

# Community Development February 2023 Report



## General Updates

February is always a big month in Community Development, because all CDBG applications are turned in, and the CDAC has some big decisions to make. Big thank you to the CDAC for the many hours you dedicated to carefully reading and scoring applications!

## Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The CDAC held the annual Open Mic on February 8<sup>th</sup> where applicants verbally shared their project proposal and allowed for a Q&A. The applications were scored and funding recommendations were brought to the selectboard. Applicants can expect award letters this spring when Cumberland County announces our allocation from HUD.

The department has been working getting easements signed for Elm Street, because we expect early April construction. Highland will be completed concurrently, but does not require any easements. On February 17th we held a public bid opening for these two projects, and selected J Pratt as our contractor for both. We're looking forward to improving pedestrian safety on these two streets! Our CDBG-funded infrastructure projects are:

- 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)

## Comprehensive Plan / Vision Bridgton (VB)



This month the Community Development Department got approval from the selectboard to hire a consulting firm to assist with our comprehensive plan. This was not an easy decision to make, and took lots of research and collecting input from our team members. The finance department was a huge help in calculating how much funding we could allocate to the project within the existing CD budget, and our Task Force and CDAC were great supporters during this process! We are excited to expand our team and produce the most robust and inclusive comprehensive plan possible.

## Open Space Plan

TJD&A Landscape Architects and Planners (now called Viewshed) will be working with our team to complete Bridgton's Open Space Plan for June of 2023. The public survey was a huge success (620 responses), and on February 27th we held a public workshop with about 30 attendees. The photos show some of the creative mapping exercises that allowed the public to inform the plan on what they feel should happen in specific open spaces in Bridgton. Viewshed will be presenting the results of all public engagement (and more) at a CDAC meeting in April.





**Please check out the website dedicated to the project.** The link is posted on our webpage.

### Marketing

The team is working on a summer ad for Portland Mag featuring 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.

### 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 comp 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 Flash Mob and Saturday Art Walks!

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

**Planning Board** (workshops): Reviewing LD 2003

**Bridgton Memorial School Ad Hoc Committee:** First meeting will be this Spring!

Thank you for reading,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Victoria Hill".

Tori Hill  
Community Development Director