction.”

“We need to keep moderate and low income people from falling through the cracks; the longer and better quality of their lives are, the more they are able to contribute to the community.”

“The business community needs to realize that if they don't support school budgets they are going to lose their top talent. Maine is in a fight for talent.”

Support housing, recreation, and other amenities for year-round residents, both young & old:

- Build housing: affordable apartments, middle class homes, senior housing developments. We can also serve greater Portland's housing need.
- Older residents care about restaurants and health care, including alternative modalities.
- Younger residents like to be around other young people and they care about jobs, things to do at night, quality of schools, and amenities for families with kids like multigenerational recreation facilities and outdoor spaces with something for every age, parks with sculptures to climb on.
- Create services for vacationers, retirees, second homers.
- Create a gym that's affordable and can accommodate both locals and tourists: fitness classes, indoor basketball, soccer, adult education, boys and girls club, food pantry, gym for adults, indoor walking track and groomed outdoor trails.
- Create amenities for year-round outdoor lifestyles - skiing, boating, hiking, trails for walking in the winter
- Create an arts center for kids and adults in Craftworks building

Support people and families that are lower income or otherwise vulnerable

- Provide access to daycare and afterschool care.
- Have a small van picking up seniors at Ricky's and circulating to the hospital and Hannaford.

- Make General Assistance easier to get– the town makes it really hard.
- Offer services so that people can get their snow shoveled or get a ride.

Attract Residents, Employers and Remote Workers

- Promote the appeal of the town to attract companies and year-round residents.
- Engage seasonal residents and visitors as participants in all activities, recruit them to boards etc.
- Recruit people who have a connection to the area – have vacationed here, have a parent here.
- Appropriate jobs might be light manufacturing, professional service, customer service, tech companies service, FedEx, LLBean, a big non-profit
- Provide training for locals to get remote work jobs.
- Create incentives to attract remote workers – the Ski area is willing to offer discounted season passes to remote workers statewide, get them to visit Bridgton
- Provide shared office space for people who work at home - a space with lots of small offices would be good
- Create a campaign to get people who work in Portland to start working from Bridgton
- Get someone who is passionate about Bridgton and a good businessman to recruit other businesses

Improve Schools, Promote the Trades, Partner with Employers

- “To attract employees to live here the test scores [at the schools] would have to go up.”
- “If we invest in our schools it will pay off. Kids who get a good education and understand how the community works, are going to come back and invest. If we don't pay the teachers well, and all the good students go away, that's a bad situation.”
- Support school budgets.
- Improve schools and test scores: students need better critical thinking skills, to think on their own feet, and to take direction well.
- The newspaper could focus more on the academics of the schools instead of just sports.
- Have a satellite from USM, Community College, or other higher learning institutions or other workforce development and adult education.
- Promote the trades for students. Bridgton needs more tradespeople, and the trades pay well.
- Freeport might be a model for improving schools.
- Some employers already meet with high school kids and talk about career paths; maybe this could be expanded to a program to include more employers and internships.
- Businesses expressed that they would be happy to work more closely with schools – what is needed is someone who is responsible for doing more outreach and coordination

5. We should protect, expand and leverage access to lakes, streams, mountain and forest.

Everyone agreed that natural resources are one of Bridgton's top assets. For the amount of passion, concern, and interest in Bridgton's natural resources, it would make sense to create a natural resources protection and access plan, and then use that both to guide development, promote for tourism and to attract year round residents.

"Bridgton is a tourist area, a beautiful small town - tasteful small businesses will thrive if we protect and preserve the lakes and mountain. If it grows too big - big boats, not protecting resources, the town will struggle."

Increase access to natural resources:

- Create a natural resources access protection plan.
- Create and maintain trails for walking, biking, hiking
- Develop a Stevens Brook Trail from Highland Lake to Long Lake, make signs that tell the history of the mills
- Create a community canoe club on highland lake for both residents and tourists; tour busses could stop there and paddle for an hour
- Create a dog park
- Create biking trails as part of ski area
- Connect the snowmobile trail network better to town businesses
- Create events around outdoor activities and recreation like ice fishing derby, trail running, biking, rugby, swimming, triathlon, plants and animals.
- Look at Kingdom Trails in East Burke Vermont - they have an amazing trail network, and did a lot of work to try to figure out how to capitalize on their ski area

Invest in Monitoring and Protecting Natural Resources

- Monitor water quality and restrict development and boat use if necessary to protect the pristine quality of lakes.
- Encourage housing development in walkable areas with small yards to reduce roads, traffic, and runoff.
- Teach people to check their boats for invasive species so we won't have to pay for inspections
- Support preserving sensitive ecological areas and connecting parcels of conserved land.
- Protect forest along road corridors to keep travel ways attractive.
- Include agriculture as part of the plan
- Don't allow industry or activities that would create toxic chemicals or other pollution
- Create program to minimize pesticides so as to not pollute lakes.

- Create policies to keep as much land as possible undeveloped and restrict the creation of new roads; developments eventually result in roads returning to towns and the maintenance costs can be a net loss to taxpayers.
- Hire a professional planner who understands regulations and environmental impacts
- Incorporate third party inspections into all major projects, and do a check-in 5 years later to see if the existing rules worked to prevent runoff pollution, and change policies if needed.
- Assign more staff to code enforcement – it takes a lot of time to deal with violations.
- Require thorough before and after photographs for any permitting – people will be much less likely to violate.

6. We need to find ways to welcome new people, new ideas, and visitors

We can welcome and engage seasonal residents and visitors as future residents, business owners, and promoters. Many summer residents have been coming for years, sometimes generations, and feel invested in community, but that can be expanded. Welcome young people, new ideas and new businesses that fit with vision of a vibrant, livable, walkable town. Many people lament that they don't have a nice place for business and personal visitors to stay, and think that a hotel would be an asset, particularly in the walkable town center so that people will walk to shops and restaurants.

“New investment will likely come from new people.”

“A lot of people don't want anything to change. But if you want to survive in this economy, you have to allow growth.”

“Don't quote me, but I'm for the hotel in town”

“For the town to grow, people from away are going to have to feel welcome here - not just in a polite 'it's nice to see you' way - but as stakeholders.”

“We need to be open to collaborating with people who have seen success in other places.”

“We need younger, forward-thinking people on the planning board and on the select board.”

“The answer is just more people. More people driving, more people stopping, more people eating, more people sleeping.”

Be more welcoming to visitors and new residents

- Work to engage seasonal residents and visitors as participants, recruit them to committees, welcome their ideas.
- Support the Community Center to host more activities to appeal to winter tourists
- Bring busses from cruise ships to Bridgton. Create a streetscape that is welcoming to tour busses, for visitors to slow down and stop
- Tour busses need restaurants and experiential businesses like a recurring art fair, nature walks, or paddling experience that can handle 40 visitors at a time
- Pitch tourist busses that they should visit Bridgton as a place to consider retiring in Maine.
- Support events that capitalize off the current demographics of Portland like the gastro pub opening focused on beer that brought in 300 people.
- Create a program of “super connectors” welcoming people who want to move here, like the 2 Degrees Portland program. Some people already offer to drive around employers’ prospective employees.

Allow more hotel, lodging & conference options:

- Address concerns to allow a Main Street hotel
- Create small lodging places along Main Street.
- Create another hotel at the entrance to Mountain Road
- Bring at least one branded hotel
- Create a conference space for 50-100 people.

Welcome new voices, perspectives, and investment:

- Create opportunities for community members to spend time talking with people with different beliefs outside of politicized public meetings.
- Create a young professionals advisory council, include high school and college age residents, and actually listen to them.
- Allow public meetings to be attended by cell phone, be shorter, and/or have professional staff consolidate information so more people can participate.
- Say to businesses: “We will find a place for you.” and then devote the staff time to find a way to fit them in in a way that doesn't ruin our Main Street or natural resources.

7. We need to improve communication and collaboration

There is a lot of collaboration, but also frustration with failed collaborations. There is a big opportunity to coordinate what's already happening and make everything feel like it's part of a larger whole.

“We have everything, but we need all the loose ends tied together.”

“There's was a parade that was planned for months that goes right by my door but I just found out.”

“The measure of a town is the opportunities for people to ‘plug in’”

“People help each other in this town. But you can't be impatient, you have to build up relationships first.”

Improve communication and coordination of existing happenings

- Create more ways to share and cross-pollinate events: shared calendar etc.
- Coordinate more between town activities and ski area.
- Work with the chamber to really market Bridgton, its businesses, and the benefit of moving here
- Find ways to layer food, arts, and culture onto existing events and create new events out of existing food, arts, and cultural organizations.
- Bring food trucks and art to the farmer's market and the weekly classic car gatherings
- Create a monthly art walk
- Seek ways to re-build the small town culture of everyone knowing each other
- Host community conversations about how to create places for daily relationships and conversations that used to happen in shops

Utilize the new Community Development Director as a connector

- Make sure everyone meets the new Community Development Director and get their profile in the newspaper
- The new director should be at every ribbon cutting and event, sponsor every small event, and volunteer at events
- The new community & economic director should maintain town calendar, make sure the whole town knows about fairs, parades, etc.
- The new person should not move on big issues until they understand who the big shakers are, and what their concerns are.
- Hire an intern locally to “home grow” someone who is familiar with the local community

8. We need to create good plans and process, and cultivate a high level of professionalism and leadership so public processes go smoothly.

We heard that the current planning approval process doesn't always handle conflicting opinions well, that some people are frustrated due to lack of vision and clarity by leadership, and that this needs to be addressed for the town to move forward. We need to work on a plan, and then allow projects that fit that plan.

“It should be easier to do development. As long as someone is meeting the rules, they should be able to do it. It's left a bad taste in the mouths of developers – if this is how they're treating people – why should I put time and energy into that?”

“It's hard in a small town, because people take sides and you don't want to alienate people.”

“We need to decide what our image should be, and work toward that, building by building.”

“The town attitude has been very fearful – focusing on finding small problems to delay projects rather than moving boldly toward a desired goal. We need to have clearer goals.”

“There needs to be a plan of what the town is looking for; right now it's up to each individual person to have a vision, and then fight the town.”

“You have to get people talking, and get people listening, hear what people are saying, so you can set goals and bring people together around those goals.”

“A leader's job is hearing people's small concerns and fears and leading people to the bigger picture.”

“You have to think of what is beneficial for the future, for the majority, for the next generation. People fear change. When someone has a negative stance, you need to hear them, but not let that stop the majority from making positive change.”

“Leadership should be focused on the mission for the town: what are the values, and how do we row in the same direction?”

Create plans, training and process to expedite the approval process

- Create a high level vision and plans that the town can follow.
- Host community conversations about the priorities and trade-offs that are being made as the town grows so that any improvement can be understood as part of a larger plan.

- Create clear rules and guidelines so people with new ideas know what they need to do to move forward.
- Hold more meetings between staff and developer before formal applications or presentations so that developers don't waste money on something that's not allowed.
- Create a post-development review process so that policies can be debated and changed before the next project appears rather than during the review process
- Set a high standard of professionalism for elected board positions.
- Train elected and appointed officials and interested residents in leadership, facilitation, communication, how to handle fears and conflict civilly, and best practices of public process so that public processes go smoothly.
- Provide food and/or small stipends for appointed and elected positions to create a positive experience at trainings and meetings.
- If there is conflict, hire a mediator to observe both sides and suggest solutions.
- Seek, grow, and encourage civic leaders of all ages with positive visions and great communication skills.
- Use outside experts for the more technical planning and natural resource protection roles

Interviewees

Dragonfly Barn, Christine Rogers

Resident, developer in Portland, Richard Packard

Resident, Former Maine Center for Entrepreneurship director, Don Gooding

Firefly Boutique, Kate Jeager

Oberg Insurance & Real Estate Agency, Inc. James Oberg

Rufus Porter Museum, Inc. (director) Karla Leandri-Rider

Towanda's Specialty Food & Deli Barbara Bloomgren

Rufus Porter Museum, Inc. (board member) Judy Graham

Canuvo, Inc. Sage Peterson, Josh Quint

Community Development Committee member, Greg Bullard

Hayes True Value Hardware & Just Ask Rental, Al Hayes

Howell Labs, David Allen, Joe McDonald

Tasteful Things, Nate Sunday

4H Executive Director, Susan Jennings

Hancock Lumber Company, Steve Rickert

Bridgton Academy, Marty Mooney, Sven Cole

Bridgton Community Center, Carmen Lone

Bridgton House of Pizza, Spyro Hronarakis

Retired Seniors at Community Center, Judy Genesio, Peter Berry, Janet Underwood

Bridgton Storage & Consignment, Mark Lopez

Bridgton Hospital, Peter Wright

DownEast Innovation, Justin Keiger
Lakes Environmental Association, Colin Holme
Macdonald Motors, Dan Macdonald
Beth Cossey
Vivo, Jim Burke
Chalmers Insurance & Real Estate, Dottie Chalmers-Cutter, Jim Chalmers
Art Gallery, Kate Krukowski Gooding
Chamber of Commerce, Angie Cook & Sue Mercer
Loon Echo Land Trust, Matt Markot
Main Eco Homes, Justin McIver
Norway Savings Bank, Jenifer Rollins
Shawnee Peak, Chet Homer
Ashley Pringle, Maine & Co.
Three anonymous residents

BRIDGTON COMMUNITY SURVEY TABULATED RESULTS AND SUMMARY

Prepared November 8, 2019

Survey administered electronically October 2, 2019 through October 30, 2019

Background and Methods

During the course of scheduled interviews with business and community leaders, it was suggested that a survey of residents would be helpful to identify appropriate development opportunities for the town, as well as gather a wider swath of general attitudes towards economic and community development. Given the timing and resources available, an electronic survey was deemed the most efficient means to solicit a large response from community members. The survey was conducted electronically for the four week period October 2, 2019 through October 30, 2019. Respondents were invited to participate through various community and business email lists and through advertisements on online social media and in the Bridgton News.

To protect the identity of respondents and to enable people to speak freely, the survey was conducted anonymously. Responses were closely screened for completeness and to determine the uniqueness of responses and source of response. Apart from a very small number of responses which were appropriately flagged, the vast majority of responses received were complete and included in the analysis.

Summary of Results

The final sample includes a total of 417 responses. Of these, approximately 50% of respondents identified as full-time residents of Bridgton, while another 40% identified as a seasonal or part-time resident. The remaining 10% of respondents are proportionately split between people that are employed in Bridgton but live outside the town and people identified as occasional visitors to Bridgton. Well over 80% of respondents reported owning a home in Bridgton, either as a primary residence or seasonal residence.

Respondents overwhelming skewed older - almost 70% of respondents reported being age 55 and over. Just 17% of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 44 years old. Similarly, responses from full-time residents are from residents that have lived in Bridgton for long periods of time. About 58% reported living in Bridgton for greater than 10 years while 28% reported living in Bridgton for less than 5 years, and about 16% reported living in Bridgton for less than 2 years. A majority of full-time residents in the sample identified as retired, while a much larger share of seasonal part-time residents identified as employed, although about a third of seasonal or part-time residents also identified as retirees. The majority (62%) of employed full-time

residents reported having employers in Bridgton, 27% reported working outside of Bridgton and about 7% reported working remotely for an entity located outside of Maine.

A core theme that resonates throughout survey responses is an appreciation and recognition of the importance of Bridgton's small town character and natural amenities that are core to Bridgton's identity. It is clear and near unanimous among respondents that protecting and maintaining this core identity is of vital importance. Likewise, the social aspects of place, specifically the people and community, were identified as core components of what makes Bridgton special to its residents and visitors. Collectively, the presence of recreational opportunities, cultural amenities, and locally owned businesses are all valued by survey residents and visitors.

Attitudes towards Economic Development

Residents and employees support a variety of strategies to help enhance the local economy and to promote vibrancy of the community (Question 14). With respect to the downtown area and Main Street corridor, full-time residents (Question 15) were supportive of locating retail stores, additional restaurants and eateries, and support for other cultural amenities, such as the arts, artisans, crafts, and creative activities. Several specific types of businesses were repeatedly raised including a bakery, coffee shops and cafes, entertainment and music venues, and family entertainment and recreational activities. Lodging options were also identified as a potential type of business to be located in the downtown area, although specific size, site, and nature of those options did not have a consensus. A number of respondents raised concerns or expressed opposition to the specific location of the proposed hotel, although to a lesser degree there were some respondents that expressed support for the proposed location. A small number of respondents believe the downtown currently maintains a good mix of businesses.

Part-time residents (Question 15) and visitors reported similar preferences for retail stores restaurants and dining as well as support for creative types such as the artists and artisans and craft makers. Coffee shops and cafes are also identified in addition to family entertainment and recreation, bakeries, and various other retail establishments. Lodging was identified by a dozen or so seasonal residents and visitors as a type of business to be located in the downtown area.

With respect to the Portland Road corridor (Question 16), full-time residents referenced hotel and motel establishments as best located along the 302 corridor. This was followed by automotive and related services, and various types of retail. Respondents also mentioned recreation, entertainment, and restaurants, as well as professional office spaces, light manufacturing and industrial were mentioned to some degree of frequency.

Seasonal and part-time residents identified retail, lodging, and automotive-related services as the types of businesses that should be located on Portland Road. Likewise, restaurants, recreation and entertainment, grocery and pharmacy, and hardware store were also identified. Professional office space were also mentioned and to a much less degree, light manufacturing and industrial where identified as businesses best to locate along the 302.

Survey respondents were also asked to identify what other types of businesses they would like to see located in Bridgton (Question 17). Full-time residents indicated they would like to see unique and upscale restaurants, specialty health and natural food stores, a brewery or brew pub, various artisan stores, as well as support for the farmer's market, coffee shops, and an indoor recreational building. Seasonal and part-time residents similarly identified restaurants, but also placed emphasis on seasonal recreational options, health and wellness, as well as arts and artisan oriented options, brew pubs, bakeries, and other personal service businesses.

A variety of descriptors were used by respondents when referring to both commercial locations when referring to the character of desirable businesses, which include adjectives such as boutique, local, quality, natural, specialty, and sustainable types of businesses. Overwhelmingly respondents appear to oppose big box stores and chain/franchise businesses, though several noted that if they are to locate in Bridgton that 302 is the most appropriate location.

However, there is an apparent tension for many respondents between the desire for a more vibrant downtown, reducing empty storefronts, and having additional retail, dining, and entertainment options, while desiring less traffic and people. Many respondents expressed concerns that development in Bridgton might eventually destroy Bridgton's small town character, referencing strip development in Windham as examples of the types of development not welcome. It is important for the town to understand that development does not necessarily and does not have to equate to sprawl, strip malls, or growth that may be destructive or counter to what makes Bridgton so attractive to its current residence as well as future. This idea that development in and of itself implies sprawl does not have to be the case. Paradoxically, it's by allowing more density and height of buildings on Main Street and restricting development on Portland Road and other areas that sprawl will be prevented.

Also of note was that the vast majority of respondents focused on the types of businesses that serve local markets, rather than the types of businesses that might be "export" in nature – serve outside markets – which could provide more stable and better paying employment opportunities that bring dollars into the local economy.

Seasonal Residents

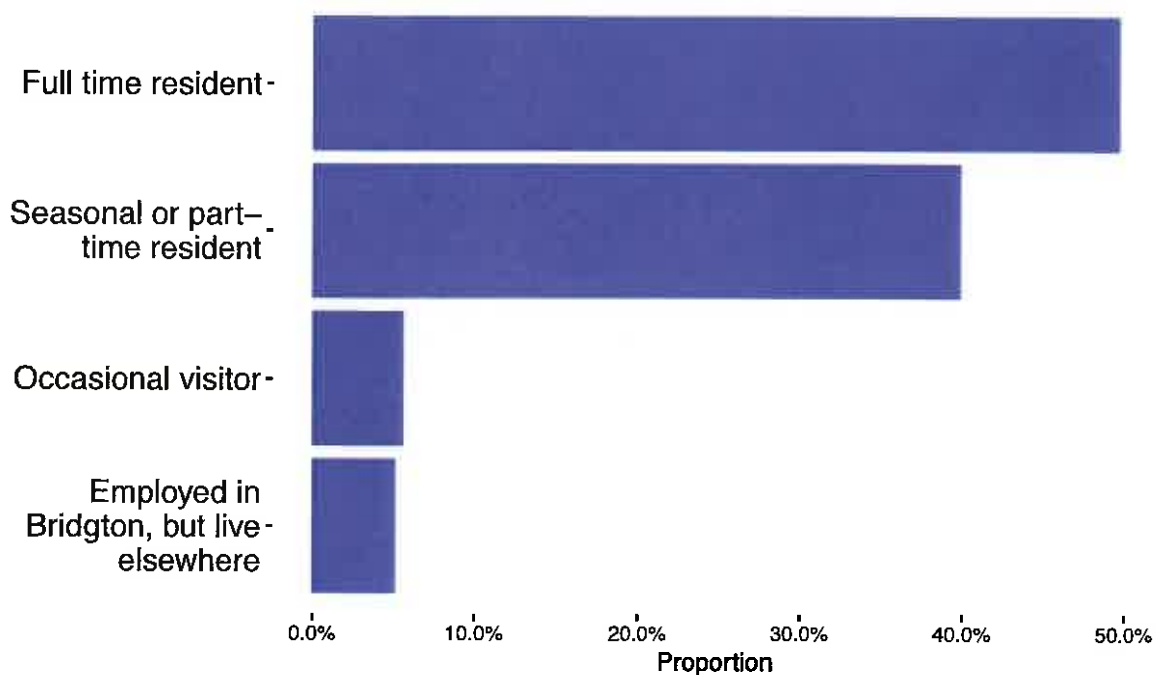
Work requirements are a primary constraint for seasonal residents to extend their stay in Bridgton, although almost half of seasonal and part-time residents reported working remotely at least part of the time while staying in Bridgton. Climate also plays an important factor in the seasonality of visitors as many seasonal residents like to split their stay in places with less harsh winters. Things to do, internet accessibility, and to a lesser extent availability of places to stay also limit people's time in Bridgton.

Seasonal residents were asked what factors prevent them from moving to Bridgton on a permanent basis. Of the 163 responses, the primary factor is related to employment. A large number of people reported planning to move to Bridgton upon retirement, which may range from within the year to up to 10 years. Given broader trends towards retirees moving to high amenity places, retirees may comprise a steady supply of people migrating to Bridgton on a full-time basis in future years. Similarly, the availability of good employment opportunities was a hindrance for people to move to Bridgton. This includes a lack of job opportunities that align with skill sets and occupations of seasonal residents, as well as that compensation rates in the Bridgton region in Maine are not competitive with a seasonal resident's home region. Family restrictions are another factor that prevented people from living in Bridgton on a full-time basis. A large share of respondents reported no interest in moving to Bridgton on a full-time basis, while a large number of other respondents indicated that climate, most notably the winters, would prevent them from a full time residency.

Business Owners

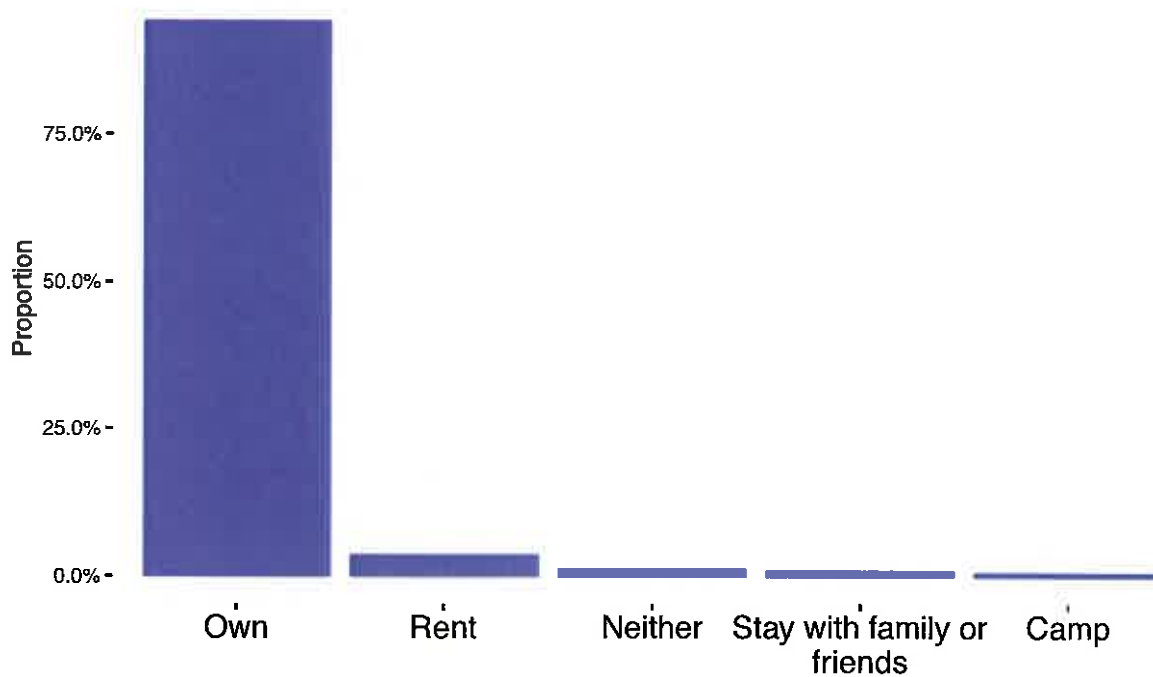
Although a business owners were a small sample size (36 respondents), Question 26 asked what led to their decision to start a business in Bridgton. The most prominent themes were to capitalize on an opportunity in Bridgton or they simply wanted to be located in Bridgton. A handful of business owners reported working remotely from Bridgton. When asked what would be most helpful in increasing the success of their business in Bridgton (Question 27), business owners overwhelmingly reported more local employment and housing options for residents and increasing the number of year-round residents. Other thoughts included public infrastructure investments, including more parking and internet accessibility/reliability, as well as marketing and branding of Bridgton. Increasing seasonal residents, lower taxes or more incentives, and lodging options were also mentioned.

Q1: Which of the categories below best describes your presence in Bridgton? (N=417)



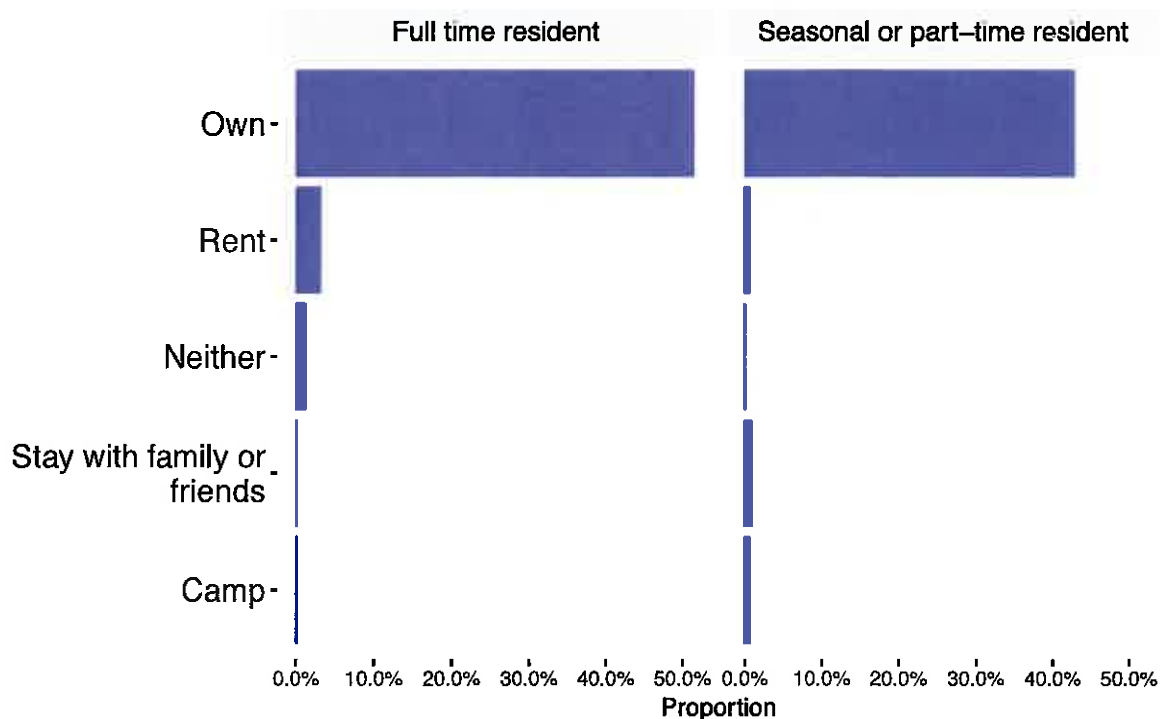
Notes: Unweighted proportions of primary respondents

Q2: Do you own or rent a home in Bridgton? (N=370)

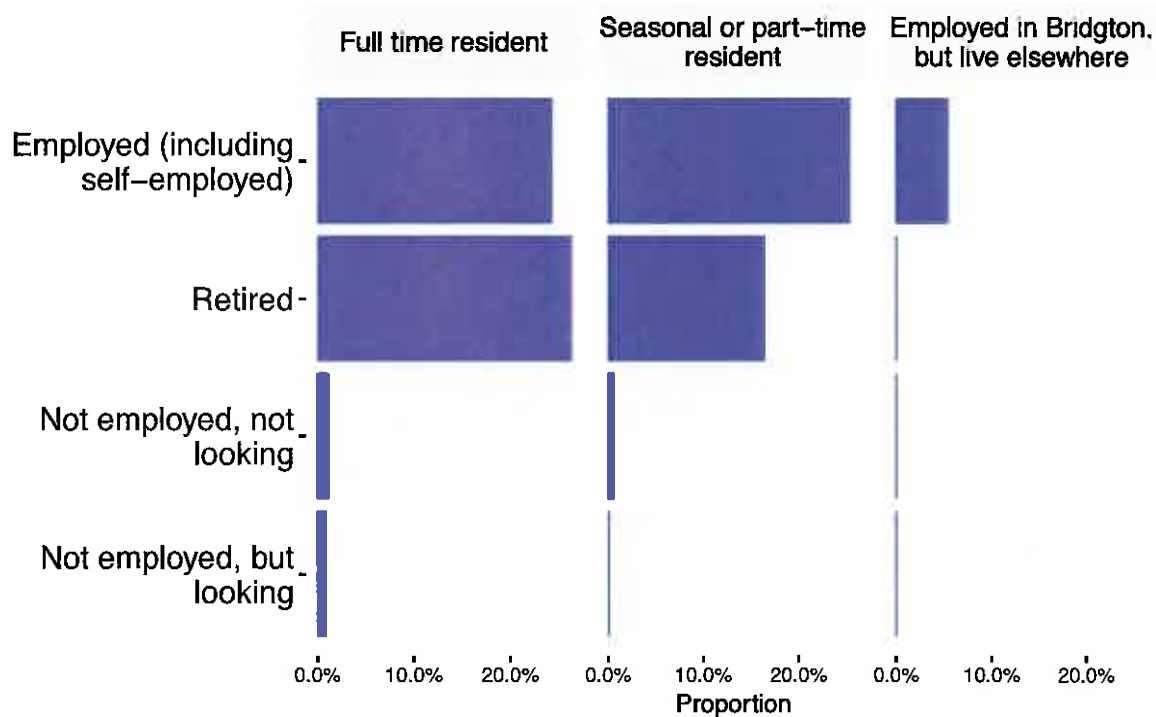


Notes: Unweighted proportions of full-time & part-time residents

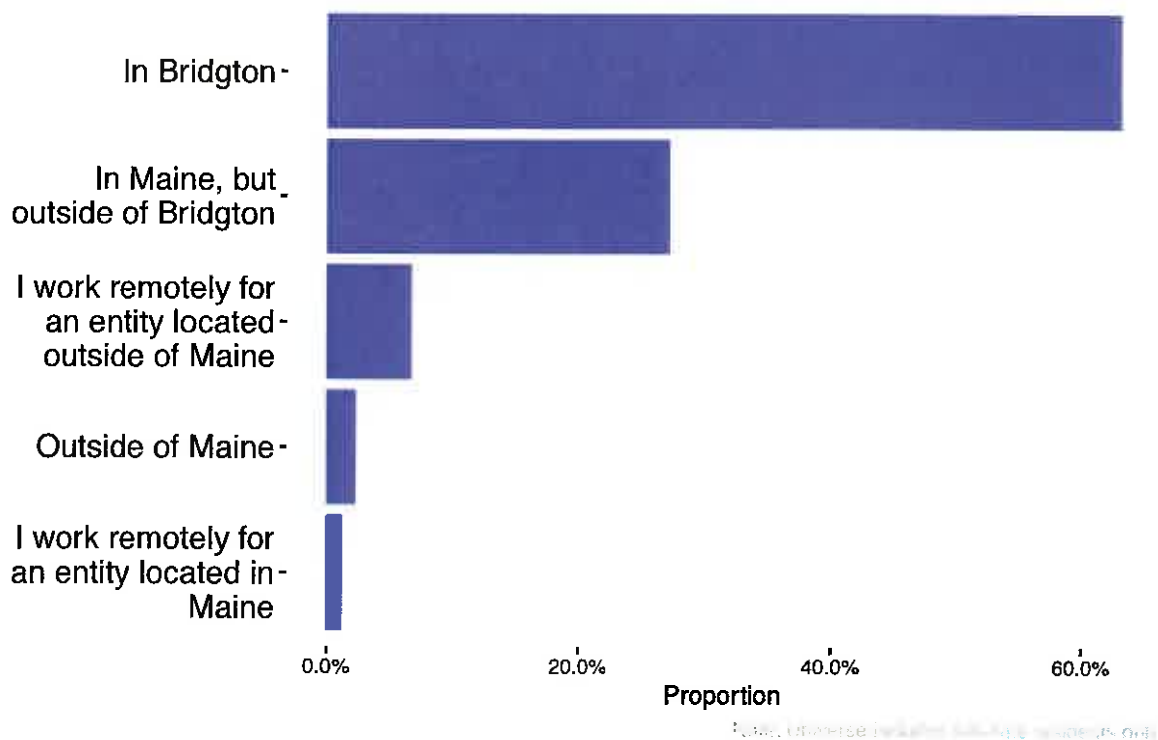
Q2: Do you own or rent a home in Bridgton? (N=370)



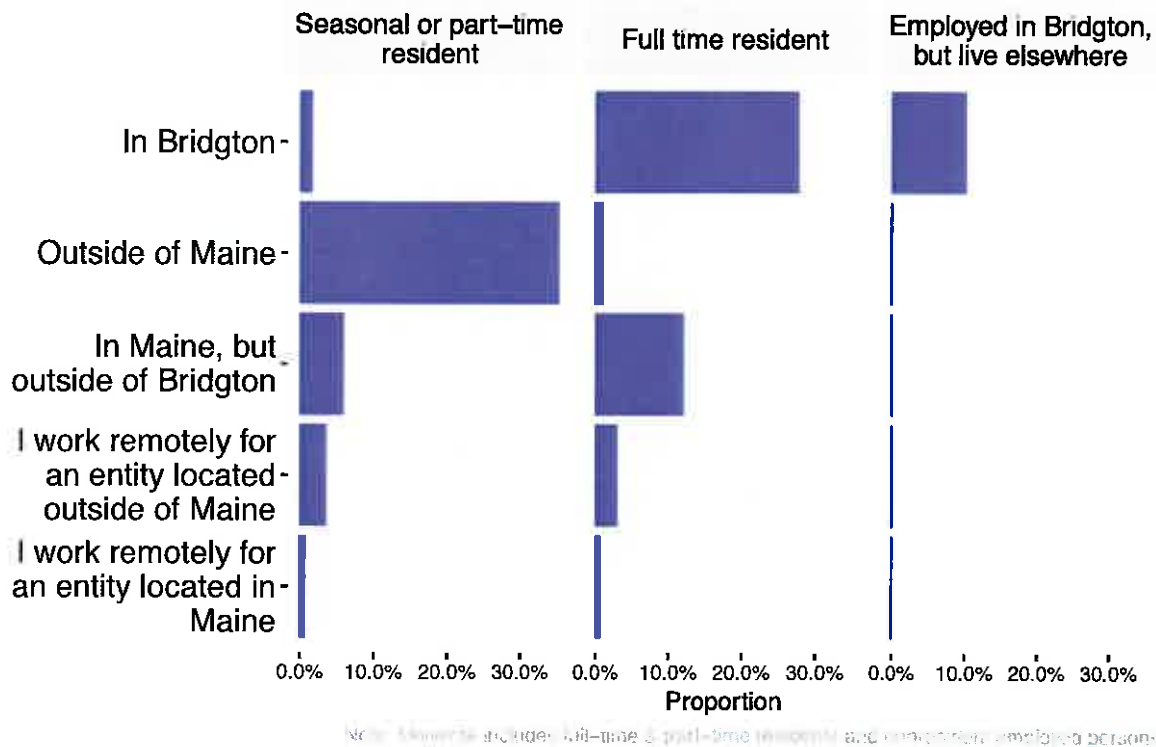
Q4: Please indicate your employment status? (N=391)



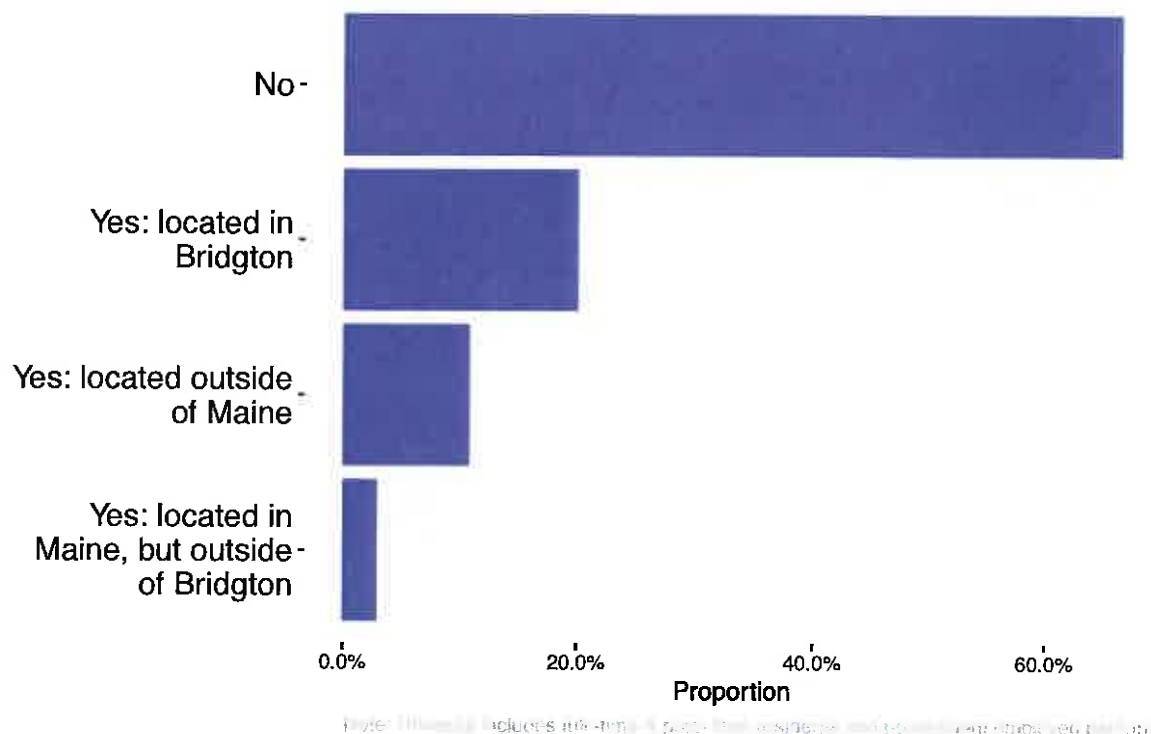
Q5: Please indicate the location of your employment: (N=92)



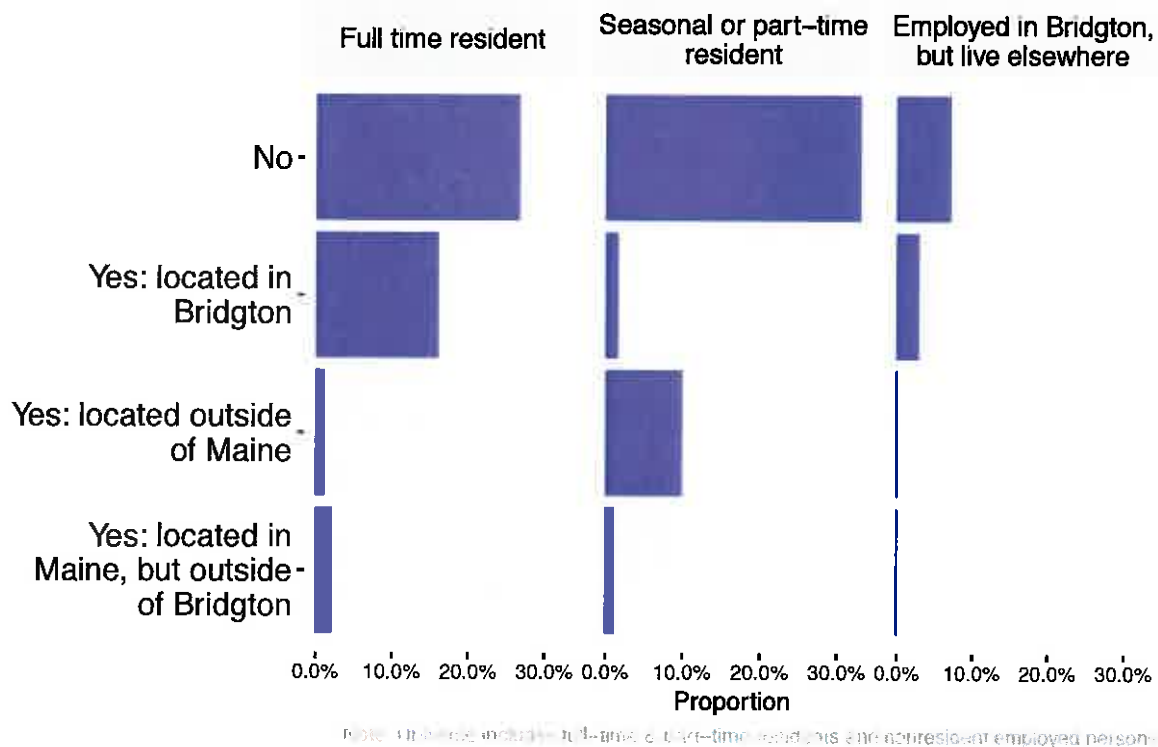
Q5: Please indicate the location of your employment: (N=210)



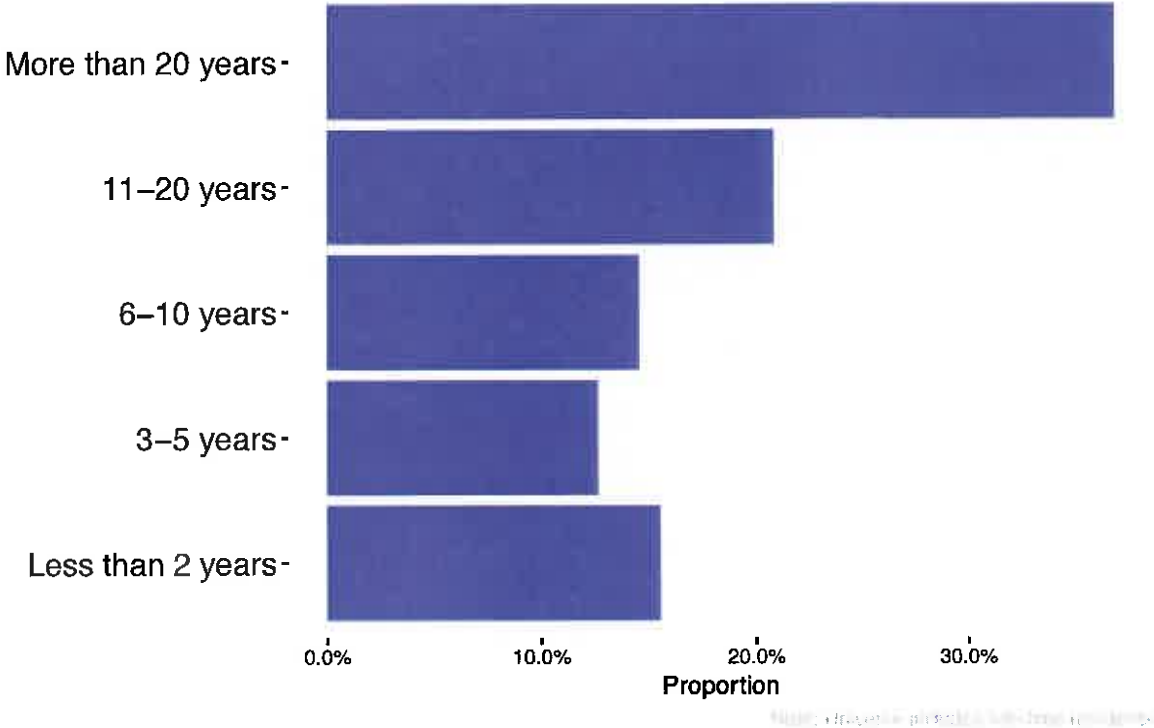
Q6: Do you or your spouse/partner own a business? (N=215)



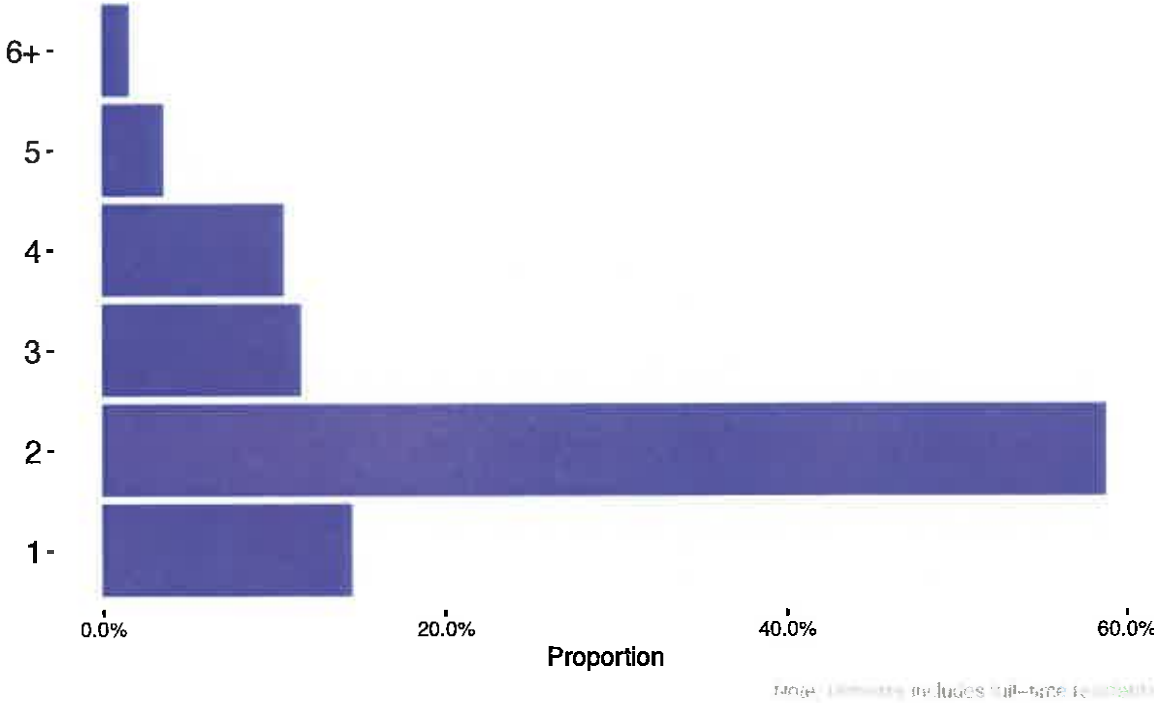
Q6: Do you or your spouse/partner own a business? (N=215)

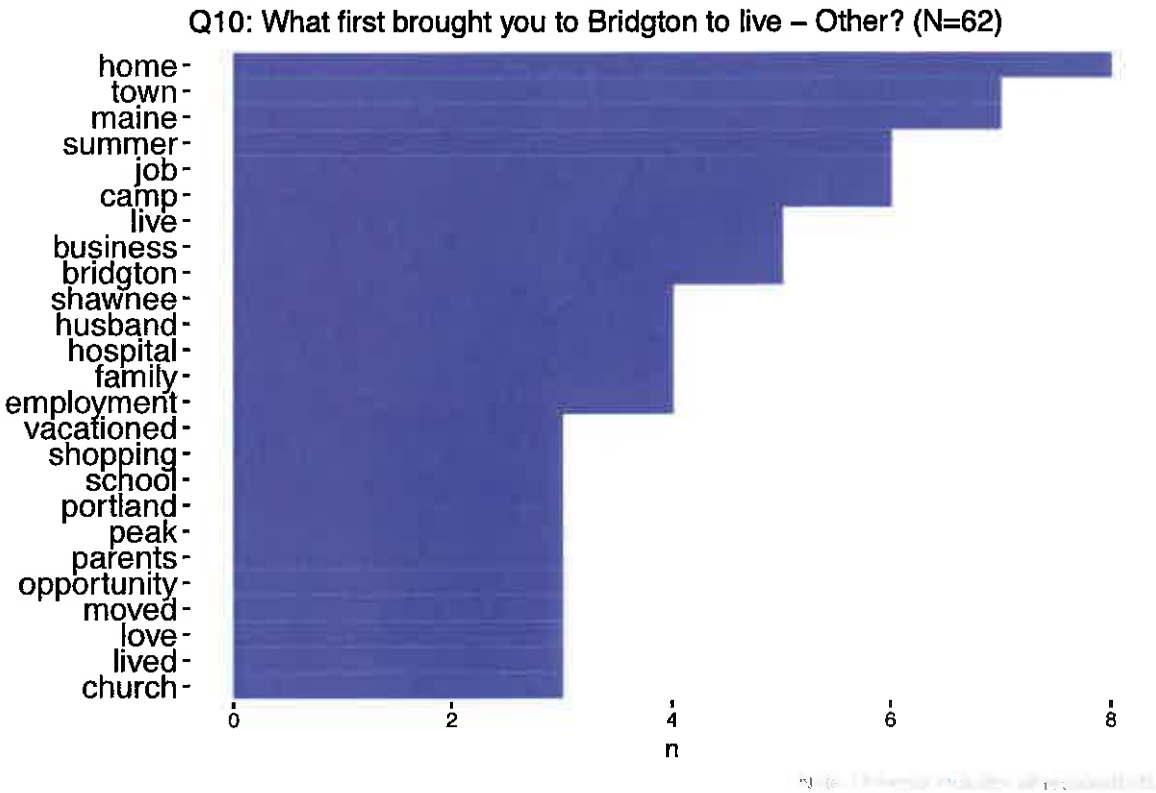


Q8: How many years have you resided in Bridgton? (N=207)

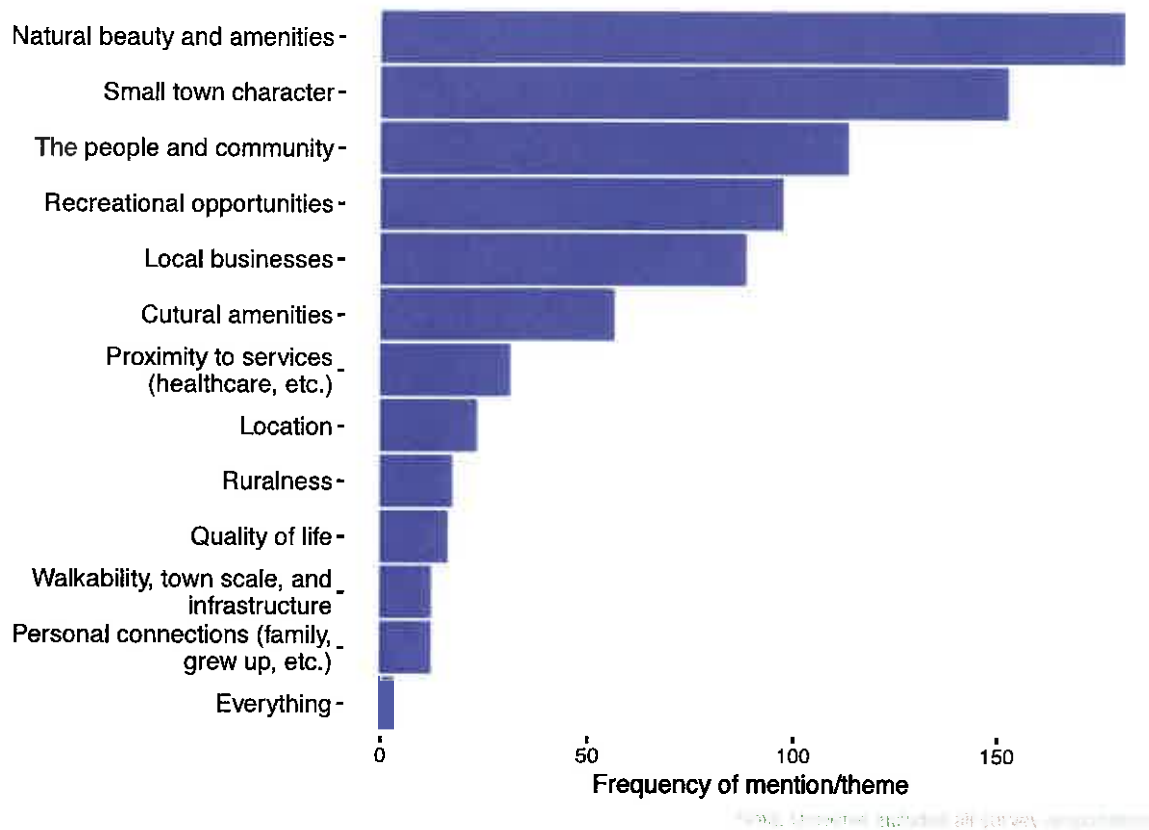


Q9: How many people including yourself (on average) reside in your household in Bridgton? (N=201)

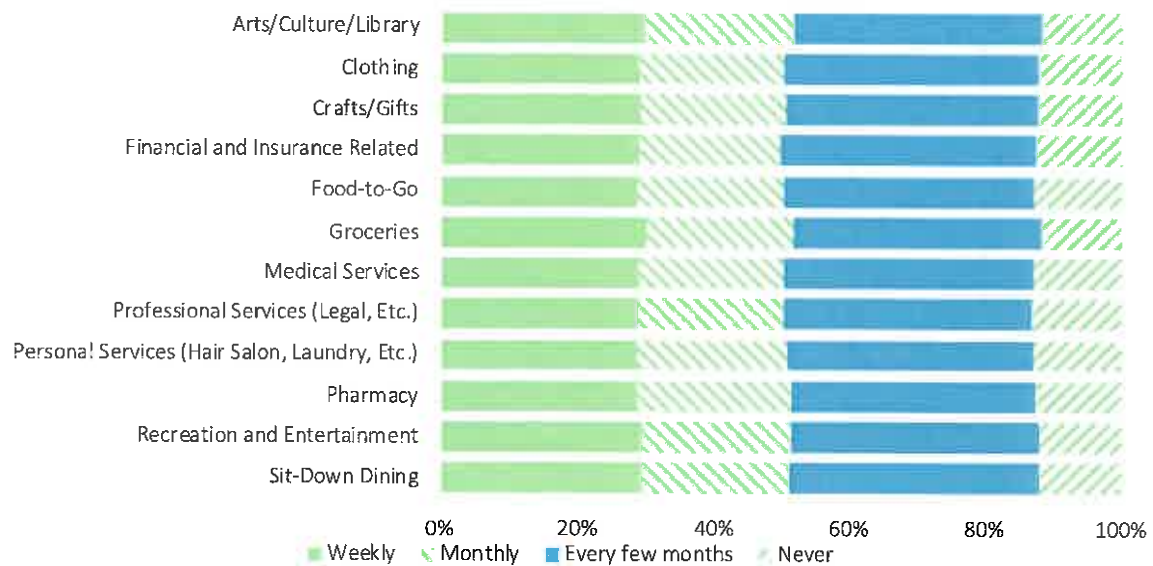




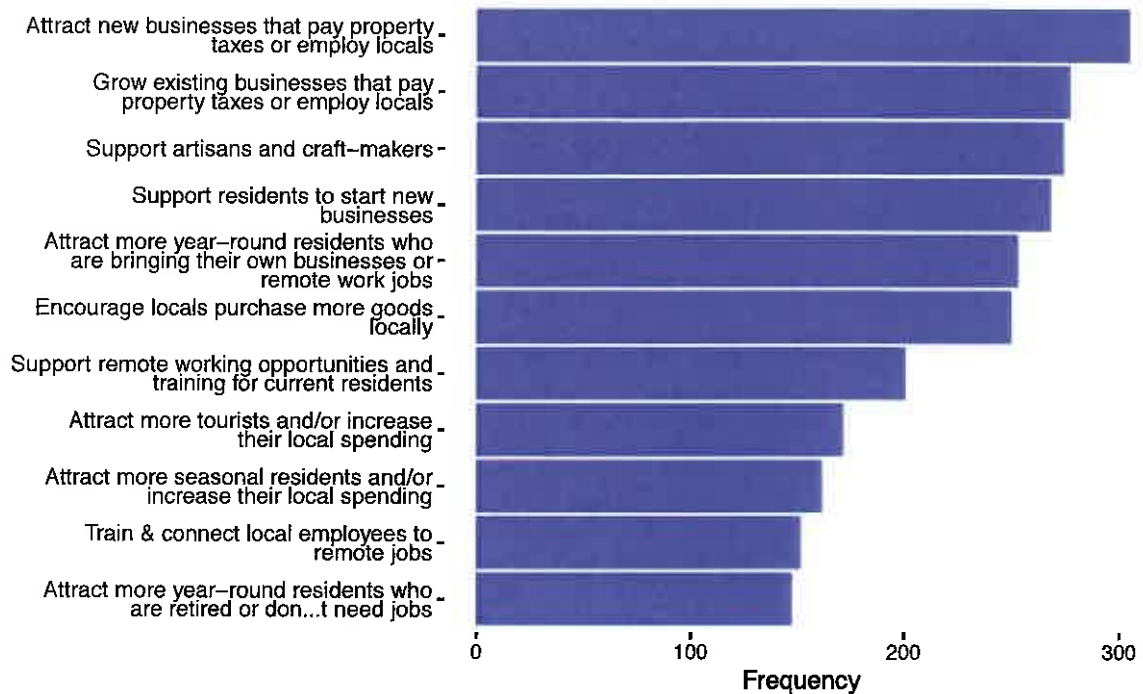
Q11: What do you like best about Bridgton? (N=367)



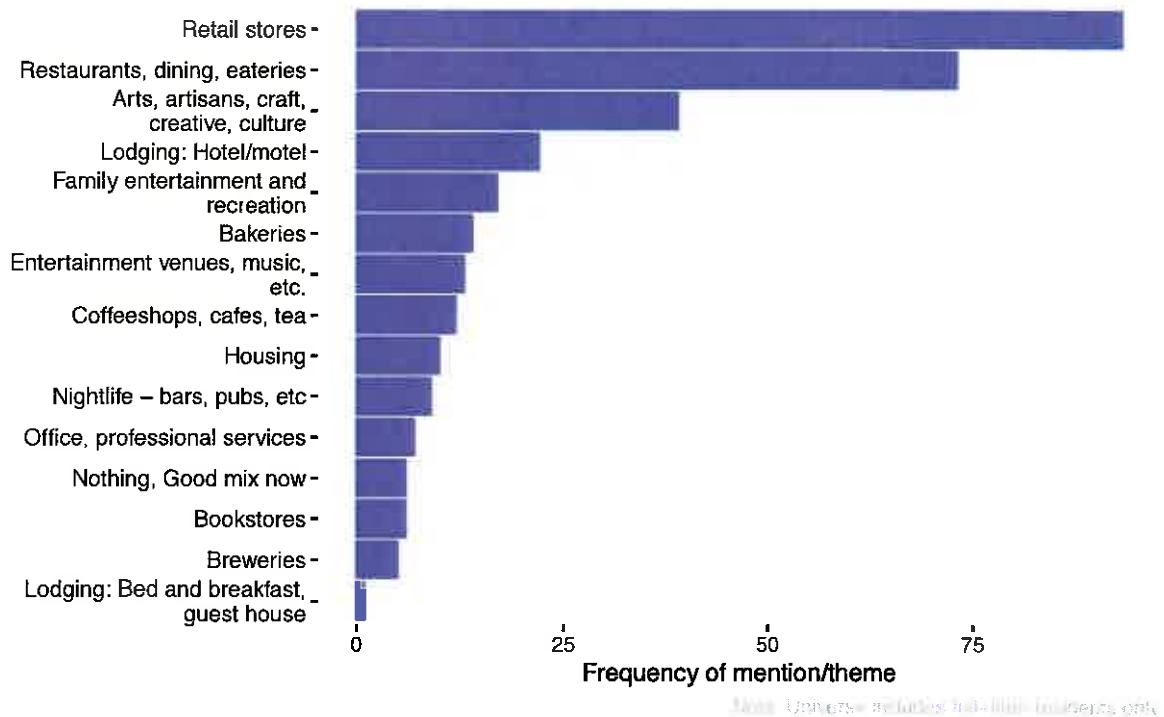
Q12 What types of businesses do you actively patronize in Bridgton and how often?



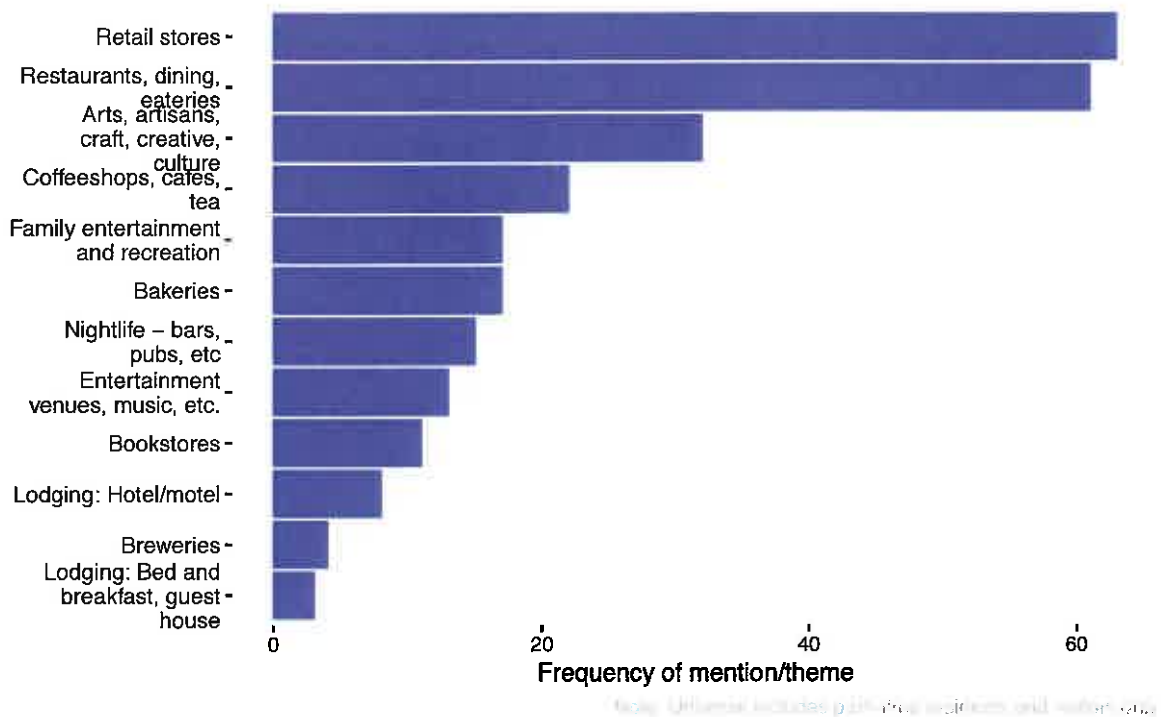
Q14: What types of strategies do you think Bridgton should pursue to help enhance the local economy? Check all that apply.



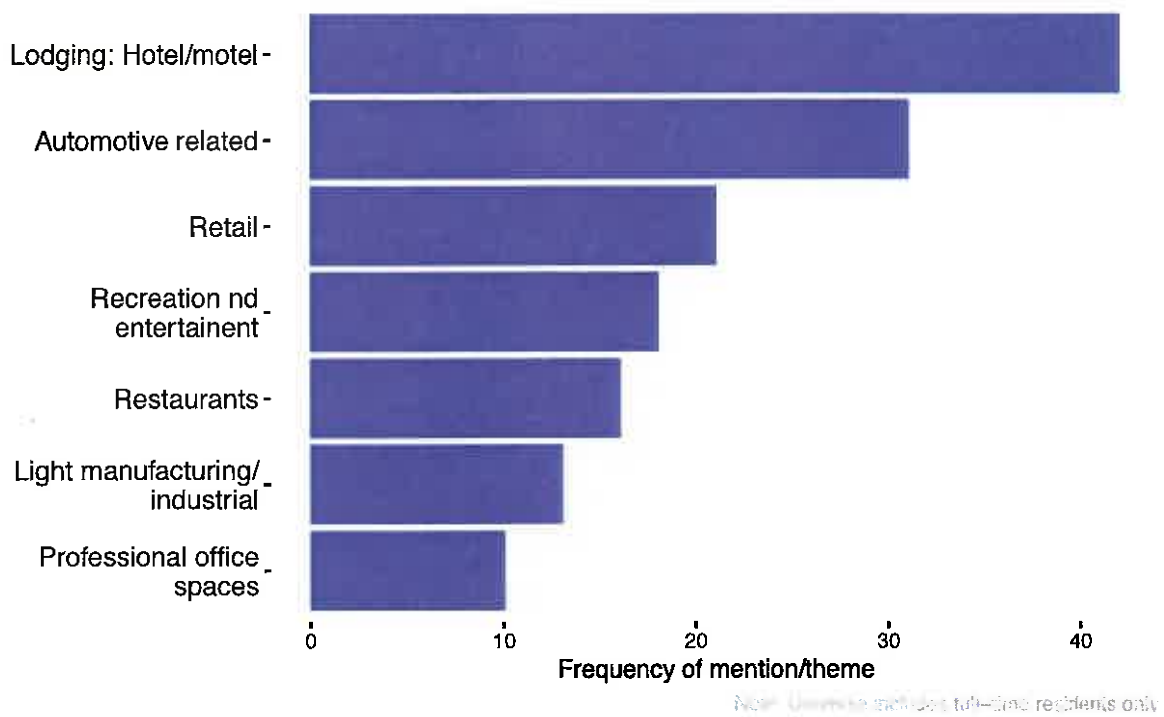
Q15: What types of businesses do you feel would be best located in the downtown area? Full-time residents (N=167)



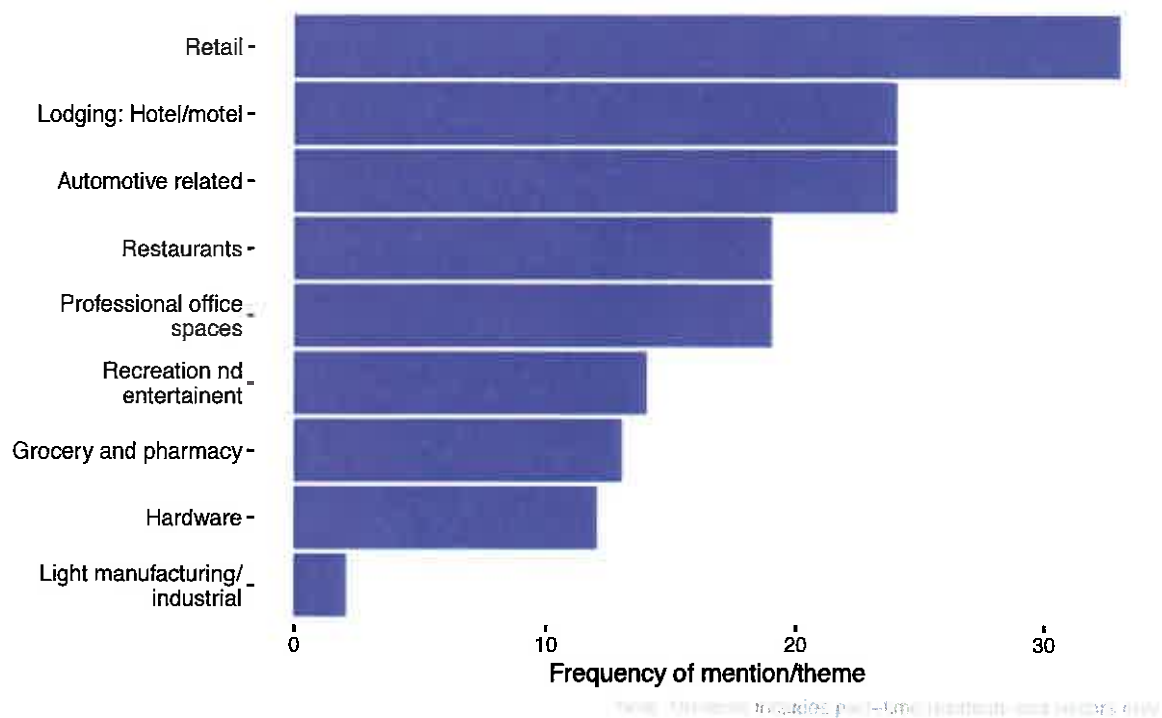
Q15: What types of businesses do you feel would be best located in the downtown area? (N=145)



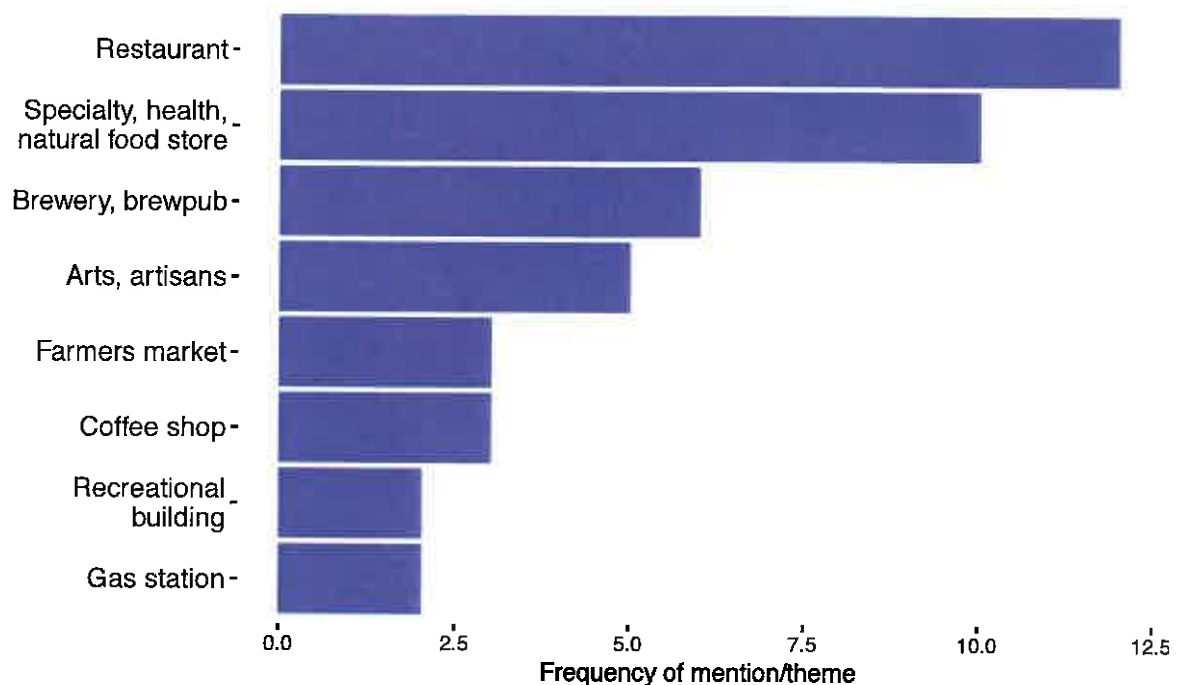
Q16: What types of businesses do you feel would be best located along the Portland St. corridor? Full-time residents (N=158)



Q16: What types of businesses do you feel would be best located along the Portland St. corridor? (N=126)

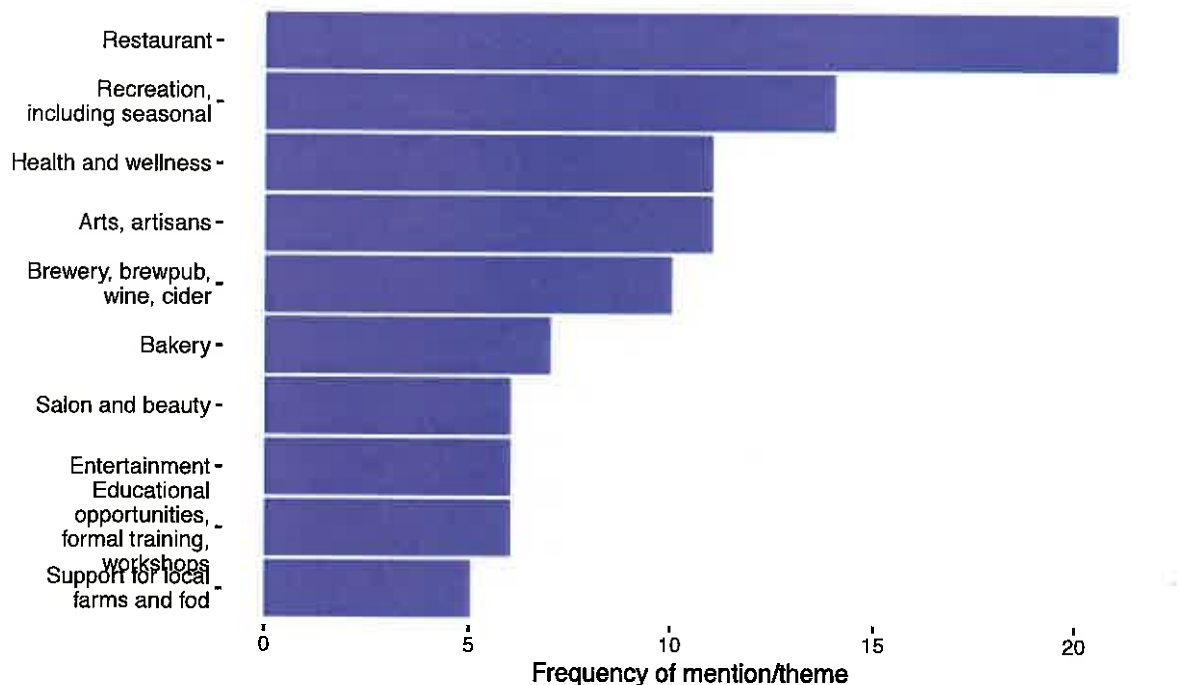


Q17: What other businesses would you like to see or patronize in Bridgton not mentioned in your previous answers, if any? (N=89)



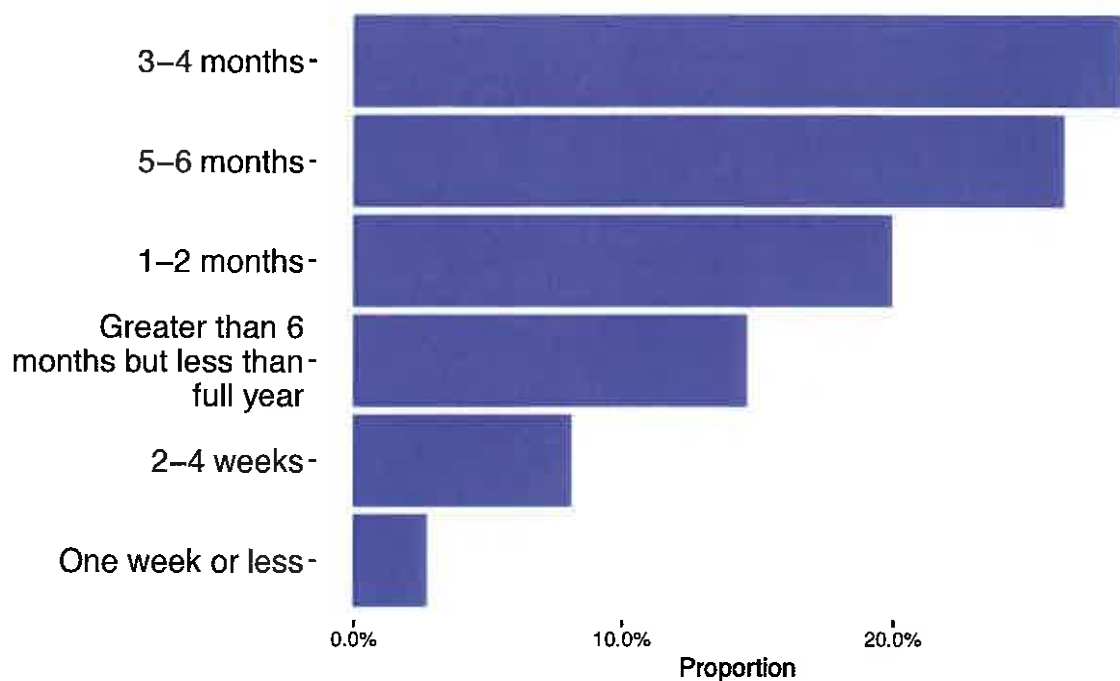
Note: Unintentional double and full count responses are only

Q17: What other businesses would you like to see or patronize in Bridgton not mentioned in your previous answers, if any? (N=80)



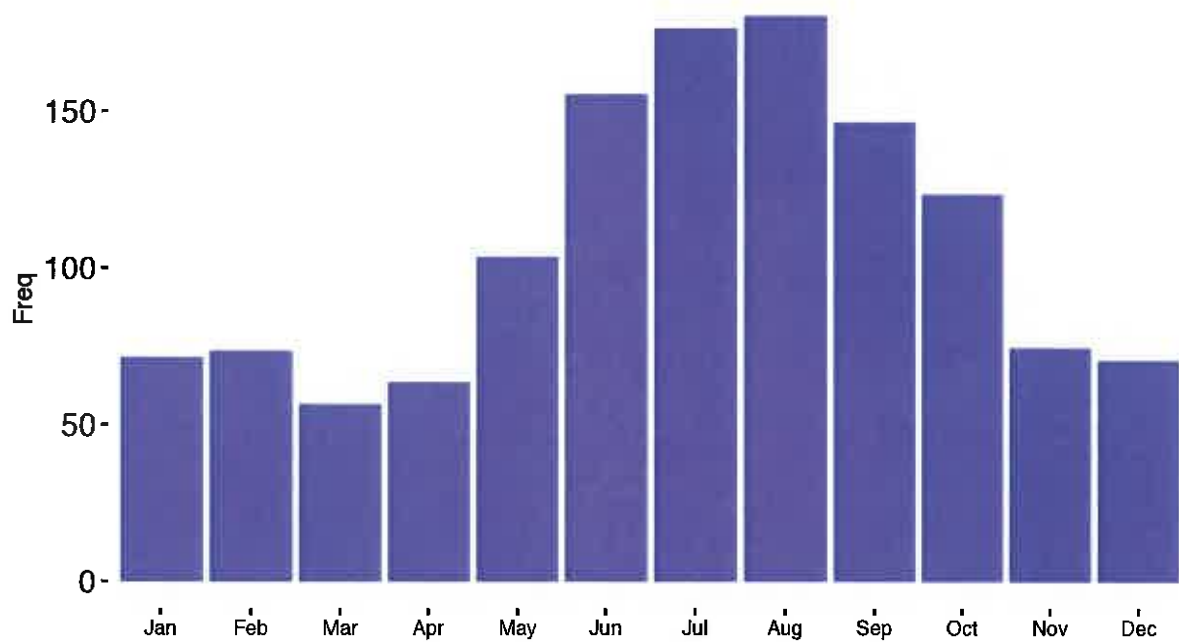
Note: Unintentional double and full count responses are only

Q18: On average, how often do you live/spend time in Bridgton each year? (N=186)



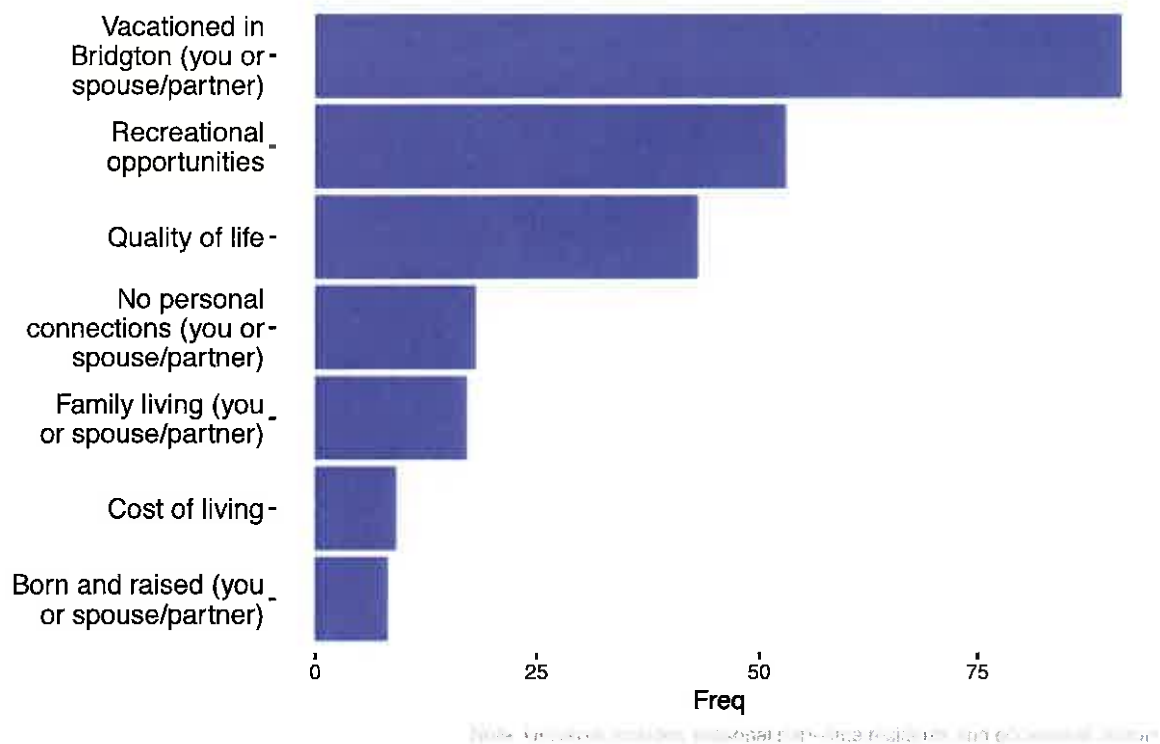
Note: Universe includes seasonal part-time residents and occasional visitors

Q19 – Please select the months that you typically reside or visit Bridgton during a typical year: (N=186)

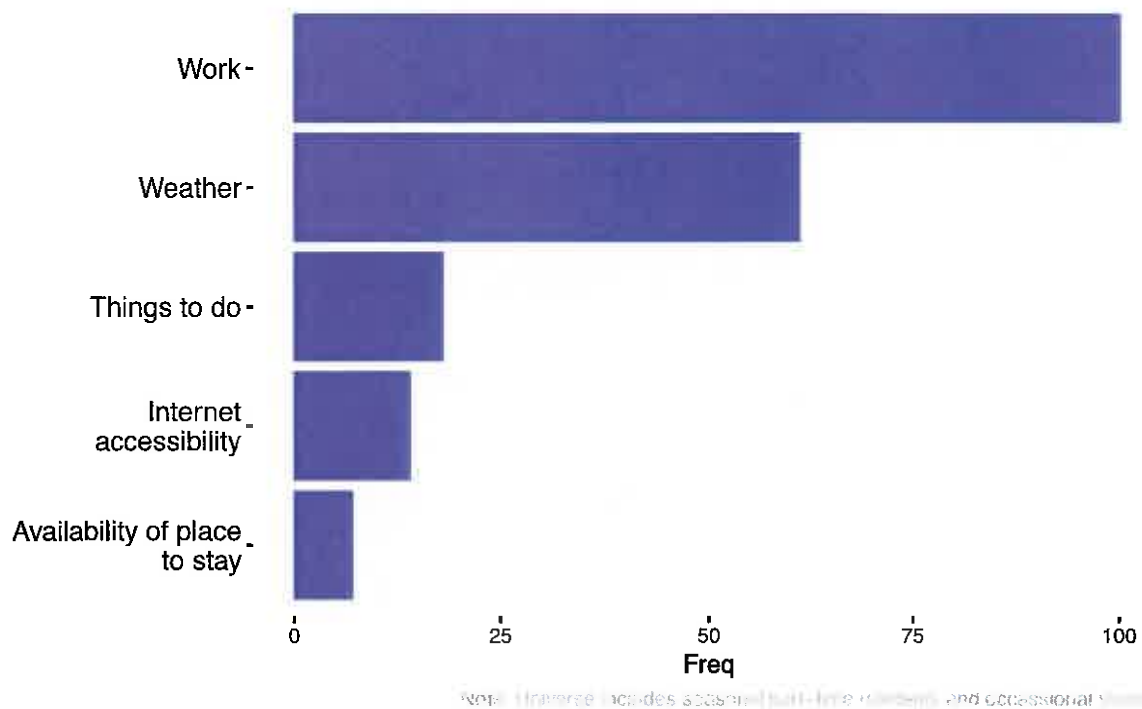


Note: Universe includes seasonal part-time residents and occasional visitors

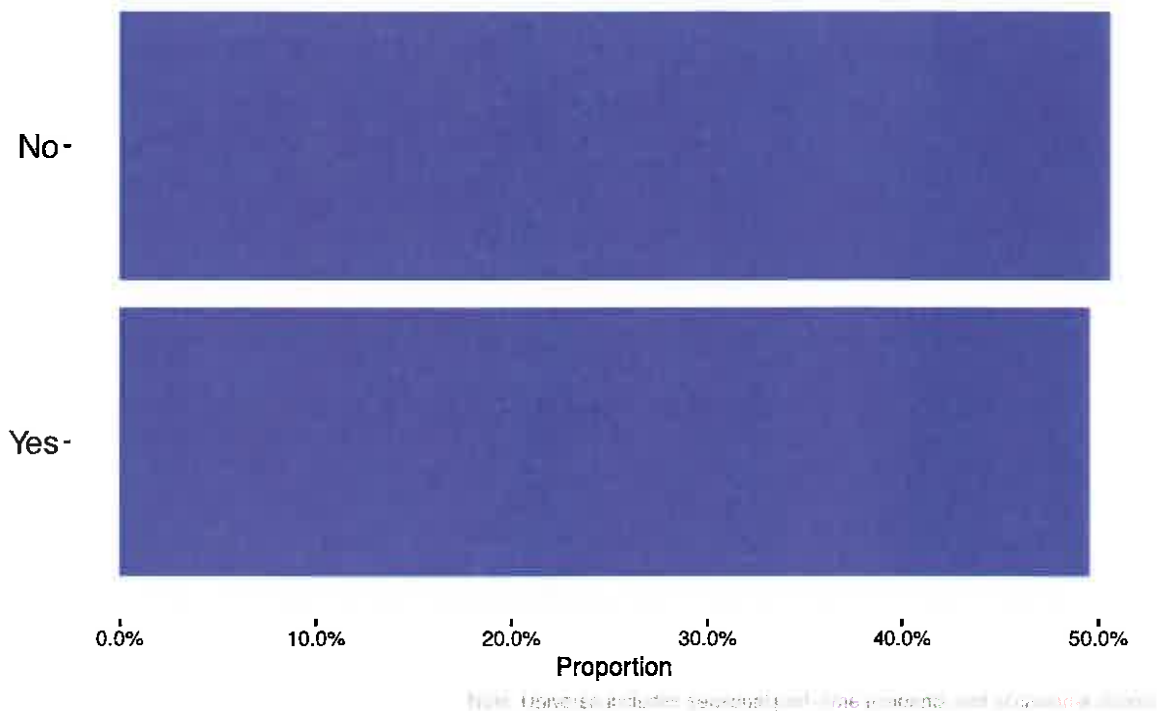
Q20 – What first brought you to Bridgton to live or visit? (N=189)



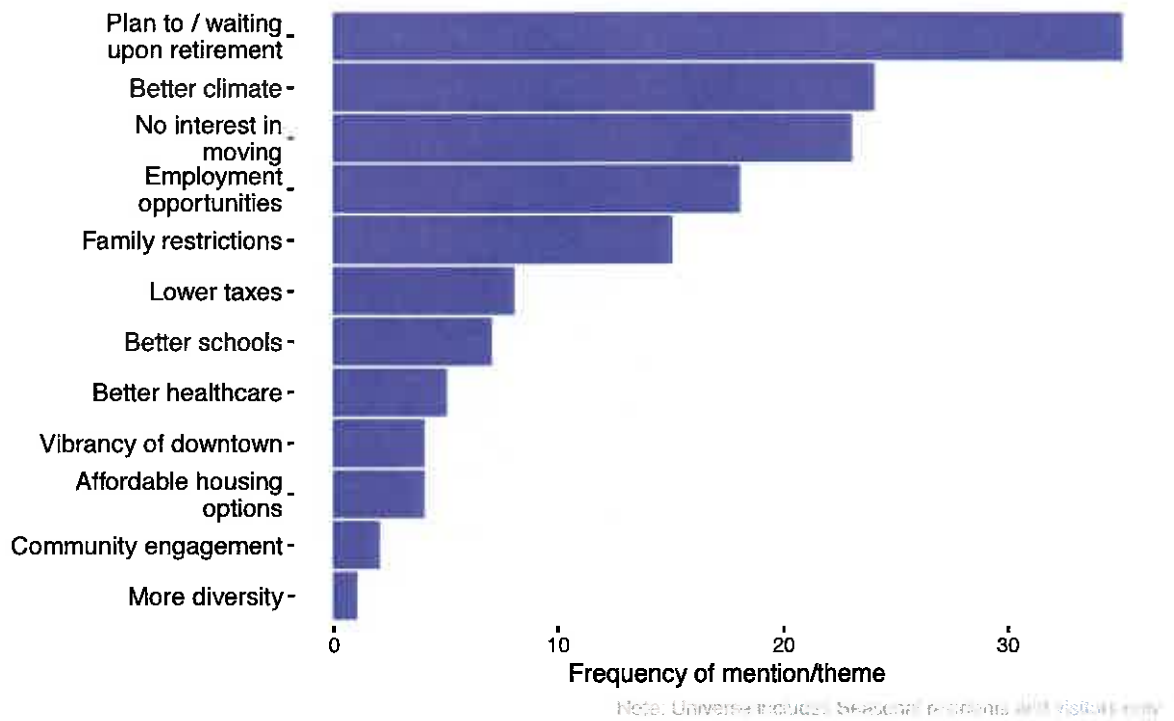
Q21 – What of the following factors limit the extent of your stay in Bridgton? (N=189)



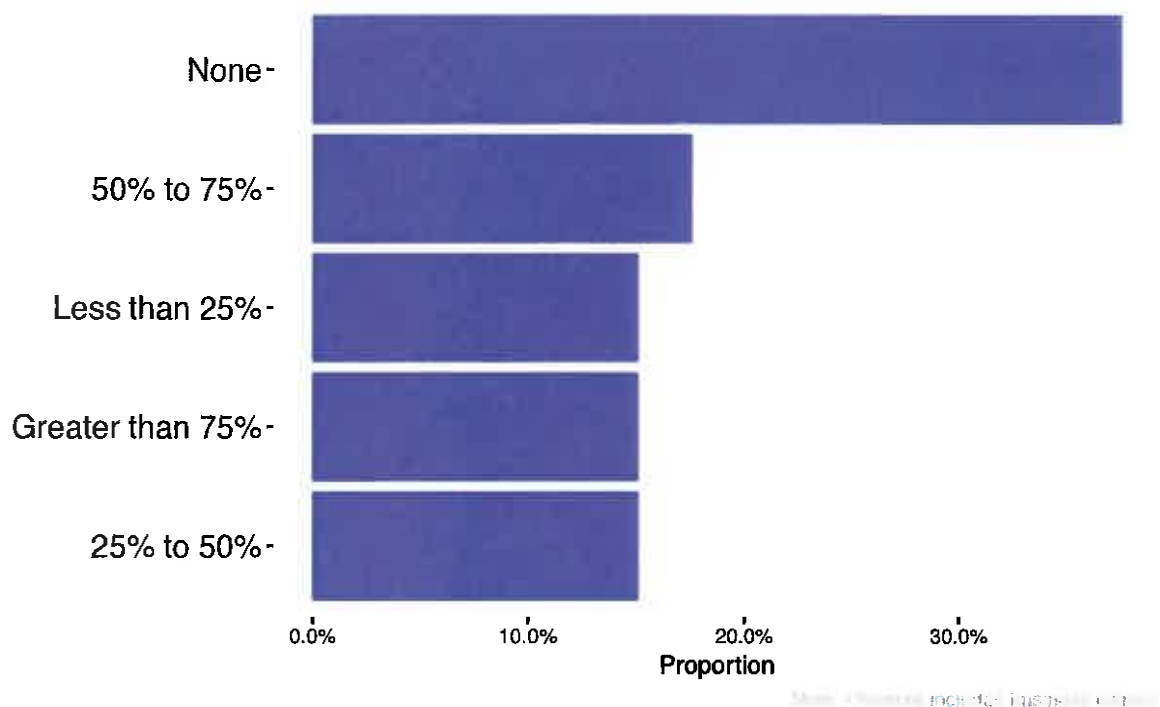
Q22: Do you ever work remotely when staying in Bridgton? (N=186)



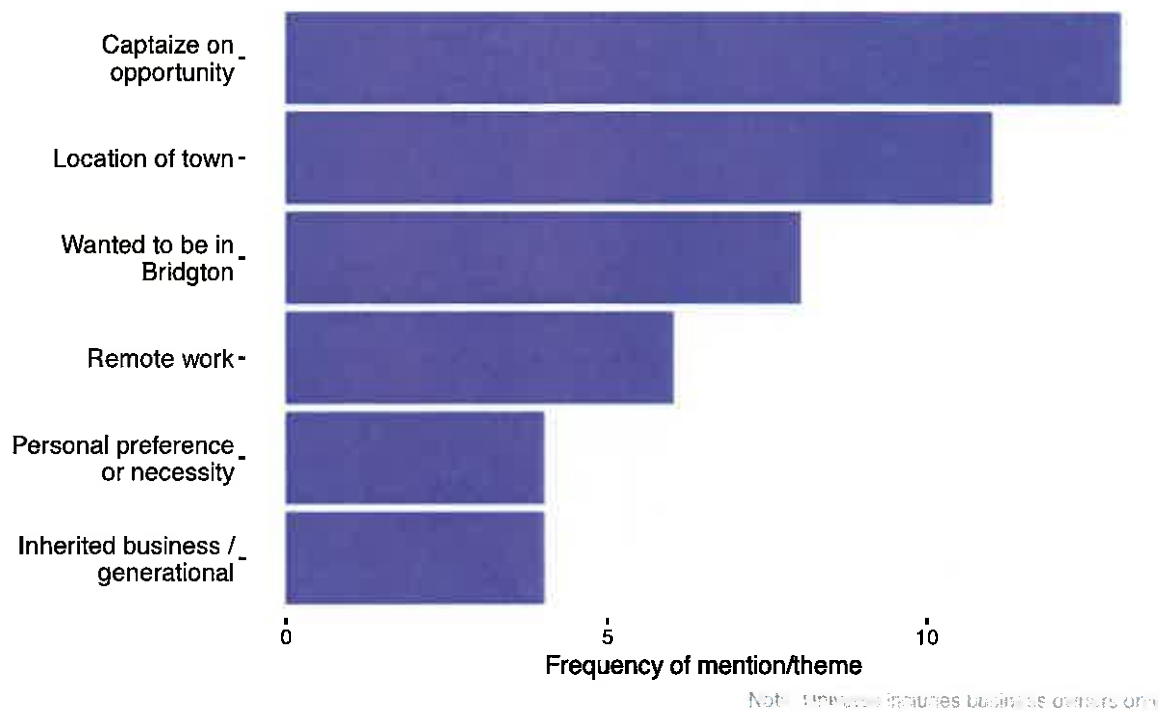
Q23: What would it take for you to move to Bridgton on a full-time basis? Seasonal residents and visitors (N=163)



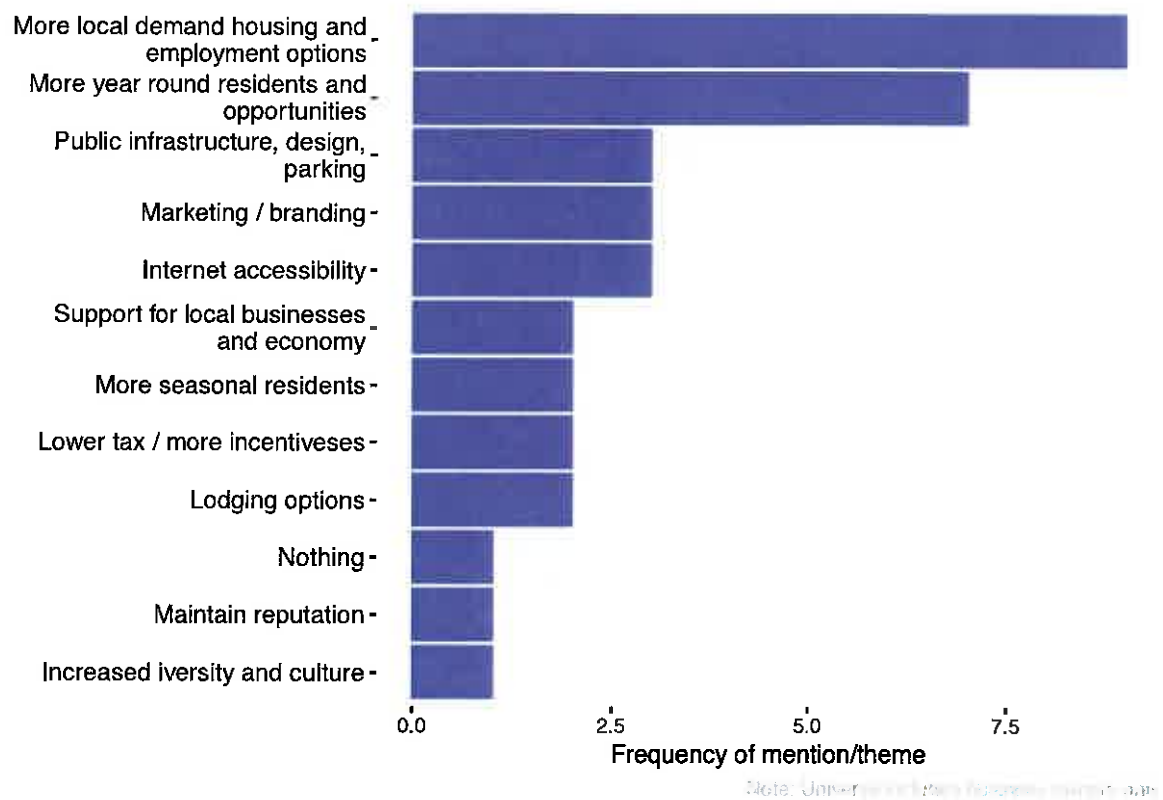
Q27: What percentage of your business is from seasonal or tourism related customers? (N=42)



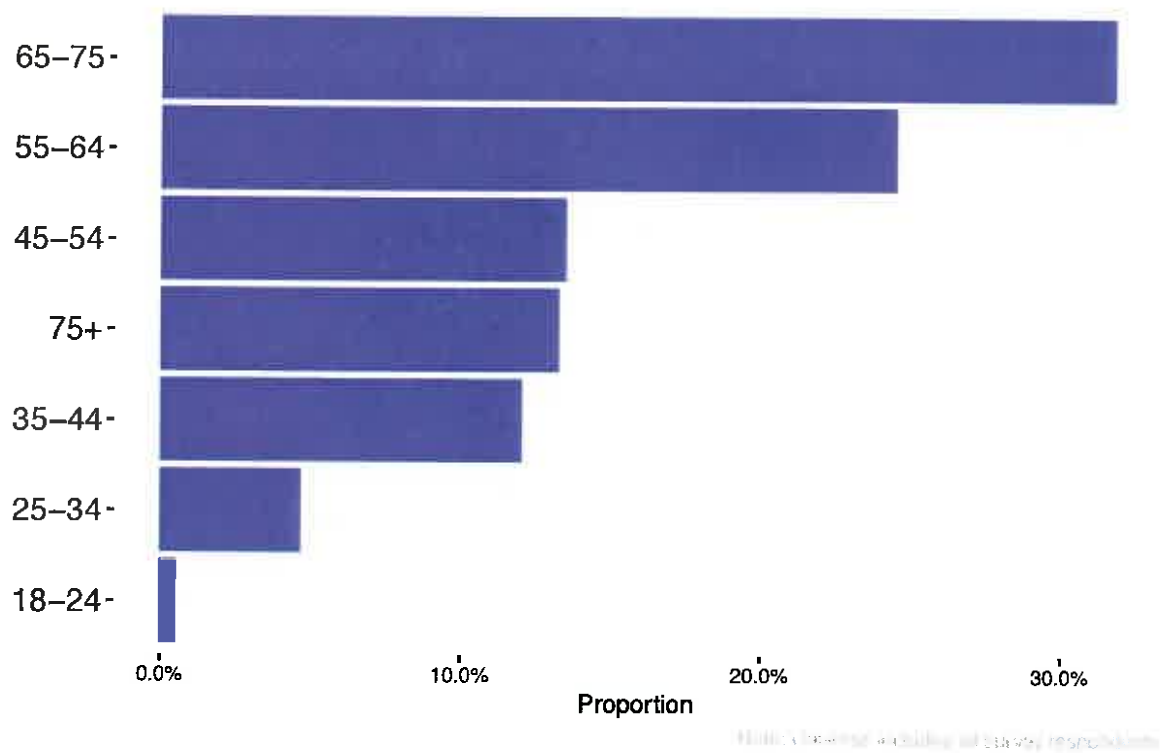
Q26: What factors led to your decision to start or own a business in Bridgton? (N=36)



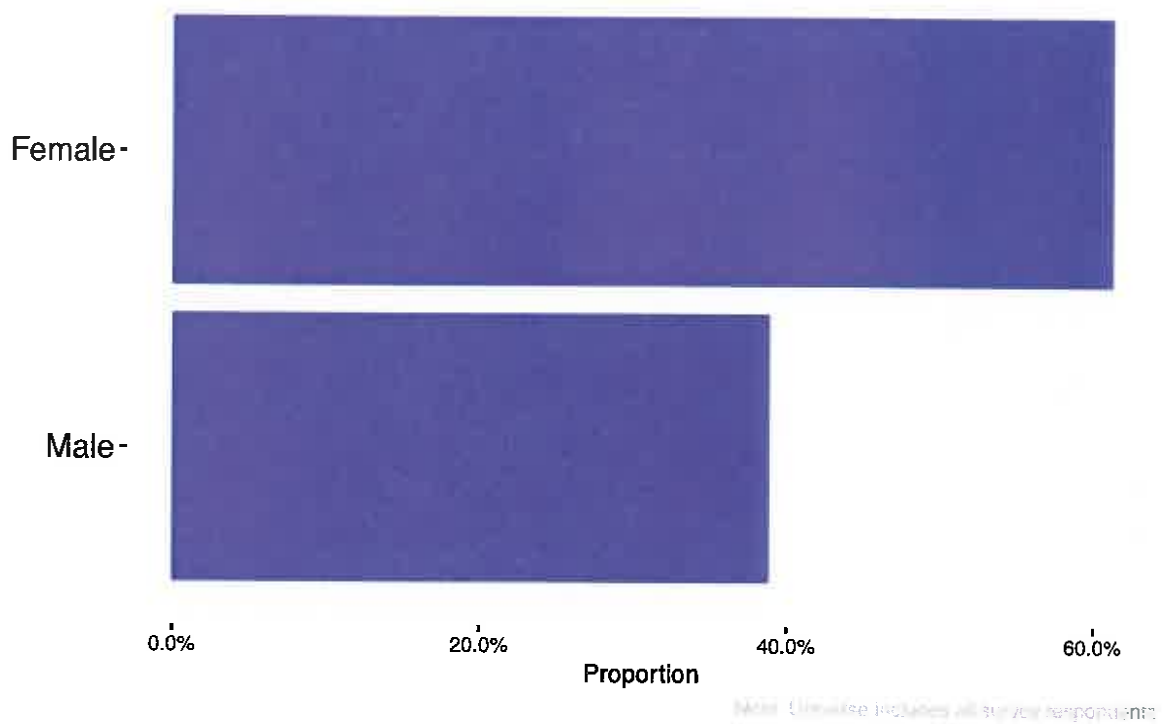
Q28: What would be most helpful in increasing the success of your business in Bridgton? (N=32)



Q30: Please indicate the range that best reflects your age: (N=409)



Q31: Please indicate your gender: (N=402)



Q14 - Comments: What types of strategies do you think Bridgton should pursue to help enhance the local economy?²³	
1	The single biggest thing to help current businesses would be for the town to purchase area for parking near Pondicherry Square, and buy & tear down old IGA for a natural park, parking and small business land.
2	Small local business is the best way to go. Employees local people and money stays in the community. - decrease/ban big box stores and chain companies - money leaves the community with these
3	Renovate and develop the "Ricky's" end of Main Street Affordable housing/apartments/condos to attract more residents
4	One option that you didn't have here (and should have), is train local people for trade work (electricians, plumbing and heating persons, carpentry). Many of the tradespeople and builders in this town are in their 50s or 60s and the new tier is not in training. The vacation and second home market, n
5	Need to improve medical services by having primary care providers that r committed to this area. We had this service however CMMC managed in short time to drive most of the quality PCP'S out of this town and decreasing services from the Hospital. Does not encourage the retired population to want to
6	manufacturing and value added companies
7	Make Bridgton a destination
8	Light manufacturing on a limited scale would provide entry level jobs that are not simply service related.
9	Leverage current successful businesses to expand.
10	Its now one thing. Bridgton needs all of the above to be vibrant and growing. Towns don't have to pick, they just need a shared vision, sound values grounded in openness to ideas and people and a will and desire to make it happen.
11	It will be hard to attract more tourists if we don't have hotel space for them to stay.
12	It is essential to find people that have a vision to expand the local economy/job base and with the financial power to make it happen. Creative entrepreneurial ventures have taken hold recently, we need more of that AND a revitalization of downtown infrastructure.
13	improving broadband access might make it easier for remote workers
14	Improve the schools to attract families
15	Improve the school system. Make it more developmentally appropriate
16	I'd like the see Bridgton get smaller and have less of a tourist based economy.

²³ Note: Responses are redacted where potentially personally identifiable information is provided. Some responses are truncated due to the character limit allowed per response. Responses have not been corrected for grammar or spelling and are in their original form from the respondent.

17	I do not believe that municipalities should be working on ways to raise revenues, but simply create an even playing field for business to do there thing with little interference, and protect residents through strong stable, and reliable town management practices.
18	Have liaison committee with Chanber of Commerce, embrace the uniqueness of the town. growth doesn't always equate with quality.
19	Emphasis on tourism and creating a more charming pedestrian friendly town center
20	Downtown is a diamond in the rough. Improving and upgrading this area could make Bridgton more of a destination. Love the businesses already there. Bring in more. Also there needs to be more sit down restaurants.
21	Bridgton could become an important art community. A beautiful place to host workshops, retreats. Etc. for painters, photographers, sculptors, quilters, rug hookers etc. we have a wonderful theater and good restaurants. Need to offer unique places, not a repeat of Windham or North Conway. The nar
22	Better internet connections. .
23	Without destroying small town character, and while maintaining natural beauty and outdoors opportunities.
24	Why do you assume we need to attract more businesses? We have everything we need.
25	We need to get people to stop in Bridgton. They just drive through.
26	We need it all. Bridgton as a town looks the worst it at looked in years maybe decades.
27	We do not want to see Bridgton turn into a Cookie Cutter small city (like Portsmouth NH has done!). Maintaining parking, especially free parking (supported by the businesses) is a big draw.
28	Training is a significant issue, however, once completed, the temptation to move for a better salary is strong. Collaboration with local businesses is essential. Fair wages are essential.
29	Training and connecting to remote jobs is beyond Bridgton's current reach. i.e. usually requires higher education opportunities and higher infrastructure.
30	Too much lip service is givento buying/shopping locally
31	There are too many empty storefronts in Bridgton. We do not want any more or any CBD businesses in town. The town could benefit from a few more restaurants.
32	There are enough seasonal residents but businesses can't survive on just summer spending.
33	The town should do more for their biggest income provider- the summer people and tourists. Put warning buoys in lake at dangerous rocks. Bring the narrow gauge to Bridgton.
34	The balance bar delicately sways between the reasons we like Bridgton - the calm, sensible pace, of decent folk not pressured or crowded beyond the limits of good behavior VS. the growth needed to maintain basic services. Go forward, slowly, I should say.

35	Support volunteers, esp. teens and young people.
36	Support the seasonal residents, who own homes and spend money weekly and have to pay out of state higher fees.
37	Support remote working opportunities and training for current residents. Very important as the national economy is moving toward a more virtual (AI) economy
38	Support local farmers and the farmer's market. Encourage businesses/organizations that employ local people and draw new young families, BUT with care that these ventures are appropriate for a location that is beautiful and delicate environmentally. It is imperative that we do not ruin the very reason
39	Support area farming, especially the Farmer's Market. Clean businesses/organizations that are in keeping with the reason people live and visit here: the beauty of the surroundings. Businesses with a future; for example, we almost succeeded in bringing a biotech instrumentation facility here, but it
40	Stop the rampant development (such as the hotel), encourage stricter zoning
41	Stop accommodating the town for the Toureess instead of the residence
42	Seasonal high end homes that would pay much higher taxes
43	Revitalize the buildings at the corner of 302 and 117, encourage more small businesses to move there. Avoid the big box stores
44	Restaurants
45	personally engage in conversations with Bridgton residents of all ages and income levels
46	Part of Bridgton's allure is its small town feel and creative / varied local, small business community. Too much franchise-style (or big box store) commercial growth will ruin what makes Bridgton different from Windham and Westbrook.
47	Not familiar or informed enough to answer above question
48	No need to grow the economy. I am coming here to get away from all of the growth and building.
49	No more taxes
50	Need more good paying jobs that offer employee benefits.
51	[REDACTED]
52	Make better use of the Magic Lantern -- and definitely adult independent and mainstream movies , documentaries - and other cultural events -
53	Maine, in general, is losing her young people. We need to find a way to keep our young people, or bring them back after college. They need a way to support themselves and eventually a family.
54	Keep small town charm.
55	It's all good

56	It is so important that Bridgton does not begin to bring in big box stores. I wouldn't want Bridgton to have the same atmosphere as N. Windham.
57	Improve infrastructure and utilities and housing for all residents. Maintain and preserve natural resources. Clean up invasives in favor of healthy native flora. Preserve access to quality healthcare for all residents
58	I'd like to see Bridgton as a destination. We already have many antique shops. More visitors would come here year round to shop, eat, and perhaps stay overnight.
59	I wouldn't like to see Bridgton overrun with chain stores. The locally owned businesses really create a vibe of community interaction. Shopping locally keeps people in tune with their neighbors.
60	I would like to see the state of Maine reduce the income taxes on retirees who want to stay in Maine longer during the year. So many retirees leave for the obligatory 6 months to reside in Florida for tax reasons (and of course, weather). The longer they stay in Maine the more money they spend in
61	I wish Bridgton would attract more families and younger people to live in the area in addition to retirees. It would liven up the town and help improve the local schools. The town should focus on maintaining its small town feel and protect its environment. It should also be looking to the town of No
62	I want to attract small businesses, not big box stores or chain restaurants.
63	I think there is huge potential to attract young families to the area who choose a small town lifestyle in a beautiful location. I am not as interested in bringing large corporate jobs, but rather in encouraging small business, remote workers, farming and cultural workers.
64	I think economic development in town should focus primarily on the local/unique companies and businesses that make Bridgton different from other towns. Encouraging development with big box or national chains will cut down the reasons for people to visit and spend time in town.
65	I think Bridgton's seasonal/tourist population will continue to support the town's economy as it has without much effort. However, what will help the community long-term is attracting year-round folks, families with young children, and young workers who are looking to live in a close-knit community
66	I support work for local residents and want local businesses to succeed. I am not in favor of bringing in national "chain" restaurants or businesses. Maine businesses, coffee shops, handmade shops, restaurants etc cannot compete with national businesses - our own is what gives Maine its charm.
67	I prefer and patronize small locally owned businesses. I've only shopped out of town for a mattress. Keep the chains in Auburn.
68	I feel I cannot trust Bridgton Selectboard or Planning board due to approval of the hotel. The planning board coached the applicant and they should have not approved it with all

	the violations they allowed - especially when it was a totally new project 10 days before applicants final submission.
69	I don't want to see marijuana businesses or gambling of any type; no more fast food chains or big box stores and certainly no more "dollar" stores!
70	I believe we should focus on year round stability and not on seasonal work.
71	I believe that it is a mistake to pin Bridgton's economic success on tourists. There are many of us who actually live here and think of this place as home (even though we may have had to earn a living elsewhere) who want services and goods year round. We go out of town because we are not interested
72	Have more dining options with diverse menus. Encourage elegant development of the area around lower Main St. (Pondicherry Square area)
73	Growth is a two-edged sword. What so many of us love about Bridgton is its size: not too large, not too small.
74	Find ways to create positions for residents to get off welfare.
75	Find methods to encourage and draw more small and family owned niche entrepreneurship that would make Bridgton unique and special. Rather than following the mundane and common trend of box and chain store businesses.
76	Explore ways to increase racial diversity
77	Encourage the travel industry by supporting and building the new hotel
78	Eliminating Personal Property Tax (Business Tax) would be a great incentive for new businesses to move here.
79	Downtown needs more businesses. There are far too many empty rundown buildings on Main Street.
80	Don't overdevelop land -- keep the nature in Bridgton to attract people and businesses.
81	Create a welcoming environment for entrepreneurs and small businesses. People move here for quality of life. Things like local schools, recreational and cultural opportunities, the hospitals are important to attracting and retaining year round residents.
82	Clean up some dilapidated homes around Main Street, particularly near Food City. Perhaps enlist local youth groups, such as Boy and Girl Scouts to offer assistance in terms off volunteer projects for yard cleanup and minor repairs, painting, etc. I would certainly donate to such causes and other res
83	Bridgton needs to attract investors to rehab or redo the Pondicherry Square area, and should fill in the Rt 302 Corridor from the drive in movie theater to Rite aid, get investors to either purchase the open land and develop, or purchase the few dilapidated homes and derelict former businesses and r
84	Better restaurants arts crafts eat fresh local farm communities
85	Be more cognizant that seasonal property owners appreciate the Town, and what it offers as much as residents do and are willing to support the community financially

	(through taxes and special fees) and through participation volunteer or paid to promote and enhance the community. Residents and non-
86	Attractions for younger people and younger families with or with our children
87	attracting new businesses is good, but there must be big enough year-round population to support
88	Attract new businesses that are not chains or franchises.
89	Attract environmentally friendly businesses
90	attract clean businesses to the area, but not at the expense of ruining the feel of small town - and not to ruin the lakes and waterways by high impact (people traffic) businesses.
91	As long as the small town character is not changed
92	as far as business is concerned, bridgton is verrrry seasonal. there needs to be more off season spending by locals and tourists-somehow
93	Anything that brings additional revenue to the town, provided the quaintness of the town in not impacted negatively.
94	among all the spots for enjoying skiing, hiking, and the summer sports too, such as Conway, Laconia, and Bartlett; none have a WeWork or WorkBar or other shared work space. I think it would be tremendous to open one ahead of these other spots and thereby attract some of the many folks who can work w
95	allow cannabis businesses that bring in a very large share of tax revenue.
96	All those things would help.
97	All the above!!
98	All of these are ways to increase our economy. There is a strong message in our state for everyone to buy locally. WE NEED year round residents who add to the economy of the town all year long. Seasonal residents are nice and many do contribute to our community in many ways but younger, solid citiz
99	All of the above!
100	All good ideas
101	Advertise Bridgton as a wonderful playground for young couples and their children!
102	Actually, any of the above would be positive
103	A lot of Main st. buildings need rehabbing or torn down. Ours 80th
104	A community where locals and seasonal residents realize that Bridgton will work best and be most prosperous when we all appreciate each other.

Question 24: Are there any other factors that you feel would improve your experience/stay in Bridgton?²⁴	
1	More diversity in cultural events/programs with emphasis on innovative "out-of-the-box" events designed to draw people in (like the LA Balloon Festival, Bethel "World's Largest Snowman" event, etc.
2	Downtown needs to incentivize the rehab and occupancy of delapidated buildings
3	Exercise classes
4	Bike paths, especially from north and south to downtown
5	More cultural options.
6	A decent gym. A campaign to respect and appreciate part-time residents as an important component to the community. I can't tell you how many times I've heard complaints about "damn out of staters!". I personally respect and support the local residents and businesses. I am always friendly and kind. W
7	Better internet access and options.
8	A good fitness gym.
9	Paint some of the really icky looking stores on main street even if they're vacant. They make the area look depressed and uninviting.
10	Bridgton is a politically conservative town. I don't feel that I fit in here [REDACTED]. We have made friends with our neighbors who are also "from away", but have found it difficult to meet and know the locals. I don't know what that is about. Maybe one has to join a church
11	Please continue to hear the voices of your lakefront taxpayers that contribute substantially to your tax base. Although we may not be residents we truly care about the town and it's growth.
12	More inviting community groups and a place (website) that lists things to do that are open for new families.
13	More vibrant downtown, upgrade buildings at Pondicherry Square
14	Yes, the available internet service providers are poor and not worth the prices they charge
15	I would love to see improvements done to the area of town when you enter from Portland Road onto Main Street. We don't frequent that end of town due to the lack of appealing shops, but would really like to if it was improved.
16	Bike paths
17	Better internet
18	More of a sense of community - interaction between residents and summer people...

²⁴ Note: Responses are redacted where potentially personally identifiable information is provided. Some responses are truncated due to the character limit allowed per response. Responses have not been corrected for grammar or spelling and are in their original form from the respondent.

19	The vacant buildings are an eyesore
20	More cultural offerings
21	Yes. Better public transportation from the Portland train station! We would love to come up on the Nor'easter and get the Explorer to Bridgton, but it doesn't run on Saturday or Sunday (or at least I don't think it does ...) Also, during the winter, a rec center with an indoor pool and a nicer indo
22	Better winter road maintenance
23	Limit the size of the boats allowed on the lake by limiting horse power and what is allowed to enter through the Songo lock. The size of the boat waves are destroying our frontage (even though we have a raised, by 2 feet, lake shore and all natural vegetation. Jet Skis doing figure 8's for hours o
24	Paying taxes without any votes is really a basic flaw in how Maine operates.
25	Main st. needs stores , bars and restaurants. I like Breakroom and House of Pizza. The movie theatre needs later shows.
26	No
27	Less government intervention in property owners property
28	Probably not one for advocating change. Would like to see planning board more flexible on businesses and more stringent on environmental degradation.
29	overall, Bridgton is too Republican for my taste, and power and decision-making is concentrated in the hands of just a few families
30	Being acquainted with more people
31	I love Bridgton the way it is.
32	More restaurants,
33	More convenience and accessibility. When we lived there we mostly had to go to North Conway or North Windham for any of our shopping.
34	More fun activities to do in town for people who come and visit us. Most people come to visit and think Fryberg Fair, North Conway or driving someplace and aside from going to Reny's don't think about going into Bridgton.
35	medical accessibility, and ease of transport to Portland
36	Continued focus on preserving the town's natural resources and aesthetic
37	Love the "Main Street" feel, but it's short. A few more small businesses there would be great.
38	Need trash removal in knights hill. Also please get Renys to redo the exterior in an attractive traditional style. It looks terrible and ruins the look of the center and betrays the lack of imagination that may lurk beneath the town's surface.
39	Local people can be very unfriendly about the traffic from visitors. I am a member of bridgton community on Facebook and there appears to be anger at times toward outsiders.
40	Improved medical facilities would be nice but isn't a deal breaker.

41	YES! We want Bridgton to stay the way it is NOW, except for the changes I have mentioned above. YES, needed improvements to roads and buildings, but NO to changes that would destroy the Bridgton we know and love!!!
42	Love Bridgton but frequent turnover of doctors is frustrating
43	Get control over good development, not dollar general and McDonalds: unique high quality food arts places to shop events Control over the lakes speed limits,noise level of boats, milfoil. Amount of boats to keep lakes healthy Walking bike path: many people walk ,run or bike and narrow roads around l
44	Nothing comes to mind - the experience is great now.
45	No
46	more sidewalks along 302 for safety walking
47	Not at this time
48	Fill the empty building with stores to shop in
49	Bring more regional than just local.
50	CLEAN UP THE MAIN ST STORE FRONTS
51	Looking forward to seeing the results of the downtown make over. Like the fact it's a nice walkable town.
52	No, we love the vacation land feel
53	Keep it with the small town feel. Growth is good but patient, well thought out growth
54	Would be nice if town owned our road
55	More year round businesses
56	town government supportive of individuals as much as businesses that want to make a quick buck.
57	I hate to see the vacant businesses downtown. Takes away from the charm of the town.
58	Control development and work with developers other than McGiver who really could care less about the town. Money is his first priority. His retirement housing is a lie: they are not eco friendly.
59	no
60	No
61	No we are happy here.
62	provide same law enforcement for lower class as well as wealthy
63	Lower property taxes for waterfront property owners.
64	I've never had a bad experience in Bridgton and the townspeople are very friendly. I'm excited to see the changes to Main Street and the new sewer system.
65	Lower tax rate on lake front property.
66	Less strip development and traffic congestion which accompanies it
67	Improving the town's infrastructure... clean up Main Street. Owners of buildings and homes should not be allowed to let buildings go into disrepair.The intersection of 117

	and 302 is an eyesore. Depot Street should set the tone for the town. The community center or former armory is unappealing regar
68	It would be great if some of the residents would be encouraged to clean up the curb appeal of their homes. I often see furniture/appliances on the front lawn or porch. Looks terrible. Maybe you can enlist the help of local organizations (boy scouts) to assist with the clean up for those who have
69	no, like it just the way it is...
70	More professional and competent local government—appropriate zoning regulations and wherewithal to enforce them
71	Better services at our lake front property
72	No
73	more public parking in downtown areas
74	Better control of architectural developments
75	no
76	Less traffic in the summer, more stores and restaurants open longer in the summer
77	No
78	more activity and development
79	Provide seasonal residents the right to vote on local matters.
80	downtown infrastructure improvements and general upgrade in appearance
81	I love Bridgton and would hate to see it lose its character. I don't want it to become like Windom.
82	better quality medical care
83	No
84	Better immediate or walk in medical care
85	lower taxes
86	No...have lived currently and like to stay the 4 months in Bridgton.
87	N/A
88	Cell service is spotty
89	Will retire there in 9+ years
90	Nope! It's my favorite place on the planet
91	We love it just as it is
92	I don't spend as much time there as I used to b/c 302 has gotten so busy and the sidewalk doesn't extend to Gradys.
93	No
94	The Lions Club sign greeting people entering town never seems to have inclusiveness and compassion as its word of the month. That is quite telling and a signal the town isn't as welcoming as it could be to out-of-towners.
95	Zoning. Too many areas are visually unappealing with junk etc. this will limit the extent to which people from out of state will be attracted here.

96	I would like more interesting restaurants and different movies in the theatre.
97	Nope -- I love Bridgton!
98	Not necessarily, but we may not stay in the house we have now. No sun for gardening, need bigger garage, kitchen, and living room.
99	No comment right now.
100	Winter less severe
101	We love Bridgton, but we live in [REDACTED] and can't get here often enough
102	no
103	lower property taxes for lakefront
104	Better access for internet.
105	I really wish that the Bridgton residents would appreciate all that us seasonal people bring to the town. We pay almost \$8,000 in taxes each year and don't use school, etc. services. We spend a ton of money at the restaurants and shops -- and yet, I feel we are still looked down upon. All of us -- a
106	More stable economy, healthcare access, favorable tax base ratio personal vs business.
107	I like it the way it is

Question 34: Please provide any additional comments related to community and economic development in Bridgton.²⁵	
1	Keep investing in the town's infrastructure and broadband and the businesses will come!
2	Look at the business model in the Conway and N. Conway area, minus the big box stores.
3	The newly approved comprehensive planning, and wastewater treatment approval, will be great for the town.
4	Residents who are encouraged to participate in community events/meetings can improve the economic development. Need organizations who meet monthly specifically to plan changes and report findings to Planning
5	Keep the small town charm. Don't grow too fast.
6	[REDACTED]
7	Bridgton's downtown still retains a strong "sense of the spirit of place" with a Main Street existing in harmony with its natural surroundings and cultural history. Any attempt at economic development that d
8	I feel like there is a them and us division in Bridgton. That we are not a cohesive town. Perhaps more community wide events would hlep.
9	I pray that any future changes in Bridgton don't change the heart of this town
10	I believe that the hospital is the largest employer in town and I know it has been struggling in the past few years - partly because it is a rural hospital but partly because of some misguided management (Ce
11	I would like no more development. I do not want this place to end up like Long Island, ny or New Jersey.
12	We need to do more for our seniors and low income families in this town.
13	Make Bridgton more like North Conway or Windham and you'll have a lot more people wanting to reside there... plain and simple
14	Regarding volunteering, Bridgton is slowly losing its volunteer base as it "ages out." It is a real problem for many organizations. The "sense of place" mentioned above seems to be fading and I'm not really
15	A single strategic plan for attraction of new companies is required. A formal effort to put Bridgton on the field with other enlightened communities in order to seek and attract quality employers is a must.

²⁵ Note: Responses are redacted where potentially personally identifiable information is provided. Some responses are truncated due to the character limit allowed per response. Responses have not been corrected for grammer or spelling and are in their original form from the respondent.

16	Hope there is no over-development or interfering with a residential neighborhood. The projected 'Hotel Bridgton' concerns me.
17	Good you are doing this survey.
18	Resist growing the tax mill rate
19	We love the Farmer's Market and feel the town should be even more supportive of their presence. (It seemed for a while last year that the town (Selectboard) was antagonistic to their presence which was unjust)
20	The section of town near the main light is sorry looking, needs some real TLC and an eye to enhancing the existing architectural potential of those old buildings. Refurbish if possible. Would love to see o
21	I am concerned by the sometimes rather silly second-guessing about development in town--we either continue to develop and provide new employment or we may die as a town.
22	We should support and expand the Community Center offering more indoor recreation in the winter, particularly. Indoor gym. Possibly a swimming pool, exercise classes etc. Function Hall. There are few places
23	I believe we should be encouraging jobs in Bridgton, perhaps related to service businesses such as stores and lodging or restaurants. I wish the community would provide some training for individuals in retail
24	It would be nice have dine-in options on Main Street that stay open longer.
25	The community is great, would be wonderful to enhance the programs in place.
26	I am concerned about the direction Bridgton is heading. It seems money is all that matters and so much is being destroyed to earn profits. Bridgton can maintain its unique soul AND develop economically with
27	I think it is important to focus our efforts on attracting locally owned businesses and people who will take care in the design of their buildings or renovations. No more dollar stores!!! Having cheap, disco
28	Bridgton is a beloved place. It's got it all: lakes, forests, trails, a historic & walkable town center, locally-owned businesses, a great farmers market, and walkable (soon to be more walkable?) streets. Br
29	I love it here and I dislike seeing a vacant storefront. I would like the young people of this community to feel that they can have a future here if they so desire. Education and opportunity is powerful and
30	So happy to see this survey and thoughtful deliberation about development. Bridgton is a gem of a town and I'd like to see it remain so. Back home, the town of [REDACTED] has created a "
31	Would be nice if the leadership was honest, caring, considerate of those with less income than them. .
32	I would like to see Bridgton become a "Pay per bag" town.

33	The town should not provide direct funds to entice businesses to come to Bridgton (other than tax credits) , however the town should simply make it "easy" for business to set up shop here. Additionally, Brid
34	continue to encourage the arts in all its forms as well as continuing education for all ages and entertainment. The Farmers Market is something that should be welcomed and expanded. What is most important
35	We need to be careful that we don't over develop the town, putting lots of buildings up when we don't have housing or jobs for anyone over 20! We need to celebrate our cultural and arts organizations more. F
36	Medical facilities will be a growing need as the population ages. Retirement communities as well.
37	In order for any community to thrive including Bridgton there must be an effort to draw and retain families, especially those with children. Having excellence in medical and health care and public schools w
38	The hotel currently being proposed would be an amazing asset to Bridgton. In the past Bridgton always had a hotel. Bridgton was/is the gateway to the White Mountains Region. People from Boston and the sout
39	Overall the traditional look of the center needs to be enhanced as well as more green space and outdoor seating.
40	I truly support local business as much as I can.
41	My impression is that the secondary public schools serving Bridgton are not good enough -- that's a top priority for community and economic development. Also, retirement communities and assisted living facil
42	Communities of faith play a big role In bridgton.
43	In developing the town, there seemed to be some covert activities, such as the attempt to build a hotel on Bacon Street. The result was an uproar with the residents in the area. Can there be a more transpare
44	We need an economic development director / planner. First step. It might also be helpful to classify development types so we can be more efficient approving these business, perhaps have different standards o
45	I think I've said it all, for now, but would certainly like to know how many responses you received and what those responses were!
46	Let's fill empty store fronts, get rid of eyesores, help the disadvantaged, Build an attractive hotel downtown, Develop eye appeal at entrance to downtown. Flower Gardens are very pretty but store fronts in
47	Bridgton I s a recreational treasure: keep it clean and safe. In the past few years I am shocked at the amount of loud boats high speeds; noise levels and milfoil in long lake. It is so important to have sa
48	Need independent living facility. The Cottages is a wonderful idea but does not provide a dining facility or services that would be provided in a facility.

49	Be selective and go for quality and not quantity, get business that are interested in the long term and that are good community partners, don't turn Portland St. into a Rte. 302 in Windham.
50	The library offers great family activities all year round from new babies to high school. Things need to be geared to younger families
51	Please hire an Economic Development Director. Town politics have interfered with this process, and we need a person to coordinate future development in town. Please do not stand in the way of medical and rec
52	*
53	i think the hotel is a terrible idea and will alter the residential neighborhood in a negative way. Getting tourists here shouldn't mean compromising the character of the town
54	The look and feel of downtown will impact the type of vacationer and potential residents the town attracts. When approving business development plans, please keep this in mind.
55	Bridgton needs jobs that will bring young professionals to the community who will buy and maintain residential properties downtown and in the village residential district, provide a larger year-round custome
56	Communities thrive when residents take ownership and get involved. Whatever can be done to enhance that aspect would be beneficial!
57	We need nice condos for 50 plus years of age. Many people are leaving our area for condos in Portland. Build communities for 50 plus years. We also need nursing facilities for elderly. If they have to leave
58	host more events at Narramissic Farm to raise money for town projects.
59	Bridgton has the opportunity because of it's lakes, natural beauty, and location to be a moderately upscale destination. Thoughtful growth, could attract tourist and \$. Ideally that would attract investment t
60	better housing or rental units for all income levels, including twonhouses or gated communities
61	Bridgton needs badly to retain its unique sense of place. It is a primary asset along with recreation/natural resources. The lack of zoning and associated sprawl is a huge detriment to retaining Bridgton's m
62	I am pleased that this survey is being taken at that Bridgton is, again, the front runner when it comes to community planning. I wish that other towns would do the same (and work as a region rather than indi
63	TOWN HAS A LOT OF POTENTIAL, BUT SHOULD PROCEED IN A WAY TO MINIMIZE THE FINANCIAL IMPACT TO THE LOCALS.
64	Taking down old buildings and replace them with style that go with the historic atmosphere of town. Keep people who live full time and part time in town in the loop of what is going on.

65	Sometimes the best course of action is to start new. The buildings at Pondicherry Square are probably beyond repair without significant investment. Until the town assists with a facelift, how can you expect
66	Out of state waterfront homeowners are getting screwed on property taxes. We use none of the town services. It's nice that we can pay for all the residents who live in hovels. Need more \$\$? Raise taxes on
67	I grew up in Bridgton and now it has become so commercialized it is not small town anymore, I hate seeing MacDonald's, Hannaford's, Dollar Store, Dunkin Donuts, car washed, etc. along Rt. 302. The town has
68	The hotel is not a desirable addition. No one asked the current hotel owners how often they are full. No one is considering the needs and desires of those who live in Bridgton and use Highland Lake. The
69	as seasonal residents we should be allowed input real estate taxes are ridiculous
70	No
71	support business already here from leaving
72	I strongly support any legislation that would improve recycling in the community including any pay per bag. The community we come from started recycling in the 80s and got to 40%. I do not understand why t
73	Please explore the idea of pop-up businesses that are unique to Maine and the Lake's Region. Perhaps converting a building such as the former granite retailer on Main Street to a venue that features multiple
74	Bridgton shouldn't be so quick to approve almost any new business scheme simply because it promises pie-in-the-sky employment opportunities, added tax revenues, or replacement/rehabilitation of old/unused pr
75	Very impressed with the new developing sidewalks, what a difference Main Street will be ...for the better, of course.
76	I would like to see the empty storefronts filled with businesses and see more outdoor seating in general and for restaurants.
77	Clean up main street
78	love the band playing in the summer, book sales by the library, community wide events
79	More community focused entertainment- festivals, musical events
80	Bridgton needs to properly develop lower Main St. in a manner consistent with a quaint Maine town. Development of the architectural character across the street from Renys will be destructive. Additionally,
81	Help the people that have addiction needs and their families. The state needs to support full systemic programs for people, not just bandaids for immediate issues.
82	Nothing to help
83	I think Bridgton is unique. It is sad to see the old store fronts in the down town strip empty or being occupied by tattoo parlors I also know that I would hate to see the town turn into another Naples in o

84	Can't wait to see where Bridgton will expand to!
85	I hope that as the community grows and buildings are replaced with new construction or renovated, that there is care taken to ensure the small town feel and aesthetic.
86	Fantastic town with lots to offer, would love to see it continue to grow and improve. We've been excited by what we've seen here over the last five years and hope it continues.
87	Would not like to see any more fast-food restaurants. There is a need for more upscale restaurants. No more "pub-type" food. No more drive-through restaurants. No more strip malls. Would not like to see
88	Make sure there are affordable pet-friendly lodging options. Don't lose Bridgton books.
89	B
90	Bridgton has an opportunity to be a tourist destination. It should grow its downtown accordingly.
91	A center for the Arts or more Art related events.
92	I receive the weekly email from the Chamber of Commerce which I always look at. It's hard to be totally involved in what's going on in Bridgton because it basically is our vacation home and our main life i
93	As much as possible, maintain the rural character of the are, including the historic architecture.
94	We love Bridgton, have owned property on a small pond in South Bridgton since 1978. It is quiet, we have loons + babies, eagles, and other wild life. Great neighbors. Always a feeling of peace when we get th
95	We would love to see Bridgton develop a bigger food scene. In addition, we hope that the hotel proposed for in town be less cookie cutter and have more of a personalized, boutiquey flair.
96	Thank you for doing this survey!
97	Please see my comments on the previous page about land development. We must work together to care for one another and the environment. If you halt the current over-development at play you can help your curre
98	We desperately need a full-time Economic & Community Development Director. The Board of Selectmen are not professionals in this area and rely on the advice of developers, whose input is self-serving. The c
99	Waste water system completed
100	Feel RE taxes on waterfront property are unfairly too high.. We live in a private road, so have to pay for road plowing. Have no children in school. Fear if RE taxes continue to go up, we will not be able
101	I feel that Bridgton would be much further in economic development if our municipal leaders were more supportive of Community Development Directors and visionaries even if they don't have experience or under

102	Hope it doesn't get too big; lakes, mountains and quiet lifestyle appeals to me. Once the woods are clear cut, the view & natural beauty are gone to make room for busier things- there are plenty of towns with
103	We need to educate local folks that land protections (clean water regs, zoning, etc) are in their own best interests.
104	This is a wonderful town. Let's grow what it offers without losing what makes it charming and unique. Minimize the chains and big box stores (and create zoning so none can locate downtown) and attract the in
105	Bridgton desperately needs a Community Development Director that in my opinion has or will learn project management skills necessary to the continued use of Community Development Block Grant funding of ongoi
106	Work at bringing more business in town that can bring more real estate tax revenue. Taxes are way to high for the amount of services provided. If taxes get much higher it will force people on a fixed income
107	Fix up the Bookstore
108	Zoning would be important to avoid conflicts that often arise when there is growth
109	I would like to see how we can rally community to support each other more. It seems like many of us are tapped out within our own non-profit. How do we get people excited about what happening in Bridgton?!
110	Butcher and natural foods, look to Norway and mimic them
111	Bridgton has an aging population and attracting and developing financially viable young families is key to Bridgton's future
112	Providing artistic spaces and opportunities increases the value of the community and can really add to the quality of life and economic development.
113	Love the BCC. Carmen runs a tight ship and keeps it interesting.
114	The sense of community here in Bridgton is just incredible. We need to develop light industry here to assure our children have somewhere to work somewhere to be gainfully employed.
115	I believe Bridgton should consider a dedicated industrial park with water, sewage, easy access for trucks to Rte 302, etc.
116	Support locally grown food, local dairy farming, etc.
117	need teen and child activities
118	It's a nice small town, while we need more services that are affordable for locals, (that they can afford) but still help with our recreation / tourist industry too, a difficult balance to find.
119	As town grows, administrative staff has not increased correspondingly with professionals to support the Town Manager & Deputy Manager. Specifically needed are professionals who can provide additional support
120	A business model that reflects north Conway but without the big box stores
121	A dog park

122	N/A
123	None
124	We need jobs and opportunities for our youth. To keep them engaged and caring about their town and to keep them here long term.
125	City needs to enforce ordinances. City owned beach camp at Salmon Point is full of out of state, year round trailers, not paying tag and title fees and getting the great deal that locals are not getting.
126	Regarding the community-CLEAN up the unsightly structures (houses) on Church St., Kennard St., Bennet St.
127	It's exciting and encouraging!
128	Please involve people in this process who know what they are doing. Laissez faire will not benefit Bridgton in the long term.
129	Bridgton is in the process of polishing its identity by the construction projects and the building rehab over the past few years and what is slated for the next few years. One source that could be tapped are
130	Bridgton has a lot to offer, both people and resources, we just need business to locate in our town.
131	Real estate taxes have gotten way to high. If they continue to rise some retired people on a fixed income may have to leave town. Services are very limited for the amount of taxes collected.
132	Diversify the developers, have a level playing field for all developers. At the moment, one developer is over whelming the town. A lot of back room deals being made with the town politicians.
133	Bridgton Community Center is a great resource for town residents. However it is so well used that meeting space is very tight. Performance space is very small. The town meeting room is disgracefully underuse
134	Residents are worried about the hospital situation. This MUST be corrected. Many residents are now traveling distances to get medical care.
135	We DO NOT need a "Hotel down town! There's plenty of land near town. How about that large acreage across from Paris. Farmers, Union?
136	The loss of doctors and services at Bridgton Hospital hurts everyone in the community
137	We seem to have a number of "one generation" businesses. There are a number of thriving businesses which are closing after founders retiring, moving on: Sportshaus, Craftworks, Printery. I know of at least
138	Exodus of primary care physicians is a real existing problem in Bridgton. Physicians continue to leave/retire from their local practice and remaining available primary care physicians in this area are unabl
139	We need to promote more development locally We must upgrade the bridgton downtown entry. We have too many vacant old buildings as we enter bridgton! We had a store with a broken front pane window covered by

140	Town and Planning board need to be on same page, town is open for business and pro growth, planning board is less open, more restrictive and making it too hard/expensive to open or bring new business to town
141	We feel that Bridgton is a very special place. We would be very sad were the development of Bridgton start looking like Windham and that's what we fear. we don't need a hotel off Kennard St. We don't need
142	Bridgton has a tremendous opportunity for smart growth. We have seen the success of Depot St. With a hotel to be built and the hope for the buildings at the stop light to be rebuilt we can change this town
143	There are so many empty buildings in downtown Bridgton. It would be awesome to see them fixed up and have businesses moved into them, instead of building new buildings for businesses.
144	Moot point, but I still scratch my head wondering how the Kennard Street hotel plan is deemed even remotely appropriate and viable for the chosen location (no, I am not a resident of that area of town, so no
145	Bridgton needs to leverage its natural assets, e.g., lakes, ski area, etc.
146	We need to spend money on infrastructure and prepare the base of the town proper in order to give the appearance of willingness to accept new businesses and the strong desire to rejuvinate the town or it wi
147	Keep Bridgton from becoming a big city and keep its New England charm. No big hotel in town but welcomed outside of down town.
148	Developer a community recreation center. A place for kids to go, rec to practice sports, community exercise programs and events to be held. We deparately need such a facility.
149	Do not make Bridgton look like Windham....too many businesses in a small area so too much traffic and congestion
150	none
151	Bridgton is a beautiful town I enjoy living here
152	My home town is being developed with high density, mixed use building, which is why I enjoy my camp in [REDACTED] When I saw that the sewer system passed in Bridgton I said"here we go" . The more you devel

BRIDGTON RESIDENT COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

The University of Southern Maine is conducting a survey of permanent and seasonal residents and visitors to learn about people's connections to the town of Bridgton. It is hoped that your input will help identify opportunities to keep Bridgton vibrant and prosperous, as well as build upon its strengths, and support its weaknesses. This survey should take approximately 5 to 15 minutes. Depending on your response in certain questions, question numbers may not be sequential.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Survey outcomes will be reported by summarizing the general consensus, rather than detailed individual responses. If you have questions pertaining to this survey you may contact Ryan Wallace at usmcber@maine.edu or 207-780-5859. Thank you for your participation! By continuing you agree you are at least 18 years of age.

Q1 Which of the categories below best describes your presence in Bridgton?

- ☐ Full time resident
- ☐ Seasonal or part-time resident
- ☐ Occasional visitor
- ☐ Employed in Bridgton, but live elsewhere
- ☐ Do not live, work, or visit Bridgton

Q2 Do you own or rent a home in Bridgton?

- ☐ Own
- ☐ Rent
- ☐ Neither

Q3 Do you own or rent a home in Bridgton during your stays?

- ☐ Own
- ☐ Rent
- ☐ Air BnB or similar service
- ☐ Stay with family or friends

☐ Camp

Other:

Q4 Please indicate your employment status:

- ☐ Employed (including self-employed)
☐ Not employed, but looking
☐ Not employed, not looking
☐ Retired

Q5 Please indicate the location of your place of employment:

- ☐ In Bridgton
☐ In Maine, but outside of Bridgton
☐ Outside of Maine
☐ I work remotely for an entity located in Maine
☐ I work remotely for an entity located outside of Maine

Other:

Q6 Do you or your spouse/partner own a business?

- ☐ No
☐ Yes: located in Bridgton
☐ Yes: located in Maine, but outside of Bridgton
☐ Yes: located outside of Maine

Q7 Do you or your spouse own a business in Bridgton?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Q8 How many years have you resided in Bridgton?

--Click Here--



Less than 2 years
3-5 years
6-10
11-20
More than 20 years

Q9 How many people including yourself (on average) live in your household in Bridgton?

--Click Here-- ▼

1
2
3
4
5
6+

Q10 What first brought you to Bridgton to live?

- ☐ Born and raised (you or spouse/partner)
- ☐ Family living (you or spouse/partner)
- ☐ Vacationed in Bridgton (you or spouse/partner)
- ☐ No personal connections (you or spouse/partner)
- ☐ Recreational opportunities
- ☐ Quality of life
- ☐ Cost of living

Other:

Q11 What do you like best about Bridgton?

Q12 What types of businesses do you actively patronize in Bridgton and how often?

Weekly Monthly Every few months Never

Arts/Culture/Library

Clothing

Crafts/Gifts

Financial and Insurance Related

Food-to-Go

Groceries

Medical Services

Professional Services (Legal, Etc.)

Personal Services (Hair Salon, Laundry, Etc.)

Pharmacy

Recreation and Entertainment

Sit-Down Dining

Q13 Which products or services do you purchase online or in cities/towns other than Bridgton?

Q14 What types of strategies do you think Bridgton should pursue to help enhance the local economy? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Attract new businesses that pay property taxes or employ locals
- ☐ Grow existing businesses that pay property taxes or employ locals
- ☐ Encourage locals purchase more goods locally
- ☐ Attract more tourists and/or increase their local spending
- ☐ Attract more seasonal residents and/or increase their local spending
- ☐ Attract more year-round residents who are retired or don't need jobs
- ☐ Attract more year-round residents who are bringing their own businesses or remote work jobs
- ☐ Support residents to start new businesses
- ☐ Train & connect local employees to remote jobs
- ☐ Support artisans and craft-makers
- ☐ Support remote working opportunities and training for current residents

Comments:

Q15 What types of businesses do you feel would be best located in the downtown area?

Q16 What types of businesses do you feel would be best located along the Portland Street corridor before getting to downtown?

Q17 What other businesses would you like to see or patronize in Bridgton not mentioned in your previous answers, if any?

Q18 On average, how often do you live/spend time in Bridgton EACH YEAR?

- ☐ One week or less ☐ 2-4 weeks
- ☐ 1-2 months
- ☐ 3-4 months
- ☐ 5-6 months
- ☐ Greater than 6 months but less than full year

Q19 Please select the months that you typically reside or visit Bridgton during a typical year:

- ☐ January ☐ February ☐ March ☐ April
- ☐ May ☐ June ☐ July
- ☐ August
- ☐ September

- ☐ October
☐ November
☐ December

Q20 What first brought you to Bridgton to live or visit?

- ☐ Born and raised (you or spouse/partner) ☐ Family living (you or spouse/partner)
☐ Vacationed in Bridgton (you or spouse/partner) ☐ No personal connections (you or spouse/partner) ☐ Recreational opportunities
☐ Quality of life ☐ Cost of living

Other:

Q21 What of the following factors limit the extent of your stay in Bridgton?

- ☐ Work ☐ Weather
☐ Things to do
☐ Availability of place to stay ☐ Internet accessibility

Other:

Q22 Do you ever work remotely when staying in Bridgton?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Q23 What would it take for you to move to Bridgton on a full-time basis?

Q24 Are there any other factors that you feel would improve your experience/stay in Bridgton?

Q25 How long have you operated a business in Bridgton?

--Click Here-- ▼

Less than 2 years
3-5 years
6-10
11-20
More than 20 years

Q26 What factors led to your decision to start or own a business in Bridgton?

Q27 What percentage of your business is from seasonal or tourism related customers?

--Click Here-- ▼

None
Less than 25%
25% to 50%
50% to 75%
Greater than 75%

Q28 What would be most helpful in increasing the success of your business in Bridgton?

Q29 Please provide the zip code of your primary residence:

Q30 Please indicate the range that best reflects your age:

--Click Here-- ▼

75+
65-75
55-64
45-54
35-44
25-34

Q31 Please indicate your gender:

--Click Here-- ▼

Female
Male

Q32 Community member contributions through local non-profits, volunteer, arts and cultural organizations create Bridgton's "sense of place" and support community members in need. Important services that cannot be funded through the town budget are often supported by these individuals. We would like to enhance our ability to integrate the unique talents and resources of our community members to the benefit of all Bridgton residents.

Do you have any talents or interests you would like to contribute, or desire to see enhanced in Bridgton?

Q33 If you would like to be contacted about contributing your talents or interests, please provide your name and contact. This information will be retained separate from other responses to this survey.

Q34 Please provide any additional comments related to community and economic development in Bridgton.

Q35 If you would are interested in receiving information about this study or being contacted for future related correspondence please provide an email address.

Thank you! Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Data Sources and Maintenance

Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis

Category/ Topic/ Concept	Table/ Figure ID/ Metric	What measure tells us	Source (for future updates)	Link to Source	Source (in 2019 report)
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE					
POPULATION HISTORY AND FORECAST					
Population history and projections (comparisons)	Table 1	# of population observed/projected; change over time period (%)	Maine State Economist (MeSE)	https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/demographic-projections	Maine State Economist (MeSE), US Census
Population history and projections	Figure 3	# of population observed/projected per year	MeSE, US Census	https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/demographic-projections	MeSE, US Census
Seasonal population change	Table 2	Size of seasonal population (#) and % change from annual population count for 2 and 4 person housing unit)	Census ACS5 year est. Tables: B25001 & DP04	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est., MOCER est.
AGE & GENDER COMPOSITION AND PROJECTIONS					
Population growth by age groups	Table 3	Population count and % change over time by age cohort	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
Population by age cohort and gender	Figure 4	Population count by age cohort and gender	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
Population projections by age cohort	Figure 5	Forecasted population (#) over time by age cohort	Maine State Economist (MeSE)	https://www.maine.gov/dafs/economist/demographic-projections	MeSE, CBR calculations
DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW					
Demographic characteristics	Table 4	#s and % change over time period by: population size; median age; total number of households (HH); average HH size & median HH income; % of the population living below the poverty line	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT					
Educational attainment	Figure 6	% of population (25 years+) by broad attainment level	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
Educational attainment	Table 5	% of population (25 years+) by detailed attainment level	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
INCOME					
Household income and per capita income	Figure 7	Median household income (\$); income per person	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
Income distribution	Figure 8	% of workers within various wages buckets	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
LABOR FORCE & UNEMPLOYMENT					
Indicators	Table 6	Total population 16+, LF participation rate, employment to population ratio, and unemployment ratio	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
Trends	Figure 9	# of people in the civilian workforce, employment count and unemployment rates per year.	Maine DOL, OWRI	https://www.maine.gov/labour/cwr/laus.html	Maine DOL, OWRI

Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis

Category/Topic/Concept	Table/ Figure ID	Metric	What measure tells us	Source (for future updates)	Link to Source	Source (in 2019 report)
HOUSING & AFFORDABILITY TRENDS						
Housing characteristics overview	Table 7	# and % of occupied housing units owned/rented; # and % of vacant units for sale/rent/seasonal; age of housing stock and % of total, average & median home values (\$); % of population cost-burdened.	Provides a snapshot of the overall health of Bridgton's residential housing market compared to Cumberland and Maine.	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://www.census.gov/hhes/housing/owning/owning.html	Census, ACS5-year est.
Housing values	Figure 10	% of households within various home value buckets	Distribution of home values in Bridgton compared to Cumberland County and Maine.	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://www.census.gov/hhes/housing/owning/owning.html	Census, ACS5-year est.
Housing affordability	Table 8	Median monthly housing costs (\$) by ownership status; % of population with unaffordable housing costs	Indication of housing affordability and an important indication of an area's ability to attract and retain workers and increase its residential population/tax base.	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://www.census.gov/hhes/housing/owning/owning.html	Census, ACS5-year est.
Homeownership affordability	Table 9	Index value (0-100); median home price (\$); median income (\$); income needed to afford median home price (\$); home price affordable to median income (\$); # and % of households unable to afford median home.	Indication of housing affordability in Bridgton compared to Cumberland County and Maine and peer communities.	Manit-housing	https://www.manit-housing.org/	Maine housing
ECONOMIC BASE						
COMMUNITING						
Commuter Flow	Figure 12	# of net commuters (i.e., difference between # of occupational residents in study region and employment in study region)	The size and flow of the workforce throughout an area by detailing the number of workers that commute to the area for work and the commuting patterns of resident workers in the area.	Census Bureau, OnTheMap	https://onthe.map.census.gov/	BMS, 2019.2
EMPLOYMENT TRENDS						
Employment Growth Rate	Figure 13	Employment growth rates relative to 2001 base year.	Long-term employment trends in Bridgton and how the town's economy compares to peer communities' ability to produce jobs and grow businesses.	Maine OWR, Includes QCEW employment only	https://www.maine.gov/labor/owr/	Maine OWR, Includes QCEW employment only
Employment growth historical and baseline projections	Figure 14	# of jobs observed/projected per year	Forecasted growth trends in Bridgton employment, reflects projected labor force growth and shifts in population dynamics in the town and surrounding communities.	Maine DOL, OWR, Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/owr/	BMS, 2019.2, Includes QCEW and self-employment
Employment Projections	Table 10	# of observed/projected jobs and % change from point in time	Forecasted employment growth in Bridgton, the Bridgton Commuter Region and peer communities.	Maine DOL, OWR, Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/owr/	BMS, 2019.2, Includes QCEW and self-employment
Average Employment Earnings	Figure 15	Average earnings (\$)	Wages in Bridgton relative to peer communities - an indication of the quality and types of jobs as well as education level and skill of the workforce.	Maine OWR, Includes QCEW employment only	https://www.maine.gov/labor/owr/	BMS, 2019.2
Distribution of Business Size	Figure 16	Share of local businesses by # of employees	Size of local businesses as measured by # of employees in study region relative to comparison communities.	Census Bureau, Zip Code Patterns	https://data.census.gov/tables/	BMS, 2019.2
LARGEST EMPLOYERS						
Largest Employers	Table 11	List of top employers including their respective industry codes and title; employment counts, square footage, and if business is home occupation.	Book details of top employers	Maine DOL, OWR	https://www.maine.gov/labor/owr/employees.html	Reference, USA
SECTOR EMPLOYMENT TRENDS						
Sector Employment Trends and Projections (Bridgton)	Table 12	# of observed/projected jobs & % change from point in time, average annual earnings, and location quotient by major 2-digit NAICS code	Industry employment provides a sense of the overall health in an industry sector (Bridgton). Employment forecasts help identify key growth sectors, and target industries that will provide job openings and opportunity.	Maine DOL, OWR, Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/owr/	BMS, 2019.2
Sector Employment Trends and Projections (Greater Bridgton Region/Commuter Region)	Table 13	# of observed/projected jobs & % change from point in time, average annual earnings, and location quotient by major 2-digit NAICS code	Industry employment provides a sense of the overall health in an industry sector (Bridgton Commuter Region). Employment forecasts help identify key growth sectors, and target industries that will provide job openings and opportunity.	Maine DOL, OWR, Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/owr/	BMS, 2019.2
Sector Employment Trends and Projections (Maine)	Table 14	# of observed/projected jobs & % change from point in time, average annual earnings, and location quotient by major 2-digit NAICS code	Industry employment provides a sense of the overall health in an industry sector (Maine). Employment forecasts help identify key growth sectors, and target industries that will provide job openings and opportunity.	Maine DOL, OWR, Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/owr/	BMS, 2019.2

Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis

Category/Topic/Concept	Table/ Figure ID	Metric	What measure tells us	Source (for future updates)	Link to Source	Source (in 2019 report)
DETAILED INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT TRENDS						
Key Industries (Bridgton)	Table 15	# of jobs & % change from point in time, average annual earnings, and location quotient by detailed 3-digit NAICS code	Employment change in key industries (Bridgton). The location quotient helps identify key industries/opportunities by showing which industries are most/least concentrated in the study region.	Maine Dept. of Labor, OMR	https://www.maine.gov/labor/omr/acsaw1.html	BMS, 2019.2
Key Industries (Greater Bridgton Region)	Table 16	# of jobs & % change from point in time, average annual earnings, location quotient, and % of jobs in Bridgton by detailed 3-digit NAICS code	Employment change in key industries (Greater Bridgton Region). The location quotient helps identify key industries/opportunities by showing which industries are most/least concentrated in the study region.	Maine Dept. of Labor, OMR	https://www.maine.gov/labor/omr/acsaw1.html	BMS, 2019.2
SELF-EMPLOYMENT TRENDS						
Self-Employment (Non-employer) Industry Sectors (Bridgton)	Table 17	# of self-employed workers & % change from point in time, and average annual earnings, by broad 2-digit NAICS code		Maine DOL, OMR; Maine Center for Business & Economic Research		BMS, 2019.2
Self-Employment (Non-employer) Industry Sectors (Bridgton Commuter Region)	Table 18	# of self-employed workers & % change from point in time, and average annual earnings, by broad 2-digit NAICS code		Maine DOL, OMR; Maine Center for Business & Economic Research		BMS, 2019.2
WORKFORCE & OCCUPATIONS						
WORKFORCE & OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS						
Occupational Employment Trends of Bridgton Residents by Major Category	Table 19	# of residents employed in major occupational sectors, % change from point in time, median annual earnings, and location quotient, at 2-digit SOC level.	Shows the number of people employed in occupations most frequently done by Bridgton residents.	Maine DOL, OMR; Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/omr/outlook.html	BMS, 2019.2
Occupational Employment Trends of Bridgton Commuter Region Residents by Major Occupational Category	Table 20	# of residents employed in major occupational sectors, % change from point in time, median annual earnings, and location quotient, at 2-digit SOC level.	Shows the number of people employed in occupations most frequently done by residents in the Bridgton Commuter Region.	Maine DOL, OMR; Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/omr/outlook.html	BMS, 2019.2
Occupational Employment of Bridgton Residents	Table 21	# employed in specific occupations for Bridgton residents, % change from point in time, median annual earnings, location quotient, and typically entry level education, at 5-digit SOC level.	The number of people employed in specific occupations most frequently done by Bridgton residents. Highlights income potential and diversification of resident population.	Maine DOL, OMR; Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/omr/outlook.html	BMS, 2019.2
Occupational Growth by Educational Requirement	Figure 17	% change in occupational employment over time period by typical educational requirements.	How employment has changed based on the level of education typically required for entry level employment; indication/proxy of knowledge/skill level of resident population and changing demand of workforce	Maine Center for Business & Economic Research	https://www.maine.gov/labor/omr/outlook.html	BMS, 2019.2; USBS, OMR calculations
INTERNET AVAILABILITY & COMPUTER USAGE						
Internet Accessibility	Table 22	% of households with internet subscription; broadband of any type (and internet access w/o subscription) and no internet access	Level of internet accessibility in Bridgton and peer communities important for growth and economic development	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
Computer and Internet Usage	Table 23	% of household population with and without a computer in the home. % with internet accessibility (of % with computer at home)	Level of computer and internet usage in Bridgton and peer communities important for growth and economic development	Census, ACS5-year est.	https://data.census.gov/cedsci/	Census, ACS5-year est.
Number of Households Unserved (no broadband)	Table 24	# of households without broadband connection	The number of unserved households by town in Cumberland county. Measure of connectivity and access.			Cumberland County Play Book

Bridgton Economic and Market Analysis

Category/Topic/Concept	Table/ Figure ID/Metric	What measure tells us	Source (for future updates)	Source (in 2019 report)
REAL ESTATE MARKET TRENDS				
RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITY				
Zillow Home Value Index	Figure 18	Home values (\$) per year	Zillow.com	Zillow.com
Building Permits	Figure 19	# of building permits issued by unit/structure	SCODS Building Permits Database	Census
Housing Occupancy	Table 25	% of owner-occupied & renter-occupied units; average size of owner-occupied & renter-occupied HH; % of occupied HH with mortgage	Census, ACS5-year est.	Census, ACS5-year est.
Housing Vacancy	Table 26	# of vacant housing units; vacancy rates (%) (and for rent/sale, seasonal, other)	Census, ACS5-year est.	Census, ACS5-year est.
PROPERTY VALUATION				
Property Valuation	Figure 20	Property valuation (\$) per year (over-time)	Bridgton Town Assessor	Bridgton Town Assessor
Relative Tax Burden Distribution by Property Sector	Table 27	Sum of land value (\$), building value (\$), exemption value (\$), and total value (\$), by property sector, % of total value by property sector.	Bridgton Town Assessor	Bridgton Town Assessor; MOBER Calculations.
LAND & DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL				
Developable Acres	Table 28	# of vacant parcels, acres, and developable acres on the market or unknown (land only)	Town Assessor	Town Assessor; MOBER calculations

Industry Cluster Identification

Industry Cluster Identification

for Bridgton Commuter Area

Emsi Q2 2019 Data Set

September 2019

Executive Summary

- Your **highest ranked cluster is Footwear**, with a score of 100 (out of 100) points.
- Your **average cluster score is 21** (out of 100) points. This is *not* a benchmark against other regions; it only compares the relative performance of your clusters to each other. Clusters ranked higher than 21 are above average for your region, while clusters ranked lower than 21 are below average.
- **Top clusters** must have a score of **at least 32**, while **bottom clusters** must have a score of **11 or less**. These thresholds are determined by applying the average deviation (plus or minus 10) to the average cluster score 21.

4 Top Clusters 27 Average Clusters 7 Bottom Clusters



Cluster Rankings

Footwear

100

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
316210	Footwear Manufacturing	203	100

Communications Equipment and Services

75

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
334220	Radio and Television Broadcasting and Wireless Communications Equipment Manufacturing	213	75

Local Industrial Products and Services

49

You have 2 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
332710	Machine Shops	442	50
811219	Other Electronic and Precision Equipment Repair and Maintenance	12	12

□ Hospitality and Tourism

33

You have 7 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
532284	Recreational Goods Rental	19	11
713920	Skiing Facilities	105	14
713930	Marinas	86	22
713990	All Other Amusement and Recreation Industries	24	7
721191	Bed-and-Breakfast Inns	11	8
721211	RV (Recreational Vehicle) Parks and Campgrounds	251	50
721214	Recreational and Vacation Camps (except Campgrounds)	325	33

□ Downstream Metal Products

28

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
332312	Fabricated Structural Metal Manufacturing	78	28

□ Insurance Services

26

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
524291	Claims Adjusting	54	26

Forestry

25

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
113310	Logging	133	25

Local Financial Services

25

You have 2 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
522110	Commercial Banking	12	12
524210	Insurance Agencies and Brokerages	113	26

Local Government Services

23

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
903999	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	660	23

Local Health Services

23

You have 17 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
446110	Pharmacies and Drug Stores	51	11

621111	Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	79	4
621210	Offices of Dentists	47	15
621310	Offices of Chiropractors	14	11
621320	Offices of Optometrists	19	13
621330	Offices of Mental Health Practitioners (except Physicians)	10	11
621340	Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists	54	15
621399	Offices of All Other Miscellaneous Health Practitioners	12	10
621420	Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers	23	11
621610	Home Health Care Services	94	10
622110	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	1,086	35
623110	Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	299	3
623210	Residential Intellectual and Developmental Disability Facilities	94	9
623220	Residential Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities	95	19
623311	Continuing Care Retirement Communities	96	27
623312	Assisted Living Facilities for the Elderly	37	7
623990	Other Residential Care Facilities	26	8

Financial Services

23

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
522120	Savings Institutions	111	23

Agricultural Inputs and Services

22

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
-------	----------	------	-------

111000

Crop Production

100

22

□ Wood Products

22

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
321113	Sawmills	105	22

□ Water Transportation

20

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
336612	Boat Building	133	20

□ Local Utilities

20

You have 2 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
454310	Fuel Dealers	78	20
517311	Wired Telecommunications Carriers	15	18

□ Local Education and Training

20

You have 3 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
611110	Elementary and Secondary Schools	252	17

611610	Fine Arts Schools	14	8
903611	Elementary and Secondary Schools (Local Government)	615	21

□ Federal Government Services

19

You have 2 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
901149	US Postal Service	126	15
901199	Federal Government, Civilian, Excluding Postal Service	65	26

□ Construction Products and Services

18

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
237990	Other Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	24	18

□ Business Services

17

You have 4 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
541511	Custom Computer Programming Services	17	19
541611	Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services	32	17
541990	All Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	23	7
551114	Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Managing Offices	30	23

□ Lighting and Electrical Equipment

16

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
335312	Motor and Generator Manufacturing	17	16

Marketing, Design, and Publishing

16

You have 2 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
519120	Libraries and Archives	40	19
541430	Graphic Design Services	18	11

Local Hospitality Establishments

15

You have 4 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
713910	Golf Courses and Country Clubs	31	8
722511	Full-Service Restaurants	370	22
722513	Limited-Service Restaurants	144	1
722515	Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars	79	14

Transportation and Logistics

15

You have 2 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
482110	Rail transportation	14	16
488190	Other Support Activities for Air Transportation	33	14

Local Real Estate, Construction, and Development

14

You have 21 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
236115	New Single-Family Housing Construction (except For-Sale Builders)	183	14
236117	New Housing For-Sale Builders	12	9
236118	Residential Remodelers	141	13
236220	Commercial and Institutional Building Construction	24	18
238110	Poured Concrete Foundation and Structure Contractors	17	9
238140	Masonry Contractors	27	10
238210	Electrical Contractors and Other Wiring Installation Contractors	95	13
238220	Plumbing, Heating, and Air-Conditioning Contractors	174	20
238290	Other Building Equipment Contractors	16	12
238310	Drywall and Insulation Contractors	35	10
238320	Painting and Wall Covering Contractors	91	7
238330	Flooring Contractors	23	10
238350	Finish Carpentry Contractors	53	8
238910	Site Preparation Contractors	169	16
238990	All Other Specialty Trade Contractors	50	12
327320	Ready-Mix Concrete Manufacturing	25	14
332322	Sheet Metal Work Manufacturing	40	18

423310	Lumber, Plywood, Millwork, and Wood Panel Merchant Wholesalers	12	17
444190	Other Building Material Dealers	43	16
531110	Lessors of Residential Buildings and Dwellings	23	13
531210	Offices of Real Estate Agents and Brokers	56	17

Local Household Goods and Services

14

You have 3 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
444130	Hardware Stores	53	13
444220	Nursery, Garden Center, and Farm Supply Stores	11	7
561730	Landscaping Services	154	15

Local Motor Vehicle Products and Services

14

You have 8 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
441110	New Car Dealers	40	15
441120	Used Car Dealers	13	11
441222	Boat Dealers	32	17
441310	Automotive Parts and Accessories Stores	42	9
447110	Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	219	16
488410	Motor Vehicle Towing	21	13
811111	General Automotive Repair	68	9
811121	Automotive Body, Paint, and Interior Repair and Maintenance	15	11

Local Food and Beverage Processing and Distribution

13

You have 4 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
311811	Retail Bakeries	11	8
424490	Other Grocery and Related Products Merchant Wholesalers	40	14
445110	Supermarkets and Other Grocery (except Convenience) Stores	210	16
445120	Convenience Stores	64	6

□ Distribution and Electronic Commerce

13

You have 4 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
423830	Industrial Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers	29	19
423910	Sporting and Recreational Goods and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	12	13
425120	Wholesale Trade Agents and Brokers	24	8
454110	Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses	16	8

□ Local Logistical Services

12

You have 2 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
484110	General Freight Trucking, Local	22	11
485410	School and Employee Bus Transportation	29	13

☐ Local Commercial Services

12

You have 8 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
541110	Offices of Lawyers	46	15
541211	Offices of Certified Public Accountants	25	17
541219	Other Accounting Services	25	6
561720	Janitorial Services	27	8
561790	Other Services to Buildings and Dwellings	21	9
811310	Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment (except Automotive and Electronic) Repair and Maintenance	35	14
811412	Appliance Repair and Maintenance	14	11
812320	Drycleaning and Laundry Services (except Coin-Operated)	16	8

☐ State Government Services

12

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
902999	State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	228	12

☐ Local Personal Services (Non-Medical)

10

You have 6 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
541940	Veterinary Services	103	14

624410	Child Day Care Services	199	9
811490	Other Personal and Household Goods Repair and Maintenance	10	7
812112	Beauty Salons	26	5
812910	Pet Care (except Veterinary) Services	49	13
812990	All Other Personal Services	17	8

Local Entertainment and Media

10

You have 3 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
451110	Sporting Goods Stores	17	6
451211	Book Stores	22	13
511110	Newspaper Publishers	23	8

Local Retailing of Clothing and General Merchandise

10

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
452319	All Other General Merchandise Stores	60	10

Local Community and Civic Organizations

9

You have 4 industries in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
624110	Child and Youth Services	20	9
624120	Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	390	9

813110	Religious Organizations	74	6
813312	Environment, Conservation and Wildlife Organizations	18	14

Education and Knowledge Creation

7

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
611699	All Other Miscellaneous Schools and Instruction	29	7

Recreational and Small Electric Goods

7

You have 1 industry in this cluster:

NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
339920	Sporting and Athletic Goods Manufacturing	11	7

Performing Arts

6

You have 1 industry in this cluster:










NAICS	Industry	Jobs	Score
711310	Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events with Facilities	28	6

Clusters That Don't Appear in Your Region

Upstream Metal Manufacturing

Upstream Chemical Products

- Video Production and Distribution
- Printing Services
- Trailers, Motor Homes, and Appliances
- Tobacco
- Biopharmaceuticals
- Textile Manufacturing
- Coal Mining
- Production Technology and Heavy Machinery
- Automotive
- Vulcanized and Fired Materials
- Metalworking Technology
- Plastics
- Jewelry and Precious Metals
- Electric Power Generation and Transmission
- Environmental Services
- Fishing and Fishing Products
- Food Processing and Manufacturing
- Downstream Chemical Products
- Furniture
- Information Technology and Analytical Instruments
- Leather and Related Products

-  Paper and Packaging
-  Livestock Processing
-  Apparel
-  Medical Devices
-  Metal Mining
-  Music and Sound Recording
-  Nonmetal Mining
-  Oil and Gas Production and Transportation
-  Aerospace Vehicles and Defense



The clusters in this analysis are defined according to the methodology of Harvard Business School's U.S. Cluster Mapping Project.

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Source: U.S. Cluster Mapping (<http://clustermapping.us>), Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School. Copyright

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Emsi has made modifications to the Harvard clusters in order to integrate our additional data.

Data Sources and Calculations

Input-Output Data

The input-output model in this report is Emsi's gravitational flows multi-regional social account matrix model (MR-SAM). It is based on data from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and American Community Survey; as well as the Bureau of Economic Analysis' National Income and Product Accounts, Input-Output Make and Use Tables, and Gross State Product data. In addition, several Emsi in-house data sets are used, as well as data from Oak Ridge National Labs on the cost of transportation between counties.

Industry Data

Emsi industry data have various sources depending on the class of worker. (1) For QCEW Employees, Emsi primarily uses the QCEW (Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages), with supplemental estimates from County Business Patterns. (2) Non-QCEW employees' data are based on a number of sources including QCEW, Current Employment Statistics, County Business Patterns, BEA State and Local Personal Income reports, the National Industry-Occupation Employment Matrix (NIOEM), the American Community Survey, and Railroad Retirement Board statistics. (3) Self-Employed and Extended Proprietor classes of worker data are primarily based on the American Community Survey, Nonemployer Statistics, and BEA State and Local Personal Income Reports. Projections for QCEW and Non-QCEW Employees are informed by NIOEM and long-term industry projections published by individual states.

Location Quotient

Location quotient (LQ) is a way of quantifying how concentrated a particular industry, cluster, occupation, or demographic group is in a region as compared to the nation. It can reveal what makes a particular region unique in comparison to the national average.

Shift Share

Shift share is a standard regional analysis method that attempts to determine how much of regional job growth can be attributed to national trends and how much is due to unique regional factors.

State Data Sources

This report uses state data from the following agencies: Maine did not provide us with a data source