

Community Development March 2023 Report



General Updates

The Arts & Culture Subcommittee organized another successful International Women’s Day Flash Mob! This one was extra special, because it was dedicated in memory of Ursula Flaherty. She will always be remembered as a strong female leader in our community, and she spent a lot of time working with community development including chairing the CDAC. Great job A&C Subcommittee.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The selectboard held a public hearing and accepted the CDAC’s funding recommendations for this program year. Nearly every year the committee has to work with an estimate, as HUD doesn’t release the actual allocation until later in the year. The Bridgton Community Center Navigator program and Food Pantry were each allocated \$15,000 (subject to change per HUD funding) and the Church St. Sidewalk project was approved for \$130,000 (subject to change per HUD funding).

J Pratt will begin working on Highland and Elm Street sidewalks on April 10th and expect to wrap up both projects before May 15th. Please reach out to our department if you have questions on these projects.

Our CDBG-funded infrastructure projects are:

- 2020 – Oak Street (completed Fall 2022) ✓
- 2021 – Highland Beach (4/10 - 5/15 2023)
- 2022 – Elm Street (4/10 - 5/15 2023)
- 2023 – Church Street (Dates TBD - Fall 2023)

Comprehensive Plan / Vision Bridgton (VB)



Our department is drafting an RFP for consulting services for the comprehensive plan update! We’re excited for the RFP to go public and hope to see a lot of bids on this important project!

Meanwhile, VB is still in full swing collecting input from residents on what they want to see in their

community 5-10 years down the road. On March 30th, Susie Guthro, TOA Community Resilience Builder/VB Project Coordinator organized the VB group to host a Community Kettle Dinner at the Bridgton Community Center. All attendees were happy to fill out surveys and provide great input!



Open Space Plan

Viewshed is analyzing our survey data and drafting the plan! They will be at the CDAC meeting on April 26th at 9am to present findings and part of the drafted plan. All are welcome to attend in person or online. **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. GPCOG, Maine Broadband Coalition, and the Bridgton Public Library held a great workshop on March 31st to collect feedback on people’s experiences accessing high-speed internet to help inform state infrastructure investments. Visit <https://www.maineconnectivity.org/planning> to learn more and take their survey!

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).
- \$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 bringing in a series of guest speakers.

Arts & Culture Subcommittee: A&C is planning Second Saturday Art Walks for the summer.

Ordinance Review Committee: ORC is reviewing the Traffic and Skateboard ordinances.

Planning Board (workshops): PB is reviewing LD 2003

Bridgton Memorial School Ad Hoc Committee: First meeting will take place this Spring!

Thank you for reading,



Tori Hill
Community Development Director