

Community Development October Report



General Updates

Keri is one month into her position as Deputy Community Development Director, and she is a huge asset to the team! She's been busy getting involved in each of the projects listed below.

Community Development Block Grant

The new program year applications were advertised in the newspaper and will be available on our website November 7th. Please read through the program requirements and reach out if you have any questions. Applications are due January 6, 2023. They will be scored by the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) and their recommendations will be brought to the Selectboard.

2024 Comprehensive Plan / Vision Bridgton

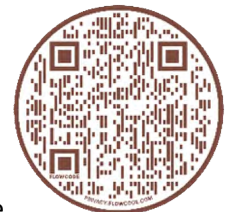
In partnership with The Opportunity Alliance and The Bridgton Library, Bridgton received a \$10,000 grant to participate in Community Heart & Soul. This gives us a funding for a coach and creative tools for community engagement that we will incorporate into the 2024 comprehensive plan. We recognize that we have several community engagement efforts happening at once: Community Heart & Soul, Open Space Plan, and the Comprehensive Plan. We decided all three efforts will be branded under the umbrella name *Vision Bridgton*. Susie Guthro spearheaded a logo contest, and by November 1, our team had received 10 submissions! The Bridgton Arts & Culture Subcommittee will choose the final logo, and the winning artist will receive a \$300 cash prize! We're very excited to launch *Vision Bridgton* and engage the community in these important plans for Bridgton's future.

Open Space Plan

TJD&A Landscape Architects and Planners will be completing Bridgton's Open Space Plan for May of 2023, before our grant funding from the GOPIF expires. They are presenting their initial inventory map in early November, which will show what we currently have for open space. They are also building an interactive website so the community can inform where we want more open space, or how we can connect our existing spaces. Bridgton is fortunate to be booming with development and new residents, but open space planning will be key to balancing this with our rural character. Our tourism industry relies heavily on public outdoor spaces!

Marketing

Keri and I put a full-page ad for Bridgton in Maine Tourism's *Maine Invites You* magazine. 250,000 of these magazines are distributed in and out of state. The QR code to the right was included, allowing anyone with a smart phone to quickly access our Instagram, Facebook, town website, Chamber of Commerce website, and Loon Echo Land Trust website. The beautiful photo we used was taken by a local photographer, Cait Bourgault. The magazine will come out in early 2023. As always, check out the @townofbridgton Instagram page where we highlight great photos and events around Bridgton!



Love Always Bridgton holiday ornaments are for sale at the town office! Proceeds benefit summer rec scholarships.

Broadband

Broadband has been an ongoing project well before the current community development team entered on scene. After several approaches including partnership with GPCOG and the Town of Fryeburg, Bridgton was told that Consolidated Communications fiber would be coming to every road with a telephone pole. These plans were supposed to arrive in late summer, but with rising inflation, this plan did not come to fruition. Our team had a very productive meeting with the leader of Harrison's broadband effort to discuss their progress with Consolidated Communications last week. Using Harrison's experience as well as the help of GPCOG's regional broadband coordinator, we will create a new plan to approach Consolidated Communications and the current funding from Maine Connectivity Authority.

Solar/Net Energy Billing

Matt Kennett, Senior Consultant for Titan Energy came by this month to let us know that he is working hard to organize a meeting with Ameresco and provide us with more information on our net energy billing before our budget season. More on this soon!

Grants & Other Funding Streams

Secured:

- CDBG – annual allocation +/- \$200,000
- \$50,000 – Governor’s Office of Policy, Innovation, and the Future (GOPIF) – allocated to our open space plan
- \$10,000 – Community Heart and Soul Seed Grant – allocated to community engagement process

In Progress:

- 1.4 million – EPA Earmark for Wastewater – our office is working with finance and Woodard and Curran to submit all required documentation to receive funds. There will be a selectboard workshop on this matter.
- ARPA – \$450k possible funding source for completing the wastewater extension project if approved
- GPCOG – transportation planning grant – Our office may pursue funding to help with the comprehensive plan

Committee Updates

Community Development Advisory Committee: The CDAC hosted the GM of Pleasant Mountain at their meeting. It was well-attended and very informative!

Arts & Culture Subcommittee: A&C is gearing up for the festival of lights! They will be assisting Gary Colello on decorating the event.

Ordinance Review Committee: ORC is revising our traffic ordinance.

Planning Board (workshops): The board had a workshop on 10/18 with our legal team to discuss LD 2003. It was advised that the board wait for the DECD to complete rulemaking before taking further action. The recording of this workshop is available on our website. Please check it out to learn more about LD 2003.

Bridgton Memorial School Ad Hoc Committee: Applications are now available to join this committee! It will be advertised in the newspaper in early November. Scan here to see the application →

Thank you for reading,



Tori Hill
Community Development Director

