

Community Development January 2023 Report



General Updates

GPCOG is developing their 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and they asked to host a workshop at the Bridgton Town Hall on January 11th to make sure the Lake Region's priorities were documented. We had a great turnout (mostly from Bridgton residents, but a few from surrounding towns)! Big thanks to GPCOG's Paul Johnson and Chris Hall for making this happen!



Community Development Block Grant

Applications for the new program year have been submitted! The CDAC will spend the next two months reviewing and scoring the applications to submit a recommendation to the Selectboard. The annual Open Mic will be held on February 8th, and applicants will verbally share their project proposal and allow for a Q&A with the committee. This always helps to paint a better picture of the applicants' work. Our team applied for the infrastructure portion of the grant (a separate pool of funds included in our annual allocation from the County) for the Church Street sidewalk project. Our infrastructure funds have been used for sidewalks for the past few years but have been delayed due to Covid. If all goes to plan, all the following will be completed by December 2023:

- 2020 – Oak Street (completed Fall 2022)
- 2021 – Highland Beach (Spring 2023 construction)
- 2022 – Elm Street (Spring 2023 construction)
- 2023 – Church Street (Fall 2023 – assuming it is awarded)

2024 Comprehensive Plan / Vision Bridgton (VB)



Vision Bridgton is the face of all community engagement for Bridgton's planning processes. This month, the focus was all on our Open Space Plan! The public survey was live for the entire month of January and received **620 responses!** This is a huge testament to the success of Vision Bridgton – it is a community-driven effort. Our VB project coordinator, Susie Guthro, along with the Community Heart & Soul Coach and our volunteers recognize that public input is not something we can expect by simply posting a survey online. Our goal is meet people where they are so it's easy for anyone to participate. The survey was available as a hard copy in three locations in town, available to take over the phone, and the Bridgton Library offered office hours to help take the survey online computer every Friday. Susie and our Community

Development Intern, Athen, assisted with getting folks to participate during the Bridgton Community Center Senior Lunches. Businesses, Non-profits and HOAs shared the survey link among their networks.

I'd like to make a huge shout out to Maggie and Matt at Loon Echo Land Trust for not only sharing this in their enormous network, but for being invaluable partners in this project!

Thank you to everyone who helped with this effort!

Open Space Plan

TJD&A Landscape Architects and Planners will be working with our team to complete Bridgton's Open Space Plan for June of 2023. The public survey was a huge success (see above), and we look forward to a **public workshop on February 27th**! Please check out the website dedicated to the project. The link is posted on our webpage.

Marketing

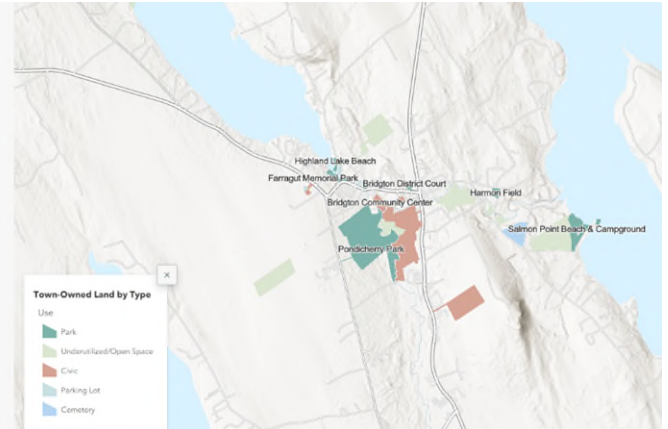
The team is working on a new ad featuring the amazing local photographer/drone pilot, Nancy Murphy Campbell. Check out her work on Instagram @njc_photo. As always check out the @townofbridgton Instagram page where we highlight great photos, events, and businesses around Bridgton! Love Always Bridgton "swag" items are always for sale at the town office. Proceeds benefit summer rec scholarships.

Town Open Space

In addition to its conservation land, Bridgton owns several types of open space, including general civic lands and parks.



Little League baseball players at Hammon Field



Broadband

The team will continue to meet with ISPs and local broadband groups to provide more options to Bridgton residents. We will be developing a survey specific to broadband so local data can be used for grant applications this year. Keep your eyes out for more *Vision Bridgton* engagement opportunities.

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 (Bridgton Public Library acts as the fiscal sponsor for this).
- **NEW- \$8,000 from GPCOG to assist with the transportation chapter of Bridgton's Comprehensive Plan**

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

Committee Updates

Community Development Advisory Committee: The CDAC is reviewing CDBG applications.

Arts & Culture Subcommittee: A&C is planning for another International Women's Day Flash Mob! Stay Tuned!

Ordinance Review Committee: ORC is reviewing Traffic, Phosphate, and International Building Code.

Planning Board (workshops): none held in January.

Bridgton Memorial School Ad Hoc Committee: Five applications were submitted from the public. These will go to the Selectboard and three will be approved.

Thank you for reading,

Tori Hill
Community Development Director