



## Gouldsboro, ME

### **Comprehensive Plan 2024**

*Thank you to the many residents of Gouldsboro who participated in our survey, community discussions and provided guidance in shaping this plan for Gouldsboro's future.*

*Please note that the Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future growth of the community and is based on current input from community members.*

*The Comprehensive Plan is not a Land Use Ordinance, but it does provide the basis to guide any future Land Use Ordinance or updates to the existing Ordinances.*

*The Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed every 5 years and updated if there are any major changes in the community's makeup or character.*



*Photo credits: Deb Bisson*

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## **Executive Summary**

This 2024 Comprehensive Plan is intended to update and replace the version that was adopted in 2005. It follows requirements of the Maine Growth Management Act (30-A M.R.S.A §§ 4312-4350) and the Maine Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule (07-105 CMR 208). The Plan is organized to facilitate review by the State Department of Conservation, Agriculture, and Forestry for consistency with Maine's growth management laws. More importantly, it is organized to enable the citizens of Gouldsboro to easily access key information needed to understand, process and decide the future direction of our community. This plan explores important land use issues and casts a vision for what we want Gouldsboro to be as a community in the next decade and beyond.

There are two main components that citizens should focus on to understand how the recommendations of this plan were developed, and the direction recommended in it. The first component was based on the planning and public participation process that led to this Comprehensive Plan proposal and the vision it is intended to accomplish for the future of Gouldsboro. Second would be the goals indicated at the end of each chapter and the strategies to reach those goals as well as the responsible parties to help the town reach those goals within the timelines presented.

The Comprehensive Plan is not an ordinance or law. It is a guide for the Select Board, the Planning Board, and other town committees in their decision-making. It is intended to provide continuity in town policy. Ordinances passed by the town should be consistent with this Plan. The Comprehensive Plan may also be used to seek funding from state and federal grant programs.

Planning is an ongoing process. The Gouldsboro Comprehensive Plan Committee recommends that the Plan be reviewed each year by the Select Board and the Planning Board to assess implementation of the Plan.

Based on the research contained in the Comprehensive Plan update and the public participation process, the Comprehensive Plan Committee is recommending Future Land Use to accomplish the vision of Gouldsboro as a town of rural character, engaged, active and active working waterfront community.

## Introduction

The last Gouldsboro Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Town and State in 2005. The decision to update the comprehensive plan was approved by the Board of Selectmen in December of 2020 under the purview of the Planning Board and a sub committee was formed in February of 2021. The committee reviewed the 2005 plan goals, completed an inventory and analysis of the town's departments, and designed a survey to identify concerns of Gouldsboro citizens in the spring of 2022. Concerns were taken to eliminate barriers to responding to the survey. The survey could be completed either online or paper versions which were mailed out in the town newsletter. The committee created a Facebook page, Gmail account for email responses, created pulse of the people flyers to enhance awareness and held public outreach gatherings. Key town employees were interviewed, as well as community members with various experience levels and encouraged residents to voice opinions at committee meetings. Guidance was sought from Hancock County Planning Commission and utilized other state and local sources for pertinent information. Committee members spent many hours updating chapters of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan.

Comprehensive plans do not expire. They are the Plan of the Town until repealed or replaced. What does expire, however, is the State of Maine's finding that a town's Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the Maine Growth Management Act (Title 30-A, Maine Revised Statutes, §§4311-4349-A). The amendments of that Act in 2008 provide that the finding of consistency expires twelve years after a Comprehensive Plan takes effect.

In general, a Town will not qualify for State grant funding unless the Town's Comprehensive Plan is found consistent with the Growth Management Act.

Gouldsboro ordinances may be more vulnerable in any Court review because they are not consistent with the Growth Management Act. It is important to revisit a Comprehensive Plan to make sure that it meets the town's needs of today and in the future. The committee recommends the plan be reviewed within 3-5 years by the Select Board and the Planning Board to assess changes and needs for updating. Planning for the town of Gouldsboro should be an on-going process.

## **Vision Statement**

Gouldsboro seeks to create and maintain a vibrant, sustainable, and connected community that celebrates our working waterfront, rural heritage and history, protects and conserves our valuable natural resources, and provides a high quality of life for people of all ages and backgrounds. The citizens will continue to be encouraged to participate in Town governance, boards and committees, and continue to do what is best for the health, safety and welfare of all our community members.

To achieve this, we will encourage community members to be engaged and active, create a flourishing local economy, sustain local farming, preserve, and expand open space and natural resources, support excellence in our schools, diversify housing choices, improve multimodal transportation options, invest in our infrastructure, prioritize resilience to climate change, and connect neighbors through community services, programs, and resources.

Gouldsboro will continue to develop its own character, defined by its citizens, history, geography and natural resources. Fending off inappropriate development, while encouraging the kind of development that is consistent with what the residents value, will be one of our major challenges in the next decade. Affordable housing needs to be at the forefront to allow our community to grow at an acceptable pace.

Gouldsboro needs to succeed in finding effective ways to encourage growth and economic initiatives, while also developing the best and least restrictive means to protect from possible negative effects so that Gouldsboro can expect to remain a desirable place to live.

Gouldsboro will continue to assess its vulnerability to climate change, implement appropriate adaptation strategies, and collaborate with surrounding communities to strengthen regional adaptation efforts. Building on Gouldsboro's Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan, delivered in October 2022, the town will implement the plan's recommendations to address high-priority vulnerabilities and continue to assess vulnerabilities as the climate continues to change. Gouldsboro will work with the State of Maine to ensure that through traffic does not change the character of the town. Gouldsboro will continue to facilitate the flourishing of small and home-based businesses as another economic base. The town will continue to develop and maintain an online listing of services and products available and will encourage supporting the local community.



## **Chapter A: Historical & Archaeological Resources**

### **1. Purpose**

Historical and archaeological resources are vital elements of a community's identity. A comprehensive plan must identify important historical and archaeological resources not only for the sake of the historical record, but also to preserve the present-day value of the town's identity and character while encouraging tourism. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Presents a brief history of Gouldsboro;
- b. Describes its historical and archaeological resources;
- c. Assesses threats to these resources, and
- d. Assesses the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve these resources.

### **2. Key Findings & Issues**

The growth and resilience of the Gouldsboro Historical Society since the previous comprehensive plan was updated highlights the community's support and concern for the history and legacy of the town. Gouldsboro has a large diversity of historic and prehistoric sites (i.e., those predating European settlement) along its salt and freshwater shores. While the Town has many buildings of historic interest, only four are on the National Register of Historic Places. There are many other places that may be eligible for listing. Gouldsboro has generated many published histories, but to date there is no systematic and comprehensive inventory and evaluation of all its historic structures and sites. There is no specific program for widespread public recognition and preservation of these resources.

### **3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan**

While more information has been gathered on historic and archaeological resources since the last plan was prepared, further research on sites is needed. Otherwise, there is the risk of sites being unknowingly altered or damaged due to the lack of adequate information. Given the many older homes in town, there is the potential of more buildings being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results**

83% of respondents felt that Historic Buildings and Museums were either important or very important cultural resources. 88.6% responded that the Town should support research, documentation and preservation of historical and archeological sites and artifacts.

### **5. History of Gouldsboro (taken from the 2005 plan)**

In this section, the history of Gouldsboro is presented, starting with the earliest human inhabitants, and continuing through the development of what has evolved into the present Town of Gouldsboro.

### 5.1. Pre-Colonial History

Indigenous people known as Paleoindians, began living on the Gouldsboro peninsula after the ice age (10-11,000 years ago). They were initially from west of the Hudson River. At that time and forward the climate was warming rapidly; as hunters, gatherers, and fishers they enjoyed herds of caribou, deer, moose, mastodon and even swordfish from the Gulf of Maine. Approximately 3,500-4,000 years ago the climate began cooling, the amplitude of the tides began to increase. Over time the sea level was rising rapidly, and the Maine coastline moved farther inland. About 3,000 years ago the Susquehanna migration started bringing people into the area from the Susquehanna River Valley and as far south as the Savanna River; they brought with them new cultures and new tool-making skills. They established camps, or small villages on the coast. Along the coast today, the evidence of many small settlements has been documented by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC). A second influx of people from southern New England occurred around 1,700 BCE. These Algonquin speakers used different tools, natural resources, and land use patterns, which distinguish them from earlier inhabitants. From this second migration arose numerous tribes known collectively as the *Wabanaki*, or “people of the dawn land”. There are 28 such camps, or small villages and historical sites within the confines of Gouldsboro.

### 5.2. European Exploration and Early Settlement

The history of European settlers in Maine and New England is a complex subject and better pursued in detail in other sources. As a summary, European seafarers probably visited the Maine coast earlier than the first written records of the 16th and 17th centuries but by the end of the 16th century, France and England started documented in-depth exploration and initiated settlements along the coast of New England. Throughout the end of the 16th century and to the mid-17th century France, England and their various Native American allies faced off militarily. Early French settlement in Maine and Maritime Canada focused on trapping and trading efforts, while early English settlers were primarily involved in fishing on the Grand Banks. England won out after the Seven Year War ended in 1763, giving England France’s New England and Canadian territories. Massachusetts acted quickly and assumed control of the former French land from the Penobscot River to Nova Scotia.

English settlements began springing up after the French & Indian wars in 1763 and England took possession of France’s former North American territories. A few people of European descent were probably living in what was then called Township 3, prior to 1763. At the time, Township 3 was part of Lincoln County, one of just three established counties in Maine. The boundaries of Gouldsborough (original spelling) were surveyed in 1763; today they are much the same (minus Winter Harbor which seceded in 1895 plus portions of Steuben which were annexed in 1845 & 1870).

Early white settlers saw the potential to create a thriving town with development opportunities. The forests would provide lumber and hunting, the streams would provide transport for logs and

power to run sawmills, plus opportunities for fishing. Harvesting trees for the mills would leave open spaces for agriculture and housing construction. Furthermore, the new town was already on the established shipping route between Boston and Halifax.

Three of those white settlers applied for, and received, land grants in 1764 to develop these opportunities. Francis Shaw, Robert Gould and Nathan Jones, all of Boston became the new proprietors. However, only Jones, along with his family moved to the area where he stayed until his death. Several of Shaw's children took up residence and raised their own families.

The forecasted opportunities didn't work out well for the proprietors. As much as two-thirds of the land in the Gouldsborough Plantation proved to be unsuitable for farming. The Revolutionary War with coastal blockades curtailed shipping. Of significant impact was the four-year depression that followed the Revolutionary War. Both Gould and Shaw died. The settlement languished. Much of the land was eventually conveyed to William Bingham, a Philadelphian who already owned two million acres of land in Maine.

In February 1789, Township 3 became the incorporated Town of Gouldsboro recognized by the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, of which Maine was a part. Later that same year, the new County of Hancock was incorporated and included part of Lincoln County. Gouldsborough then became part of the new county. In 1790, the first U.S. Census was taken and showed Gouldsborough to have a population of 267.

In 1794, William Bingham hired General David Cobb, who had fought under George Washington in the Revolutionary War, as his agent. Cobb was charged with laying out roads, guarding against timber trespass, building mills, bringing in settlers and eventually developing the town into a city. The first road into the town was designed and constructed by Cobb; today portions of that road bearing his name are still usable.

Maine achieved statehood in 1820 and General Cobb left Gouldsborough. Cobb's envisioned city had not materialized. Instead, the population was just 559 people, and they were living in several villages within the town. Each of the villages were self-contained and connected by a network of Cobb-designed roads.

Between 1800 and 1900, shipping and shipbuilding became major industries. In 1893 telephone service was installed by New England Telephone & Telegraph Co. At the time, Gouldsborough was a stop on the Shore Stage Line but by 1900 steamboat and railway service became available seven miles away at Hancock. The "Bar Harbor Express" rail line ended its run at the Waukeag Ferry dock. The ferry serviced the Frenchman Bay area.

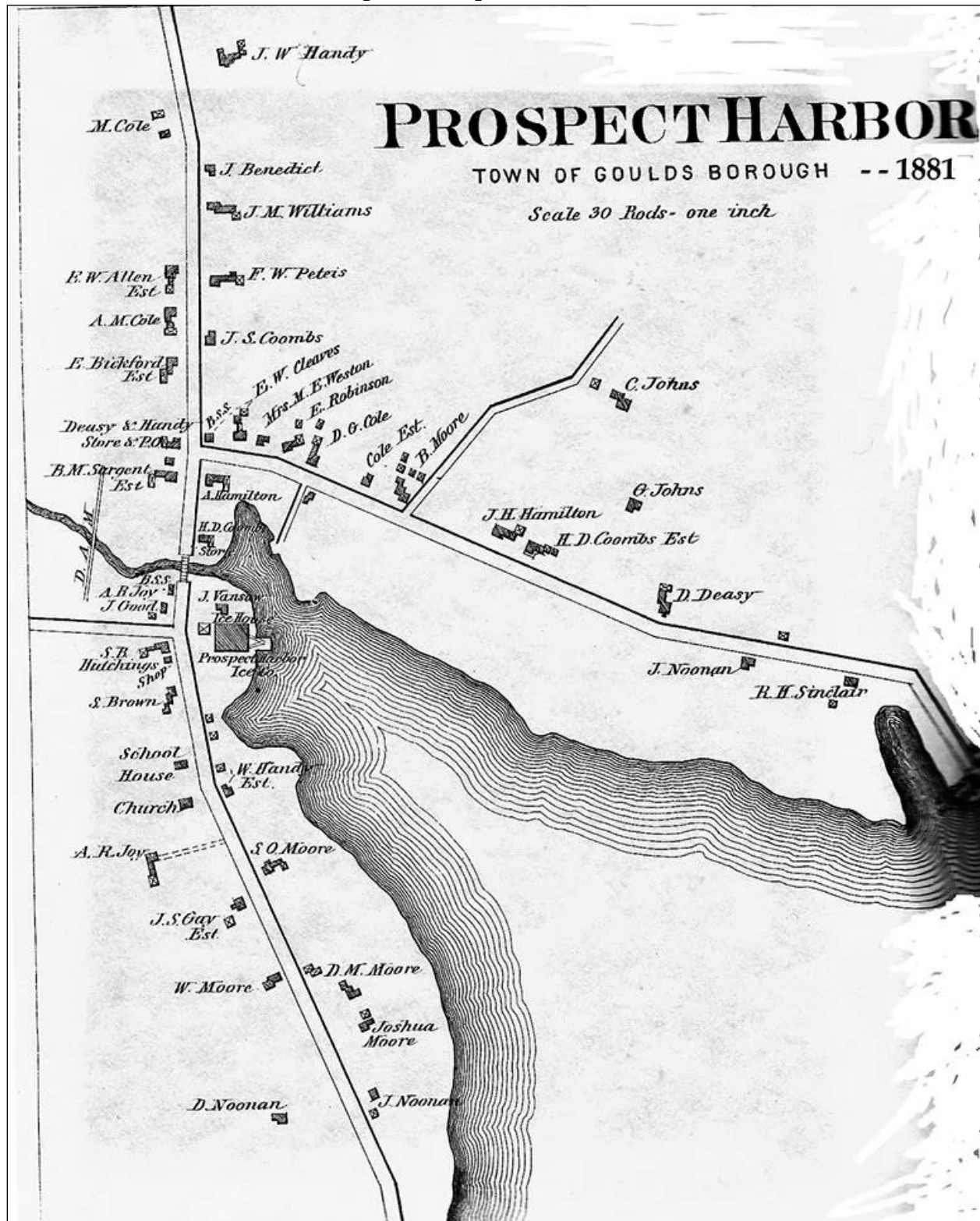
As a result of an uneven coastline, Gouldsborough developed into many historically separate fishing villages, summer colonies and communities, including Birch Harbor, Prospect Harbor, South Gouldsborough, West Gouldsborough, Summer Harbor, Wonsqueak Harbor, Bunker's Harbor, Chicken Mill, Jones' Pond, Westbay, and Corea. Each of the villages generally had its own grammar school, church, general store, a mill and a post office. Some villages had inns and livery stables for travelers. Traveling salesmen included itinerant dentists, photographers, peddlers, artists, and theatrical troupes. The occupations of the village inhabitants included farmers, fishermen, lumbermen, carpenters, shipbuilders, seafarers, and tradesmen. Coastal freighters supplied stores with year-round goods. Sawmills provided barrel staves and long lumber; gristmills produced flour. The mills were variously powered by water, steam, or tides. The distinction of these villages remains today, one example of how historic patterns of settlement are still evident in the community.

Silver was discovered in 1879 in the West Bay area of Gouldsborough and four mines were soon opened along the vein. One of the mines was operated as a driven shaft at the end of an open cut. Today the shaft of this mine has been filled in, but the cut can still be seen from Guzzle Road. The prosperity from the mining operations was short-lived: By 1881 the population increase of 116 that occurred during the silver boom reversed itself.

In 1887 the Legislature changed the spelling of the town name from Gouldsborough to Gouldsboro. Gouldsboro never had its own high school, instead it paid tuition to other schools for its students. In 1952 Gouldsboro, along with several other towns, built a consolidated high school in East Sullivan. In 1956, a consolidated grammar school was opened on Pond Road. The new grammar school combined the separate village schools and made busing necessary for the first time. In 2009 a new grammar school was opened in Prospect Harbor and the earlier schools closed. In 2022 the original consolidated high school was replaced by a newly constructed school on the same property.

In 1983 the Town built a new Community Center adjacent to the grammar school. The Center replaced the old Town House, which had served for more than a century as a place to conduct Town business and hold Town meetings. The old Town House was subsequently deeded to the Gouldsboro Historical Society (GHS) to serve as a museum devoted to the history of the Town. The GHS has since acquired an additional building in town which was then modified to store digitized Town records dating back to its founding in 1789; all the old handwritten records have now been digitized and cataloged by a team of dedicated volunteers.

Map A-1: Prospect Harbor, 1981



Source: Schoodic National Scenic Byway

## 6. Archaeological and Historic Sites

### 6.1. Pre- Colonial Archaeological Sites

A common definition of an archaeological site or "site" means a location where there exists material evidence of the past life and culture of human beings. Gouldsboro is fortunate to have two well defined pre-European historic sites. A common archaeological site is a shell heap, or midden. These human generated shell piles offer valuable insight into the lives of New England's early people.

Gouldsboro is home to the Taft Point midden. (Figure A-1). Taft Point is one of a few sites in Maine with archaeological evidence of Wabanaki habitation, as well as predecessor peoples dating back to the Archaic period. Archaic Period sites date to 3,000 years ago or older. The hunter gathers of these periods tend to winter along the coast eating shellfish and other marine foods where they went inland during warmer periods following game and fishing opportunities along the numerous rivers and streams. Eventually exposure to the Iroquois peoples from the West spurred the adoption of agriculture, which cushioned seasonal food and resource supplies.

**Figure A-1: Tally of Taft Point Artifacts**

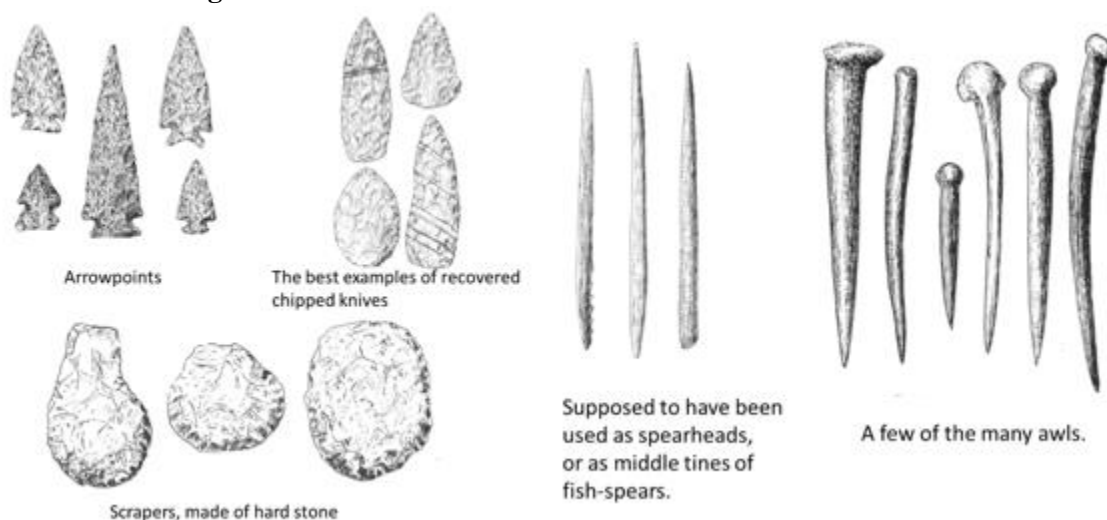
<b>Relative distribution of artifacts at Taft Point</b>	<b>Lowest Horizon of black humus</b>	<b>Lowest Horizon of shells &amp; fire dirt</b>	<b>Upper Horizon of shells &amp; fire dirt</b>
Plummets	59	1	0
Hammerstones	36	5	15
Slate points	12	3	0
Adzes	8	22	7
Grooveless axes	2	8	7
Knives			
large	11	5	1
small	13	18	12
Arrowheads			
straight stemmed	23	1	0
notched	21	52	43
Scrapers			
large	19	7	0
small	13	63	44
Projectile points (stone)	8	10	0
Drills	3	9	6
Bodkins	0	21	6
Needles	0	3	6
Awls	3	10	20
Projectile points (bone)	2	0	0
Harpoons			
large	11	2	2
small	0	16	7
(moose and deer bone)	0	4	0
Flakers (antler)	6	9	3
Beaver teeth (artificially sharpened)	27	53	38
Bone beads	7	0	0
Stone ornaments	8	1	0
Pottery	0	35%	65%

Source: Abbe Museum

Gouldsboro is also home to the Jones Cove Shell-Heap located in West Gouldsboro. The Jones cove midden provides an excellent example of a Wabanaki related midden. An archaeological dig at Jones Cove midden was undertaken in 1928.

Several interesting features were exhibited. It was plain to be seen that the surface of the ground upon which the shells were piled was uneven and that the hollows, particularly, were well filled with very dark dirt in which could be detected ashes, charcoal, crumbling shells, disintegrating bone fragments, and occasional stone arrow points scrapers, and "flint" chips. No bone tools were found in this bottom stratum. Fire-blackened stones, arranged in a crescent or maybe a circle, told of an old-time fireplace as old at least as old as the beginning of the shell-heap which covered it. Several other fireplaces were unearthed during the digging, and evidence of fires—charcoal and calcined bones and shells—were not uncommon in various parts of the heap (Abbe Museum).

**Figure A-2: Tools Found at the Jones Cove Site**



*Source: The Jones Cove Shell-Heap at West, Gouldsboro, Maine, Walter B. Smith, Sherman Publishing Co., Bar Harbor, Maine (1929)*



**Figure A-3: Items found at the Jones Cove Midden (Abbe Museum)**

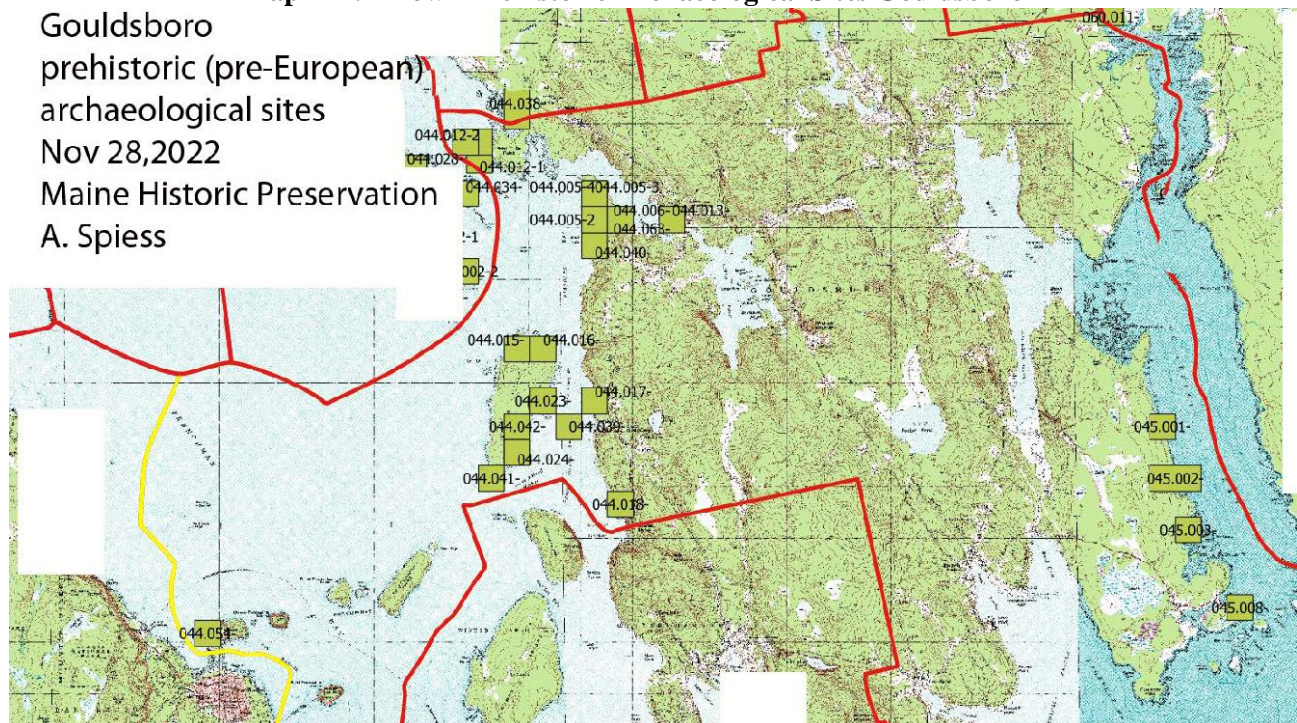


*Source: Abbe Museum*

## 6.2. Official Historic Sites

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) has been very active identifying historic and prehistoric sites. The term prehistoric refers to sites which pre-date written history. MHPC has researched many sites including early Native-American sites. All these sites are along the Gouldsboro shoreline. The artifacts recovered during the digs have been removed to the Abbe Museum for display and safe storage.

### Map A-2: Known Prehistoric Archaeological Sites Gouldsboro



*Source: Maine Historic Preservation Commission*



MHPC recommends that additional surveys for significant pre-historic sites continue, especially in the Prospect Harbor and Birch Harbor areas.

**Table A-1: Listing of MHPC Known Prehistoric Sites Gouldsboro**

Site Number	Type
044.005-1	Retouched flake & flakes from test pit. Core on beach
044.005-2	Flakes & bone from test pits
044.005-3	Flakes, fishbone, mammal bone, charcoal.
044.005-4	Numerous flakes and bone, especially fishbone
044.006	Stone tools, bone tools, grindstone, fauna, ceramic
044.012-1	Stone & bone tools, grindstone, fauna, ceramic.
044.012-2	
044.012-3	
044.013	Stone & bone tools, grindstone, fauna, ceramic, scrapper
044.015	No cultural remains. Rich in shell incl. mussel.
044.016	2 proj. pt frags, potsherds, bone & variety of shell
044.017	Proj. point, stemless w/basal thinning, fishbone, flakes
044.018	One flake
044.023	Site could not be located
044.024	Midden on small island, one of pair
044.039	None
044.040	Ceramic period stemmed biface (Smith PC). Many flakes
044.041	None
044.042	None
044.043	1 pp frag (tri w basal thinning), 1HS, flakes in bank
044.044	
044.054	
044.055	
044.063	Quarry reduction debitage
045.001	
045.002	
045.003	Thin deposit of shell
045.008	Midden almost destroyed by house construction

*Source: Maine Historic Preservation Commission*

Gouldsboro also has many post-European settlement archeological sites. Table A-2 list those sites MHPC deems important.

**Table A-2: Summary of Historic Archaeological Sites, Gouldsboro**

Site Number	Name	Type
ME173-001	Ash's Point Fort	Not Historic Site
ME173-002	"Wreath"	Wreck, bark
ME173-003	"Waldron Holmes"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-004	"Jane Ingram"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-005	"Castilian"	Wreck, schooner

Site Number	Name	Type
ME173-006	"Helena"	Wreck, vessel
ME173-007	"Hamilton"	unidentified wreck, schooner
ME173-008	"E.T. Russell"	Wreck, gas screw
ME173-009	"Thetis"	Wreck, oil screw
ME173-010	"William G. Edie"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-011	"Wawenock"	Wreck, gas screw
ME173-012	"Louis A. Surette"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-013	Ash's Point Quarry	Quarry, granite
ME173-014	Schieffelin Point boat	Unidentified wreck, boat
ME173-015	Schieffelin Point barn	Outbuilding, barn
ME-173-016	Schieffelin Point water tower	Water tower
ME173-017	Schieffelin Point camp?	Domestic, camp
ME173-018	I. Tracy/General David Cobb (?) house and farmstead	Domestic
ME173-019	Dike/Marsh Road	Dike
ME173-020	C. C. Perry (?) Dam	Dam
ME173-021	cellar	Domestic
ME173-022	George Foss	Domestic
ME173-023	Samuel Wood	Domestic
ME173-024	Smith	Domestic
ME173-025	Samuel Wood	Outbuilding
ME173-026	D. Bunker House	Domestic
ME173-027	Stave Island #6 & #7	Domestic
ME173-028	W. Woods Summer Residence and Fish House	Anglo-American Domestic
ME173-029	Rodick Homestead	Farmstead
ME173-030	Roddick Fish Processing Center	Fish House
ME173-031	Mount Desert Canoe Club	Resort
ME173-032	The Bungalow estate	Domestic, Summer House
ME173-033	Stave Island steam sawmill	Mill, Sawmill
ME173-034	Stave Island tidal sawmill	Mill, Tidal mill
ME173-035	Stave Island shipyard	Shipyard
ME173-036	J. A. Webster	Wreck, Schooner
ME173-037	Providence	Wreck, Schooner
ME173-038	Jones Pond Mills	Mill, Sawmill and Gristmill
ME173-039	Grand Marsh Dike/Road	Dike/road

*Source: Maine Historic Preservation Commission, 2021*

### 6.3. Historic Buildings

The following properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Prospect Harbor Light Station** consists of a conical tower, a detached one-and-a-half-story frame keeper's house built in 1891. In 1905 an oil house was added. The building replaced a lighthouse that was erected in 1850.



Prospect Harbor Light Station

**West Gouldsboro's Union Church**, which was erected between 1888-91, is a wooden frame building of unusual architectural character. Its eclectic, highly picturesque composition is particularly noteworthy when studied in the broader context of Maine's church architecture of the 1880s.



West Gouldsboro Union Church, Route 186

The **West Gouldsboro Village Library** was completed in 1907 and is a one-story, three-bay Tudor Revival style building of handsome design. It features a tall rubble stone foundation that rises to the windowsills, stucco exterior walls and chimney surfaces, and a steeply pitched gable roof framing half-timbered peak. The library stands in a rural location adjacent to the West Gouldsboro Union Church. Ellis Soderholtz contributed to its design and construction.



West Gouldsboro Village Library, Route 186

Initially constructed about 1902 and enlarged at an indefinite time thereafter, the **Soderholtz cottage** is a rambling one-story masonry and frame building that overlooks Frenchman Bay. It was designed and occupied as a summer residence by Eric Ellis Soderholtz, a noted nineteenth century architectural photographer and twentieth century potter.



Eric E. Soderholtz Cottage, Route 186

#### 6.4. Other Historical Sites

The village of Prospect Harbor is home to what was the last operational sardine cannery in Maine. It is also home to “Big Jim.” Big Jim is a 40-foot-tall sign depicting a Maine fisherman. It was originally erected by the Maine Sardine Council in the late 1950s just north of the Portsmouth Kittery bridge over the Piscataqua River. It was relocated in the 1980s to the Stinson Sardine Factory. Stinson’s added a can of Beach Cliff sardines to the sign. After Stinson’s closure, a follow-on owner changed the sardines to a lobster trap. The Stinson man was originally made of wood until the 80’s when a major storm hit and the lower half (i.e. the pants) blew off. This iconic 50 plus year old sign is part of Maine’s and Gouldsboro’s maritime history.

Big Jim Signs - Prospect Harbor



Source: Downeast Magazine, Ellsworth American

#### Roadside America – Schoodic National Scenic Byway

The Village of South Gouldsboro, Maine is located on the western side of Gouldsboro Peninsula about four miles south of the U.S. Coastal Route One. It is a small fishing village on the Schoodic National Scenic Byway, midway between West Gouldsboro on the north side and Winter Harbor to the south. The western shore faces Frenchman Bay, and Mount Desert Island, which is only about 4.5 miles across the bay. Schoodic Peninsula, home to the only part of Acadia National Park on the mainland, covers the whole southern part of the peninsula.

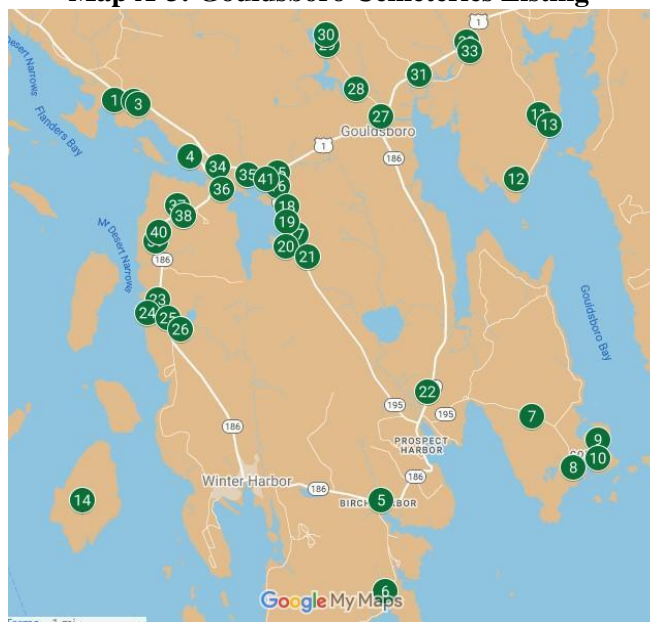
There are numerous roadside locations worth stopping to check out. The Bartlett Maine Estate Winery and Distillery is worth a stop for some homemade wines, the Frances B. Wood Preserve offers a moderate hiking trail, Mandala Farm offers all natural, organic produce and meats and offers an amazing farm experience. If you are into history, the Old Town House Museum can provide information on older days. The Taft Point Preserve has trails and spectacular mountain views.

### 6.5. Cemeteries

Nothing provides a better glimpse into a town's history than its cemeteries. Gouldsboro has 41 cemeteries providing a stratified view into the former residents of the town.

The Gouldsboro Historical Society has organized an effort to help stabilize the Town's various cemeteries. Additional efforts would be greatly assisted by organized funding.

**Map A-3: Gouldsboro Cemeteries Listing**

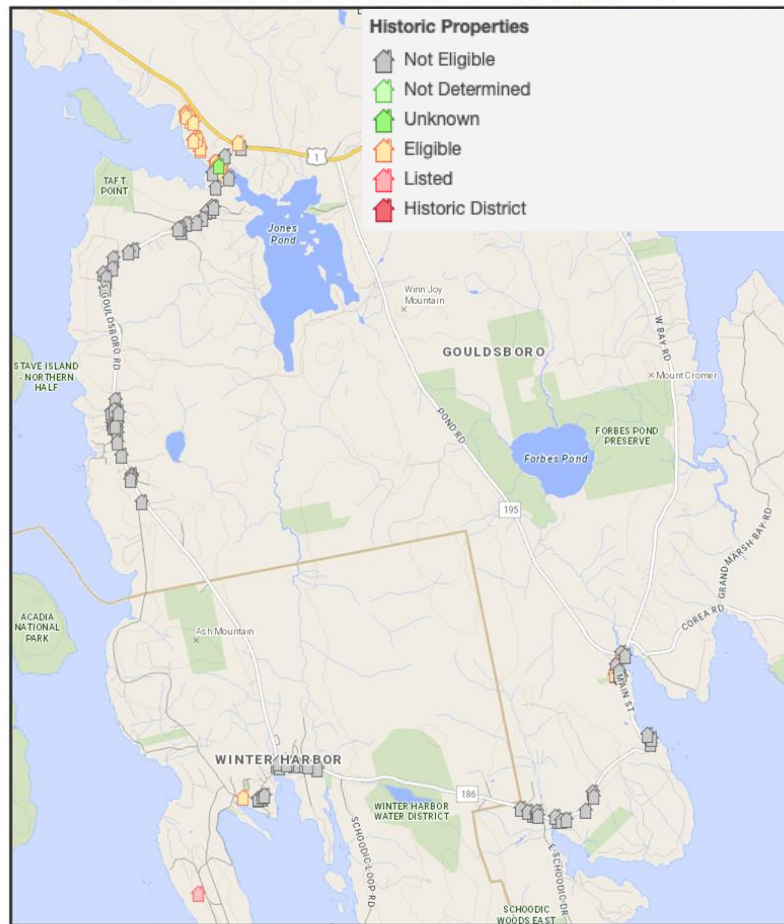


*Source: Gouldsboro Historical Society*



- A.B. Bunker Cemetery (23)
- Alexander Nutter Cemetery (13)
- Alfred Young Cemetery (17)
- Ashe Point Cemetery (35)
- Beech Hill Cemetery (38)
- Bunker Family Monument (1)
- Bunker Memorial Cemetery (26)
- Bunker-Robbins Cemetery (40)
- C. Bunker Cemetery (24)
- Capt. Higgins Monument (6)
- Capt. Joseph & Abigail Stevens (33)
- Corea Cemetery (7)
- Crowley Island Cemetery (10)
- David Sargent Cemetery (25)
- David Young Monument (8)
- Goodwin Cemetery (2)
- Gouldsboro Point Cemetery (11)
- Hill Cemetery (4)
- Hillcrest Cemetery (18)
- Hillside Cemetery (5)
- Hodgkins-Wallace Cemetery (3)
- Ironbound Island Cemetery (14)
- John Pherson Cemetery (41)
- Joy Cemetery (21)
- Lakeview Cemetery (36)
- Mill Pond Cemetery (9)
- Nathan Jones Monuments (15)
- Nathan Martin Cemetery (16)
- Nathaniel Shaw Cemetery (12)
- Orcutt Cemetery (19)
- Prospect Harbor Cemetery (22)
- Robert Ash Cemetery (28)
- Rolfe- Woodworth Cemetery (20)
- Samuel Libby Cemetery (31)
- Sargent Cemetery (39)
- Taft Cemetery (37)
- Thomas Workman Cemetery (32)
- Tracy-Rolfe Cemetery (30)
- West Bay Cemetery (27)
- Whitaker Cemetery (29)
- William Wood Cemetery (34)

**Map A-4: Gouldsboro Historic Properties**  
**GOULDSBORO HISTORIC PROPERTIES**



Source: MaineDOT

## **7. Threats to Historic and Archaeological Resources**

### **7.1. Threats**

Gouldsboro faces the same threat to its historical architecture and archaeological sites as every seaside town in Maine. Moisture, weather, and decay are always constant threats. Further inappropriate repairs, reuse, demolition for other uses, and fire provide a wide spectrum of threats. Restoring or rehabilitating historic buildings to maintain an acceptable historic presentation is expensive and usually out of the reach of most homeowners. It is also possible that owners of parcels or buildings may not know or fully appreciate the historical significance of their holdings.

Historic archaeological sites are also under the constant threat of being plundered or attacked by souvenir hunters. Sea level rise is a rapidly emerging additional threat to the continuity of existing sites and hinders the identification of undiscovered sites.

### **7.2. Assessment of Adequacy of Protection**

Gouldsboro has few protections to mitigate threats to historic or archaeological sites. The Planning Board could unknowingly approve a development application. This threat could potentially be minimized if a professional historical survey of the Town could be completed. The language of the town ordinances has been updated but further clarification would probably be prudent. According to MHPC, no professional surveys have been conducted that could further identify potentially significant resources. A future survey should focus on resources associated with the Town's maritime, agriculture, residential and industrial heritage, particularly those connected with the earliest Euro-American settlements of the 17th and 18th centuries.

MHPC also recommends a comprehensive survey be conducted to further identify historic homes or buildings that could qualify for National Register listing. At the present time just four are marked: Prospect Harbor Light Station, West Gouldsboro Union Church, West Gouldsboro Village Library, and the Eric Soderholtz Cottage. It is believed there are many more qualified and they should be identified as a part of the on-going plan to enhance Gouldsboro's historical image. A building's listing on the National Register generally will increase its value.

The best practice, by MHPC for protecting the ancient middens sites, is by not broadcasting the exact locations to people who would not have a scientific interest in visiting a site. Most sites are on private property.

The Planning Board future goal includes updating ordinances to incorporate maps provided by MHPC into the town's review process to identify and protect historical and archaeological resources and require modifications of proposed site designs by reviewing ordinances and updating the site plan application. The Board should also update section 6.1 of the Site Plan Ordinance and the site plan application to require surveys of historic and archaeological areas.



To achieve this goal, the town could work with the Historical Society which has been in the process of digitally cataloging historical sites for a couple of years now.

The Gouldsboro Historical Society is a very active membership organization with a governing board of directors. It is housed in the former town offices building where it has created a museum of historical and archeological artifacts important to the town's growth. The museum is open to the public on certain scheduled days. The society presents discussion programs several times a year to the attending public, engaging speakers qualified on varying topics of historical interest.

The society coordinates with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission and publishes a periodic newsletter describing topics and discussions of interest. In recent years the Society has continued an extensive program of digitizing historical records and is now the repository for all Gouldsboro's important town documents; this wealth of information is available to the public on its website. Additionally, the Society identifies and reviews sites and structures of historic significance and recommends action plans as funds become available.

## 8. Goals & Objectives – Historical & Archaeological

<b>GOAL:</b> Gouldsboro desires to protect its key historical and archaeological resources from incompatible development and undertake measures to assure the long-term enhancement of its historical sites and structures.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party(ies)	Timeframe
Incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission as required by the State and update the site plan application and ordinances as needed.	Adopt or amend land use and subdivision ordinances with objective as part of the review process. Require developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.	Planning Board	1-2 years
Encourage preservation of key historical, scenic, and archaeological resources.	Review ordinance models that could be applicable in furthering this objective. Seek info from the Historical Society's ongoing work.	Planning Board, Historical Society	1 year
Create a consistent and documented inventory of historic and archaeological sites and structures.	Continue to support funding of the Historical Society to enable it to contract services to undertake this task.	Budget Committee, Historical Society, HCPC	*this goal is currently in process - ongoing

Identify additional significant archaeological sites and historic properties for inclusion in National Register of Historic Places.	Working from the inventory and in consultation with owners and the State, develop applications for inclusion.	Historical Society	3-6 years
Protect historic and archaeological sites from climate change, including sea level rise, extreme heat, wind, and rain.	Conduct a survey using MHPC template or similar. Partner with Gouldsboro Coastal Resilience Committee	Coast Resilience Committee, Historical Society	Immediate with an action plan identified by the end of 2026.
Create sound measures to protect against disturbing potential archeological sites	Review of Shoreland & Subdivision Ordinance, update as needed	Planning Board	1-3 years

## Chapter B: Population & Demographics

### 1. Purpose

Population is a foundational data set guiding all aspects of a comprehensive plan. The understanding of the town's past, current and future population trends support many other aspects of the plan, such as housing, land-use and transportation. This information will help the town prepare for future municipal expenditures and investments. Specifically, this chapter:

- Describes Gouldsboro's population trends;
- Describes how these recent trends relate to and contrast with Hancock County and the State;
- Presents alternative future population scenarios.

### 2. Key Findings & Issues

In 2022, Gouldsboro's median age stood at 57 years old, higher than Hancock County's median age of 48.9. Gouldsboro's median income (\$63,270) was slightly lower than that of the Hancock County average of \$64,149. The school age and workforce age population of Gouldsboro has decreased in proportion to the total population. Gouldsboro's population had been on the rise with a population of 2,084 in 1998 before it dipped to 1,737 in 2010. It has since steadily declined to 1,703 in 2020 Decennial Census. School enrollment at the Peninsula Elementary School in 2013 was 201 students and has since declined to 136 students in 2021, before the Charles M. Sumner Learning Campus opened.

Sumner Memorial High School enrolled 235 Gouldsboro students in 2013. This number increased to 259 in 2021. The new Charles M. Sumner Learning Campus, which encompasses

middle school (6-8) and high school (9-12), welcomed students for the 2022/2023 school year with enrollment at 180 for middle school students and 279 for high school students. This move expectedly dropped enrollment at the elementary school level, even with the introduction of Pre-K classes at each of the four RSU24 elementary schools.

### 3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan

The town had lost year-round population during the 1990's with household populations increasing by about 9%. The number of school aged children had decreased by about 29%, and there was a 58% increase in those aged 45 to 64. Gouldsboro's population is aging and has been attracting retirees and pre-retirees.

### 4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results

The public opinion survey received 241 responses. 81% of respondents were year-round residents, meaning that approximately 11.5% of the community responded to the survey. The remaining respondents were seasonal residents. Further respondent demographic information is detailed below.

Age Bracket	26-40	41-55	56-70	70+
	5%	10%	18%	45%
Employment Status	Self employed	Retired	Employed	Unemployed
	21%	59%	16%	1%
Future Moves Based Over 1-5 years	Become a year-round resident	Move out of town	Sell a vacant lot	Purchase land in Gouldsboro
	6%	3%	3%	3%

## 5. Conditions and Trends

### 5.1. Historical Trends

Between 2000 and 2020, the population of Gouldsboro decreased by 238. The numbers suggest that the population is showing a trend of decline; this trend is demonstrated further in the projected decrease of the Town's population to 1,567 residents in 2040.

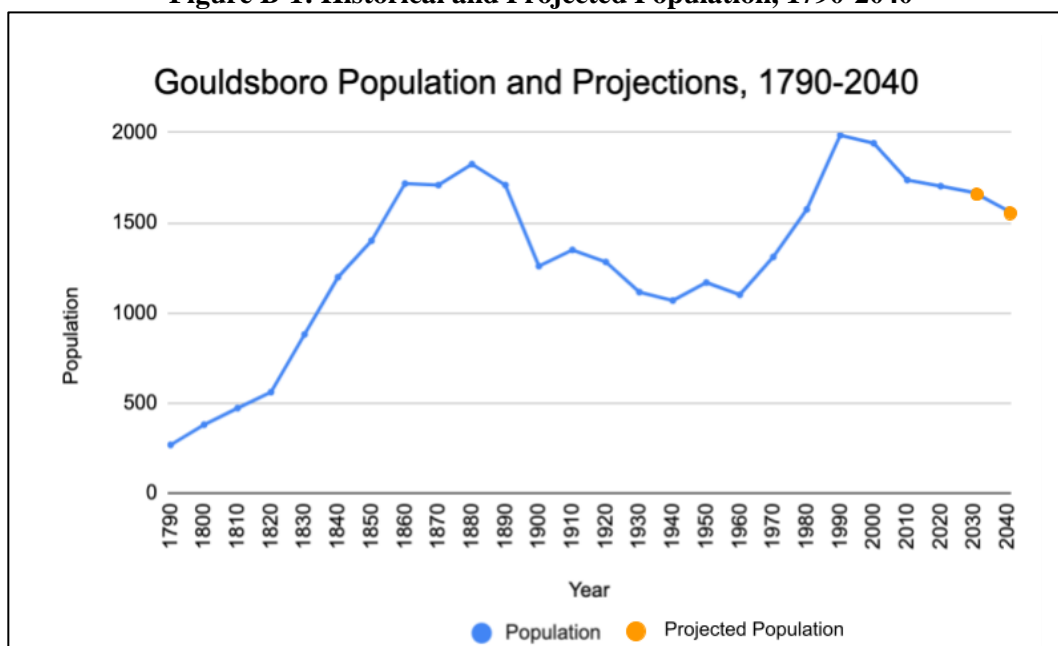
**Table B-1: Gouldsboro Historical Population**

Year	Population	% Change from Previous Decade
1790	267	-
1800	379	41.9%
1810	471	24.3%
1820	560	18.9%
1830	880	57.1%
1840	1,198	36.1%
1850	1,400	16.9%
1860	1,717	22.6%
1870	1,709	-0.5%
1880	1,825	6.8%
1890	1,709	-6.4%

Year	Population	% Change from Previous Decade
1900	1,259	-26.3%
1910	1,349	7.1%
1920	1,282	-5.0%
1930	1,115	-13.0%
1940	1,068	-4.2%
1950	1,168	9.4%
1960	1,100	-5.8%
1970	1,310	19.1%
1980	1,574	20.2%
1990	1,986	26.2%
2000	1,941	-2.3%
2010	1,737	-10.5%
2020	1,703	-2.0%
2030	1,667	-2.1%
2040	1,567	-6.0%

Sources: US Decennial Census, Maine State Economist Population Projections

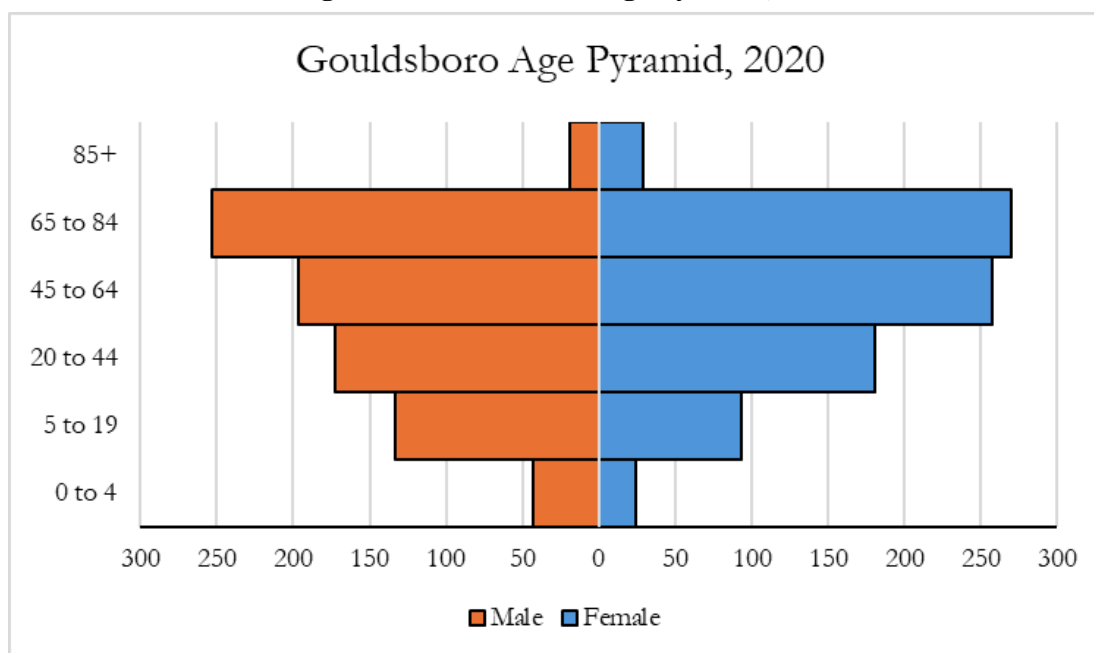
**Figure B-1: Historical and Projected Population, 1790-2040**



Source: US Decennial Census, Maine State Economist

## 5.2. Age Characteristics

The Town's population in 2020 stood at 1,703, an approximate 2.0% decline in residents since 2010 and a 12.3% population decline since 2000. As shown in Table B-2 below, between 2000 and 2020 the 65-84 and 85+ age cohorts were the only groups to increase in population, indicating that the Town's population is also getting older in addition to smaller. Maine State Economist's population projections predict that Gouldsboro will continue to see a steady decline over the next decade; these projections show a decline to 1,667 residents by 2030 (-4.0% from 2020) and a continued decline to 1,567 residents by 2040 (-7.0% from 2030).

**Figure B-2: Gouldsboro Age Pyramid, 2020**

Source: 2020 Decennial Census

**Table B-2: Age Distribution Trends**

Age Cohort	2000	% of Total	2010	% of Total	2020	% of Total	% Chg, 10'-20'	% Chg, 00'-20'
0 – 4	88	4.5%	87	5.0%	67	3.9%	-23.0%	-23.9%
5 – 19	342	17.6%	247	14.2%	226	13.3%	-8.5%	-33.9%
20 – 44	619	31.9%	391	22.5%	354	20.8%	-9.5%	-42.8%
45 – 64	556	28.6%	610	35.1%	485	28.5%	-20.5%	-12.8%
65 – 84	301	15.5%	365	21.0%	523	30.7%	43.3%	73.8%
85+	35	1.8%	37	2.1%	48	2.8%	29.7%	37.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,941</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,737</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,703</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-2.0%</b>	<b>-12.3%</b>

Source: Decennial Census 2000, 2010, 2020

### 5.3. Household Size

According to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the average household size in Gouldsboro is 2.2 people. Comparatively, the Town's average household size was 2.25 in 2010 and 2.31 in 2000. The estimated average household size for Hancock County in 2022 was 2.20, the same as it was in 2010 and a decline from 2.31 in 2000.

Time will tell whether this decrease in population or household size years will continue. Smaller household sizes are significant as it could mean that more homes will be needed to serve the same number of people.

### 5.4. Projected Population

There is no reliable way to project population for a small town such as Gouldsboro, as it does not seem to follow the larger regional trends projected for Hancock County. The Maine State

Economist has developed year-round population projections for all municipalities in the State through 2040 in 5-year intervals. According to those projections, Gouldsboro's population is expected to continue to decline as seen in Table B-3 below. Hancock County's population is projected to increase by 2030 before seeing a small decline by 2040; an over 1.1% population increase is projected for the County between 2020 and 2040. The State's population is projected to see an overall population increase of 3.1% by 2040.

Gouldsboro's population has the potential to increase beyond the latest projections as more people seek out areas of lower population density, provided they are able to work remotely or seek a retirement community. Access to broadband/fiber internet could become an important factor for the population of many rural towns.

The year-round population by age figures for Hancock County, Winter Harbor and Gouldsboro are shown on Table B-4. As seen, both Gouldsboro and Winter Harbor are expected to decline in population in the coming years. These estimates represent an estimated 8.0% decrease in Gouldsboro's population between 2020 and 2040. A lack of housing and an aging population may be the most likely cause of the projected declining population.

**Table B-3: Projected Population through 2040**

	2025	2030	2035	2040
Winter Harbor	425	408	375	340
Gouldsboro	1,691	1,667	1,626	1,567
Hancock County	56,140	56,707	56,698	56,092

*Source: Maine State Economist*

### 5.5. Educational Attainment

According to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Gouldsboro's population, albeit significantly smaller, has a smaller percentage of residents with bachelor's or graduate degrees than Hancock County or the State as a whole. 91.8% percent of Gouldsboro residents aged 25 and older had a high school education or higher and 25.5% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Comparatively, 95% percent of those 25 and older in Hancock County had a high school education or higher while 36.6% held a bachelor's degree or higher.

**Table B-4: Educational Attainment: Gouldsboro, Region, County & State (>25 years old)**

Degree Type	Gouldsboro		Hancock County		Maine	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Some High School, no diploma	110	8.2%	2,099	5.0%	55,098	5.7%
High School Diploma	611	45.5%	12,976	30.6%	310,778	31.9%
Some College or no degree	173	12.9%	7,870	18.6%	182,869	18.8%
Associate's degree	107	8.0%	3,933	9.3%	109,768	11.3%
Bachelor's degree	218	16.2%	9,856	23.2%	229,764	23.6%
Graduate or Professional Degree	124	9.2%	5,657	13.3%	141,794	14.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,343</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>42,391</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>974,973</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

## 5.6. Household Income

Gouldsboro's median household income in 2022 was \$63,750 according to ACS 5-Year estimates. This amount was very similar to that of Hancock County (\$64,149). The median income of owner-occupied units is noticeably higher than that of renter-occupied units, a trend that is similar at the county level. An estimated 23.7% of town residents earn between \$75,000-\$99,999; a similar percentage (22.6%) take in a household income between \$25,000-\$49,999. According to ACS 5-Year estimates 11.5% of Gouldsboro residents had an income below the poverty level in 2022, compared to 10.7% percent of the county as a whole.

**Table B-5: Median Household Income**

Income Bracket	Percentage of Residents
Less than \$24,999	15.1%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	22.6%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	17.7%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	23.7%
\$100,000 - \$199,000	16.4%
\$200,000+	4.5%

*Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

**Table B7-: Median Household Income, Gouldsboro, and Hancock County**

Median Household Income	Gouldsboro	Hancock County
All Occupied Housing Units	\$63,750	\$64,149
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	\$76,250	\$73,375
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	\$45,875	\$31,996

*Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

## 6. Seasonal Population

The seasonal fluctuation in Gouldsboro has traditionally been significant; like many other coastal Maine communities, B&B's, Campgrounds, RV Parks, and rental properties such as those found through Airbnb cater to summertime visitors. As the town changes and evolves, the impact of the seasonal population will become more apparent. It is difficult to gauge the increase of summer population as the town does not regulate Airbnb's or private rentals; however, the U.S. Decennial Census offers an indication of how many units are used seasonally. Table B-8 shows that according to the 2020 Decennial Census, 77% of the vacant units in Gouldsboro were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This is a reduction from 81.6% of the vacant units in 2010 and approximately 92% of the vacant units in 2000, although still a noticeable amount.

If a decline in the Town's population continues as projected, the seasonal bump will become even more noticeable. There has been some concern from residents regarding this growing trend and additional strains on town services.

**Table B-6: Vacant Units used for Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use**

	2000	2010	2020
Vacant Units for Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use	183	230	211
All Other Vacant Units	15	52	63
Total Vacant Units	198	282	274
Percentage of Vacant Units used for Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use	92.4%	81.6%	77.0%

Source: Decennial Census 2000, 2010, 2020

## 7. Goals & Objectives

<b>Goal:</b> Maintain Gouldsboro's rural character through gradual population changes that includes people of diverse ages and wealth.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party(ies)	Timeframe
Ensure residents can remain in town for as long as possible, well into their senior years.	Support age-in-place policies and investments that provide facilities and services to support this need.	Select Board and/or designee(s)	Withing 1 year of plan adoption - ongoing
Promote Gouldsboro as a place to live and actively seek out new residents and young families.	Work with local tourism and development agencies to reach a broad audience.	Select Board and/or designee(s)	Within 1 year if plan adoption & ongoing as necessary
Maintain an annual understanding of population changes in Gouldsboro.	Regularly review ACS and Census data, along with local sources of data to monitor population fluctuations	Select Board, Planning Board, HCPC	Within 1 year of plan adoption & annually
Support Broadband/Fiber Internet Access throughout Gouldsboro to retain residents and attract new/younger residents.	Work cooperatively with state agencies and other towns in the region to secure better internet	Peninsula Broadband Committee, Select Board	Within 2 years of plan adoption
Promote childcare and early childcare education opportunities.	Work with local businesses, nonprofits, and community partners to explore childcare opportunities for residents with young children.	Select Board and/or designee(s), School Representatives	Immediate – to be completed within 2 years of plan adoption



## **Chapter C: Economy**

### **1. Purpose**

An understanding of past, current and future potential trends in the local and regional economy is essential for assessing the town's future needs. Employment patterns will change due to factors such as the following: increasing numbers of at-home workers and telecommuters; changes in the region's employment opportunities; and changes in location and composition of retail service centers. As a result of these changes, transportation, telecommunication, and energy infrastructure will all be impacted and require adequate planning. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Describes employment trends in Gouldsboro;
- b. Describes the local and regional economy; and
- c. Discusses the likely future economic activity and market changes that may impact Gouldsboro.

### **2. Key Findings & Issues**

Self-employment continues to be an important part of Gouldsboro as it represented an estimated 28% of the labor force in 2022, a percentage that has steadily increased over the past decade. Gouldsboro had a higher percentage of self-employed residents and persons employed in natural resource-based jobs than the county. Unemployment rates have been rising in recent years and are consistently higher than both the town of Winter Harbor and Hancock County. Other working residents must travel outside of Gouldsboro for employment as there are roughly 12-15 businesses in Gouldsboro's that hire for employment.

Agriculture and fisheries make up a large share of Gouldsboro's workforce. The Town has been pursuing broadband capabilities to compete for new residents who can work from home and might choose to reside in Gouldsboro because of its abundant natural beauty, lifestyle, and ecosystem benefits. The lack of public water and sewer, solid waste disposal costs, and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on roads are among other public facility and infrastructure needs that must be considered moving forward. It will also be important to support the marketing of marine products and help to ensure that existing marine-based businesses remain competitive. The long-term impact climate change has on fisheries and marine-based industries remains to be seen.

### **3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan**

Gouldsboro had a higher proportion of persons employed in natural resource-based jobs than the county, but the percentage was declining probably due to a decline in the fishing industry at that time.

Unemployment rates had increased since the closure of the Navy facilities in 2002 and were higher than both the county and Town of Winter Harbor averages. Self-employment was an important part of the economy with about 25% of the labor force being self-employed.

## 4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results

Survey takers responded to the question “What type of development would you like to see in Gouldsboro during the next 10 years?” There was a notable amount of “yes” responses to economic-related development such as restaurants and commercial trade, service, or retail businesses.

Survey Answer Choices	Yes	No
Development of any kind	32.1%	67.9%
Commercial (trade/service/retail)	75.7%	24.3%
Inns, Bed & Breakfasts, Hotels	67.0%	33.0%
Light Industry	71.0%	29.0%
Medical	81.7%	18.3%
Restaurants	85.2%	14.9%

The topic of local jobs is one of the top priorities for many residents, with 89.5% of respondents believing it is important or very important to keep established business and industry in Gouldsboro. There is also significant support for promoting a strong economy that enhances quality of life.

### Please rate the following economic goals for the Town?

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Sure
Promote a strong economy that enhances quality of life.	43.1%	38.9%	13.0%	4.2%	0.8%
Create quality employment and opportunities for business ownership.	35.3%	41.1%	17.0%	4.6%	2.1%
Attract new businesses to town.	24.3%	36.4%	24.7%	11.7%	2.9%
Keep established businesses and industries in Gouldsboro.	62.6%	26.9%	7.6%	2.5%	0.4%

The impact of increased conversion of private homes to Airbnb-style short-term rentals affects the local economy in terms of increased tourists as well as decreasing the housing available for potential workers. 62.1% do not think the town needs to enact an ordinance limiting them like the one in Bar Harbor. This impact will need to continue to be monitored, particularly in the most popular locations like Corea where there are many tourists but few nearby businesses to supply their needs.

## 5. Recent Employment Trends

### 5.1. Employment & Unemployment

Gouldsboro’s total civilian labor force (employed persons over 16 years of age) has declined roughly 17% between 2000 and 2022. This represents a much more substantial decrease than Hancock County as a whole, which saw an approximate 1.5% decrease between this same time

period; the Town's 2022 count is comparable to the 1990 total civilian labor force, which was 680. Gouldsboro's unemployment rate in 2022 was slightly higher than that of Hancock County and consistent with most of the other towns in the same geographical area.

**Table C-1: Gouldsboro, Hancock County, and Surrounding Area Employment Trends, 2022**

	<b>Gouldsboro</b>	<b>Winter Harbor</b>	<b>Sullivan</b>	<b>Sorrento</b>	<b>Hancock County</b>
Civilian Labor Force	681	231	619	121	28,408
Employed	654	221	593	118	27,417
Unemployed	27	10	26	3	991
Unemployment Rate	4.0%	4.3%	4.2%	2.5%	3.5%

*Source: Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research, and Information*

Gouldsboro has historically had a high percentage of self-employed residents compared to Hancock County as a whole. According to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, approximately 28.0% of Gouldsboro's civilian workforce was self-employed in their own unincorporated business, in contrast with 14.0% in all of Hancock County. This reflects the importance of self-employed individuals in fishing, construction, and small (and often home-based) businesses to the local economy. This high-level of initiative in the local labor force should be recognized in any economic development strategies. It should also be noted that in 1980, 31% of the labor force was self-employed in Gouldsboro. There was speculation that the decline in interceding decades might have been due to the decline in the fishing industry, although the resurgence of a higher proportion of self-employed residents may indicate ties to rebounding fisheries.

## 5.2. Employment by Sector

Table C-2 compares employment by industry sector for Gouldsboro and Hancock County. There is a significantly higher proportion of persons employed in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries industry in Gouldsboro (22.8%) than in Hancock County as a whole (6.7%). This is indicative of the importance of natural resource-based employment to the local economy. It also represents a notable change from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, which reflected the Education, Healthcare, and social services industry as holding the single highest proportion of any jobs in Gouldsboro. This industry now comprises the second highest percentage of the Town's workforce (13%). It was noted at the time that local school consolidation (due to the decrease in enrollment resulting from the Navy base closure) likely drove down the number of education-related jobs.

**Table C-2: Employment by Industry**

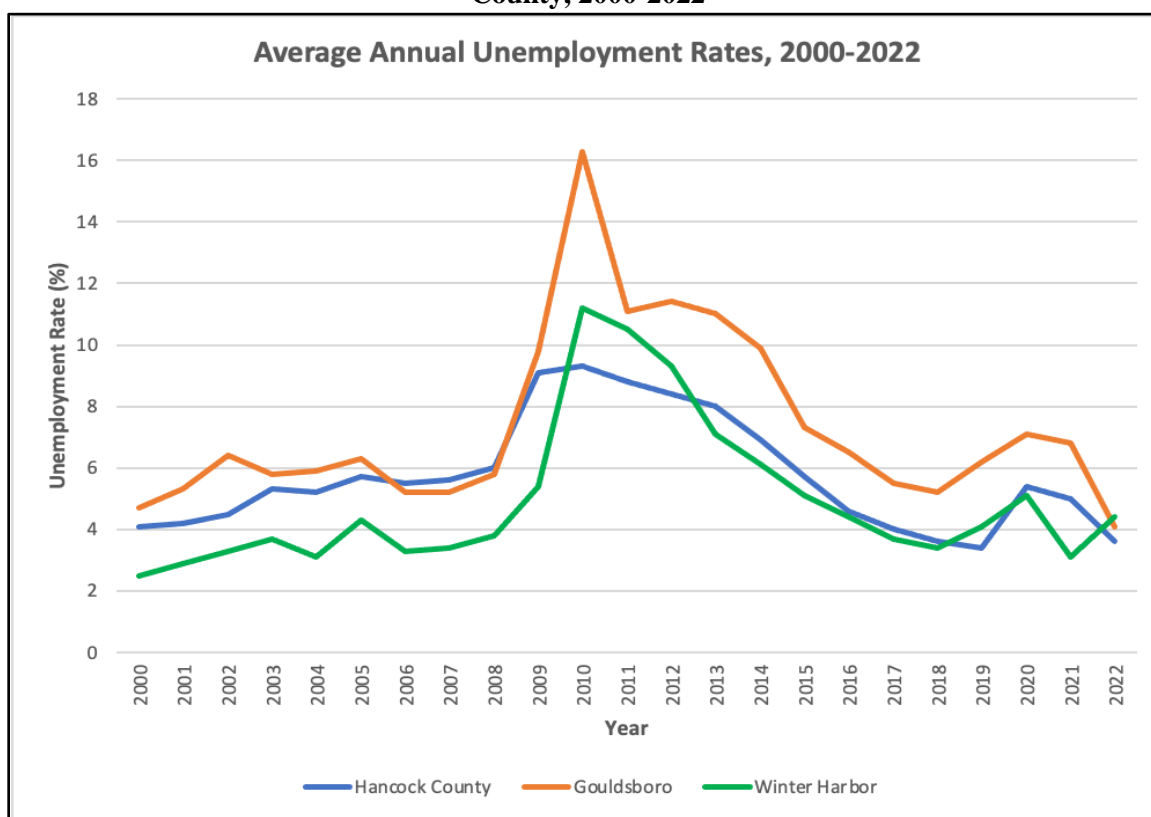
<b>Industry</b>	<b>Gouldsboro</b>		<b>Hancock County</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries & Mining	152	22.8%	1,882	6.7%
Construction	83	12.4%	2,312	8.3%
Manufacturing	62	9.3%	1,588	5.7%
Wholesale trade	21	3.1%	557	2.0%
Retail trade	27	4.0%	3,560	12.7%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	24	3.6%	1,272	4.5%
Information	0	0.0%	368	1.3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	43	6.4%	1,478	5.3%

Industry	Gouldsboro		Hancock County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management services	53	7.9%	3,392	12.1%
Educational Services, Healthcare & Social Assistance	87	13.0%	6,969	24.9%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services	42	6.3%	2,259	8.1%
Other Services, except Public Administration	55	8.2%	1,418	5.1%
Public Administration	19	2.8%	951	3.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>28,006</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Average unemployment rates are shown in Figure C-1 for Gouldsboro, Winter Harbor and Hancock County as a whole. These data illustrate a gradual decline in the unemployment rate following the recession in the late 2000s until the rate increases towards the end of the 2010s, evident even before the employment effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. They also show that Gouldsboro maintains a consistently higher unemployment rate than Winter Harbor and Hancock County as a whole.

**Figure C-1: Average Annual Unemployment Rate: Gouldsboro, Winter Harbor and Hancock County, 2000-2022**



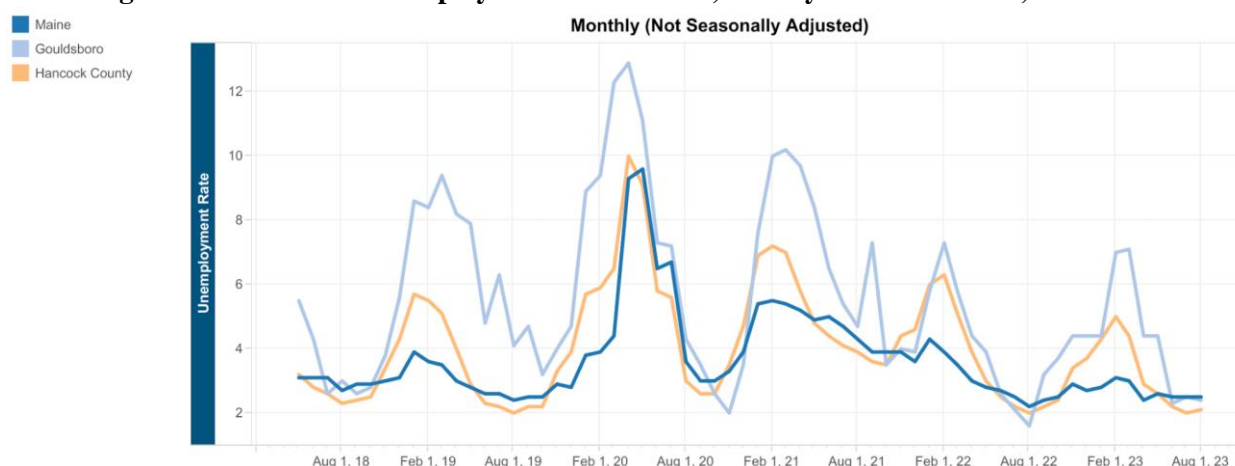
Source: Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research, and Information

Figure C-2 compares seasonal unemployment rates for Maine, Hancock County and Gouldsboro from August 2018 to August 2023. Overall, unemployment typically rises in the winter and falls during the summer. For most months during these years, Gouldsboro had a higher

unemployment rate than the State or the County; however, with such a small number of people in Gouldsboro, any significant change in seasonal employment will have a greater impact on the overall unemployment rate.

The Schoodic Peninsula's geographic location brings advantages and disadvantages, but isolation makes it difficult for the area to compete. Geographically the locale offers protection and a distinct identity, but the peninsula's remoteness causes the area to experience a seasonal fluctuation in employment. A significant number of jobs are seasonal summer jobs that are lost during other parts of the year.

**Figure C-2: Seasonal Unemployment at the Town, County and State Level, 2018-2023**

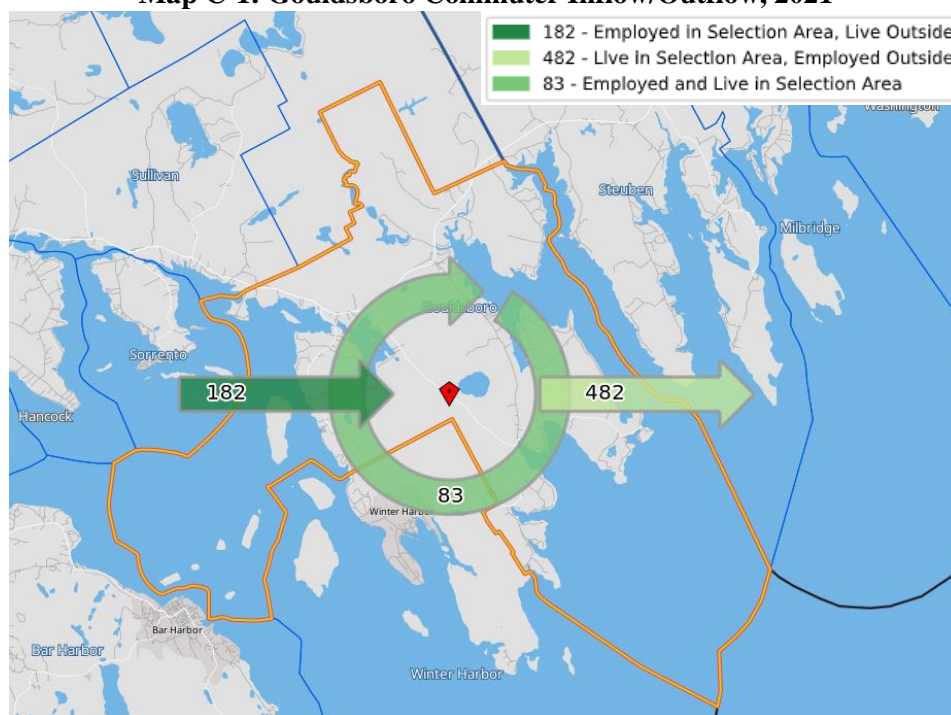


*Source: Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research, and Information*

### 5.3. Commuting Patterns

There is substantial commuting by Gouldsboro residents that work outside the home. The mean travel time for the journey to work increased from 23.7 minutes in 2000 to 34.9 minutes in 2022. An estimated 17.7% of workers traveled 60 or more minutes to work. The mean travel time in 2022 was 10 minutes longer than the 24.6 minutes for Hancock County as a whole.

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan predated the full closing of the Navy facilities, and it was assumed at that time that residents would be commuting in the future unless the Town were to undertake an aggressive economic development policy. The data suggests that there has been a significant increase in commute time since the Navy facilities closure. Gouldsboro is also one of the furthest towns in Hancock County from the larger hiring economy of Ellsworth.

**Map C-1: Gouldsboro Commuter Inflow/Outflow, 2021**

Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap, 2021

Gouldsboro is a rural community, and this requires that many residents commute to get to work. Commuting may either be to a local town pier for lobster fishing, to a small local business or to larger towns or cities. 2021 U.S. Census on The Map data indicate that 68.7% of those employed in Gouldsboro live outside of town limits. 14.7% of residents stay in town for work, while remaining working residents commute to areas outside of Gouldsboro for employment.

#### 5.4. Major Employers

Shown in Table C-3, Maine Department of Labor's Center for Workforce Research and Information lists the Eleanor Dixon Clinic and West Bay General Store as Gouldsboro's biggest employer by number of employees (20-49), followed by Elscott Manufacturing, the Mira Monte Inn and Springtide Seaweed (all with 10-19 employees).

**Table C-3: Top Employers in Gouldsboro**

Employer Name	Employer Size
Eleanor Dixon Clinic	20-49
West Bay General Store	20-49
Elscott Manufacturing	10-19
Mira Monte Inn	10-19
Springtide Seaweed LLC	10-19
Downeast Mexican Takeout	5-9
Maine Coast Rehabilitation Services	5-9
Maine Natural History Observatory	5-9
Offshore Fuel	5-9
One Wing Publishing	5-9
Weaver Trust	5-9

Employer Name	Employer Size
Young's Market	5-9

*Source: Maine Department of Labor's Center for Workforce Research and Information*

## 5.5 Economic Development

There has been some recent economic activity in Gouldsboro, such as a new upscale RV Campground on West Bay Road as well as the Harborside Cafe/grocery store due to open by late fall of 2024 or early spring of 2025 in the post office building, which will need to hire employees. The former Maine Fair Trade property has recently been acquired by local entrepreneurs who are still deciding how best to use the facility. They will be working with the Planning Board to determine the most appropriate and allowable uses within Shoreland Ordinance guidelines. These types of small businesses are slow to come to town but need to continue to bind our community with local ties. Ben & Me Ice Cream has expanded a bit and continues to be a successful addition, as has Seaside Landscaping.

Tourists continue to wander through the villages that make up Gouldsboro; they help new and established businesses along with seasonal rentals, but additional small businesses would offer more options. Elsa's Inn, the Bluff House, Acadia's Oceanside Meadows Inn, the Sunset House Bed & Breakfast, and Corea's Black Duck Inn offer local lodging. Albee's Shorehouse Cottages has been recently purchased and the name changed to Rest-Ash-Oar; renovations are underway. Local campgrounds offer another means of lodging and include West Bay Acadia RV Campground, Acadia East Campground and the nearby Schoodic Woods.

Schoodic Arts for All continues to be a needed presence within the community as well. It has grown from a two-week summer event to a year-round presence, reaching out more to the public with workshops and community events. The Gouldsboro Community Center has seen increased activity with a new committee hosting more community events such as father-daughter dances, Easter egg hunts, family movie nights, craft fairs, community yard sales, and more.

A growing segment of employment is the "work-from-anywhere" professional who requires only a stable and fast internet connection. Gouldsboro will need to continue its work with Winter Harbor on bringing broadband to the area to attract residents in this segment. This growing segment can be a vital component to complement one of Gouldsboro's long-established mainstays, creative home-based enterprises.

Ideal economic considerations would be the prospect for developing and keeping a mix of year-round businesses which could offer a variety of well-paying, year-round jobs within the Town and within easy commuting distance. It should also concentrate on preserving important seasonal sources of employment, home occupations and local entrepreneurial activities.

The objectives for achieving this economy goal:

1. Assist existing business
2. Encourage business development
3. Promote and facilitate commercial growth
4. Continue to allow home occupations
5. Increase Gouldsboro's participation in regional efforts to diversify Hancock County's economy.

## **6. Projected Future Employers & Regional Issues**

Gouldsboro's future economy will depend on a range of factors, including both local and regional demographics as well as changes in climate and technology. It will be important to support the marketing of marine products and help to ensure that existing marine-based businesses remain competitive. Retail and other industries in town that rely on brick-and-mortar storefronts will continue to compete with larger regional centers such as Ellsworth and Milbridge and will likely not be major employers in the future.

The long-term effects of climate change's impact on fisheries and marine-based industries remains to be seen. This diverse sector, whether shellfish or seaweed harvesting, etc., will be impacted by rising sea temperatures and increasing cycles of extreme weather events. This could pose a major threat to the future of Gouldsboro's local economy.

The Town will also be in competition with other towns and regions that have fiber optic internet as telecommuting increases in the internet age. The growth of tourism, especially since the opening of Schoodic Woods, has impacted Gouldsboro in terms of increased visitors and therefore an increased need for goods and services. While this presents an opportunity for tourist-related business, it also strains the Town's resources in some ways, including affordable housing for future entrepreneurs and for their employees. Furthermore, the lack of affordable and accessible childcare and early childhood education could also contribute to Gouldsboro's ability to attract new residents and retain current ones.

## **7. Analyses**

### **7.1. Historical Perspective**

Between 1800 and 1900, shipping and shipbuilding became major industries in Gouldsboro. At the time, Gouldsboro was a stop on the Shore Stage Line but by 1900 steamboat and railway service became available seven miles away at Hancock. The "Bar Harbor Express" rail line ended its run at the Waukeag Ferry dock. The ferry serviced the Frenchman Bay area.

As a result of an uneven coastline, Gouldsboro developed into many historically separate fishing villages, summer colonies and communities. Each of the villages generally had its own grammar school, church, general store, a mill and a post office. Some villages had inns and livery stables for travelers. Traveling salesmen included itinerant dentists, photographers, peddlers, artists, and



theatrical troupes. The occupations of the village inhabitants included farmers, fishermen, lumbermen, carpenters, shipbuilders, seafarers, and tradesmen. Coastal freighters supplied stores with year-round goods. Sawmills provided barrel staves and long lumber, and gristmills produced flour. The mills were variously powered by water, steam, or tides.

## **7.2. Local and Regional Economic Development Plans**

Gouldsboro is located along the Schoodic National Scenic Byway. The Byway offers both residents and visitors a visual and recreational experience and an opportunity to contribute to the local economy. A Corridor Management Plan was first written for the Byway in 2000 to establish goals for infrastructure improvements, leveraging local resources and to maintain the quality of experience. The Plan includes various strategies for promoting and utilizing not only the economic assets along the Byway, but throughout the larger Schoodic region. Unofficial updates were made to the Plan in 2023.

No other local or regional economic development plans have been created in the last five years. In 2019 the State released “Maine 2020-2029 Economic Development Strategy, A Focus on Talent and Innovation”, which was revised in 2024. The Town is currently awaiting the finished product of a housing needs assessment that is being conducted by an outside consultant, which may incorporate how the local economy impacts and benefits from the current housing market.

## **7.3. Defined Economic Priorities**

Gouldsboro’s future economy will depend on a range of factors, including both regional and local demographics, as well as changes in climate and technology. While some number of local businesses will continue, mostly related to the industries connected to land and water, retail and other industries that rely on brick-and-mortar storefronts, will continue to compete with larger regional centers such as Blue Hill and Ellsworth, and will likely not be major employers in the future. Climate changes’ impact on fisheries and marine based industries also remains to be seen. This diverse sector, whether shellfish or seaweed harvesting etc., will be impacted by rising sea temperatures and increasing cycles of extreme weather events. This could pose a major threat to the future of Gouldsboro’s local economy.

Over the past years, Gouldsboro has begun exploring approaches to zoning that encourage and protect small-scale working waterfront development. Gouldsboro should continue this process, including consideration of where new use of such tools might encourage new working waterfront development instead of coastal residential development.

Gouldsboro continues its work on being able to provide broadband capabilities to attract the talent that Maine desperately needs to offset its aging and declining workforce. An integrated approach that includes more affordable housing and other factors will be needed to capitalize on these and other economic possibilities.

- Maintain an active, economically productive working waterfront community.
- Accessibility for remote workers and home-based occupations?

#### **7.4. Village Centers**

Gouldsboro's historical context provided for moderately dense habitation in the villages. The town has many historically separate fishing villages, summer colonies and communities including Birch Harbor, Prospect Harbor, South Gouldsboro, West Gouldsboro, Summer Harbor, Wonsqueak Harbor, Bunker's Harbor, Chicken Mill, Jones Pond, Westbay and Corea. The distinction of these villages remains today. Through the years, these villages have seen a decline in resources located within their centers as they have been forced to band together for economic reasons. While it is possible to take measures to improve the attractiveness of Gouldsboro's villages, the challenges addressing the lack of public sewer and water system remain.

#### **7.5. Areas Appropriate for Commercial or Industrial Development**

The Town's Future Land Use map allows commercial and industrial development in select areas of the town. Industrial development is permitted in the upper northwest portion of Gouldsboro, north of Route 1 and south of Ashville Road, as well as in a separate area north of Route 1 and south of West Bay Pond.

Land allowing commercial development has a slightly larger footprint. This includes an area in the upper northeast portion of Gouldsboro, on both sides of Route 1 east of Chicken Mill Stream; on parcels of land along both sides of Route 1 east and west of the village of West Gouldsboro; and in an additional area along Route 1 and east of Jones Pond.

#### **7.6. Adequacy of Existing Public Facilities to Support Economic Development**

Gouldsboro does not have public water or sewer, which limits the immediate potential for economic development in the various villages and service areas of the town. There will also be continued concerns with the ability to dispose of solid waste and recycling, and the costs associated with doing so, which could increase as additional businesses and services are developed. Continued investment in fiber optic internet and telecommunications infrastructure will be needed to support the local home-based occupation economy, as well as those that choose to relocate to Gouldsboro for remote work. Police, fire and EMS services and medical facilities are deemed adequate to support economic and residential development. The condition of town roads are not of immediate concern; however, safety and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists are concerns that need to be addressed, and the lack thereof limits mobility opportunities for travelers.

#### **7.7. Local and Regional Economic Development Incentives**

The Town does not currently have any economic development incentives or economic development incentive districts, such as tax increment financing districts.

#### **7.8. Use of Community Assets for Economic Growth**

The Town has several existing businesses, services, recreational opportunities, and neighboring attractions and facilities that can be used as assets for economic growth. Preserves, natural areas, and the proximity to the Schoodic portion of Acadia National Park are a significant draw, and

their location within or near the town can lead to additional time and money spent within town limits. Local inns and campgrounds encourage visitors to spend more than just a day. The Dorcas Library, Gouldsboro Historical Center, and local shops and restaurants are among additional locations for recreation, entertainment and revenue generation. The overall rural and coastal nature of the town itself is attractive to visitors and those that decide to call Gouldsboro home for part of or the entirety of the year. Developing a marketing strategy to promote the Town's assets, organizing community events at these locations, and partnering with the Schoodic Chamber of Commerce can be methods for further utilizing these assets and attractions for economic growth.

## 8. Goals & Objectives - Economy

<b>Goal:</b> Gouldsboro will work to support local economic enterprises and attract new residents to the area so as to retain as much economic capital in the town as possible.			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Responsible Partie(s)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Secure equitable access to fiber and broadband Internet for all Gouldsboro residents. (refer to Population Chapter)	Continue the efforts of the local broadband committee.	Peninsula Broadband Committee	Immediate until completion
Prepare Gouldsboro for climate change impacts to town infrastructure and current industries such as fisheries and other natural resource-based operations.	Implement the October 2022 Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan	Select Board, Coastal Resilience Committee, HCPC	Immediately– to be completed within one year of plan adoption. (July 2026)
Support current businesses and attract new business opportunities through actively researching and pursuing grants, loans, and other financial support, and identifying appropriate capital investment projects in town.	Actively pursue Community Development Block Grant, USDA, State, and private sources of funding for applicable capital investments and opportunities.	Select Board, Town Manager	Immediate and ongoing.
Encourage small home-based businesses that complement the quiet rural character of the town and align with State environmental policies.	Review current land-use ordinances, both local and state, to find a balance between projected development demand and Gouldsboro's natural resources, and then formulate a policy if required.	Planning Board	Immediately – complete within two years of plan adoption. (July 2027)
Consider Business designated areas/land within use for development or reuse of vacant business sites.	Consider commercial zoning areas, Route 1, etc. Have several community conversations.	Planning Board	To be completed within one year and a half of plan adoption.

			(December 2026)
Regional coordination efforts and collaboration with the Schoodic Area Chamber and town of Winter Harbor.	Consider a volunteer committee with the task of bringing information.	Planning Board, Town Manager	To be completed within two years of plan adoption. (July 2027)
Economic Development Planning – support well paying, year –round and seasonal local business, home occupations, and local entrepreneurial activities.	Town and/or Select Board to appoint grant managers to hire or volunteer to oversee grant reporting. Seek state or federal grants to be able to hire contract grant writers. Form committee to investigate utilizing AARPA funds.	Select Board and/or Town Manager	Complete within three years of plan adoption (July 2028)

## **Chapter D: Housing**

### **1. Purpose**

Gouldsboro's Comprehensive Plan will address several key housing issues. These include changes in conditions and needs as well as projecting future demands for housing throughout the community, workforce housing as well as housing for an aging population. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Describes recent trends in Gouldsboro's housing stock in terms of types and number of units with available information, including vacant and occupied homes;
- b. Discusses rental and owner housing affordability;
- c. Project future housing needs including short- and long-term housing needs;
- d. Describes emerging trends such as climate in-migration and increased short term rentals
- e. Describes benefits that will accrue to Gouldsboro from a greater supply of available and affordable housing and;
- f. Recommends ways to increase the supply of energy-efficient housing for multi-occupational and multi-generational community members.

### **2. Key Findings and Issues**

The number of total housing units increased from 1,329 to 1,426 between 2000 and 2020; however, the number of occupied units decreased by 0.4% over this period. Vacant units, both seasonal and non-seasonal, saw an increase during this time. Gouldsboro continues to be primarily comprised of owner-occupied, detached single-family homes. The affordability of both rental and owner-occupied housing has continued to decline as the cost of purchasing and renting a dwelling has risen beyond the reach of many population groups upon which the viability of Gouldsboro depends. Housing costs rise above 30% of household income for many owner and renter households earning less than \$35,000. Using Maine Housing's Homeownership Affordability Index, the affordability for owner-occupied housing in Gouldsboro has shifted from "affordable" (2010-2013) to primarily "unaffordable" (2014-2023).

With declining household sizes and an aging population, there may be a need for more housing that serves the senior population. An estimated 6-10% increase in year-round affordable rental units would be a benefit to the community and could allow seniors to affordably downsize from their single-family residences while creating space for younger families and other year-round residents. Affordable housing projects and funding models in other parts of the state can be used to create similar initiatives in the Schoodic Area.

### **3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan**

The number of year-round homes had increased by 15% between 1990 and 2000, and the number of second homes increased by 14%. The median household incomes in 2002 were only 58% of the amount needed to afford the median-priced home. Housing affordability for homebuyers was considered a "serious problem." The Plan stated that there could be an average of 12 new year-round homes and eight second homes built each year between 2000 and 2015.

## 4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results

Maintaining the rural character of Gouldsboro was important to 95.8% of survey respondents and the necessity for more residential homes was identified as important by 75.8%. Survey results also showed that 46.1% of respondents thought that residential homes should be built anywhere in town, while 31.4% believed they should be built in designated areas.

## 5. Recent Housing Trends and Analysis

Gouldsboro's total number of housing units increased by 7.4% between 2000 and 2020 (see table D-1). The number of vacant dwellings increased by nearly 19% in the last two decades, while the number of occupied units went down by a total of three units. The number of year-round homes increased by 15% between 1990 and 2000, a rate that was not replicated in the proceeding decades. Household sizes are decreasing, a trend that could continue given the aging of the town's population.

**Table D-1: Change in Housing Units, Gouldsboro, 2000-2020**

	2000	2010	2020	% Change, 2000-2010	% Change, 2010-2020	% Change, 2000-2020
Occupied	801	773	798	-3.5%	3.2%	-0.4%
Vacant	528	669	628	26.7%	-6.1%	18.9%
Seasonal	484	562	516	19.3%	-8.2%	9.6%
Non-Seasonal	44	107	112	91.1%	4.7%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>1,442</b>	<b>1,426</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>

*Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 2000, 2010, 2020*

### 5.1. Housing Unit Type

Since 2000 there has been an estimated 12.6% increase in single-family units and a substantial estimated decrease in mobile homes. Overall, there has been an estimated 2.1% increase in total housing units between 2000 and 2022.

**Table D-2: Dwelling Unit by Type**

	2000		2022		% Change, 2000-2022
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
<b>Single-Family</b>	1,112	83.6%	1,252	92.3%	12.6%
<b>Duplex/Multifamily</b>	40	3.0%	43	3.2%	7.5%
<b>Mobile Home</b>	166	12.5%	62	4.5%	-62.7%
<b>Boat, RV, Van, etc.</b>	12	0.09%	0	0%	-100%
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,357</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>

*Source: 2000 Decennial Census, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

### 5.2. Tenure

The breakdown between rental and owner-occupied year-round housing is shown in Table D-3. According to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, approximately 86% of occupied-homes were owner-

occupied and nearly 14% were renter-occupied in 2022. This is a lower percentage of rental units than in Hancock County as a whole. Most renter-occupied units are concentrated in the larger, service center communities of the county rather than in small towns such as Gouldsboro. The percentage of units in town that are owner-occupied has increased from 77.7% in 2000 to an estimated 86.4% in 2022.

**Table D-3: Tenure of Occupied Year-round Housing**

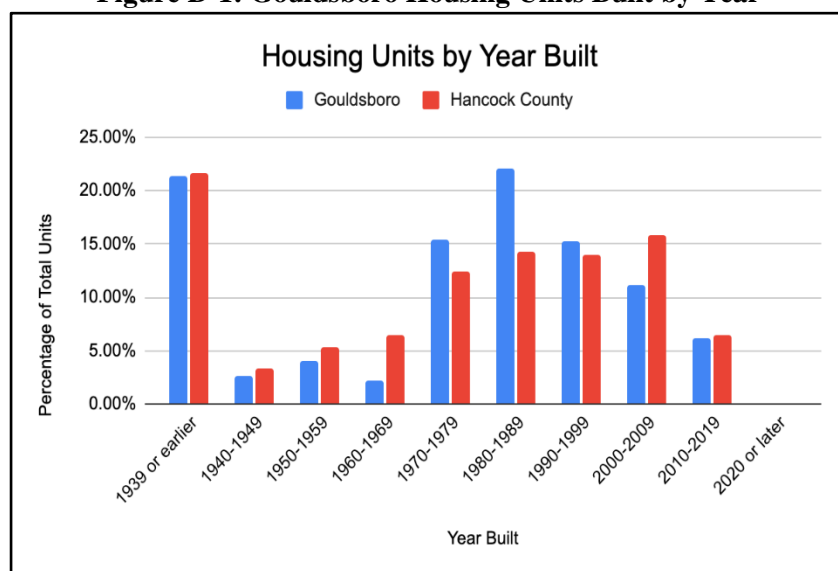
		2000		2010		2022	
		Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
<b>Gouldsboro</b>	Renter-Occupied	179	22.3%	122	15.8%	103	13.6%
	Owner-Occupied	622	77.7%	651	84.2%	655	86.4%
	Total Occupied Units	801	100%	773	100%	758	100%
<b>Hancock County</b>	Renter-Occupied	5,332	24.4%	6,202	25.6%	5,249	21.3%
	Owner-Occupied	16,532	75.6%	18,019	74.4%	19,411	78.7%
	Total Occupied Units	21,864	100%	24,221	100%	24,660	100%

Source: 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

### 5.3. Age of Existing Housing Stock

Over 20% of Gouldsboro's housing stock was built prior to 1939. A similar boom in residential development occurred between 1980 and 1989, visualized in figure D-1 below. Approximately 17% of the town's housing stock has been built since 2000, most of that coming between the years 2000-2009.

**Figure D-1: Gouldsboro Housing Units Built by Year**



Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

### 5.4. Seasonal Housing

Table D-4 shows that according to the 2020 Decennial Census, 82.2% of the vacant units in Gouldsboro were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This is a reduction from

84.0% of the vacant units in 2010 and approximately 92% of the vacant units in 2000, although still a noticeable amount. With such a significant number of vacant units being used seasonally or occasionally, a method for tracking the occupancy of these units could be useful in determining their impact on the availability of year-round residences, changes in the cost of these residences, and the rate at which year-round residences are being converted to seasonal properties.

**Table D-4: Vacant Units used for Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>
Vacant Units for Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use	484	562	516
All Other Vacant Units	44	107	112
Total Vacant Units	528	669	628
% of Vacant Units used for Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use	91.7%	84.0%	82.2%

*Source: 2000, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census*

## 5.5. Affordability

In terms of affordability, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's definition for affordable housing is "housing on which the occupant is paying no more than 30% of gross income for housing costs, including utilities". The anecdotally reported experience in Gouldsboro is that housing costs are especially problematic for first-time home buyers and renters, low-paid workers, and individuals no longer in the workforce.

### 5.5.1. Renters

As seen in Table D-4 below, the median gross rent in Gouldsboro in 2022, according to 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates was \$795 per month, compared to the \$949 for Hancock County. Over 60% of the rent amounts in Gouldsboro fell into the \$500 to \$999 per month range, with nearly one quarter between \$1,000 and \$1,499. The median household income for renter-occupied units in 2022 was \$45,875. It should be noted that this estimated median gross rent amount may not truly reflect the monthly rates of rental units in Gouldsboro or Hancock County.

**Table D-5: Gross Rent of Renter-Occupied Units, 2022**

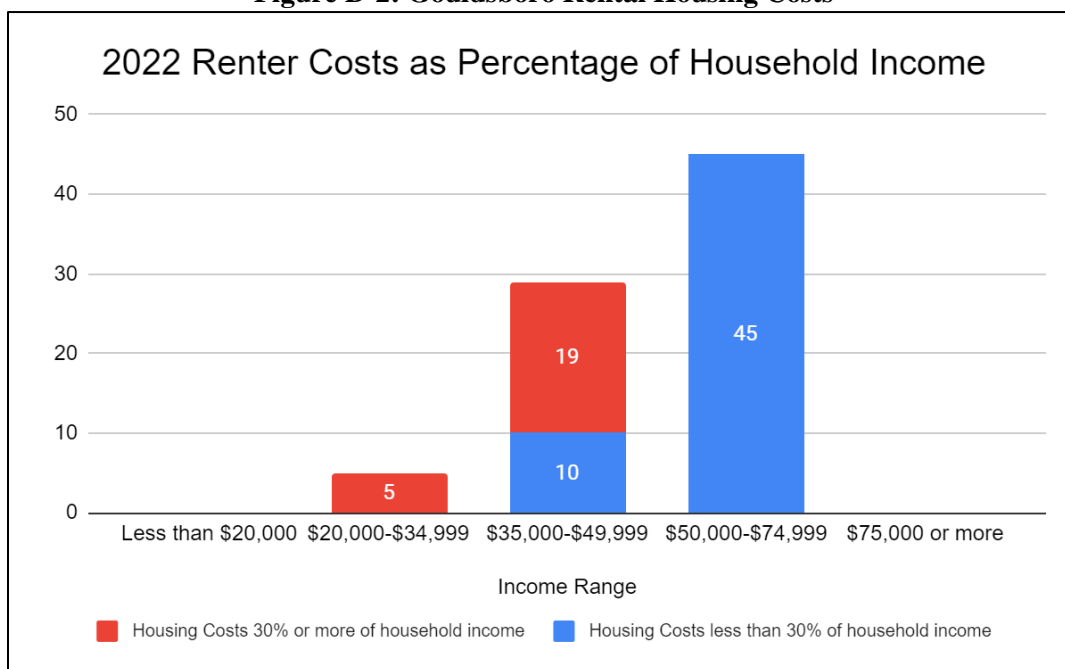
<b>Monthly Rent</b>	<b>Gouldsboro</b>		<b>Hancock County</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
< \$500	10	12.7%	891	9.5%
\$500 to \$999	50	63.3%	5,103	54.3%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	19	24.0%	3,307	35.2%
\$1,500 or more	0	0%	693	7.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9,397</b>	<b>100%</b>
No Cash Rent	24		366	
Median Gross Rent	\$795		\$949	

*Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates*



Figure D-2 below shows that roughly two-thirds of the renters in Gouldsboro in 2022 who had household incomes less than \$50,000 were paying more than 30% of their incomes on rent and therefore did not have affordable rental housing. On the other hand, all Gouldsboro residents with incomes greater than \$50,000 were spending less than 30% of their income on monthly housing costs.

**Figure D-2: Gouldsboro Rental Housing Costs**



*Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

### 5.5.2. Value of Owner-Occupied Housing

The value of owner-occupied homes in 2000 and 2022 in Gouldsboro are compared in Table D-6. The data illustrates a trend of rising home values; the median value in Gouldsboro was estimated at \$265,400 in 2022, more than double that in 2000. The estimated 2022 median home value in Gouldsboro was slightly higher than that of all of Hancock County (\$250,900).

**Table D-6: Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units in Gouldsboro, 2000 & 2022**

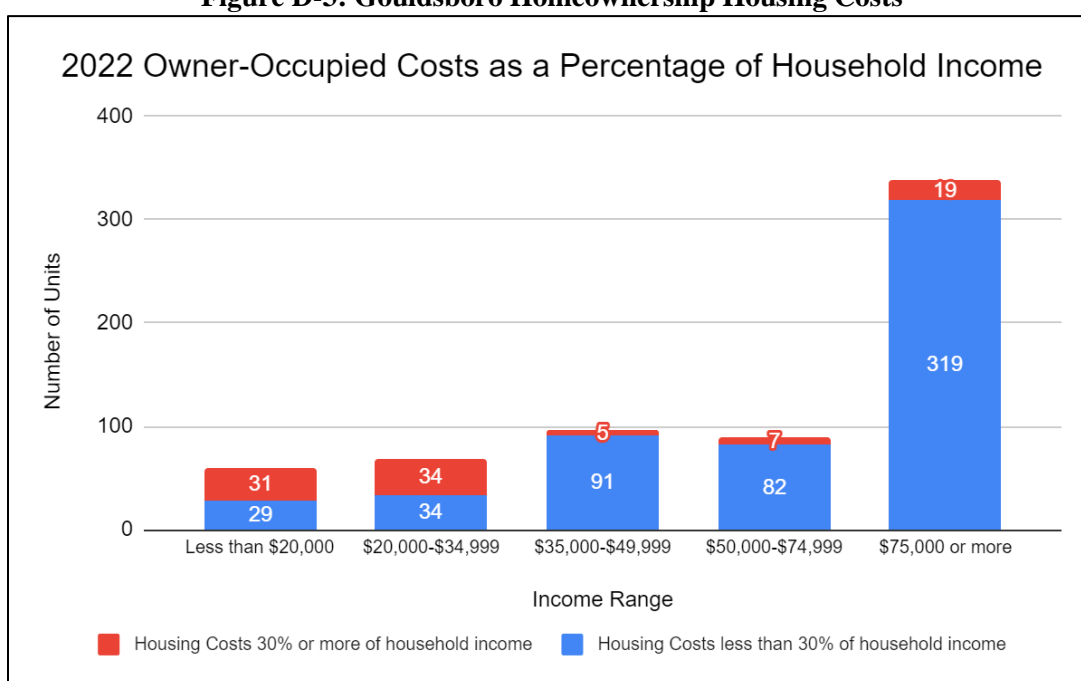
Value	2000		2022	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$50,000	14	3.6%	19	2.9%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	183	47.5%	39	6.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,000	87	22.6%	93	14.2%
\$150,000 to \$199,000	38	9.9%	119	18.2%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	39	10.1%	115	17.6%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	22	5.7%	127	19.4%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	2	0.5%	117	17.9%
\$1,000,000-\$1,999,999	0	0.0%	3	0.05%
\$2,000,000 or more	0	0.0%	23	3.5%

	2000		2022	
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>100%</b>
Median Value	\$98,600		\$265,400	

Source: 2000 Decennial Census; 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates indicate that 14.7% of owner-occupied households in Gouldsboro were spending 30% or more of their household income on housing costs. These housing costs include mortgage, utilities, property taxes and insurance costs. Over half (51.2%) of owner-occupied households earning less than \$35,000 fell into this category, visualized in Figure D-3. At the county level, an estimated 21.9% of owner-occupied households spent 30% or more of their household income on housing costs in 2022.

**Figure D-3: Gouldsboro Homeownership Housing Costs**



Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Maine Housing uses a “Homeownership Affordability Index” to estimate the affordability of the state’s cities and towns. This index is based on the ratio of area median home prices to area median household income. An index of 1.0 or more indicates that incomes are sufficient to purchase the median-priced home. Table D-7 shows this index in Gouldsboro since 2010; years shaded in red have an index of less than 1.0 and homeownership was considered unaffordable, while the years shaded green indicate affordability.

From 2010-2013 median income was higher than the amount required to afford a median-priced home; however, other than in 2016, homes in Gouldsboro have become increasingly unaffordable using this index. In 2023 Gouldsboro had a “Homeowner Affordability Index” of 0.46, as 83.5% of Gouldsboro households were unable to afford the median-priced home in

town. This is based on a median 2023 income of \$67,053 and a median home price of \$425,000. The “Homeowner Affordability Index” for Hancock County in 2023 was 0.51, with a countywide median income of \$68,056 and a median home price of \$405,000.

**Table D-7: Gouldsboro Homeownership Affordability**

Year	Index	Median Home Price	Median Income	Income Needed to Afford Median Home (Annual)	Home Price Affordable to Median Income	Income Needed to Afford Median Home (Hourly)	Households Unable to Afford Median Home (%)	% of Homes Sold Unaffordable at Median Income	Total Homes Sold
2023	0.46	\$425,000	\$67,053	\$147,242	\$193,542	\$70.79	83.5%	80.8%	26
2022	0.52	\$410,040	\$63,201	\$122,656	\$211,281	\$58.97	77.1%	83.3%	36
2021	0.79	\$290,250	\$56,557	\$71,836	\$228,515	\$34.54	60.2%	71.4%	42
2020	0.88	\$274,000	\$59,779	\$68,049	\$240,669	\$32.72	59.0%	59.6%	47
2019	0.93	\$225,000	\$56,021	\$60,443	\$208,538	\$29.06	55.8%	60.7%	28
2018	0.94	\$175,000	\$45,988	\$49,156	\$163,722	\$23.63	53.6%	64.0%	25
2017	0.80	\$204,950	\$43,618	\$54,722	\$163,363	\$26.31	63.1%	60.0%	20
2016	1.22	\$150,000	\$47,950	\$39,366	\$182,711	\$18.93	37.7%	27.3%	22
2015	0.81	\$230,000	\$48,085	\$59,435	\$186,078	\$28.57	61.4%	60.0%	20
2014	0.79	\$208,250	\$43,571	\$54,833	\$165,477	\$26.36	62.2%	59.1%	22
2013	1.29	\$127,500	\$44,665	\$34,491	\$165,111	\$16.58	41.4%	38.5%	13
2012	1.03	\$162,500	\$45,809	\$44,473	\$167,382	\$21.38	48.4%	42.9%	14
2011	1.79	\$93,500	\$46,694	\$26,095	\$167,308	\$12.55	23.3%	35.3%	17
2010	1.03	\$150,000	\$49,696	\$48,304	\$154,321	\$23.22	48.4%	47.4%	19

Source: *MaineHousing*

## 5.6. Other Housing Issues - Substandard Housing

Substandard housing is not a major issue in Gouldsboro. In 2022, there were zero households that lacked complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

**Table D-8: Substandard Housing in Gouldsboro, County, & State, 2022**

Substandard Housing, Occupied Units	Gouldsboro	Hancock County	Maine
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	0	200	5,553
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	0	164	3,314

Source: *2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates*

## 5.7. Local Regulations & Affordable Housing Policies

Currently there are no regulations that directly encourage or discourage the development of affordable housing; however, LD 2003 permits a density bonus for affordable housing developments in a town’s designated growth areas, which are defined as a part of this Plan. LD 2003, which has an implementation date of July 1, 2024, for communities with a town meeting form of government, was originally signed into law in 2022 with the goal of removing barriers to increase housing production opportunities throughout the state. The Town is in the process of

updating its land use ordinances for compliance with this law. LD 2003 is discussed further in Chapter L: Future Land Use.

Due to Gouldsboro's relatively high market costs for home ownership, this lack of affordable-housing policies could contribute to population loss over the medium term. First-time homebuyers and median-income earners would tend to be priced out of the market. Local affordable-housing policies could address this issue, along with measures to promote sustainable growth and incorporate affordable housing options within any new development.

Gouldsboro should review land use regulations to find ways for homebuyers to purchase vacant homes and existing land that meet regulations for future subdivisions, or provide incentives to make housing less expensive to develop. An assessment of the Town's housing needs is in progress, and the Town will continue conversations with the community to set goals that work best for the community.

### **5.8. Projecting Future Needs**

It is important to determine how many additional housing units will be necessary to accommodate projected population and demographic changes. To accomplish this, the Select Board hired Camoin Associates to conduct a housing needs assessment for the Town. This study is currently in progress. Following the results of this study, the Town will form a housing committee that will plan and coordinate the implementation of Camoin's recommendations. These recommendations will allow decisions to be reached concerning additional provisions for affordable housing and the need for a mixture of housing types.

Projections to accommodate housing needs as population and demographic changes occur can be difficult with a declining population. Gouldsboro's average household size has seen a decline since 2000, dropping from 2.31 down to an estimated 2.22 in 2022. With declining household sizes and an aging population, there may be a need for more housing that serves the senior population, which could involve building multi-family units. Traditionally, single-family homes have been the predominant housing type in Gouldsboro. The number of duplex and multi-family units has only increased by an estimated three units since 2000. There has been a more substantial estimated decrease in the number of mobile homes.

An estimated 6-10% increase in year-round affordable rental units would be a benefit to the community while not putting significant strain on the current infrastructure. Developing this type of housing could allow seniors to affordably downsize from their single-family residences, and in turn open their homes for younger families and other year-round residents.

Consideration should also be given to the vacant homes in the community and reasons as to why they are vacant. The effects of the increasing rate of converting properties to short term rentals also contribute to the lack of availability and rising cost of year-round homes and apartments. An inventory of short-term rentals should be kept and updated annually.

## **6. Regional Affordable Housing Initiatives**

Housing programs and organizations that have been successful in increasing the opportunities for affordable housing have been established in surrounding communities. The Town can use these

initiatives as a reference for future decision making, as well as partners for identifying and creating opportunities for affordable living.

- Island Workforce Housing is a non-profit in the Deer Isle/Stonington area. The mission of Island Workforce Housing is to create housing solutions in Deer Isle and Stonington that are permanently affordable to individuals and families working in these communities. Housing for these valued community members is a critical first step in securing the longevity of the economic development and civic health and well-being of the island. As its first project, Island Workforce Housing and the Island Heritage Trust acquired 27.5 acres of land on the Sunset Cross Road. The 13.4 acres upland was used to develop Oliver's Ridge, 10 units of rental housing for the year-round workforce, while the pond buffer (14.1 acres) will be conserved for public use.
- The Washington County Sustainable Housing Work Team prepared a 2014 plan, "A Regional Plan for Sustainable Housing in Washington County" with three objectives: supporting the most effective existing public/private partnerships; developing a better understanding of problems and solutions for an aging population and an aging housing stock; and sponsoring new strategies to create jobs while improving our housing stock and reducing our reliance on increasingly unaffordable ways of staying warm in the winter. This plan and its objectives can be used as guidance to form something similar for the Schoodic Region and/or Hancock County.
- In 1996, Cranberry Isles established a nonprofit Realty Trust to address their affordable housing issues. The Trust accepted federal HUD funds to help purchase three properties. The occupants of these properties must earn less than a maximum income, specified on an annual basis by the federal government.
- In Islesboro, another nonprofit organization, Islesboro Affordable Property (IAP), constructed an eight-unit project, the Ruthie James Subdivision. IAP owns the land and residents own the homes. IAP subsequently built and subsidized the sale of a single-family home. All in all, IAP has built or acquired at least 13 homes for rent. Most of its money is raised through private fundraising. Islesboro's comprehensive plan identifies five issues related to housing on the island.

Additionally, in a collaborative effort the towns of Gouldsboro, Sullivan and Winter Harbor jointly submitted an application for a Municipal Housing Grant through the Department of Economic and Community Development in March 2024. As part of this application, funds were allocated to further study the development feasibility of a parcel of land adjacent to and east of Route 186 (West Bay Road) in the southern portion of the town. Between 30-40 acres of the parcel, owned by Maine Coast Heritage Trust, has been set aside for transfer to the town for housing development consideration with the remaining acreage to be conserved. Other potential projects within this application include the promotion of ADUs and homesharing as affordable housing options, and the formation of a region-wide housing forum that would create the infrastructure for regular conversations and idea sharing about housing-related issues in the Schoodic Area. The Town is still waiting to hear the status of this application.

## 7. Goals & Objectives - Housing

<b>GOAL:</b> Recognize that Gouldsboro's viability, economy and overall well-being depend upon housing that is safe, energy efficient and affordable for multi-occupational and a multi-generational community.			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Facilitate development of affordable housing and housing shortages including ownership and ownership options which may include long and short term	Provide at least 10% of new residential development from 2024-2034 to be affordable	Select Board, Planning Board	Immediate – ongoing
	Ensure ordinances to allow the addition of at least one/two accessory apartment/building per dwelling unit, subject to site suitability	Select Board, Planning Board	1-5 years
	Support collaborative local and regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable housing needs.	Select Board	Immediate-long term
	Address reported violations of local ordinance and State laws and regulation that affect health, safety, or community conditions	Select Board, Planning Board, CEO	Ongoing
Study affordability and sustainability and provide recommendations	Form a committee to plan and coordinate implementation recommendations of the Town's contracted housing needs assessment with Camoin Associates. Include in the committee's agenda the study of current growth management and land use regulation; propose possible amendments to support increased density; and encourage development of affordable housing.	Select Board, Town manager, Planning Board, or Housing Committee	Immediate and ongoing
	Compile and distribute information on programs, grants and projects for subsidized housing, energy efficient improvements, etc.	Select Board, Planning Board, Housing Committee	within 1 year, ongoing
	Establish a special reserve account dedicated for funding potential affordable housing/workforce housing programs and/or search for grants.	Select Board, Budget Committee, Housing Committee	Within 1-2 years, ongoing

## Chapter E: Transportation

### 1. Purpose

The transportation system and mobility are some of the most important factors that influence a community's economic well-being and support (or negatively impact) the health and cohesion of its population. The transportation system, including parking, is also one of the costliest infrastructural elements a town must maintain. This section will discuss and analyze the major transportation issues facing Gouldsboro. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Discuss the extent, use, condition, and capacity of Gouldsboro's transportation systems;
- b. Assess the adequacy of these systems to handle current and projected demands; and
- c. Account for areas where sustainable transportation alternatives and long-term cost savings in infrastructure management may exist.

### 2. Key Findings & Issues

The rate of traffic has increased since the last plan was prepared, due mostly to the rise in the seasonal and tourist population. Due to the large size of the town (approximately 99.0 square miles), of which roughly 46.2 square miles is land, road maintenance costs continue to be a major concern. Identified problem areas are the intersections of Clinic Road & Route 1; of Pond Road & Route 1; and of East Schoodic Drive & Route 186, as well as areas on Corea Road and in Birch Harbor that are without shoulders. These are specifically dangerous for cyclists. Improvement of infrastructure and safety for pedestrians and cyclists is still needed; many of the areas where infrastructure is desirable are narrow and have no shoulders.

Gouldsboro does not presently face any serious traffic congestion issues; however, parking is still inadequate for larger events. The public transportation system for Gouldsboro is minimal, both during the summer season and year-round. There is no public system in place for transportation off the peninsula for shopping, medical appointments, and other recreation.

### 3. Key Findings & Issues from 2005 Plan

Gouldsboro did not face any major traffic issues in 2005, particularly related to congestion. Road mileage increased as a result of private roadways being accepted as town way roads, which increased road maintenance costs for Gouldsboro and increased the tax burden on residents.

### 4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results

Results from the 2022 public opinion survey showed general satisfaction with the Town's maintenance of snow removal and sanding. The main transportation concern of the survey was regarding the safety of bike paths around town; over 40% said that the safety of bicycling on town roads is poor. When asked about the "planning and development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to improve the safety of these users" 40.4% of respondents ranked this as very important while 20.8% ranked it important. Along similar lines of thinking, over 50% ranked

“planning and working toward creating a multi-use recreational trail system that connects with a larger network within the region” as either very important or important.

Less than half of the respondents believe that the condition of town roads is good, while 33.5% think they are in fair condition and 18.0% believe they are in poor condition.

## 5. Gouldsboro’s Roads

### 5.1. Classification of Roads

The Maine Department of Transportation (Maine DOT) has classified all public roads in the State. The classification system is based on the principle that the roads that serve primarily regional or statewide needs should be the State's responsibility and roads that serve primarily local needs should be a local responsibility. The first of two primary systems for classifying public roadway infrastructure is Federal Functional Class (FFC).

FFC describes the functionality and geographical characteristics of public streets and highways based on the character of service they are intended to provide. This classification reflects how the highway provides the ability for transportation. The information below provides characteristics of FFC classes (arterial, collector, and local roads) as well as the number of miles of each class in Blue Hill. These roads are visualized in Figure E-1.

Arterials – Roads that connect major settlements and are designed for high-speed travel with limited access points. Routes 1 and Route 95 are examples of arterial roads. Gouldsboro has one arterial road, Route 1 (7.28 miles)

Collectors – Roads that support traffic within a town or group of small towns or disconnected neighborhoods. They are designed to accommodate moderate speeds, 35 – 45 mph, and a moderate traffic volume. Routes 186 and 195 are examples of collectors. Gouldsboro has 22.33 miles of collector roads. (2005 Plan)

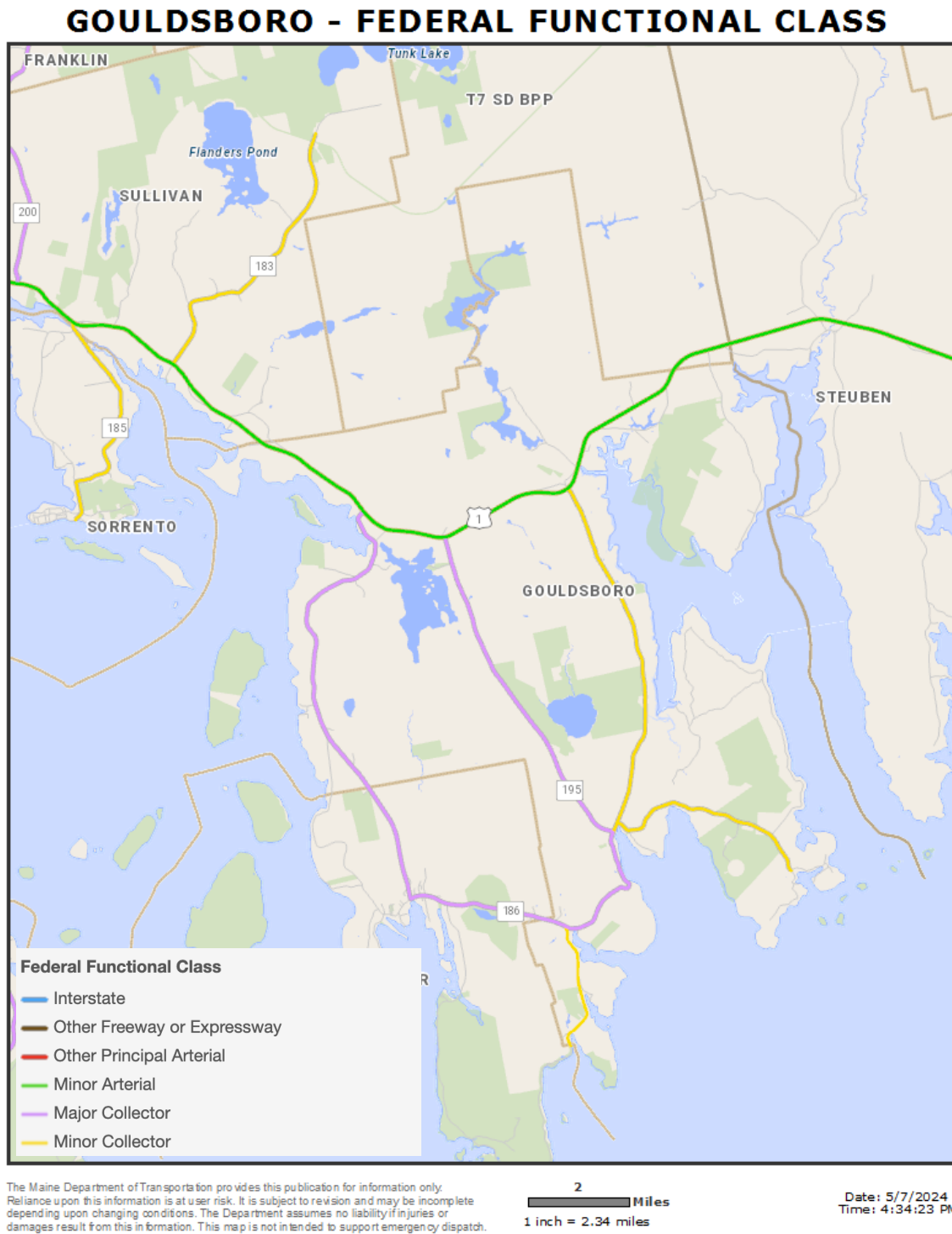
Local – Roads that are lightly traveled and comprise the network between residential areas and residential areas and downtowns. They are often narrower than the previous two road types and accommodate speeds under 35 mph. Most roads in Gouldsboro are classified as local roads. Development considerations are often influenced by road classification, especially when considering where to locate new development and what types. As Gouldsboro has mostly local roads, of which roughly 24.12 miles are maintained by the town, heavy industry and shipping would not be well suited to the travel patterns and character of the town on many of these roads. Gouldsboro has approximately 27 miles of town roads.

Private Roads – Private roads are defined as roads that serve three or more dwellings. Currently the town of Gouldsboro has approximately 55 of these private roads. Roads serving two or fewer dwellings are defined as driveways, of which Gouldsboro has approximately 62. That would



make approximately 117 roads in Gouldsboro that the town is not responsible for plowing or maintaining.

**Figure E-1: Federal Functional Classification**



The second system for classifying public roadways is the **State Highway System**.

The State Highway System describes the type of service that a public street and highway is expected to provide, as well as the responsibility for maintenance. Table E-1 displays State Highway System characteristics and roadway miles under this classification. Private roads are not classified in the FFC or State Highway System.

**Table E-1: State Highway Classification Characteristics and Roadway Miles by Class**

State Highway Classification	Description	Examples in Gouldsboro	Responsibility	Miles in Gouldsboro	% of Total Miles
State Highway	Connected routes through the State that primarily serve intra- and interstate traffic	U.S. Highway 1	Maine DOT is responsible for year-round maintenance	7.28	
State Aid Highway	Connect local roads to the State Highway System and generally serve intercounty traffic movement	State Route 186, State Route 195	State aid roads are usually maintained by Maine DOT in the summer and by municipalities in the winter.	22.33	
Town Ways	All other public roads not included in the State classification system; provide access to adjacent land		Municipalities or counties	27	
Private	Roads that serve three or more dwellings. Roads serving two or fewer dwellings are defined as driveways			N/A	
<b>Total</b>				<b>56.61</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 5.2. Road Maintenance Plan

In addition to local roads, the Town provides winter maintenance for an additional 30 miles of State Roads. These roads are Pond Road, Main Street, South Gouldsboro Road, West Bay Road, Corea Road, and East Schoodic Drive. Gouldsboro continues to struggle with maintaining roadways, specifically paving of roadways. The continually increasing high cost of paving makes it difficult to pave more than approximately a mile of roadway annually and impossible to get ahead (see Table E-2) This has been a topic of conversation at both the Town's Budget Committee meetings and Selectboard meetings. Moving forward, the town would like to add more each year to the paving account, but this will knowingly increase taxes. The chart below shows fiscal year budgeting specifically for paving.

**Table E-2: Paving Fiscal Year Budgeting**

	FY 14/15	FY 15/16	FY 16/17	FY 17/18	FY 18/19	FY 19/20	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23
Paving Reserve	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$80,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$200,000	\$330,000

MaineDOT manages several state routes in Gouldsboro, including U.S. 1, Route 186, and Route 195. In 2023, MaineDOT efforts in Gouldsboro and neighboring towns included:

- 2.60 tons of patch applied
- 51.9 Shoulder miles of mowing
- 4 emergency event responses
- 42.2 miles of striping applied
- 34.2 shoulder miles of sweeping
- 8 drainage structures cleaned
- 393.4 linear feet of brush removed
- 447 linear feet of backhoe ditching
- 261 linear feet of shoulder rebuilt
- 27 minor signs installed or maintained
- 3 drainage structures installed or replaced
- 40 linear feet of guardrail or fence maintained

### 5.3. Highway Corridor Priority

Another way that Maine DOT categorizes roads is its Highways Asset Management methodology. It represents an effort by Maine DOT to provide a fair, structured framework to prioritize programs and projects. There are two parts—the Highway Corridor Priority (HCP) and the Customer Service Level (CSL). The first part of the method, the **Highway Corridor Priority (HCP)**, categorizes Maine’s highway assets into five levels of priorities:

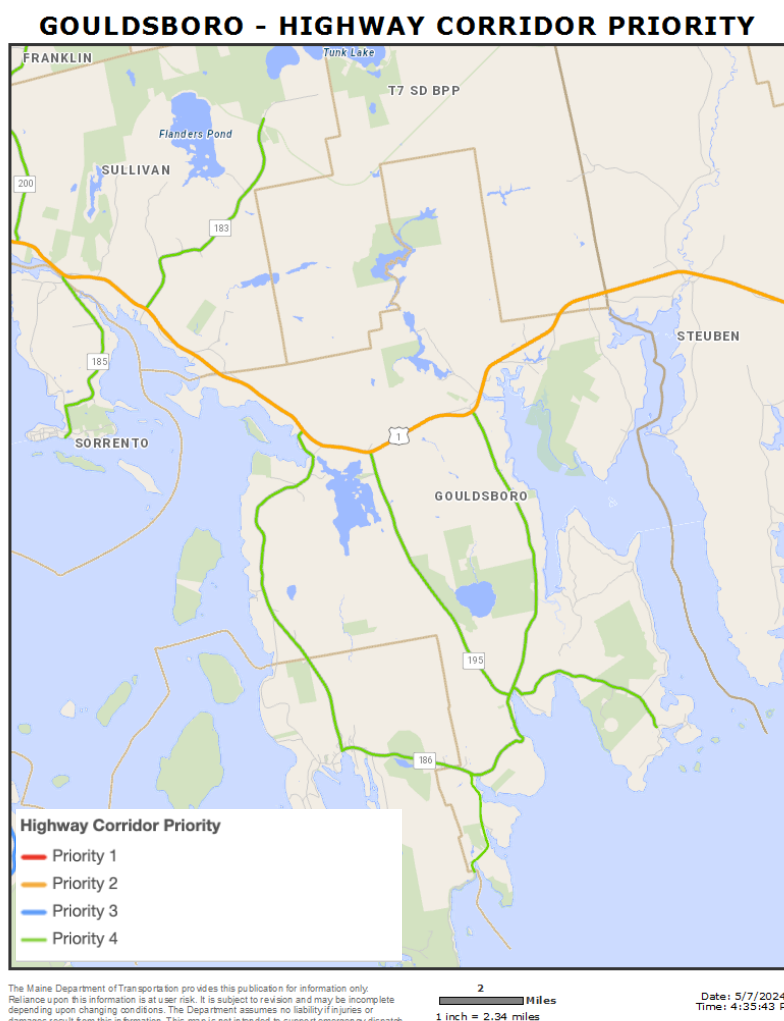
Priority 1: Key arterials not found in Gouldsboro.

Priority 2: High priority, non-NHS arterials. U.S. Highway 1 falls into this category.

Priority 3: Remaining arterials and high-volume major collector highways. There are no Priority 3 roads in Gouldsboro.

Priority 4: Remainder of the major and minor collector highways, and state aid system, in which road responsibilities are shared between the state and municipalities. State Routes 186 and 195 fall into this category.

Priority 5: Local roads that are the year-round responsibility of Gouldsboro.

**Figure E-2: Highway Corridor Priority Classification**

## 5.4. Customer Service Level

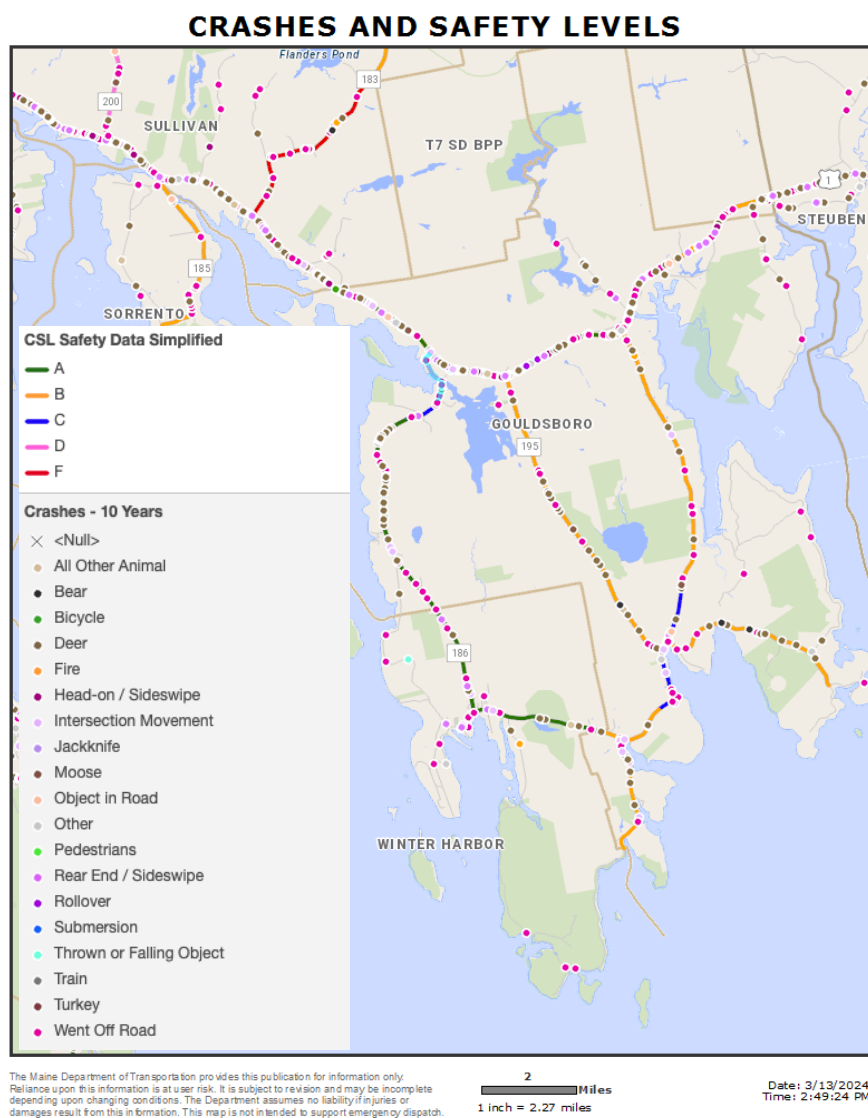
The second part of the method is determining the **Customer Service Level (CSL)** that measures Maine DOT managed highway assets (Priority 1-5) in three areas. CSL uses customer-focused engineering measures to track highways (1) Safety, (2) Condition and (3) Serviceability, and grades them similar to a report card (A – F).

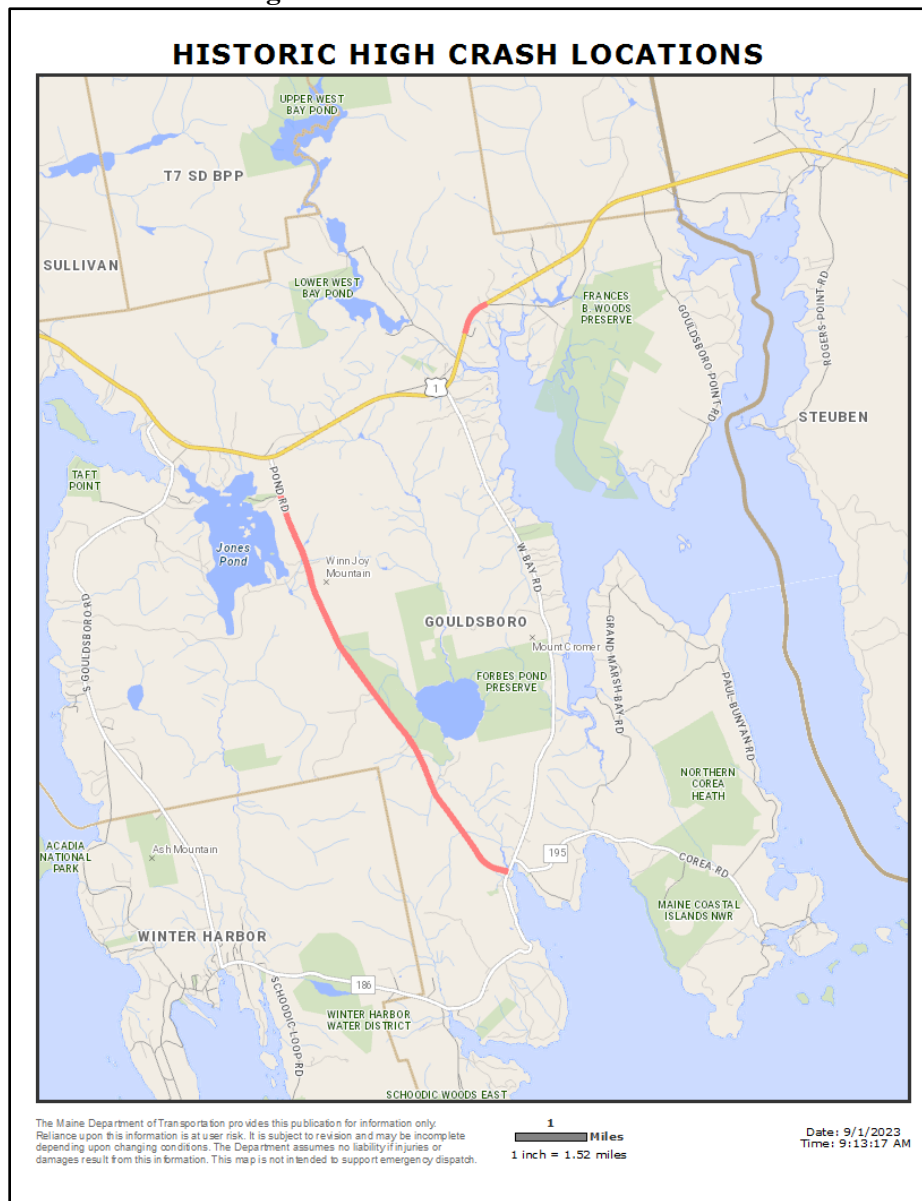
### 5.4.1. Safety

The factors that go into the Safety evaluation are crash history, paved roadway width, pavement rutting, and bridge reliability. Figure E-3 below shows crash locations in Gouldsboro for the past 10 years and roadway safety levels. Many of the crashes on Route 1 are with animals - deer primarily. Going off the road was also common. Most of Gouldsboro's State roads are graded either an A or B for safety. Portions of Route 186 on South Gouldsboro Road and West Bay Road have a safety grade of C due to crash history and pavement width.

One of the ways transportation engineers evaluate roadway safety is by looking at High Crash Locations (HCLs) and High Crash Location Segments. A High Crash Location is one that has a minimum of eight accidents over a three-year period and a higher-than-average rate of accidents when compared with similar intersections across the state. Zero HCLs were identified in Gouldsboro between 2021-2023. Historic HCLs are shown in Figure E-4. The two locations are State Route 195, beginning at node 23508 ending at node 24300, with 15 crashes; U.S. 1 between Chicken Mill Pond Road (Node 23930) and West Bay Road (Node 24031) with a total of eight crashes.

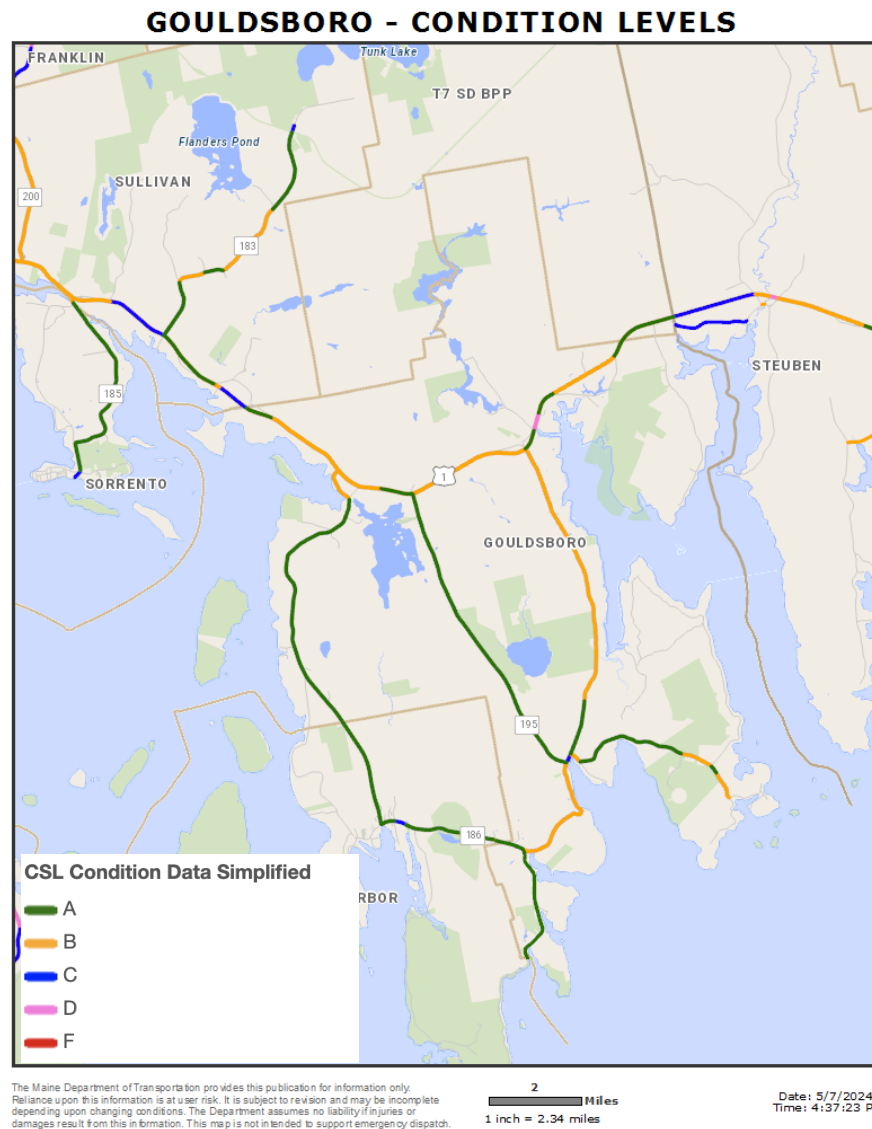
**Figure E-3: Crashes and Safety Levels**



**Figure E-4: Historic Crash Locations**

### 5.4.2. Condition

The second part of Maine Dot's Customer Service Level evaluation is Condition. This assessment is based on ride quality, pavement condition, roadway strength, and bridge conditions. As seen in Figure E-5, Gouldsboro's arterial roadway, Route 1, is classified by the Maine DOT as being in Condition A. State Route 195/Corea Rd is classified as being in Condition C due to ride quality. Several portions of Route 1 are classified as being in Condition C due to ride quality and pavement conditions. Route 1 IR 521 (Guzzle Rd) is classified as being in Condition C due to structural bridge issues. Portions of South Gouldsboro Rd are classified as being in Condition D and Condition F due to pavement conditions.

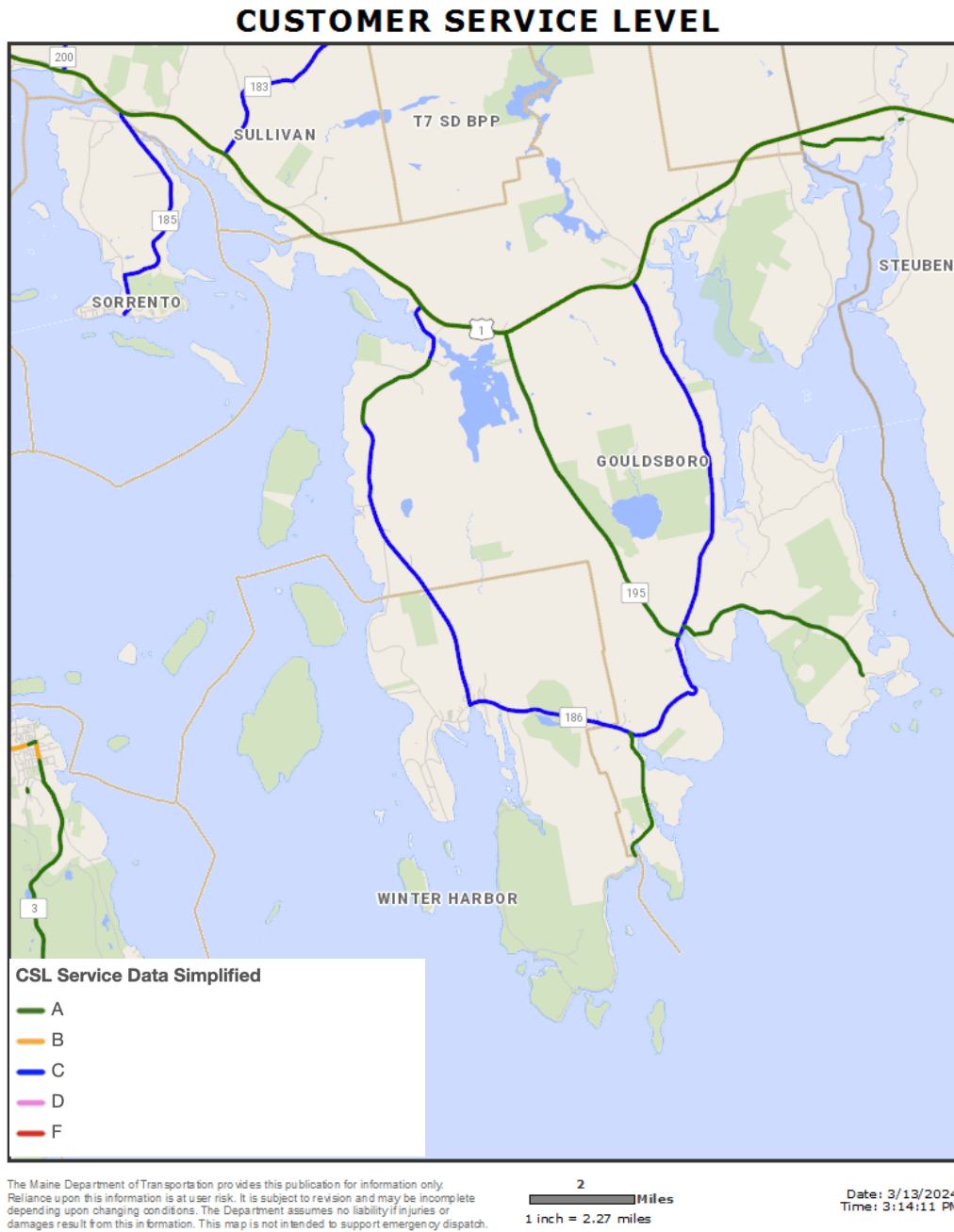
**Figure E-5: Gouldsboro Condition Levels**

### 5.4.3. Service

The Service component of the Customer Service Level evaluation includes whether a roadway segment is posted during spring thaw to protect longevity, the weight load restrictions of any bridges, and degree of congestion/delay with specific consideration for peak summer months due to the potential impact on tourism. In terms of Customer Service Levels, portions of U.S. 1 and Routes 186 (S Gouldsboro Road) and 195 received A grades. Portions of Route 186 along both South Gouldsboro Road and West Bay Road received service grades of C (fair) due to road postin.



Figure E-6: Customer Service Levels



### 5.5. Traffic Volumes

Maine Department of Transportation states that “traffic volumes are monitored on a continuous, year-round basis at permanent recorder sites located on major highways throughout the State. These hourly counts are collected to produce an average weekday figure, a weekly average day, a monthly average day, and a monthly average weekday. This information has been compiled to



develop an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) figure for each location. The AADT is computed from the average of daily totals for the entire year.”

The highest average annual daily traffic (AADT) in Gouldsboro in 2018 was 6,080 on U.S. 1/Bradley Road. Since 1979, traffic on the route has more than doubled. In more recent years, traffic has increased considerably on State Route 186/South Gouldsboro Road. Traffic volume undoubtedly varies by season.

**Table E-3: Average Annual Daily Traffic**

Location	1979	1996	2009	2012	2015	2018	% Chg 1979-2018	% Chg 2009- 2018
IR 1015 (SUMMER HBR RD) S/O SR 186	153	230	230	200	-	200	30.7%	-13.0%
IR 1030 (COREA RD) S/O SR 195	343	360	260	300	-	300	-12.5%	15.4%
IR 1423 (CLINIC RD) SW/O US 1	598	-	1,050	890	810	760	27.1%	-27.6%
IR 1471 (CHICKEN MILL PD) S/O US 1		-	-	-	-	40		
IR 1471 (CHICKEN MILL RD) E/O US 1	67	-	-	-	-	70	4.5%	
IR 2176 (CROWLEY ISLAND RD) E/O IR 1030	290	270	320	390	-	360	24.1%	12.5%
IR 3160 (PAUL BUNYAN) NE/O SR 195(COREA)	-	-	200	-	-	220		10.0%
IR 521 (GUZZLE RD) NW/O US 1	161	-	210	-	180	-		
IR 521 (GUZZLE) NW/O IR 1038 @ BR# 5226	-	-	110	-	120	-		
IR 521(GUZZLE) @BR#0171 (1.7MI FROM US1)	-	-		-	40	-		
IR 600 (E SCHOODIC DR) S/O SR 186	883	1,290	660	810	620	950	7.6%	43.9%
SR 186 (MAIN ST) S/O SR 195 (S JCT)	1,804	2,250	1,570	1,350	1,390	1,500	-16.9%	-4.5%
SR 186 (MAIN ST) W/O IR marine resou600 (E SCHOODIC)	1,156	1,990	1,120	1,260	-	1,420	22.8%	26.8%
SR 186 (S GOULDSBORO RD) SW/O US 1	-	-	820	-	740	1,310		59.8%
SR 186 (WEST BAY RD) NE/O SR 195 (N JCT)	2,791	1,020	910	720	900	790	-71.7%	-13.2%
SR 186 (WEST BAY RD) SE/O US 1 (E JCT)	807	1,080	890	720	-	890	10.3%	0.0%
SR 186 (WINTER HBR) SE/O IR 1015	1,140	1,870	1,180	1,470	-	1,610	41.2%	36.4%
SR 186 SW/O IR 1007 (YOUNGS FARM RD)	-	-	-	1,780	1,620	1,930		
SR 195 (COREA RD) E/O SR 186	1,101	1,610	-	990	920	960	-12.8%	
SR 195 (POND RD) NW/O SR 186 (MAIN ST)	628	860	1,180	870	940	1,040	65.6%	-11.9%
US 1 E/O SR 195 (POND RD)	1,800	3,210	3,320	3,360	-	3,370	87.2%	1.5%
US 1 NW/O IR 1423 (CLINIC RD)	-	-	4,550	-	4,350	-		
US 1 NW/O IR 2185 (BRADLEY FARM RD) (PW)	2,638	5,510	5,440	5,590	5,460	6,080	130.5%	11.8%

Location	1979	1996	2009	2012	2015	2018	% Chg 1979-2018	% Chg 2009- 2018
US 1 S/O IR 521 (GUZZLE RD)	-	3,600	3,600	3,560	3,490	3,920		8.9%
US 1 SE/O IR 1423 (CLINIC RD)		4,200	4,300	4,370	4,310	4,630		7.7%
US 1 SE/O SR 186 (S GOULDSBORO RD)		4,320	4,590	4,550		4,710		2.6%
US 1 SW/O IR 1471 (CHICKEN MILL) (N JCT)		3,310	3,510			3,740		6.6%

Source: Maine Department of Transportation Definition of terms: SW =Southwest, SE = Southeast, SW/O = Southwest of, Se/O = Southeast of, NW =Northwest, N/O = North of S/O = South of, W/O = West of.

## 5.6. Bridges

There are five bridges in Gouldsboro. Two of these bridges are owned and maintained by the town: Ruebens Bridge and Guzzle Bridge. The remainder are owned and maintained by MaineDOT: Soules Bridge, Jones Pond Outlet Bridge and Prospect Harbor Bridge.

The bridge inventory and classification system of public bridges has been established by MaineDOT. Table E-4 includes a list of bridges, along with the year built, assessed condition, date of inspection and annual average daily traffic count (AADT) for each bridge.

**Table E-4: Gouldsboro Bridge Classification and Inventory**

Bridge Name	Owner	Year Built	Crossing	Deck Condition	Superstructure Condition	Substructure Condition	Date of Inspection	AADT
Ruebens Bridge	Town	1980 (Reconstructed 2003)	West Bay Stream	Satisfactory	Fair	Critical	5/9/2023	50
Guzzle Bridge	Town	1949	West Bay Stream	Fair	Fair	Fair	8/24/2022	140
Soules Bridge	MDOT	1927	West Bay Stream	N/A	N/A	N/A	5/17/2021	4,093
Jones Pond Outlet Bridge	MDOT	2012	Jones Pond Outlet	N/A	N/A	N/A	5/17/2021	2,051
Prospect Harbor Bridge	MDOT	1927	Prospect Harbor	Fair	Fair	Satisfactory	5/17/2021	1,981

Source: MaineDOT

MaineDOT defines the Federal Sufficiency Rating of a bridge as “a numeric indicator of the overall value of the sufficiency of the bridge.” A rating will be from 0 (worst) to 100 (best). The FSR is computed with a federally supplied formula using an array of condition and inventory data and is used to identify bridges eligible for federal funding. This rating includes both structural deficiencies as well as functional obsolescence (width or weight capacity are below current design standards) and gives an overall value of the sufficiency of the bridge. Since

functional obsolescence may account for a large portion of the rating, low sufficiency ratings (i.e., Ruebens Bridge) do not necessarily mean that those bridges are at risk of failure.

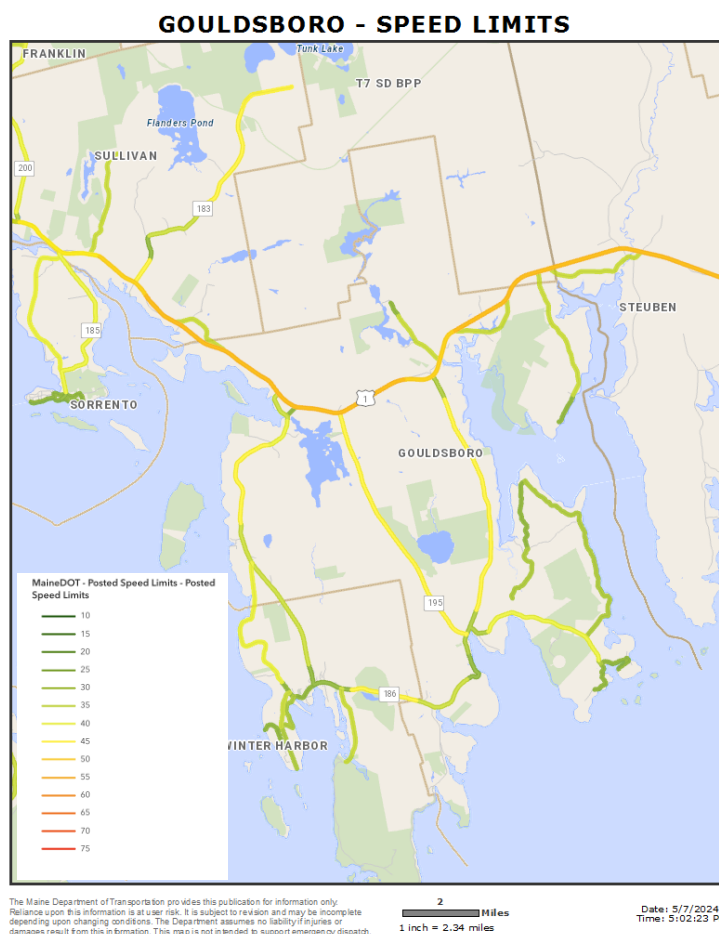
**Table E-5: Federal Sufficiency Ratings of Gouldsboro Bridges**

Bridge Name	Year Built	Federal Sufficiency Rating
Ruebens	1980 (reconstructed 2003)	4
Guzzle	1949	66.8
Soules	1927	65.1
Jones Pond Outlet	2012	97

*Source: Maine DOT*

### 5.7. Speed Limits

U.S. Highway 1 has a posted speed limit of 55mph. Pond Road (State Route 195) has a speed limit of 45mph, as does portions of State Route 186 along West Bay Road and South Gouldsboro Road. Sections of State Route 186 drop to 35mph while local and private roads are typically lower speeds. The areas of speed limit concerns are minimal throughout town with focus on the occasional excessive speeding through the villages.

**Figure E-7: Speed Limits**

## 5.8. Major Traffic Generators

While the rate of traffic in town has increased since the last plan was prepared, Gouldsboro does not presently face any serious traffic congestion issues other than occasionally during the annual town meeting; there is an overflow of traffic from the parking lot and residents park along Pond Road. (refer to table E3)

## 5.9. Parking

The Town of Gouldsboro maintains the following municipal parking areas:

- Municipal Office Building: 23 spaces
- Gouldsboro Recreation Center: 44 spaces

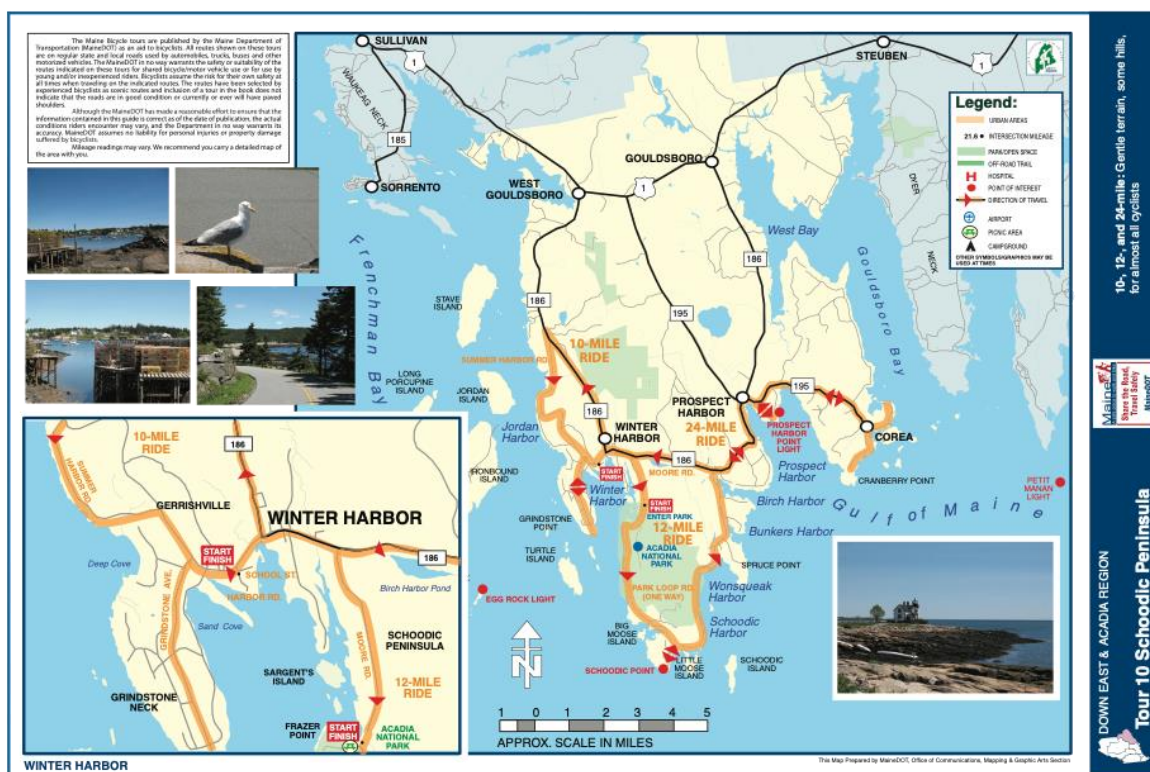
Parking at the municipal office building and the Gouldsboro Recreation Center is inadequate for hosting any large events. Parking along roads within Gouldsboro is dangerous as the road shoulders are not designed to support parking in key village areas.

The Town does benefit from the Bunkers Harbor Bike Trail Access Parking within the Schoodic section of Acadia National Park, which affords easy parking for biking and hiking access to the eastern section of the Schoodic section of the park.

### 5.10. Pedestrian & Bicycle Infrastructure

Gouldsboro has almost no dedicated pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure connecting major locations, such as the school, store and parks. Creating such connections is a challenge because many of the areas where infrastructure is desirable are narrow and have no shoulders. These conditions impact residents' ability to safely walk and cycle, particularly in the winter months and at night. There is a short stretch of sidewalk in the Village of Prospect Harbor supporting the Peninsula School, the Town Office, and the Dorcas Library. Despite the infrastructural limitations, many residents engage in walking and bicycling for recreation. In seasonal months Gouldsboro's roads are popular for bicycle tourists, particularly along the Bold Coast Scenic Bikeway and the Schoodic National Scenic Byway. Explore Maine suggests 10, 12 and 24-mile bicycle loops in the Schoodic Area; the 24-mile loop takes cyclists through the villages of Corea and Prospect Harbor.

**Figure E-8: Explore Maine Schoodic Area Bicycle Tours**



Without proper planning and adjustments to the current infrastructure, increased access by non-motorized users to the transportation system can lead to higher chances of motorist-pedestrian and motorist-cyclist crashes. The Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM) has several potential options that may be applicable in Gouldsboro. These range from temporary installations that do not impact road geometry to educational programming for the local schools and community

groups. Addressing pedestrian and cyclist safety will be an important topic for the Town to consider as more non-motorized users access the transportation system. Increasing opportunities for residents to safely access walking and biking will be an investment in the health outcomes of all residents.

As stated above, connecting any major locations in town would be difficult as roads are narrow, have no shoulders and the main roads through town are state owned. An addition of bike lanes would address the pedestrian/cyclist's safety concerns from Birch Harbor, along Main Street and onto Corea. Further promotion of the Island Explorer bus service is an additional way to alert cyclists about safely accessing paths and trails at destinations in the area that are served by this bus service.

#### **5.11. Public Transportation, Airports & Rail Service**

Gouldsboro has very limited public transportation available. Downeast Transportation operates a once daily round-trip bus service from Milbridge to the Jackson Lab location on Mount Desert Island; this includes a scheduled stop in Gouldsboro at Young's Market on U.S. 1, at both 5:55 a.m. and 4:25 p.m., Monday-Friday. Downeast Community Partners provides limited services for eligible clients referred by Maine Department of Health and Human Services on a demand response basis. Transportation is provided through a combination of accessible vehicles with drivers and volunteers that utilize their own vehicles. West's Transportation is another option for area residents; this is a fixed-route and demand response public transportation service to communities within Washington County and eastern portions of Hancock County. Other organizations such as Friends in Action offer transportation to and from medical appointments, as well as to other destinations; these services involve pre-arranging rides and in some cases are only available to qualified individuals.

Bangor offers year-round bus connections to Portland and Boston via Greyhound Bus Lines and Concord Coachlines. The Island Explorer bus service is available from mid-June to mid-October, stopping only in Birch Harbor with a restricted route to Winter Harbor and the Schoodic portion of Acadia National Park.

The closest airports are in Bangor and Trenton. Bangor International Airport has regular connecting flights to Boston and New York City, along with chartered flights to Florida. Bar Harbor – Trenton Airport in Trenton offers regular service to Boston and other regional cities on the east coast of the United States. Municipal airports for private use are located in Blue Hill and Stonington.

Since the closing of the Verso Mill in Bucksport, freight rail service has discontinued to much of Hancock County. There is no passenger rail service in Hancock County, although there is a short-distance scenic railroad ride in Ellsworth that operates from May to October. The nearest public ferry services do not include Gouldsboro. The Bar Harbor-Winter Harbor Ferry, which

also connects the Mount Desert Island and Schoodic Peninsula sections of Acadia National Park, operates seasonally out of Winter Harbor. There are no known private boat services available for Gouldsboro.

### **5.12. Local Transportation & Mobility Issues**

Parking remains an important local issue along with road maintenance and repair. As mentioned before, access to mobility service is a current and future necessity for many Gouldsboro residents. This need will only increase as Gouldsboro's population continues to advance in age. Accomplishing Gouldsboro's age-in-place goals will require alternative means of mobility for elderly and impaired residents. Alternative mobility support is also complemented by a popular understanding of, and demand for, improved pedestrian and bicycle access, connectivity and, more importantly, safety.

## **6. Analyses**

### **6.1. Community and Regional Transportation Concerns**

Although Gouldsboro is a coastal community with tidal waters, there is no public boat transportation other than the Bar Harbor/Winter Harbor Ferry, which departs from Winter Harbor at 10:00 am and runs every two hours until 6:30pm but is only available during the summer months through September. Ferry service is not needed as the Bar Harbor/Winter Harbor Ferry is only minutes away from Gouldsboro.

Hancock County and the surrounding region could also face capacity issues with electric vehicle infrastructure. As more and more motorists are switching to fully electric vehicles (EVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV), demand will increase for charging opportunities. Towns and regions that are poised to provide this service early may have a competitive advantage over others for tourism revenue and attraction of potential future residents. Along with Fiber Internet, EV infrastructure will be an important component for future development in the region.

### **6.2. Road Conflicts**

While state roads do run through the town's villages and developed areas, there are no significant conflicts. Traffic volume does increase seasonally; however, roads have accommodated this increase through these areas. Over the past 10 years zero High Crash Locations have been identified.

### **6.3. Relevance of State and Regional Transportation Plans**

The State of Maine has several transportation plans that may have relevance for Gouldsboro. The Long-Range Transportation Plan Update 2050 "will convey MaineDOT's vision for a multimodal transportation system that not only provides for safe and efficient travel throughout the state, but also supports a high quality of life and economic opportunity in all of Maine's villages and communities."

Also underway is the Maine Strategic Transit Plan 2025. MaineDOT is particularly interested in looking at new models and approaches for providing public transportation more efficiently and effectively in Maine's rural areas like Gouldsboro.

A Statewide Active Transportation Plan, created by MaineDOT, includes an assessment of Highway Corridor Priority 3 and 4 roads throughout Maine, such as Routes 186 and 195 in Gouldsboro, to highlight shoulder-enhancement opportunities in rural areas. The Town can work with MaineDOT to encourage public participation and prioritization of enhancements. Towns are also regularly included in MaineDOT's Three-Year Work Plan; however, there are no town-specific items listed in the 2024-2026 Work Plan.

#### **6.4. Parking Standards**

The Town has a Parking Ordinance, adopted in 1997 and last revised in 2019. The ordinance does not regulate where or how parking can be developed, but rather where and where it is not allowed. As part of the town's Site Plan Review Ordinance the "location and dimensions and materials to be used in the construction of proposed driveways, parking... must be provided." Parking layout and design standards are also provided in section 6.6 of this ordinance. Parking areas in the Shoreland Zone are defined in the town's Shoreland Ordinance. Overall, there is no discouragement of developing parking in village or downtown areas.

#### **6.5. Land-Side or Water-Side Transportation Facilities**

The Town does not operate any land- or water-side transportation facilities. There are several boat launch and carry-in boat access points throughout the town that recreational and other users have access to. Public access points include Gouldsboro Point, Prospect Harbor, Bunkers Harbor and South Gouldsboro. There are no access points in Corea or Birch Harbor.

#### **6.6. Local Access Management**

Regarding access for new nonresidential and three-family or more residential development, section 6.2 of the Town's Site Plan Review Ordinance states that "vehicular access to the site must be on roads which have adequate capacity to accommodate the additional traffic generated by the development." Additionally, section 6.3 of this ordinance "Access to the Site", section 6.4, "Accessway Location and Spacing" and section 6.5, "Internal Vehicular Circulation" provide additional guidelines and standards.

The town's Subdivision Ordinance provides standards for access control, including access design for subdivisions entering onto U.S. 1 and other standards including for various levels of traffic volume, layout, and construction.

#### **6.7. Local Road Design Standards**

Standards for roads and driveways in the shoreland zone are defined in Section 15, H. of the town's Shoreland Ordinance. They apply "to the construction of roads and/or driveways and drainage systems, culverts, and other related features". Design and construction standards for streets are also present in Article X, Section C, 6. of the town's Subdivision Ordinance. These



standards have been established to support the community's desired land use pattern; however, they have no specific mention of design standards for bicycle and pedestrian transportation. The Subdivision Ordinance does state that "sidewalks shall be installed at the expense of the subdivider where the subdivision abuts or fronts onto a major street and at such locations as the Board may deem necessary".

### **6.8. Subdivision Roads**

Regarding the layout of dead-end streets in the town's Subdivision Ordinance, Article X, Section 5., C, d. states that "In the case of dead-end streets, where needed or desirable, the Board may require the reservation of a twenty (20) foot wide easement in the line of the street to provide continuation of pedestrian traffic or utilities to the next street."

Minimum design and construction standards are also defined for all private streets for a subdivision. Article X, Section 6., h. states that "A dead-end street or cul-de-sac shall not exceed three thousand (3,000) feet in length and shall be provided to a suitable turn-around at the closed end. When a turning circle is used, it shall have a minimum outside curb radius of sixty-five (65) feet."

There is additional language in the ordinance about the overall layout and the design and construction of subdivision streets in addition to other standards. One of the criteria for granting application approval is that it "will not cause unreasonable highway or public road congestion or unsafe conditions with respect to the use of highways or public roads existing or proposed."

## **7. Climate Change Impacts Climate change is increasingly at the forefront of transportation planning concerns, particularly where sea level rise and extreme weather events are projected to damage and undermine many roads in coastal Maine.**

Gouldsboro's 2022 Vulnerability Assessment and Action plan identified roads that are highly vulnerable to damage by sea level rise and storm surges. Town Way roads on this list include Crowley Island Road on the causeway linking Crowley Island to the rest of Corea, Corea Road where it joins Cranberry Point Road and Francis Pound Road, and Bunker Pound Road at the top of Bunkers Harbor. Each of these areas was submerged, inundated by waves, and impassable during the January 10, 2024, storm. Developing and implementing mitigation plans for each of these areas should be an immediate priority.

State Aid Highways on this list include Main Street in Prospect Harbor on the west edge of the harbor and Corea Road where it intersects with Grand Marsh Bay Road at Sand Cove. Mitigation actions at both of these points are essential because loss of these roads would interfere with access to emergency services. In particular, loss of the highway at Sand Cove would cut the

entirety of Corea off from emergency services. Since these are State Aid Highways coordination with Maine DOT will be necessary. Communication with Maine DOT should begin immediately.

## 8. Goals & Objectives - Transportation

<b>GOAL:</b> Ensure that a safe, convenient, well-maintained, economically feasible transportation system with diverse options, is available to all residents and visitors.			
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategy(ies)</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Improve Pedestrian & Bicycle Access Throughout Gouldsboro	Work with Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM) on Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety programming at local schools & youth groups.	Select Board or their designee(s) to work with Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM) and HCPC & Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT)	Immediate and on-going
	Work with BCM & HCPC to plan and identify possible solutions and implementation strategies for this goal.		
	Source appropriate funding and grants to support non-motorized transportation in Gouldsboro.		
	Work with local land-trusts, conservation groups and property owners to identify potential locations for conservation easements, trail networks and connectives through Gouldsboro and the region.		
Increase options for public transportation, transit and mobility services to all Gouldsboro residents and work towards supporting age-in-place goals with MaaS	Work with Maine DOT and HCPC to integrate the town in the Region's expanding transit hub and associated options at Acadia Gateway	Select Board or their designee(s) to work with DCP, other providers and HCPC & MDOT	Immediate and ongoing
	Work with Downeast Community Partners (DCP), Maine DOT/Moving Maine Working Group to identify potential mobility options and providers.		
Prioritize Gouldsboro's transportation needs against current MaineDOT work-plan and continue to assess work-plan vs. Town needs.	Work with HCPC and MaineDOT to assess town road maintenance needs and priorities against upcoming planned projects by MaineDOT	Select Board or their designee(s) to work with HCPC, MDOT.	Immediate and ongoing
Address known climate vulnerabilities on Town Way roads.	Work with state agencies to secure funding for engineering designs. Seek state and federal support for construction.	Coastal Resilience Committee. Select Board	Immediate

Address known climate vulnerabilities on State Aid Highways	Work with HCPC, MDOT (and state and Hancock County Emergency Management?) to develop designs and secure construction funding	Coastal Resilience Committee, HCPC, MDOT	Immediate
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## Chapter F: Public Facilities

### 1. Purpose

A town's future growth can be constrained or catalyzed by the public facilities and services available. This chapter provides a thorough analysis and understanding of current conditions for Gouldsboro and potential future needs and issues. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Identifies and describe Gouldsboro's public facilities and services, and
- b. Assesses the adequacy of these services to handle current and projected demands.

### 2. Key Findings & Issues

The Town of Gouldsboro has struggled in recent years with the turnover of town office staff, police department, fire/EMS departments as well as CEO/Road Commissioner/town infrastructure positions. Gouldsboro continues to plan to develop efficient systems for finance, efficient systems of public facilities, and services to accommodate any anticipated economic development growth. There is enough community concern for Gouldsboro to look into ways to meet the diverse transportation needs of the community and visitors by providing a safe, efficient and adequate transportation network for all types of users. Some of Gouldsboro's buildings need to be identified for repairs and updating.

Town departments are a critical necessity and should continue to be reviewed each year along with long-term goals. This review should include estimated costs, identification of potential funding sources, and a timeline of implementation. Solid waste management and recycling, while previously addressed in the 2005 Plan, has reemerged as an issue due to recent market changes and regional issues. The Town also has a significant number of roads to maintain considering its population. None of the town-maintained roads are considered to be in excellent shape and most need some type of maintenance. Summarize fiscal capacity/CIP

### 3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan

The current constable facilities are overcrowded. Given the other demands on the municipal building the town may have to consider an expansion of this building or a separate police facility. If the latter alternative is considered, the town may want to explore a joint facility with Winter Harbor, which also is facing an overcrowded police facility. (Update - as of 2022, a separate facility was constructed using local resources that now accommodates the constable staff and equipment in fire station No. 3.)

The fire department is facing a shortage of volunteers and the loss of assistance from the Navy. Here again, greater cooperation with Winter Harbor needs to be considered. Studies are currently underway on the future of the schools in both towns. It is thus premature to determine how much sharing of facilities is practical. (Update - the fire department is still facing a shortage of volunteers. Gouldsboro and Winter Harbor have entered into a mutual cooperation model in providing emergency medical services.)

## 4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results

76.4% of respondents believe that they are getting good value for their tax dollars in Gouldsboro while 23.6% believe they are not. Town services were rated as followed:

Service	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Safety of Bicycling on Town Roads	3.4%	13.8%	32.6%	43.1%
Condition of town roads	4.6%	42.7%	33.5%	18.0%
Emergency Medical Services	33.1%	34.3%	12.1%	2.1%
Fire Protection	50.4%	35.3%	1.7%	0.4%
Library Services (not town owned)	52.5%	30.4%	9.6%	2.5%
Police Protection	46.4%	40.2%	5.4%	0.4%
Parks & Recreation	22.3%	44.1%	24.8%	2.1%
Snow Removal (contracted)	30.8%	43.2%	15.8%	1.7%
Stormwater Management	10.2%	30.1%	28.4%	11.0%
Recycling/Trash Collection (contracted)	24.3%	32.6%	30.1%	11.3%

## 5. Town Government

### 5.1. Current Conditions

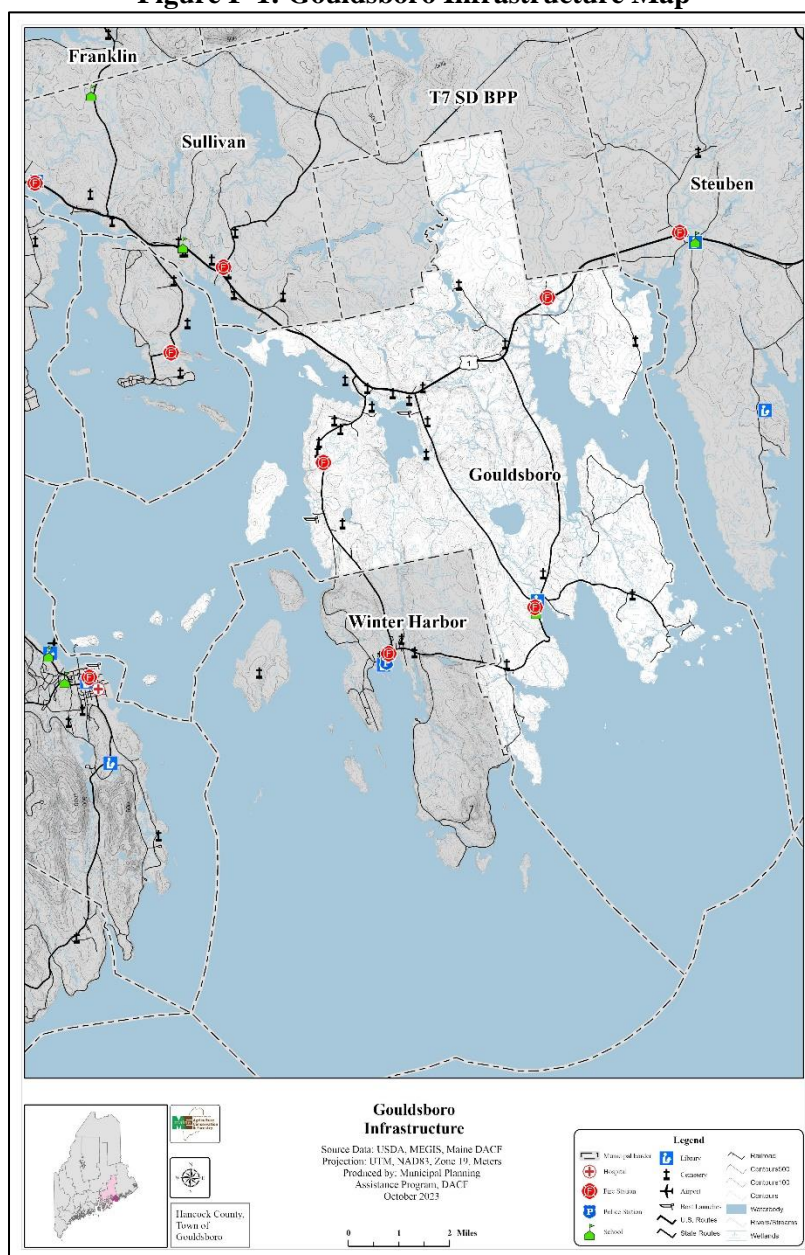
Gouldsboro has a town meeting form of government with a governing body of five elected Select Board members. Gouldsboro employs a Town Manager, a Code Enforcement Officer that also acts as the Superintendent of Infrastructure, three Deputy Town Clerks, all serving as full-time employees, a Treasurer who is part-time, as well as a part-time Assessor's Assistant. Other town employees include the police department, fire department and EMS staff.

### 5.2. Current & Future Adequacy

Gouldsboro has experienced a population decline of 12.3% since 2000. Although Maine State Economist projects additional population decline, any future housing and economic development in the town could change this trajectory. A population increase would help with the Town's tax base but could place increased strains on town staff. Any increased regulation, whether state or local, would also place a greater burden on the Code Enforcement Officer and other town officials. Regional sharing or multi-town cooperation might be both financially and logistically beneficial to Gouldsboro in the future.

The Town provides its community with a website<sup>1</sup> where services are listed as well as departments, boards, committees, meeting dates and minutes as well as other aspects of town government and community information about Gouldsboro. Other services include notary services, motor vehicle, ATV, boat and snowmobile and trailer registrations, and fishing and hunting licenses.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gouldsborotown.com/>

**Figure F-1: Gouldsboro Infrastructure Map**

Source: Municipal Planning Assistance Program

## 6. Solid Waste Disposal & Recycling

### 6.1. Current Conditions

Gouldsboro provides a weekly curbside solid waste collection service. Town residents purchase \$1.25 trash bags stickers which are affixed to each bag/can being picked up. The town waste contractor previously transported the town's waste to the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC), a waste-to-energy facility located in Orrington, Maine. See Table F-1 for yearly tonnage. The PERC facility closed in 2023 and was eventually sold at auction. Eagle Point Energy Center, who purchased the business, has announced tentative plans to restart operations

in 2025. The town also operates a transfer station that receives and temporarily stores demolition and bulky waste.

Statewide, municipal solid waste recycling reached 36.7% in 2016, far short of Maine DEP's goal of 50%. Few Maine towns in the Downeast area have had municipal recycling programs since the 2019 closure of Coastal Recycling in Hancock and the 2020 closure of the Fiberright facility in Hampden. As of 2022, the Town's household solid waste collection contractor has provided a free curbside cardboard collection service. The Town-operated transfer station recycles scrap metal, appliances, and rubber tires. Plastics represent the greatest volume of potentially recyclable materials entering the general solid waste stream. Waste disposal in landfills and incinerators could be greatly lessened if recycling services were available, and it is likely that Gouldsboro community members would respond favorably to this opportunity. Any successful recycling program would be best implemented as a regional effort.

**Table F-1: Gouldsboro's Waste Tonnage per Year**

Year	Transfer Station Tons	PERC Tons	Total
2017	415	451	866
2018	399	441	840
2019	429	442	871
2020	436	447	883
2021	384	460	844
2022	280	477	757

*Source: Gouldsboro Solid Waste Committee*

Town septic systems are all privately owned, and property owners are responsible for the pumping and disposition of septic solid wastes. The septic service companies are responsible for properly disposing of any solid waste that is removed from the septic systems. There is no public sewer system; this does not prevent the community from accommodating projected population changes.

## **6.2. Current & Future Adequacy**

It is anticipated that Gouldsboro will face increasing costs associated with solid waste management. Currently, the closest household solid waste recycling option is in Portland (Ecomaine), but transportation costs to that facility are prohibitive.

In a rural town like Gouldsboro, backyard composting is one-way where residents can divert some of their waste from the municipal waste stream. The Gouldsboro transfer station accepts yard waste that is burned off. One company, Maine Organics in Ellsworth, composts industrial level shellfish wastes or other bulk compostables. This service is provided on a contract basis and is not available to Gouldsboro residents.

Solid waste disposal costs could also be lessened by local actions and regulations. These include lessening dependence on plastics, diverting household compostables through a community



composting organization, and through regional approaches to cost sharing the transportation of recyclable materials.

## 7. Fire Protection

### 7.1. Current Conditions

The Gouldsboro Volunteer Fire Department (GVFD) serves Gouldsboro, and mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities. The average response time to a fire is 11 minutes, with the furthest reaches of town being almost 20 minutes away. The department is dispatched by the Hancock County Regional Communications Center.

*Facilities:* Presently, there are three fire stations in Gouldsboro. Station No. 2 and 3 each include a 10KW generator and Station No. 2 also houses the police department. Currently the three facilities adequately house all of Gouldsboro's current fire-fighting equipment.

**Table F-2: Gouldsboro Fire Department Facilities**

Facility	Address	Year Built	Square Feet
Station No. 1	59 Main Street, Prospect Harbor	1993	4,154
Station No. 2	4 Williams Brook Road, Gouldsboro	1991	7,200
Station No. 3	6 Walters Road, Gouldsboro	1991	2,070

**Figure F-2: Gouldsboro Town Office, Fire Station No. 1**



*Photo Credit: Deb Bisson*



**Figure F-3: Gouldsboro Fire Station No. 2 & No. 3**

*Photo Credit: Deb Bisson*

**Staffing:** Gouldsboro has an all-volunteer fire department with 14 members. Some officers receive a modest stipend from the town. In 2022 the town budget allocated \$86,426.76 for personnel costs for the Fire Department. Operating an all-volunteer company is increasingly difficult because of complex regulations that govern fire departments. Firefighting training and other matters demand considerable time that many volunteers do not have. As of 2019, there were 14 volunteers in the department; seven of these are available to respond to calls during the day and six members are qualified to perform interior attack. Sustaining enough volunteers is an issue of critical importance. The Town may need to consider a paid force that is a shared resource between multiple towns.

**Response:** The Fire Department responds to a variety of types of calls each year, including, but not limited to structure fires, chimney fires, forest fires, grass fires, vehicular accidents, ambulance calls, miscellaneous rescue calls, and fire alarms. Calls for service are shown in Table F-3. The average response time is 7-10 minutes. In addition to fighting fires and the other types of services, the department sponsors fire prevention programs at the Peninsula Elementary School. Fire permits for town residents are now issued by the Fire Chief, the Town Clerk, and online from the State.

**Table F-3: Gouldsboro Fire/EMS Department Activity, 2016-2022**

Activity	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Ambulance Transports	197	103	119	151	155	212	300
Non-ambulance Transports	58	72	64	56	61	62	65
Motor Vehicle Incidents	11	7	13	15	11	11	15
Structure Fire Incidents	2	5	4	9	6	2	4
Fire Alarm Incidents	27	19	12	33	8	34	21
Wildfire Incidents	3	1	4	3	3	5	4
Rescues	1	1	1	3	3	2	2
Other/Smoke Investigations	9	11	4	5	6	10	6
Mutual Aid incidents	8	3	14	14	16	9	12

Activity	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Service Calls	24	22	24	7	9	7	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>433</b>

*Source: Gouldsboro Volunteer Fire/EMS Department*

**Equipment:** The current inventory of vehicles is shown in Table F-4. The department's current equipment is adequate for the present time. With the limited life span of capital equipment and the significant cost to replace the equipment the town will continually face the need for significant amounts of money when equipment needs to be replaced. The cost of replacement and repair costs are also challenging for the Town's budget. Furthermore, some manufacturers no longer provide parts, and sourcing required parts for repairs can be challenging for a department with an aging fleet.

**Table F-4: Gouldsboro Fire/EMS Equipment Inventories**

Year	Vehicle Type	Condition	Years Left of Service
1988	Ford F250 Truck	Fair	2
1991	Ford Louisville Fire Truck	Fair	2
1992	Ford 800 Ferrara Pumper	Fair	1
1995	Ford E350 Rescue Type III	Fair	5
1999	International 4900	Fair	5
2004	Freightliner M2106 Fire Truck	Fair	5
2009	Navistar Fire Truck	Fair	10
2010	Chevrolet Ambulance	Fair	2
2014	Chevrolet Ambulance	Fair	2
2018	Chevrolet 1500271 4WD LT DBL	Prime	3

*Source: Gouldsboro Fire Chief, August 2023*

## **7.2. Current and Future Adequacy**

The current department services are deemed adequate. The department indicates that water supplies throughout town are generally adequate for firefighting; however, required subdivision fire ponds are becoming overgrown. Subdivisions need to be held accountable and pond access must be maintained. While no emergency vehicle access problems have been reported on town roads, the department does periodically experience poorly marked houses and overly narrow private driveways. This is a problem with both summer and year-round dwellings. There is a need for paid clerical assistance to effectively deal with increased paperwork and regulatory compliance. This clerical activity is not easily assumed by the volunteer members of the fire department. A paid, part-time position would address this need.

Another challenge is the cost of replacement equipment. Currently the department needs to add SCOTT Air-PAK self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). The cost of SCBA bottles average between \$1000-\$1500 per bottle. The currently held SCBAs and their related compressors will need updating in the next ten years. The estimated cost for that is \$156,000. The biggest anticipated cost for the town within the next five years will be the purchase of a new tanker/pumper at an estimated cost of \$225,000-\$300,000.

## 8. Law Enforcement

### 8.1. Current Conditions

The Gouldsboro Police Department started as a volunteer community watch in the 1970s. It has evolved to its current state of being a full-time service police department for the Town of Gouldsboro, comprising three patrol officers; two full-time and one part-time. Full-time officers must meet the same training requirements as all other municipal and county police departments in the State of Maine. Emergency services contract with the Hancock County Regional Communications Center for dispatch of the Gouldsboro Police and Fire Departments, EMS and Schoodic Ambulance Service. In 2019, the Gouldsboro Police Department handled over 1,000 calls for service and made over 630 traffic stops. Officers are outfitted with in-car cruiser video camera systems and body cameras. The police department is housed at Gouldsboro Fire Station No. 2. Gouldsboro's police department is served by the Hancock County Regional Communication Center, which is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for emergency dispatch services (911).

**Table F-5: Gouldsboro Police Calls for Service by year**

Year	Total Number of Calls
2018	927
2019	1055
2020	879
2021	681
2022	814

*Source: Gouldsboro Police Dept Records*

Troop J of the Maine State Police is responsible for providing professional, full-service law enforcement services to Hancock and Washington Counties through two resource-sharing agreements that promote cooperation and maximize the effectiveness of limited law enforcement resources in rural areas. Their main office is located in Ellsworth and a field office in Jonesboro. The Town also relies on mutual aid support from the Town of Winter Harbor and from the Hancock County Sheriff's Department.

### 8.2. Current & Future Adequacy

The current department services are deemed to be acceptable, though at minimal levels. Maintaining a small police force in a rural setting is challenging. Training is a constant challenge as well as identifying the most optimum schedule for officers on staff. Enforcement of moving vehicle laws, such as speed limits and hands-free regulations, continues to be an issue. Partnering with regional, state and federal law enforcement partners for educational opportunities continues to be an avenue that results in low department impact. The department is synchronized with the Hancock County Emergency Management Agency for the identification of upcoming training venues.

## **9. Emergency Medical Services**

### **9.1. Current Conditions**

The Town oversees the emergency medical service (EMS) organization serving Gouldsboro and Winter Harbor. Currently the department has 14 personnel, nine drivers, four Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), and one paramedic. The department utilizes a 6am-6pm day shift with personnel at the station from 8am-4pm, paid hourly, as well as a 4pm-6am night shift with the personnel being on call from home. The night shift is paid a flat rate based on position. Each shift comprises two people. The chief EMS works 60 hours a week full time and the department also has one EMT position that is 48 hours per week full time. The department attempts to fill all the shifts according to the availability of the team members. If necessary, the chief will cover a shift as needed. Many of the team members are employed in other professions in order to make a living wage.

As of January 2023, the department has three personnel in EMT basic school and two in EMT Advanced classes. EMS and ambulance service is provided outside of Fire Station No. 1. EMS conducts advance support service (ALS) back up for the other ambulance companies. This is starting to increase in frequency due to neighboring ambulance providers being out of service, usually because of lack of personnel. Gouldsboro EMS has gone as far as Ellsworth to cover Northern Light, Cherryfield, Jonesport, and Milbridge.

The Town also can utilize LifeFlight of Maine. LifeFlight of Maine (whose parent organizations are Central Maine Healthcare and Northern Light Health, and its aviation operator Seven Bar Aviation) provides critical care air transport throughout Maine. Most of their transport routes (85%) are from small hospitals in rural areas to large hospitals.

### **9.2. Current & Future Adequacy**

The current department services are deemed to be acceptable, though at minimal levels. Gouldsboro EMS operates two Type III ambulances, a 2010 and 2014, both with over 150,000 miles; there is expected to be less than three years remaining in their service life. Type III ambulances are cutaway vans with an integrated modular ambulance body. The replacement cost of one ambulance is estimated to be over \$300,000. As of 2023, there is currently an 18-month wait time before a new unit could be delivered.

EMS has two cardiac monitors with one being a Lifepak 12, which was loaned by Sorrento Fire Department. The Lifepak 12 is a 2006 model and should be replaced by 2024. The Gouldsboro-owned unit is a Lifepak 15. This unit needs periodic updates that cost approximately \$10,000.

## 10. Education

### 10.1. Current Conditions

Gouldsboro's school age educational requirements are met by Regional School Unit (RSU) 24, which serves nine communities along the Downeast coast of Maine. Specific communities served are Eastbrook, Franklin, Gouldsboro, Mariaville, Steuben, Sorrento, Sullivan, Waltham, and Winter Harbor. According to Maine Department of Education enrollment data, 178 students from the Town were enrolled in 2023. This is a decrease from 190 in 2020 and the ten-year high of 199 students from the Town in 2014.

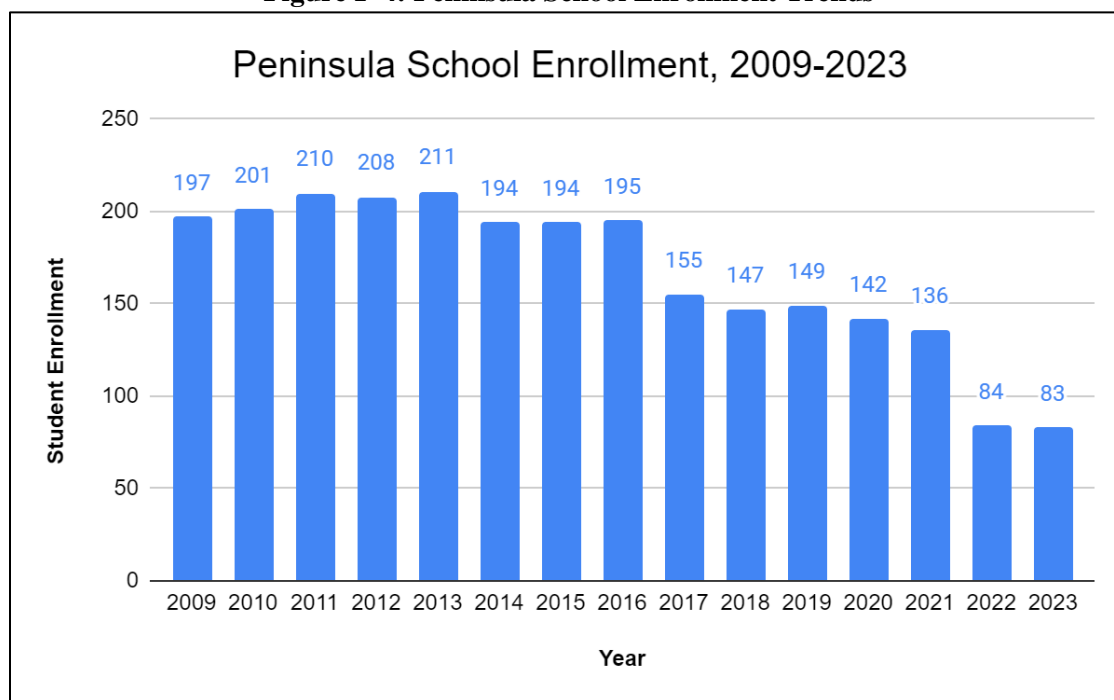
The RSU24 district contains 5 schools with a total of 789 students. There are 4 Pre-K-5<sup>th</sup> grade Elementary Schools, and 1 Middle-High School. The districts minority enrollment is 10%. Also, 33.8% of students are economically disadvantaged. Cave Hill Elementary, located in Eastbrook, has a population is 59 students. Ella Lewis Elementary, located in Steuben, which is a remote rural setting, has a population of 74. The Mountain View Elementary located in Sullivan, a distant rural setting, has a population of 147 while the Peninsula Elementary School is located in Prospect Harbor, another rural setting, has a population of 83 students. Sumner Memorial Middle School population is currently 180, while the High School enrolls 279 students.

**Table x-x: Student Enrollment from Gouldsboro**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Students from Gouldsboro	199	189	195	187	179	183	190	157	179	178

#### 10.1.1. Elementary Education

The elementary school serving Gouldsboro is the Peninsula School, located at 71 Main Street in Prospect Harbor. Peninsula School has 13 classrooms and six intervention spaces. 2023 enrollment was 83 students, grades PK-5 with a student-teacher ratio of 5 to 1. According to state test scores, 87% of students are at least proficient in math and 87% in reading. Student enrollment has fluctuated in recent years as a result of home school instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic and the opening of the Charles M. Sumner Learning Campus, which relocated grades 6-8 from Peninsula School to this new facility. The square footage of the Peninsula School is 37,791. It has a 5,632 square foot gymnasium that has an occupancy rating of 981. The gym is used for assemblies, holiday concerts, PE classes, basketball games, ceremonies and has also hosted town meetings.

**Figure F-4: Peninsula School Enrollment Trends**

*Source: RSU 24 (includes students from Winter Harbor)*

*\*Grades 6-8 transitioned to Charles M. Sumner Learning Campus in 2022*

### 10.1.2. Middle and High School

The Charles M. Sumner Learning Campus is a combined middle and high school campus, serving more than 500 students in grades 6-12. The campus, which opened in 2022, consists of a 103,000 square foot building that replaced the 1950s-era Sumner Memorial High School. The campus is in the Town of Sullivan on US Route 1. The campus features air-source heat pumps, energy recovery ventilation, and Variable Refrigerant Flow HVAC systems units, allowing the new building to perform with an anticipated Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of 32, which is significantly below the national EUI median score of 48.5. The school provides a state-of-the-art learning campus with shared 21st century learning environments, including a new Learning Commons, Maker Spaces, and Materials Labs. Collaboration spaces adjoin most classrooms, allowing for breakout, self-directed learning, and project-based programs.

### 10.1.3. Other Educational Organizations/Groups

RSU 24 Adult Education (RSU 24 AE) serves the communities of Eastbrook, Franklin, Gouldsboro, Mariaville, Sorrento, Steuben, Sullivan, Waltham, and Winter Harbor. RSU 24 AE provides a spectrum of courses for residents past the normal school age. Courses include:

- Business & Skills Training
- College Transitions
- Computers & Technology
- High School Completion

- Literacy
- Personal Enrichment

Of particular benefit to Gouldsboro residents are the Certified Nursing Assistant and Certified Residential Medication Aide certification courses.

The Gouldsboro community is also served by Healthy Acadia, a 501c3 nonprofit organization that works on a broad range of community health initiatives that help Hancock and Washington counties to thrive. Since 2001, Healthy Acadia has worked to identify priority health needs and to address root causes. They convene and facilitate numerous collaborative community efforts with shared leadership from many sectors to develop plans and take action to improve health and wellbeing, and to rapidly respond to critical and emergent health needs in local communities.

Gouldsboro, as well as the rest of the Schoodic Region, is supported by the Schoodic Institute. Schoodic Institute is Acadia National Park's primary partner in science and education. Portions of the park are included within the boundaries of the town. It supports scientific research of importance to the park, provides professional development for teachers, and trains a new generation of stewards who will help conserve our natural and cultural heritage.

Schoodic Arts for All (SAFA) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization with its headquarters located in Winter Harbor and maintains facilities in both Winter Harbor and Gouldsboro. Its initial emphasis was an arts festival to bring some traffic through Winter Harbor. More than 20 years later, SAFA has grown to offer year-round workshops and performances, After School Art Club for area schools and homeschool groups, Summer Art Camp, and hosts several art-related community groups. SAFA inhabits three historic buildings, two in Winter Harbor and one in Gouldsboro. The Gouldsboro facility is a two-story art studio that has been fully equipped with pottery wheels and kilns. In 2018, Schoodic Arts for All was named the Best Community Organization in the inaugural Maine Arts Awards.

## **10.2. Current & Future Adequacy**

The physical plants of the elementary school and of the middle/high school are in superior condition and will serve the needs of the community for decades to come. No construction or expansion is anticipated during the planning period. However, population fluctuations and regionalization of services will impact school operations significantly over the next 10 years and beyond. Student enrollment over the next decade will be dependent on these factors. In addition, many rural schools face staffing shortages and a problem retaining qualified educators and staff. This leads to increased teaching staff turnover that affects quality of instruction and impacts school culture. If fewer people choose education as a career choice, schools, including Gouldsboro, will face issues of staffing and operations. Staffing and operation issues are also affected by the higher-than-county-average housing costs in Gouldsboro and the relatively low

wages paid to public school educators in Maine.

## **11. Public Works**

### **11.1. Current Conditions**

The management of road maintenance and other public works duties are the responsibility of the Superintendent of Town Infrastructure. The Town employs one while all support to town roads is provided by contractors. The Town currently has a 6,500 square foot salt/sand storage shed, as well as two additional buildings that were previously owned and operated by Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT).

The Town does not maintain a public water or sewer system. Each individual lot owner is responsible for obtaining their own potable water source as well as providing sewage disposal systems in accordance with county and state requirements. Currently all storm waters are directed via ditching and or culverts to streams that drain directly into the ocean or other bodies of water located within the town's boundaries.

### **11.2. Current & Future Adequacy**

Road salt and sand costs often fluctuate seasonally. Additionally, the cost of repaving has increased significantly in recent years. This, combined with the fact that most of the Town's roads are in fair to poor condition, present a significant future cost to the Town, which has limited resources. In the past, road repairs consisted for the most part of hot topping over existing roads. This does not address narrowness, limited shoulders, sharp curves, exposed hazards, pavement drop-offs, steep slopes, and limited clear zones along roadsides. Some Town roads need major overhauls, and the Town does not currently have the resources to accomplish task, however, the Select Board and Budget Committee have started conversations to increase this budget each year as the costs to maintain roads keep increasing.

With no municipal water or sewage treatment system, the Town is restricted in its ability to support future residential or industrial growth. This impacts its ability to support housing or to invite in acceptable industrial developments. The development of multiple residential housing options is particularly restricted. Also, the Town needs to ensure that adequate building lot sizes are maintained in order to support individual septic or sewer systems to not have an impact on groundwater resources.

## **12. Town Office**

### **12.1. Current Conditions**

The current Town Office, within the public service building, was constructed in 1950 and consists of 2,000 square feet. Major rooms include 560 square feet of office space for the Select Board, Secretaries, and Code Enforcement Officer; a 730 square foot meeting room and voting



area; and 300 square feet of offices for the Town Clerk and Treasurer, respectively. Other rooms include the vault, bathrooms, kitchen, and general egress areas.

### **12.2. Current & Future Adequacy**

The current Town Office meets current minimum needs. The Town's meeting room is a small space that can seat approximately 30 people. The room is not conducive to supporting any type of communication technology such as video conferencing. The Town Office is further constrained by a significant lack of parking; The municipal office building has 23 spaces. While this amount can accommodate most town Selectmen and committee meetings, events that attract larger crowds result in overflow to the neighboring Methodist Church or even along Main Street, which can pose safety risks.

## **13. Library**

### **13.1. Current Conditions**

The Dorcas Library is not operated by the Town. It was started informally by the Dorcas Society of Prospect Harbor in 1932, who constructed the cottage that houses the library today. In 1932, the library started with two rooms, one where the members of the Dorcas Society did their quilting and the other where the library was located. The library was started when the members decided to donate their own books and let people in the community come borrow them. In 1956 a children's room was added and in 1978 a large, new Harbor View room was added to the back of the building. The library subsists off on donations; the Town has historically donated money to assist in library operations. The Dorcas Library Association officially incorporated and is a non-profit [501c3] organization with an all-volunteer Board of Trustees. Library board members served as officers and library directors of the organization until 2015, when the first paid library director was hired. In 2018, the library hired an additional librarian.

### **13.2. Current & Future Adequacy**

The library meets most standards and guidelines from the Maine State Library Association and no future upgrades or changes are required at this time.

## **14. Community Centers**

### **14.1. Current Conditions**

In 1983 the Town built the Gouldsboro Recreation Center, a 6,448 square foot building adjacent to the grammar school, which has since been closed. The building is an open structure that hosts many of the Town's government and recreational events. It features 44 parking spots that can handle most minor events. The Gouldsboro Recreation Center is further discussed and described in Chapter G (Recreation & Health).

The Town's Prospect Harbor's Women's Club building is located at 61 Main Street in Prospect Harbor. The building serves as a seasonal meeting place. It has a 2,400 square foot common room and has an attached kitchen. The building is not used during the winter months.

**Figure F-5: Prospect Harbor Women's Club**

*Photo Credit: Deb Bisson*

## **15. Broadband**

### **15.1. Current Conditions**

Current broadband access is dependent on location and what service providers are available to service that location. This could include cable providers, over the air providers, or even satellite internet access.

### **15.2 Current & Future Adequacy**

Broadband access is critical for economic development, education, and healthcare. The Town has partnered with the Town of Winter Harbor to address both towns' current patchwork capabilities. The Schoodic Peninsula Broadband Committee was formed in 2022 with the goal to expand or build internet access in both towns so that every household and business will have access to at least a 100 Mbps upload and download internet connection. This work will continue in 2024 and beyond with development of a high-level network design and community engagement on the project with the help of the Maine Connectivity Authority. In 2022 the Schoodic Peninsula Broadband Committee was awarded a "Get Ready Connect" grant from Maine Connectivity Authority to continue with planning for building (or expanding) a network to ensure 100 Mbps symmetrical internet connections to pretty much every customer in all of Gouldsboro and Winter Harbor. The committee's next steps are to review requests for information (RFI) results from existing providers. The committee is also entering into discussions on the development of a high-level network design for these communities.

## **16. Community Medical/Health Facilities**

### **16.1. Current Conditions**

Northern Light Health operates the Eleanor Widener Dixon Memorial Clinic, located on Clinic Road in Gouldsboro. The clinic supports family and geriatric medicine and employs four medical

professionals: two specialized in family medicine, one specialized in geriatric medicine and one in osteopathic medicine. There is also a physical therapy practice at the clinic. Northern Light Health is the most expansive, integrated health care system in Maine. It comprises ten member hospitals, including the Maine Coast Memorial Hospital, a small facility located in Ellsworth. It is the closest full-service hospital to Gouldsboro.

There are additional resources for optimized health in Gouldsboro outside of traditional medical facilities. Blessing Hands of Maine operates out of Gouldsboro and serves Hancock, Washington and Penobscot counties by providing in-home services to aging adults with disabilities. These include everyday activities of daily living, household tasks and general companionship. The Eastern Area Agency on Aging offers a variety of wellness, nutrition, and lifestyle programming for area senior citizens while Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County enhances the lives of those experiencing or associated with life-altering illness.

## 16.2. Current & Future Adequacy

Table F-6 lists hospitals and other healthcare facilities that serve Gouldsboro along with their travel distance in miles. While closer emergency medical services would always be more beneficial, the healthcare facilities within proximity of the Town and the services needed to adequately provide for residents appear adequate.

**Table F-6: Health Facilities**

Summary of Health Facilities	Location	Miles	Emergency Room/Medicine
Eleanor Widener Dixon Memorial Clinic (Northern Light Primary Care)	Gouldsboro	In town	No
Milbridge Medical Center (out of county)	Milbridge	10.4	No
Convenient MD	Ellsworth	20.6	No
Northern Light Maine Coast Hospital	Ellsworth	21.5	Yes
MDI Hospital	Bar Harbor	38.1	Yes

*Source: Northern Light Health, Google Maps*

## 17. Water

### 17.1. Current Conditions

There is no publicly owned water system in Gouldsboro that serves a residential area. Four wells are listed as public water supply wells by the Maine Drinking Water Program. These wells serve the school, two restaurants, and a campground. Currently there are no major problems in Gouldsboro with ground water supply.

### 17.2. Current & Future Adequacy

Gouldsboro residents and businesses depend on individual wells for their water supply. If a moderate rate of growth should happen, or population decline as projected proves to be correct,

current drinking water supplies should be adequate for the near future. The only potential problem would be threats to individual wells from contamination or from the potential addition of high usage industrial water users. There is no foreseeable likelihood of needing to develop a municipal water system. There would be a benefit to a well-organized regional approach to well water testing.

## **18. Sewerage and Stormwater Management**

### **18.1. Current Conditions**

Stormwater management systems? Combined sewer overflows? Existing infrastructure? Adequately maintained? Improvements needed?

Individual on-site stormwater drainage systems? Drains? Culverts?

The Town's Shoreland Ordinance states that "all new construction and development shall be designed to minimize storm water runoff from the site in excess of the natural predevelopment conditions". It continues to state that existing natural runoff control features should be maintained where possible, and that stormwater runoff control systems must be maintained as necessary. Stormwater runoff procedures and design guidelines are also addressed in the town's Site Plan and Subdivision ordinances.

### **18.2. Current & Future Adequacy**

Need

## **19. Street Tree Program**

Gouldsboro does not have a street tree program. The Shoreland Ordinance does provide regulations for hazard trees, storm-damaged trees, and dead tree removal.

## **20. Fiscal Capacity and Capital Investment Plan**

### **Summary of Forecast Capital Expenditures – need to update for 2024**

This section documents known capital expenditures planned by the municipality over the next ten years. These are defined as expenses exceeding \$10,000. and having a useful life beyond five years. They are separate from operational expenditures such as fuel, minor repairs, salary and benefits and other operating expenses.

Capital improvements are funded from several sources, such as appropriations on a town warrant, capital reserve funds, bonds, and loans. The other sources of income to fund these expenses are also grants – federal, state or private. Any combination of these may be used to cover capital investment costs. Gouldsboro has sufficient borrowing capacities if needed.

Gouldsboro continues to have an active and committed Budget Committee that is quite thorough during the budget process each year. During this process, they communicate with department heads, the Town Manager and Select Board members to communicate and anticipate any major needs as well as how best to fund major expenses.

#### Need

- Have efforts been made by the community to participate in or explore sharing capital investments with neighboring communities? If so, what efforts have been made?
- How does total municipal debt (including shares of county, school and utility) compare with the statutory and Maine Bond Bank recommended limits on such debt?

**Table F-7: Forecasted Capital Expenditures**

Capital Improvement Item	Current Balance 6/30/22	Estimated Cost	Budgeted 2023	Expense Source	Estimated Time- Line
Salt Shed	\$0	unknown	not currently budgeted for until known expense	possible bond item	within 5 Years
Fire Station Roofs	?	\$20,000	?	Reserve Account	within 5 years
Police Cruiser	\$3,416	?	yes	Reserve Account	3-5 years
Additional Town Street Lights for safety	minimal taxpayer	minimal	no	minimal amount/taxpayer	possible 1-3 years
Fire Truck/tanker	\$67,040?	\$225,000- \$300,000	no	Will seek Grants	5-10 years
Ambulance	\$8,896	?	no	Will seek grants/donations	5-10 years
Broadband	\$0	unknown	no	Grants & w/ neighboring Winter Harbor	2-5 years
Municipal Revaluation	\$0	\$5,000- \$10,000	no	Budget item/taxpayer	3-5 years

## 20.1. Valuation and Tax Assessment

The Town's ability to raise taxes depends largely on the total value of all property in the community. Tax commitment is the amount needed to fund the budget based on the tax rate chosen each year. As can be seen in the table and chart below, the town's total valuation has experienced a steady rise since 2009.

**Table F-8: State and Local Valuation, Tax Commitment, and Tax Rate, 2009-2022**

Year	State Valuation	Total Local Valuation	Tax Commitment	Tax Rate (Mil Rate)
2009	\$423,200,000	\$405,041,181	\$3,240,329	0.00800
2010	\$438,350,000	\$403,443,800	\$3,207,378	0.00795

<b>Year</b>	<b>State Valuation</b>	<b>Total Local Valuation</b>	<b>Tax Commitment</b>	<b>Tax Rate (Mil Rate)</b>
2011	\$421,850,000	\$405,613,400	\$3,224,627	0.00795
2012	\$414,050,000	\$406,753,100	\$3,233,692	0.00795
2013	\$394,900,000	\$408,780,400	\$3,249,804	0.00795
2014	\$389,150,000	\$411,871,400	\$3,418,532	0.00839
2015	\$396,600,000	\$414,685,600	\$3,504,093	0.00845
2016	\$407,550,000	\$415,436,200	\$3,630,912	0.00874
2017	\$412,300,000	\$417,357,100	\$3,714,478	0.00890
2018	\$403,550,000	\$417,750,300	\$3,843,303	0.00920
2019	\$416,700,000	\$420,481,100	\$4,267,883	0.01015
2020	\$437,350,000	\$422,289,600	\$4,412,926	0.01045
2021	\$447,600,000	\$428,160,300	\$4,388,643	0.01025
2022	\$463,400,000	\$428,363,820	\$5,247,457	0.01225

*Source: 2009-2022 Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary, Maine Revenue Services, Property Tax Division*

## 20.2. Revenues and Expenses

**Table F-9: Gouldsboro Revenues and Expenses, 2019-2023**

<b>Revenues:</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Taxes	\$5,365,450	\$5,220,999	\$4,860,246	\$4,923,881	\$5,781,044
Program Revenues	\$144,962	\$82,436	\$345,864	\$548,331	\$304,220
Investment Income	\$58,100	\$43,961	\$6,971	\$4,555	\$14,722
Intergovernmental	\$57,926	\$81,188	\$185,513	\$161,616	\$222,315
Interest on Delinquent Taxes	\$23,784	\$103,592	\$25,453	\$13,064	\$13,721
Other	-	-	-	\$15,405	\$29,783
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,822,207</b>	<b>\$5,165,911</b>	<b>\$5,437,412</b>	<b>\$5,666,852</b>	<b>\$6,365,805</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>					
General Government	\$390,568	\$423,264	\$495,905	\$496,156	\$498,407
Protection	\$82,226	\$71,440	\$440,804	\$631,150	\$756,895
Health/Sanitation	\$258,276	\$296,219	\$234,846	\$315,360	\$326,625
Public Works	-	-	\$402,620	\$503,468	\$589,953
Education	\$744,166	\$694,394	\$3,106,675	\$3,053,003	\$3,534,820
Town Buildings	\$116,788	\$141,898	\$52,340	\$78,849	\$95,555
Other Assessments	\$6,901	\$3,089	\$212,267	\$219,062	\$226,237
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,873,050</b>	<b>\$5,004,060</b>	<b>\$4,945,457</b>	<b>\$5,297,048</b>	<b>\$6,027,952</b>
<b>Changes in Net Position</b>	<b>\$(50,843)</b>	<b>\$161,851</b>	<b>\$491,955</b>	<b>\$369,805</b>	<b>\$337,853</b>

Source: Annual Audit Reports

## 21. Goals & Objectives – Public Facilities (make sure fiscal capacity included)

<b>Policies</b>		
To finance existing and future facilities and services in a cost effective manner.		
To explore grants available to assist in the funding of capital investments within the community.		
To reduce Maine's tax burden by staying within LD 1 spending limitations.		
<b>Strategies</b>		
Explore opportunities to work with neighboring communities to plan for and finance shared or adjacent capital investments to increase cost savings and efficiencies.		

**GOAL:** Advance the health, safety, and welfare of Gouldsboro by ensuring the provision of government services in a fiscally responsible manner.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
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Ensure the town can expand parking to meet the needs of the public and municipal employees and officials.	Expand the parking and access to town facilities to accommodate increased programming and functions.	Select Board	10 years
Continue to explore opportunities for--and feasibility of – inter-municipal provision of services such as fire and police protection and other services.	Communicate, coordinate, and fund cooperative opportunities with neighboring municipalities.	Select Board, their designees, HCPC	Ongoing
Mitigate the amount of waste entering the solid waste stream and reduce municipal costs for garbage disposal.	Increase inter-town cooperation to explore alternative options and methods for solid waste disposal.	Select Board, their designees, HCPC	Ongoing
Ensure that the town’s plan and equipment required for road maintenance keep pace with evolving needs for road maintenance, repairs, paving and regulations.	Research alternative materials and methods and adjust as needed. Establish partnerships with local municipalities to investigate the creation of “buying pools” to utilize the concept of buying in bulk, resulting in a lower per unit price. For example, creating joint paving projects with neighboring towns.  Monitor and maintain current equipment for longevity.	Select Board or designees	Ongoing
Ensure fire protection is available and adequate for all residents of Gouldsboro while not becoming an overly burdensome tax expense.	The fire department will work with the town to communicate all needs, facilities, equipment, or training, and ensure that these needs are included in capital improvement plans	Gouldsboro Volunteer Fire Department, Select Board	Ongoing
	Recognize that maintaining adequate fire protection will entail additional investment in plant and equipment and addressing the difficulty of basing fire protection solely on volunteers.	Gouldsboro Volunteer Fire Department, Select Board	Ongoing
Ensure efficient ways to communicate with the Gouldsboro Community including ensuring the	Study options for upgrading the website for ease of use and maintenance as well as broader capabilities	Select Board/ Town Manager/staff	Immediate & Ongoing



Town website continues to be an important resource	Utilize the Town Facebook page for meeting info/community news etc.	Town Manager	Immediate & Ongoing
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## **Chapter G: Recreation and Health**

### **1. Purpose**

A community's quality of life is an important factor for most people deciding on a place to live and is often related to the growth and development of a town or area. This section contains an inventory of current recreation and health facilities and an analysis of how these may be affected by future change and growth. Specifically, this chapter;

- a. Describes current health and recreational resources in Gouldsboro;
- b. Assesses the current and future long-term adequacy of these resources; and
- c. Predicts whether the availability of open spaces for public access and recreation will be threatened by future growth and development.

### **2. Key Findings & Issues**

As the Town's population continues to age, consideration is needed to consider other recreational facilities for the aging population. Some minor repairs are needed on the community recreation center, as well as ongoing repairs for the Prospect Harbor Women's Club, which serves as a larger community meeting place and occasional events. Improvements are also needed to the playground at Jones Pond Park. Gouldsboro's Town Park, created in 2017, has been a great addition to Gouldsboro's community and the hope is for it to become more widely utilized by residents.

Gouldsboro must continue to find ways to allow access to both saltwater and freshwater bodies for residents. Access to private parcels for recreational use is a building concern as more landowners are posting "no trespassing" signs. Access to water for pleasure craft and the availability of limited moorings in harbors seems to be a growing concern for residents. The Town is in need of safer pedestrian and bicycle access on local roads, and an active transportation network that is interconnected. There is also need for improved recreational programming for senior citizens and improved access for all abilities in natural areas

### **3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan**

Gouldsboro does not appear to face any serious deficiencies in its recreational facilities. Improvements are needed to the playground area at Jones Pond. The Town's population continues to age, and it is likely that trend will continue. The Town may want to facilitate conversations with the public regarding recreational facilities for the aging population.

### **4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results**

Survey results establish that walking is a notable activity for Gouldsboro residents as 92.7% of respondents said that they walk as a recreational activity. 72.8% participate in kayaking or canoeing, which is why access to water bodies is important for town residents. 62.5% of

respondents engage in picnicking or cooking outdoors, and nearly half (47.0%) participate in bicycling as a recreational activity.

86.7% of those that completed the survey believe that community centers are either important or very important and over 60% feel the same way about sports facilities and gyms. Over 70% support the Town facilitating more public access to salt water and the shoreline, and 62.6% support the Town creating more public boat ramps and launches.

Overall, respondents support investment in active transportation infrastructure. When asked about the Town “planning and working towards creating a multi-use recreational trail system that connects with a larger network within the region”, a combined 53.1% ranked this as important or very important. When asked about “planning and development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to improve safety of users,” over 60% ranked this as either important or very important.

## 5. Current Recreation Resources

The Town owns several recreational facilities. Jones Pond, which offers public access to boating, swimming, a small beach, and a picnic area; and the Community Recreation Center, which is utilized for many events organized by a small committee, as well as rented out for various needs.

Gouldsboro’s Town Park has been steadily gaining interest for various uses by residents. There is a small private campground on U.S. Route 1 and an upscale RV Park off West Bay Road. The privately owned beach at Sand Cove in Corea is utilized by locals and tourists. Other recreational resources are the nearby Schoodic portion of Acadia National Park, Blackwoods Campground, Donnell Pond and Maine Public Reserve Lands, and the Down East Sunrise Trail. While Gouldsboro residents have traditionally had informal access to many private properties for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities, there has been some posting of land in recent years. This appears to be due in part to damage to property from ATV’s and to a lesser extent, snowmobiles.

Schoodic Arts for All offers many programs throughout the year including the Last Friday Code House and various concert series, arts and crafts, workshops and more. The Dorcas Library has been a source for gatherings, research materials and books. The library has acquired the building directly across the street that will host different activities and groups in the future.

**Table G-1: Recreation Resources & Facilities for use**

Facility	Owner	Facilities/Activities
Peninsula School	RSU 24	Playground, ball fields
Jones Pond	Town	Swimming, boating, picnic area, beach
Gouldsboro Recreation Center	Town	Baseball field, indoor facilities
Gouldsboro Town Park	Town	Gazebo, open space
Prospect Harbor Women’s Club	Town	Indoor building use
Taft Point Reserve	Frenchman Bay Conservancy	Hiking, hunting, ocean access,

Day Ridges Preserve	Frenchman Bay Conservancy	Hiking, paddling, water access
Francis B. Wood Preserve	Frenchman Bay Conservancy	Birding, hiking
Corea Heath Preserve	Frenchman Bay Conservancy	Birding, hiking
Forbes Pond Preserve	Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Birding, hiking, fishing, paddling
Stave Island	Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Camping, hiking
Corea Bog Walk	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Walking/hiking
Salt Marsh Trail	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Walking/hiking

*Source: Town of Gouldsboro, Frenchman Bay Conservancy, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*

## 6. Adequacy of Gouldsboro's Recreational & Health Resources

The adequacy of recreational resources is evaluated by means of State criteria that establish what resources a Town of Gouldsboro's size should have, supplemented by the subjective opinions of the residents themselves. The State standards are detailed in Table G-2. As all towns are different State standards are best considered as guidelines, and the local populace is the final judge of Gouldsboro's recreational and health resource adequacy. Gouldsboro benefits from regional cooperation in health and recreation. While the Town does not have many local athletic facilities, the Ellsworth YMCA offers some recreational uses to residents. The Town's Recreation/Community Center does have an indoor basketball court.

**Table G-2: State of Maine Guidelines for Parks and Recreation Services**

	Population Criteria	Present in Gouldsboro
<b>I Administration</b>	1,500-2,000	
1. Parks & Recreation Committee	Y	Y
<b>II Leadership</b>		
1. Summer Swimming Instructor	Y	N
2. Summer Recreation Director	Y	N
<b>III Public Programs</b>		
1. Swim Instruction	Y	N
2. Supervised Playground	Y	N
3. Senior Citizens Club	Y	N
4. Skiing Instruction	Y	N
5. Ice Skating	Y	N
6. Community-wide Events-though the Community Rec Center	Y	Y
7. Arts & Crafts Programing-collaborate with Schoodic Arts for all	Y	Y
8. Evening Adult Education	Y	N
<b>IV Public Facilities (Including School)</b>		
<b>A) Outdoor Facilities</b>		
1. Community Recreation Area: 12 – 25 acres	Y	Y
2. Softball/Little League Diamond	Y	Y
3. Basketball Court - Indoor	Y	Y
4. Tennis Court	Y	N
5. Multi-purpose field	Y	Y
6. Ice Skating	Y	N
7. Playgrounds	Y	Y
8. Horseshoe	Y	N
9. Shuffleboard	Y	N

10. Picnic Areas w/Tables etc.	Y	Y
B) Indoor Facilities		
1. School Facilities Available to Public	Y	Y
2. Gym or Large Multipurpose Room	Y	Y
3. Auditorium	Y	Y
4. Public Library	Y	Y
V. Finance		
A) Minimum \$6.00 per capita for part-time programming	Y	N

*Source: Recreation & Open Space Planning Workbook*

## 7. Open Space

### 7.1. Inventory of Open Spaces

Table G-3 shows where the recreational open spaces are in Gouldsboro. It is important to note that this chart shows only the publicly accessible open space. It does not include private property that is enrolled in the open space tax incentive program or under conservation easement. A tally and map of the acreage under those programs is found in Chapter J-Natural Resources.

**Table G-3: Public Access - Open Spaces and Access to Water Bodies**

Public Access Area	Facility	Owner	Location
Recreation Area/Boat Ramp	Jones Pond	Town	Recreation Road
Coastal Plateau Bog Ecosystem	Grand Marsh	-	Prospect Harbor/Corea
Coastal Plateau Bog Ecosystem	Corea Heath	Frenchman's Bay Conservancy	Prospect Harbor/Corea
Carry-in Boat Access	West Bay Pond	Town	Guzzle Road
Carry-in Boat Access	Forbes Pond	MCHT	Two points along Pond
Boat Ramp	Prospect Harbor Wharf	Town	Main Street
Boat Ramp	South Gouldsboro/Bunkers Cove	Town	Shore Road
Boat Ramp	Gouldsboro Point	Town	Gouldsboro Point Rd

### 7.2. Inventory of Water Bodies and Adequacy of Access

Presently boat ramps and carry-in boat access locations allow public access to Jones Pond, Forbes Pond, West Bay Pond, Prospect Harbor Wharf, Bunkers Cove, and Gouldsboro Point. Other water bodies do not have public access, that is as convenient. Bodies of water within and surrounding Gouldsboro include the following:

- Forbes Pond
- Jones Pond
- Lily Pond
- Little Pond
- Lower West Bay Pond
- West Bay Pond
- Flanders Bay
- Frenchman Bay
- Gouldsboro Bay

- Corea Harbor

### **7.3. Mechanism to Acquire Important Open Spaces and Access Sites**

Several of the town's open space and public access sites are owned or managed by the conservation organizations Maine Coast Heritage Trust and Frenchman Bay Conservancy. Others are owned by the Town. The Town will continue to partner with these organizations in conserving and acquiring open space in Gouldsboro.

### **7.4. Trail Systems**

Gouldsboro residents have access to many hiking trails through conservancies and land trusts. One of the largest is Forbes Pond, which is an undeveloped, 927-acre property acquired by Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT). There is also the Frances Wood Preserve, which has a 1.8-mile trail network and includes an observation deck. The 68-acre Taft Point Preserve and Salt Marsh Trail is another option for hikers, which is preserved by Frenchman Bay Conservancy and has a 1.5-mile trail. Corea Heath is another great option to explore and is a National Wildlife Refuge. The Day Ridges Preserve loops through cedar swamp and by a beaver pond as well as a gravel road to check out Lower West Bay Pond.

Gouldsboro residents also have access to nearby Acadia National Park's many trails and bike paths. These include Schoodic Head and Buck Cove Mountain Trail, School Head Trail, Lower Harbor Trail, Frazer Creek Bike Path Loop, Schoodic Woods to Blueberry Hill, Acadia East Trail, and Wonsqueak Bike Path. Many of these locations offer biking, paddling, climbing, skiing and more in addition to hiking with hand curated trail maps and detailed driving directions for visitors to get to the locations. Many of Gouldsboro's trails and conserved lands offer trails on the shore for exceptional views and hiking experiences.

Existing trails are well maintained by owners of the property and remain conflict free of use. There is a need for improved accessibility to all natural areas.

### **7.5. Potential Threats & Impacts to Open Spaces**

Changes in land ownership, whether for private use or development, could impact this important aspect of Maine life. Some residents may be fearful of allowing traditional public access to their land out of liability concerns, which can result in posting "no trespassing" signs. Unlike most other states, Maine operates under an implied permission structure, meaning that if land is not posted it is legal to use the land. The Landowner Liability Law protects the landowner for injury that occurs on their property unless the landowner is charging a fee for that use. Newer landowners may be uneducated about the law and do not realize that they would not be liable.

Since the 2005 Plan was written, there has been an abundance of private land that has been acquired by local land trusts and conservation organizations for public use. While this may provide future protection for public access with regards to cross-country skiing, biking, hiking trails and other activities, hunting is still only permitted on private lands or where designated

acceptable by the State.

## 8. Local & Regional Issues and Future Needs

Locally, the Town needs safer pedestrian and bicycle access on local roads, and an active transportation network that is interconnected. There is a need for improved recreational programming for senior citizens and improved access for all abilities in natural areas; between 2000 and 2020 the 65-84 and 85+ age cohorts were the only groups to see an increase in population. Additionally, basketball facilities need upgrades, and some minor repairs are needed on the community recreation center, as well as needed ongoing repairs for the Prospect Harbor Women's Club, which serves as a larger community meeting place and occasional events. The Town also needs a better system for disseminating information regarding programs, facilities, locations, and schedules.

Increased usage of regional recreational facilities can potentially result in increased traffic and maintenance costs. Waste being left in public and natural areas is another issue that presents additional costs to the municipalities that host such facilities, as well as to the private organizations that own them. Improved informational signage with contact information, along with providing additional waste receptacles could help reduce the amount of waste left behind.

## 9. Goals & Objectives – Recreation & Health

<b>Goal:</b> To provide a range of health and recreation activities to persons of all ages and abilities within the financial means of the town, and partner where appropriate with other organizations to meet current and future needs.			
Objective	Strategies	Responsible Parties	Timeline
Improve access for all ages and abilities to various recreational facilities and resources.	Work with local land trusts, conservation groups, and affiliated organizations to identify and seek funding to support Americans with Disabilities Act standards.	Select Board, designees, Recreation Committee, Historical Society	Immediate and ongoing
	Locate historic roads and trails no longer in use for improvement and public access.	Land Trusts/Historic Society/volunteers	Within 3 years / ongoing
Monitor, change, update, or improve recreational facilities and services based on changing needs of Gouldsboro.	Create a 5–10-year plan which incorporates maintenance of buildings & properties with anticipated community needs or expansions within the budget process. Update the plan annually.	Select Board, CEO	Immediate/within 1 year
	Work with Maine Coast Heritage Trust and landowners to consider possible re-establishment of Kayaking/Canoe access within town.	Select Board/Town Manager/appoint volunteer group	Within 5 years
	Work with local land trusts and		

	conservation organizations to develop a town-wide map of all walking and biking trails.		
Encourage and expand community gardening opportunities in Gouldsboro to address food insecurity and promote socialization and exercise.	Establish a community volunteer committee	Select Board or volunteer designees	Within 2 years
Improve access to healthcare facilities and appointments through senior mobility and rideshare programs.	See Chapter D, Transportation.		



## **Chapter H: Marine Resources**

### **1. Purpose**

It is important that a Comprehensive Plan provides a thorough analysis of the town's strong dependence on fisheries-related employment and must address critical marine resource issues. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Describes Gouldsboro's current coastal marine resource areas, facilities, and water-dependent uses and changes since the last comprehensive plan update;
- b. Assesses the adequacy of existing facilities and public access points to handle current and projected use demands; and
- c. Assesses the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve coastal marine resource areas and water-dependent uses.
- d. Anticipates and prepares for climate change impacts on marine infrastructure.

### **2. Key Findings and Issues**

Marine resources contribute in meaningful ways to Gouldsboro's economic and recreational activities. The local fishing community, which has flourished in the past, is now facing serious challenges that include climate change, international tariffs, the potential threat of diseases spreading and threatening local waters, and adverse impacts due to reduced access to ocean-based livelihoods. With increased storm frequency and intensity, there will likely be increased risk from pollution runoff to intertidal harvesting and economic activity, making water quality monitoring, and stormwater management increasingly important.

Gouldsboro took a strong stand in recent years to protect against unwanted large-scale aquaculture farming and paved the way for other towns to do likewise. Other concerns that warrant consideration and review include working waterfront access, parking and harbor plan review. Gouldsboro residents still want to maintain, and where needed, restore the quality of marine resources and continue to promote the preservation of the historical fishing community while maintaining the rural character and finding alternative solutions to improving public access.

### **3. Key Findings and Issues from 2005 Plan**

The Plan stated that Gouldsboro had an abundance of marine resources, but that data suggests a decrease in marine resource-based employment. Another issue was limited public access to the shore, inadequate parking, docking facilities, and other limitations to public access. There was also a demand for additional moorings. The plan stressed the importance of a Comprehensive Harbor Management Plan to anticipate future growth and ensure adequate infrastructure for a working waterfront.

The 2005 plan indicated the community's wishes to protect and enhance its marine resources in a way that ensures usage by all residents and taxpayers while avoiding any harm to long-term viability. Improving marine access for the public and commercial fishing interests, recommendation of dredging harbors with minimal impact on sensitive marine resources, and constructing a breakwater were all important issues. Marine water quality, ways to minimize any threats, water dependent uses, shellfish restoration, and preserving the fishing community were discussed and implementation strategies were suggested.

#### 4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results

Increasing parking at saltwater access locations ranked as important for residents, with 62.3% of respondents in favor, and 65.7% support expanded access to freshwater resources. Gouldsboro residents are concerned about protecting all water resources, whether fresh or saltwater, ponds, streams, rivers and shoreline. Residents overwhelmingly do not approve of any large-scale aquaculture leases or operations within the town.

Other Results:

Question	Yes	No
Do you support large-scale aquaculture leases and operations within Gouldsboro?	8.2%	91.8%
Support the Town dredging harbors to allow for more moorings and safe passage of larger vessels?	29.8%	70.2%
Support the Town facilitating more public access to saltwater and the shoreline?	62.3%	37.7%
Support creating more public boat ramps and launches?	62.6%	37.4%
Should the Town encourage more commercial fishing?	42.4 %	57.6%

### 5. Marine Resource Inventory

#### 5.1. Shellfish

The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) conducts regular and ongoing monitoring of water quality to determine where fishery and harvest closings are necessary. Several Gouldsboro areas are currently closed to shellfish harvesting due to bacterial contamination from a point source of pollution<sup>2</sup>. This is to be expected, as there are ten identified overboard discharge sites in Gouldsboro. Six are in Birch Harbor and four in Corea. An overboard discharge (OBD) is a discharge of treated wastewater generated at residential or commercial locations directly into Maine's rivers, streams and the ocean, rather than being conveyed to sewage treatment facilities. Most OBDs in Maine are associated with residential dwellings and small commercial operations along the coast. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has regulated OBD permits since the 1970s for properties that do not have access to sewer lines or land suitable for septic system installation. The number of OBD permits decreased by 50% from 1987 to 2010. OBDs can negatively impact water quality, which can have consequences for wildlife and for fisheries

<sup>2</sup> See Shellfish Harvesting Area Classification – Notification of Changes August 25, 2023, Growing Area EJ, Schoodic Point to Dyer Point <https://www.maine.gov/dmr/sites/maine.gov/dmr/files/closures/EJ.pdf>

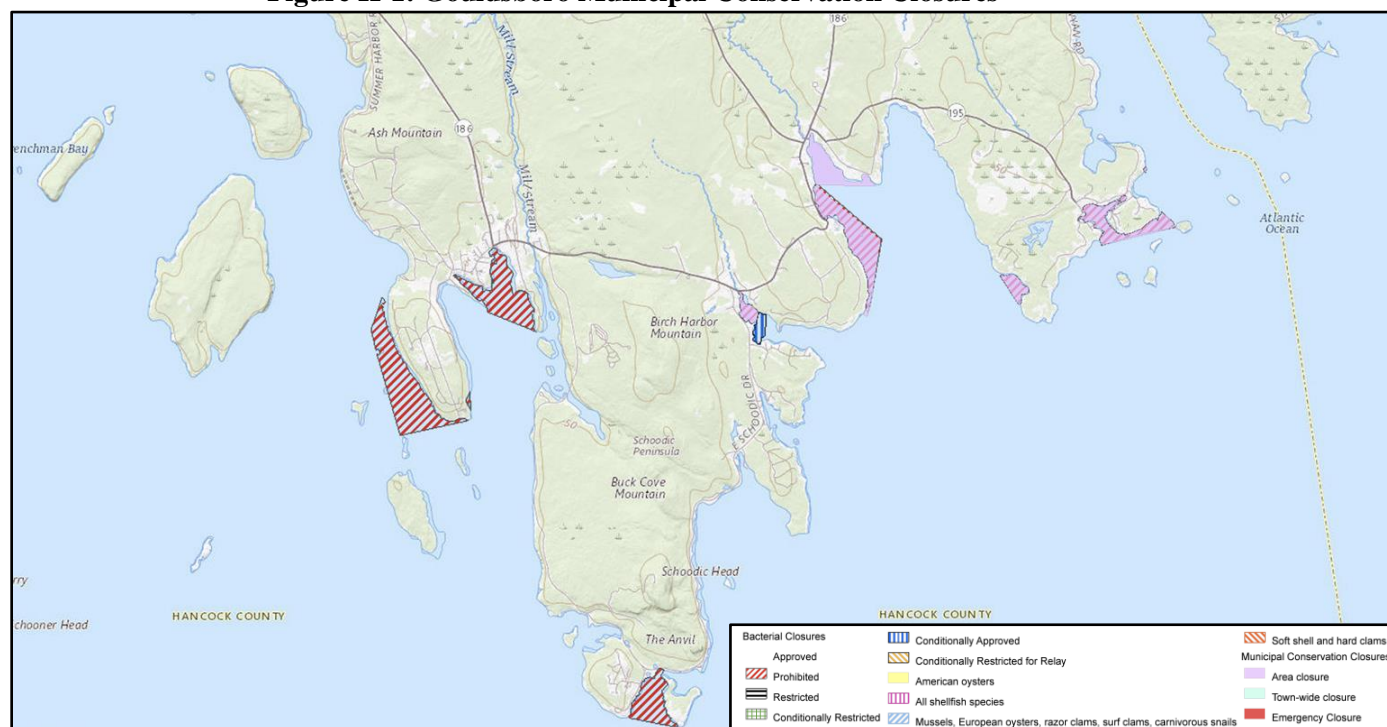
(This and more information can be found at <https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/wd/OBD/index.html> and at [https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/wd/OBD/ip\\_obd.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/wd/OBD/ip_obd.pdf)).

Therefore, the Department of Marine Resources closes shellfish growing areas in a buffer area around an OBD as a precaution. Other areas are closed periodically for reseeding. The closed areas thus change periodically and may have changed by the time this document is printed.

**Table H-1: Prohibited Shellfish Harvesting Areas**

<b>Growing Area</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
P2. Sand Cove (Gouldsboro) west of a line beginning at the eastern tip of Sampson Point running southwest to the opposite shore forming the south side of an unnamed cove.	0.49
P3. Corea Harbor (Gouldsboro): South and west of a line beginning at the east tip of Youngs Point then running southeast to the west tip of Sheep Island; and north of a line beginning at the west tip of Sheep Island, running southwest to the southern tip of an unnamed point of land forming the western mouth of Corea Harbor.	66.1
P4. Prospect Harbor (Gouldsboro): west of a line beginning at the most southeastern tip of Pettees Point, running north to the USCG navigational aid "Gong 3" (east of Clarks Ledge), then running northwest to an unnamed point on the west shore of Inner Harbor approximately 767 yards south of the mouth of Forbes Stream.	116.37
P5. Shark Cove (Gouldsboro): northeast of a line beginning at a red-painted post at the northwest mouth of Shark Cove, running southeast to a red-painted post on the southeast mouth of Shark Cove.	21.03
P6. Birch Harbor (Gouldsboro): northwest of a line beginning at the eastern tip of an unnamed point on the southwest shore of Birch Harbor located approximately 600 yards south-southeast of the Rt. 186 bridge running northeast to another unnamed point on the north shore approximately 467 yards southeast of the Rt. 186 bridge.	16.05

*Source: Maine Department of Marine Resources*

**Figure H-1: Gouldsboro Municipal Conservation Closures**

Source: Maine Department of Marine Resources, 2024

Figure H-1 shows intertidal locations in Gouldsboro impacted by water quality closures. The total intertidal acreage closed, because of pollution, is approximately 220. These numbers may have changed since last reviewed in March 2024. The total intertidal area in the Town of Gouldsboro is approximately 3,458 acres and the total intertidal clam habitat is 1,964 acres.

According to DMR data, there were 58 marine resource harvester licenses issued in Gouldsboro during 2022. Table H-2 summarizes the licenses held in Gouldsboro by type while Figure H-2 illustrates harvester vessels by length. Vessel lengths were not reported for 26 vessels. While Gouldsboro residents may hold licenses and harvest elsewhere, the only species that have been hauled into Gouldsboro ports in recent years are American lobster, Jonah crab, soft-shell clam, elvers, and sea scallops. By far the most lucrative fishery in Gouldsboro is the lobster catch. According to preliminary DMR data, the total weight of lobster brought to port in Gouldsboro and South Gouldsboro in 2019 and 2020 was 761,838 pounds, with a value of \$3,208,397.90. In 2009-2010, the lobster catch in these two ports was 739,795 pounds, worth \$2,065,817. Although fisheries tend to ebb and flow in abundance and market share, these data suggest that the lobster fishery remains robust and important and is becoming more lucrative.

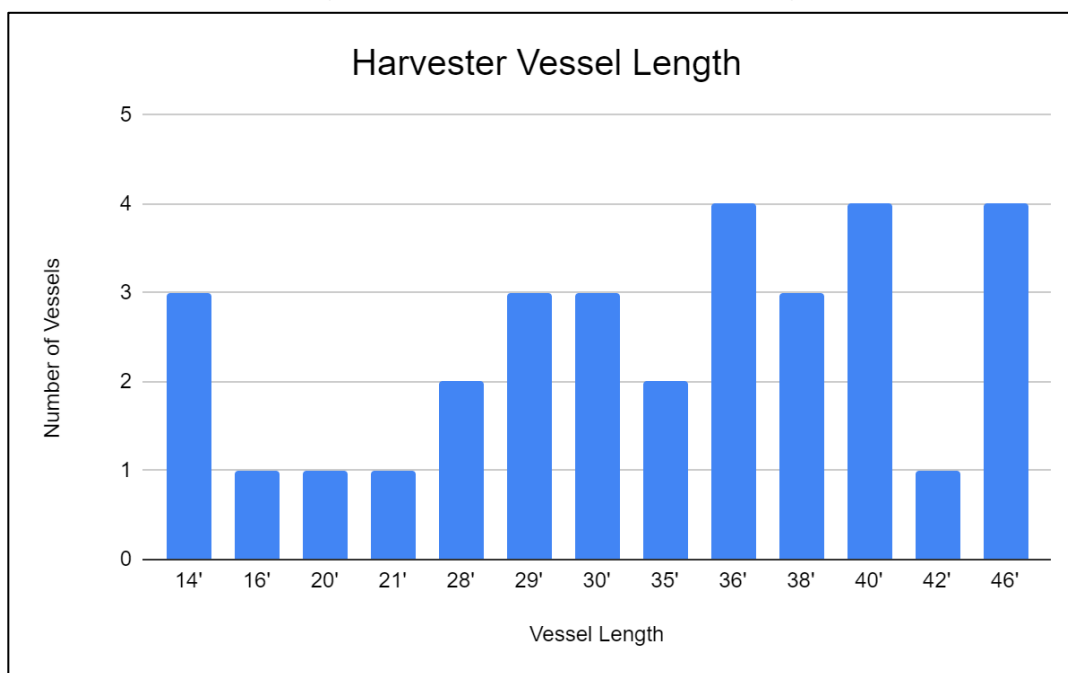
**Table H-2: 2022 Harvester Licenses by Type**

License Type	Number
Commercial Fishing Crew (CFC)	2
Commercial Fishing Single (CFS)	6
Commercial Shellfish (CS)	6
Commercial Shellfish +70 (CSO)	1

Elver 1 Fyke Net (E1)	1
Lobster/Crab +70 (LCO)	1
Lobster/Crab Apprentice (LA)	2
Lobster/Crab Class 1 (LC1)	3
Lobster/Crab Class 2 (LC2)	3
Lobster/Crab Class 3 (LC3)	7
Lobster/Crab Non-Commercial (LNC)	3
Lobster/Crab student (LCS)	6
Marine Worm Digging (MWD)	6
Menhaden Commercial (MENC)	1
Menhaden Non-Commercial (MENR)	2
Quahog Mahogany (QM)	1
Recreational Saltwater Fishing Operator (SWRO)	1
Recreational Saltwater Registry (SWR)	1
Scallop Diver (SDI)	1
Scallop Dragger (SD)	2
Sea Urchin Diver (SUH)	1
Seaweed (SW)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

Source: Maine Department of Marine Resources

**Figure H2-: 2022 Harvester Vessel Length**



Source: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Note: Excludes 26 vessel lengths not reported

**Table H-3: Documented Vessel Owners in Gouldsboro, 2022**

Type of Vessel Owners	# of Owners
Recreational Boats	6
Commercial Fishing Boats	34
Freight Barges	0
Passenger Boats	0

Other Vessels	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

*Source: Maine Department of Marine Resources*

Table H-4 summarizes catch data reported for two ports in Gouldsboro from 2015 to 2020 in terms of weight, value, trips made, and number of harvesters.

**Table H-4: Reported Catch at the Ports of Gouldsboro and South Gouldsboro, 2015-2020**

Species	Total Weight (lb)	Total Value (\$)	Total # Trips	Total # Harvesters
Crab Jonah	3,567	1,924	13	5
Scallop Sea	10,802	1,347,15	126	26
Clam Soft	359,092	749,820	3,634	173
Elver	910	1,446,714	752	230
Lobster American	3,138,844	10,525,266	7326	168

*Source: Maine Department of Marine Resources*

Additionally, Table H-5 tracks Gouldsboro softshell clam landings and dollar values from 2007 to 2022.

**Table H-5: Historic Maine Fisheries Data on Annual Softshell Clam Harvest in Gouldsboro**

Year	Pounds	Value
2007	42,871	\$53,464
2008	1,118	\$77,889
2009	82,657	\$101,720
2010	92,720	\$112,318
2011	122,534	\$173,014
2012	109,806	\$156,268
2013	106,693	\$159,867
2014	83,906	\$156,623
2015	85,634	\$203,472
2016	75,675	\$152,601
2017	43,932	\$69,036
2018	60,223	\$102,900
2019	52,275	\$124,338
2020	41,352	\$97,475
2021	42,202	\$132,445
2022	10,175	\$28,789

*Source: Gouldsboro Shellfish Committee*

## 5.2. Aquaculture

According to the Department of Marine Resources, Gouldsboro was the first town in the State to impose a moratorium specifically on large-scale finfish aquaculture in November of 2021 with other coastal communities following suit. As the Town reviews its ordinances, the Planning Board continues its work on creating a large-scale finfish licensing ordinance. DMR reports that between 2017 and 2021 aquaculture leases in Maine waters increased from about 110 to 185 with the total acreage encompassed by active leases increasing from less than 1,300 to about 1,750. The region has also seen growth of aquaculture on an “industrial scale.” There are concerns within the community about the impact on the environment, including chemical and

biological pollution, transmission of disease and parasites to migrating fish, fecal matter unsustainable feeds, and competition for coastal space. The community of Gouldsboro overwhelmingly opposes any large-scale industrial aquaculture and will continue to review ordinances and make updates to protect against any of the above threats to our bays, shoreland, and Town.

### **5.3. Elvers**

Elvers remain one of the most valuable species harvested in Maine. Despite a decrease in per-pound value of more than \$1,500 in 2021, Maine's elver fishery rebounded on the strength of a per pound value in 2023 of more than \$2,000. The overall landed value of more than \$16 million was an increase of more than \$10 million over the previous year. More than 2,600 people applied to the lottery for a 2022 harvester license for one of only 13 available spots resulting from licenses not renewed in 2020 and 2021.

### **5.4. Harbors, Marinas, and Other Public Access to the Coastal Shore**

Public access points include Gouldsboro Point, Prospect Harbor, Bunkers Harbor and South Gouldsboro. There are no access points in Corea or Birch Harbor. Parking continues to be inadequate at all points. The previous harbor master believed there was a need for dredging to add additional piers, floats, and other docking facilities, and this needs to be on the list of priorities to research for the future of Gouldsboro.

Originally the Town opted to utilize a town-owned parcel on Prospect Harbor's eastern shore for the small shellfish resilience lab project with a partnership between the Town, Schoodic Institute, and local schools to raise baby clams. The Town has now opened a three quarter-acre, shorefront parcel on Lighthouse Point Road for water access instead and moved the lab location to Bunkers Harbor. The small, half-tide ramps and parking areas at Bunkers Harbor, South Gouldsboro, Gouldsboro Point and West Bay Stream also continue to be inadequate.

There are still approximately 150 moorings in town. Gouldsboro's Harbor Master has updated the mapping of the number of mooring locations within Gouldsboro. Corea has 42, Gouldsboro Bay-10, Bunkers Harbor –20, Prospect Harbor – 29, South Gouldsboro – 20 and Flanders Bay – 10.

The Town's Harbor Management Ordinance was adopted in 1984 and **last revised in 2023**. It governs "all maritime activities on and within the tidal and inland waters located within the boundaries of the Town of Gouldsboro." There are standards and procedures for wharves, docks, piers, floats and ramps as well as for moorings and the operation of vehicles.

Currently there is no local or regional harbor management plan. The 2005 Plan stated that a comprehensive harbor management plan needs to be undertaken, and that it should address harbor access and use, parking and mooring plans. It was also recommended in the 2005 Plan that a harbor management plan examine overall use and industry trends while considering the environmental impacts of harbor improvements.



## 6. Adequacy of Access

The Town has made some minor repairs to piers in recent years and plans to continue discussions towards its goal of providing better public access to the coastal shore for its citizens and visitors. The Town has opened the three-quarter acre Town-owned lot on Lighthouse Point Road, which includes a parking area for public access. The Town will continue to investigate the potential development of other feasible access points.

### 6.1. Water-Dependent Uses

Water-dependent uses are defined as those uses that require direct access to coastal waters and cannot be located away from these waters. These would include fishing operations and piers as well as seafood processing, including lobster, clams, rockweed, kelp, mussels, horseshoe crab, and marine worms are all significant contributors to Gouldsboro's economy and must be considered. Water dependent businesses also include marine transportation companies, commercial fishing, and charter boats require infrastructure located on or adjacent to water to maintain their operations.

Gouldsboro's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance provides a balance between water-dependent and other uses, as well as for commercial and recreational uses. In 2023 The town approved a revised zoning change in December 2023 for a vacant parcel zoned as Commercial Fisheries to General District Development with added restrictions to keep the site as a working waterfront. This change allows commerce, keeping with the scale and balance of the town.

The town of Gouldsboro has found that it has a municipal interest in the conservation, beneficial use and effective management of its coastal resources, including Coastal Waters and Coastal Wetlands. The Town has passed the Industrial-Scale Finfish Aquaculture Licensing Ordinance pursuant to the enabling provisions of Article VIII, Part 2, of the Maine Constitution, the provision of Title 30-A.M.R.S § 3001(Home Rule), the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, Title 30-A.M.R.S. § 4301, *et seq.*, and title 38-A §§ 1-13 (Harbor Masters).

### 6.2. Visual Access and Scenic Views

Gouldsboro's Scenic Resources

Scenic Resource	Ownership	Access/Public/Private
Jones Pond	Town	Public
Taft Point Reserve	Frenchman Bay Conservancy	Public
Francis B. Wood Preserve	Frenchman Bay Conservancy	Public
Corea Heath Preserve	Frenchman Bay Conservancy	Public
Forbes Pond Preserve	Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Public
Stave Island	Maine Coast Heritage Trust	Public



West Bay		Public
Sand Cove Beach	Private Ownership	Public use
Sand Cove – Young's Point		Public
Prospect Harbor		Public
Corea Harbor		Public
Cranberry Point		Private

Preserves and natural areas in town, coastline, several owned and protected by conservation organizations, are publicly accessible. Several identified from HCPC scenic assessment inventory and analysis: <https://www.hcpcme.org/environment/view/>

## 7. Effectiveness of Existing Measures

### 7.1. Preserving Marine Resources

The primary way that marine resources are protected in Gouldsboro is through its State-required Shoreland Ordinance, last revised in August of 2023. Gouldsboro may want to review its current treatment of water quality concerns, such as storm water runoff from development, and revise ordinances to call for stricter attention to erosion and sedimentation prevention in new subdivisions. Site plan review procedures could stress standards for the extent of impervious surface and drainage and build on those already in place.

Enforcement is an important part of any land use ordinance. Vegetative clearing and the construction of large homes have altered the view of the shorefront from the water; the impact of such development could be mitigated by thorough enforcement of existing (and any future) shoreland zoning standards.

Overall, it is becoming more difficult for Gouldsboro and other coastal towns to retain their fishing heritage. The high price of shoreland, competition for public access, and federal fishing restrictions are making fishing more challenging. One specific measure that could be considered is a shoreland zoning restriction to protect water-dependent uses from being converted to residential use. There is currently no such protection in our town. Town ordinances should be reviewed and amended by the planning board to ensure the town CEO can take action when enforcement is needed.

### 7. Adapting to Climate Change

As part of Gouldsboro's implementation of recommendations by the Maine Climate Council, Gouldsboro has committed to manage 1.5 feet of relative sea-level rise by 2050, relative to the year 2000, and 3.9 feet of sea-level rise by the year 2100. In practice, Gouldsboro has already experienced storm events that result in more than 3.9 feet of effective sea-level increase and is now planning for more than 3.9 of sea-level in designs for municipal harbor infrastructure. Town ordinances and the Planning Board's Site Plan Review procedures should be modified to reflect

the expectation that shoreland infrastructure must be designed and built to be resilient in storm surges that are at least as large as those we have already experienced.

## 8. Regional Marine Resource Issues

Given the challenges just mentioned regarding preserving our fishing heritage, Gouldsboro may want to consider sharing its marine resources with peninsula communities or nearby coastal towns. Gouldsboro's previous history as a major commercial fishing port has declined due to the costs involved but still has both commercial and recreational potential for the future. Harbors could be sources for renewed activity that could benefit the Town's economy while still maintaining its present status of commercial fishing. To accomplish this, the town must continue to maintain and improve existing public access with development of additional public access points by securing harbor improvement grants and funding. Conversations addressing issues such as water quality and public access with other towns may be beneficial for all. The Comprehensive Plan must recognize the importance of marine resources to the town and regional economy. Further growth and development will continue to place greater demand on the Town's harbors as recreational user numbers continue to increase. Many coastal communities including nearby Winter Harbor and the Schoodic Peninsula are facing similar issues. One regional effort underway involves a coordinated approach to revitalize the traditional alewife population in Hancock County and Maine.

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## 9. Goals and Objectives - Marine Resources

<b>GOAL:</b> Assure community access to the Town's marine resources and continue and mitigate environmental issues.			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Protect, maintain, and when warranted, improve marine habitat and water quality.	Review and update ordinances to ensure water quality is protected in marine watersheds through standards that consider storm water runoff, extent of impervious surfaces, and other non-point sources of pollution.	Harbor Committee, Town manager, Select Board	End of 2025
	Promote strict enforcement of existing and new town ordinances that affect marine water quality.	Harbor Master, Harbor Committee,	Ongoing

		Town Manager, Select Board	
	Engage in strict enforcement of municipal, state, and federal regulations regarding overboard discharges from all vessels including but not limited to commercial vessels, recreational vessels, and MMA vessels.	Harbor Master, Harbor Committee, Town Manager, Select Board	Ongoing
	Engage in strict enforcement of the Shoreland Protection Ordinance.	CEO, Select Board, Town Manager	Ongoing
	Engage in early and ongoing communication with any entity proposing marine development, including but not limited to tidal and wind energy, aquaculture and commercial waterfront development.	Town Manager, Select Board and Harbor Committee	2025 and Ongoing
	Review and update ordinances to ensure water quality is protected in marine watersheds through standards that consider storm water runoff, extent of impervious surfaces, and other non-point sources of pollution.	Select Board, Planning Board, Climate Committee/Gouldsboro's Shore Project Committee	Immediate- Ongoing
Foster water dependent land uses and balance them with other complementary land uses.	Have discussions to create and implement a plan to increase access to waterfront facilities, maintain dock areas, moorings, maintain boat launch areas and dredging.	Town Manager, Select Board, Harbor Master, Harbor Committee, CEO, Infrastructure Superintendent	2025-2026
Maintain and where possible, improve harbor management facilities.	Review, amend and implement the local harbor management plan.	Harbor Committee, Select Board, Town Manager	2025
	Seek Harbor Improvement Grants for funding improvements.	Harbor Master, Select Board, Town Manager	2025 - Ongoing
Protect habitat and focus areas within Gouldsboro	Work with local conservation commissions and land trusts and research available strategies available. Provide resources to educate the community.	Select Board, Town Manager, proactive community groups or volunteers	2025-2028

Protect, maintain and improve visual and physical public access to Gouldsboro's marine resources for all uses including fishing, recreation and tourism.	Identify needs for additional or improved recreational and commercial access including parking, boat launches, fishing piers and swimming access.	Harbor Committee, Select Board, Town Manager	2025-2027
	Provide information about the Working Waterfront Access Program and current use taxation program to owners of waterfront properties used to provide access to or support the conduct of commercial fishing activities.	Harbor Committee, Select Board, Town Manager	2025 and Ongoing
Prevent loss of critical working waterfront infrastructure.	Secure funding for feasibility and design studies/work with State programs to secure funding for needed modifications to roadways or infrastructure	Coastal Resilience Committee, Town Manager, Select Board	Immediate - Ongoing

## **Chapter I: Water Resources**

### **1. Purpose**

This section presents an overview of Gouldsboro's water resources, which are essential to protecting the Town's drinking water. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Describes the characteristics, uses, and quality of Gouldsboro's significant water resources;
- b. Predicts and considers potential negative impacts to water quality caused by future growth and development as well as climate change;
- c. Assesses the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve significant water resources.

### **2. Key Findings and Issues**

Gouldsboro residents depend primarily upon drilled bedrock wells for their drinking water, which normally provides adequate water for domestic use. There are no known gravel aquifers supporting Gouldsboro wells. Lack of information on groundwater resources, first mentioned in the 1993 plan and again in the 2005 plan, remains a major concern for Gouldsboro. Because there is no public water system, future development will require a determination for adequate ground water supply.

While most water resources within 250 feet of the shore, rivers, certain streams, and great ponds are protected by shoreland zoning, there is no zoning of inland areas. Currently there are mostly anecdotal reports of problems with wells in Gouldsboro, ranging from saltwater intrusion to problems with concentrations of iron, manganese or arsenic, or problems with acidity. The prevalence of these problems is unknown. An extensive survey of existing wells would provide valuable information for planning future growth. Further in-depth studies are needed to ensure adequate ground water supplies for Gouldsboro.

The lack of town-wide zoning limits the ability of the Town to prevent certain uses from locating in vulnerable areas and causing harm to water resources. For example, there are no municipal ordinances prohibiting a commercial establishment with large areas of impervious surface from locating watershed areas. There are, however, state standards that regulate developments of one or more acres of impervious surface or five acres or more of disturbed area. The Planning Board approved an amendment to the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and was approved by voters in December 2023, which requires property owners to obtain a permit for septic system repairs. This would make the Town aware of defective septic systems and ensure that corrective action is taken in a timely manner.

Gouldsboro's flood plain map was revised in September of 2020.

### **3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan**

The 2005 Plan noted that Gouldsboro took several measures between 1993 and 2003 to protect its water resources. This included enactment of a Site Plan Review ordinance and revisions to the Subdivision Ordinance to include detailed phosphorus management standards. Both ordinances address storm-water run-off and nonpoint source pollution. These provisions are essentially those contained in the model 1996 subdivision ordinance standards developed by the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission.

In 2005, there were no publicly owned water systems, but there were four public water systems as defined by the Maine Drinking Water Program, including wells serving Peninsula School, a campground, a commercial establishment, and a major employer.

The Town identified existing overboard discharges as the only known point source of pollution to water resources and was at the time collaborating with DEP to address these. The 2005 plan identified the town sand pile and former US Navy properties (and other handlers of hazardous waste), stormwater runoff and motorboats as possible contributors of nonpoint source pollution to water resources.

Additional threats and considerations identified in the 2005 Plan included the existence of privately owned dams impacting water levels of public water resources, and the coordination with neighboring towns for protection of water resources that cross municipal boundaries. The Town also identified the need for a comprehensive study of its ground water resources, especially in more densely settled areas. Prioritizing future development in a manner that protects quality and quantity of groundwater, about which little was known, was considered a key water resource issue facing the town.

The Town identified the need to take steps to ensure it has an adequate supply of groundwater as the town continues to grow.

### **4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results**

The survey indicates that the responding residents hold protecting water resources as a high priority. Almost 80% of the respondents felt there should be more water quality monitoring and that a plan to reduce/remediate pollution sources should be developed. A similar amount (76%) responded that protecting groundwater was very important; 74% ranked protecting rivers and streams as very important; and 68% ranked protecting wetlands as very important. Respondents were split almost evenly when asked about the quality of the Town's stormwater management: 40% felt storm water management ranked as excellent or good, whereas 39% felt it was fair to poor.

## 5. Surface Water Resources

### 5.1. Lakes, Ponds, Rivers, Streams & Watersheds

There are five great ponds (naturally made freshwater ponds greater than 10 acres) that are partially or entirely located in Gouldsboro, and one that is man-made (Chicken Mill Pond). There are also numerous small ponds, some of which are man-made. These small ponds are not subject to State laws such as the Natural Resources Protection Act.

The watershed of a pond is the land area that drains into that pond. Gouldsboro shares several watersheds with adjoining towns (See Table I-1). This means that the protection of some ponds may be best addressed in cooperation with those communities.

**Table I-1: Characteristics of Gouldsboro's Ponds**

Name	Area (acres)	Perimeter (miles)	Mean Depth (feet)	Max Depth (feet)	% 500-m buffer covered by impervious surface	Trophic State* (chlorophyll-a)	Elevation (feet)	Watershed Towns
<b>Forbes Pond</b>	192	2.3	7	11	0.2%	<=7 ug/L	20	Gouldsboro
<b>Jones Pond</b>	462	8.1	15	48	2.9%	<=7 ug/L	53	Gouldsboro, Sullivan, T7SD
<b>Lily Pond</b>	19	0.7	12	22	0.2%	<=7 ug/L	102	Gouldsboro
<b>Chicken Mill Pond</b>	17	1.8	4	7	NA	<=7 ug/L	<10	Gouldsboro
<b>Lower West Bay Pond</b>	120	5.5	unknown	unknown	1.0%	<=7 ug/L	30	Gouldsboro, T7SD
<b>West Bay Pond</b>	226	7.5	5	10	0.0%	<=7 ug/L	31	Gouldsboro, T7SD
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,036</b>							

\***Trophic states** are based on lake fertility, specifically the productivity or “nourishment” in a waterbody. More fertile lakes have more nutrients and therefore more plants and algae. **Oligotrophic to Mesotrophic:** <=7 ug/L Chlorophyll-a) Describes a waterbody of low to moderate biological productivity and higher transparency or clarity. **Eutrophic to Hypereutrophic** (>7-30 Chlorophyll-a): A well-nourished waterbody, very productive, supporting a diverse array of organisms. Usually, low transparency is due to high algae and chlorophyll-a content.

*Sources: The Nature Conservancy, Maine Coast Heritage Trust; Lakes Stewards of Maine*

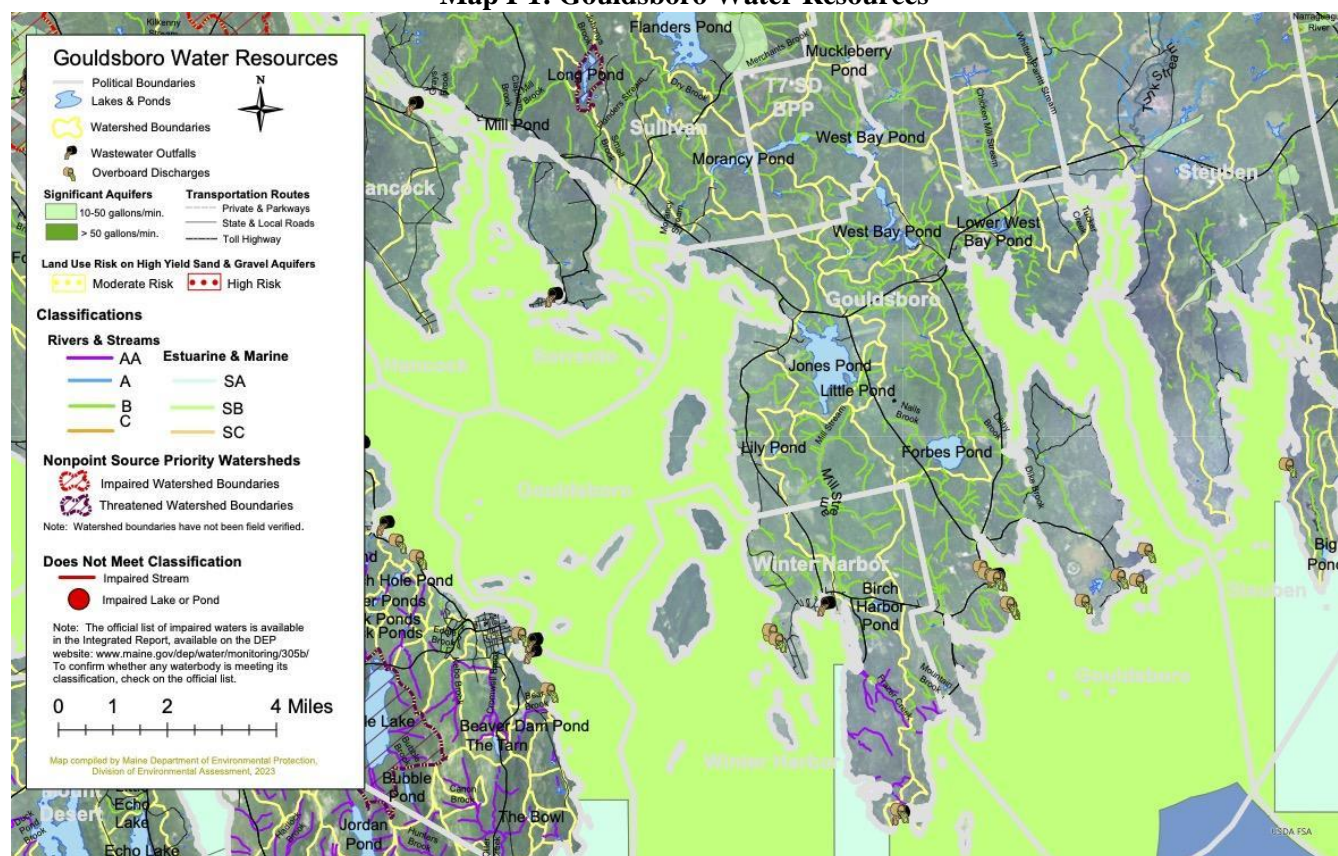
All of Gouldsboro’s freshwater ponds have susceptibility to phosphorus loading and other contaminants that have been identified by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) as an important factor in water-body quality. Phosphorus is a naturally occurring element that clings to soil particles and organic matter. For this reason, soil runoff and sedimentation are the single biggest source of pollution to freshwater bodies in Maine. Increased phosphorus runoff into a lake can cause excessive algae growth which can impair lake water

quality. Maine Department of Environmental Protection has not identified any Gouldsboro ponds or other water sources as being threatened or impaired. Also, no invasive species have been reported found in any of the ponds in Gouldsboro.

MDEP standards for the level of protection are advisory only but can be used as a planning guide for allocating or limiting development in the watershed. Many communities have taken measures to regulate phosphorus runoff resulting from residential development and related activities in their watersheds.

Gouldsboro also contains numerous streams, some of which also intersect other towns. They include Chicken Mill Stream, Dike Brook, Fred Ashe Brook, Libby Brook, Meadow Brook, Mill Stream, Nails Brook, Roaring Brook, Tucker Brook, and Whitten Parritt Stream.

**Map I-1: Gouldsboro Water Resources**



Source: Maine Department of Environmental Protection, 2023

## 5.2. Marine Water Quality

MDEP implements water quality programs under the Clean Water Act and state law, and is



responsible for managing, protecting and enhancing the quality of Maine's water resources through voluntary, regulatory and educational programs. The Department collaborates with local, state, and federal agencies to plan and implement strategies to protect Maine's water quality.

MDEP classifies all surface water in Maine, both fresh and saltwater. These classifications set the standards allowed for discharges of pollutants. Most marine waters in the state, including those adjacent to Gouldsboro, are classified "SB," which is the second highest classification for estuarine and marine waters and denotes that the water is suitable for recreation, fishing, aquaculture, and as habitat for fish and other estuarine/marine life. Per MDEP standards, habitats in these waters "shall be characterized as unimpaired." No discharges that would cause closure of open shellfish areas are permitted. Dissolved oxygen contents are set at 85%.

### **5.3. Threats to Surface Water Resources**

The Town's ability to manage its groundwater resources is limited. Both the 1993 plan and the 2005 plan recommended a hydrological study of Gouldsboro's groundwater supply but recognized the expense of such a study. Commercial entities wishing to establish a presence in town may be required to undertake a hydrological study of the site prior to development per the Town's Site Plan Ordinance.

The MaineTracking Network currently tracks well water use and testing behavior and water quality. Thousands of well water samples have been analyzed at the State of Maine Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory. Maine's Maximum Exposure Guidelines are as follows: Arsenic: 10 ug/L (micrograms per liter), Chloride: 250 mg/L (milligrams per liter), Fluoride: 2 mg/L, Manganese: 0.3 mg/L, Nitrate: 10 mg/L, Nitrite: 1 mg/L, Uranium: 30 ug/L. See Table I-4 for Gouldsboro data.

There are two types of pollution that threaten surface water: point source and nonpoint source. Point source pollution is attributable to a specific source such as a pipe discharging into a stream. Nonpoint source pollution doesn't come from a single source. Nonpoint source pollution or polluted stormwater runoff, often comes from a number of diffuse sources within a watershed (all the land area that drains into one waterbody). Stormwater runoff is water that doesn't soak into the ground during a rainstorm and flows over the surface of the ground until it reaches a stream, lake, estuary, or the ocean. Stormwater runoff often picks up polluting hitchhikers such as soil, fertilizers, pesticides, manure, and petroleum products. Therefore, NPS is hard to track or quantify, but should be assumed to exist. It can be reduced through education and participation in programs like Lake Smart, for example.

### **5.4. Access to Surface Water Resources**

Upper West Bay Pond can be accessed by a paddlers trail starting at the Day Ridges Preserve, which was developed and is managed by Frenchman Bay Conservancy. In 2016, Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) acquired the first of four parcels that comprise the Forbes Pond Preserve. Funding came from

a variety of sources, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) program. MCHT’s acquisition of the Forbes Pond Preserve opened an additional opportunity for access to this freshwater pond. The addition of the Preserve significantly added to the Town of Gouldsboro’s freshwater recreational resources. Jones Pond is located on Recreation Road and is accessible to the public for boat launching, swimming and as a recreation picnic area is managed by the Town.

## 6. Groundwater Resources

There are three types of wells commonly used in Maine: drilled bedrock wells, drilled overburden wells, and dug wells/springs. Of the three types, drilled bedrock wells are by far the most common source of drinking water for homes in Gouldsboro.

Gouldsboro residents and businesses depend on individual wells for their water supply. Drilled bedrock wells generally yield about 10 to 50 gallons per minute (gpm). Normally, a well yielding about 1 to 5 gpm is considered sufficient for domestic use.

Four wells are listed as public water supply wells by the Maine Drinking Water Program. These wells, detailed in Table I-2, serve the school, two restaurants, and a campground. Currently there are no major problems in Gouldsboro with ground water supply; however, ground water resources are vulnerable to climate and weather and new developments might create problems for existing wells. Meanwhile, the State of Maine has no records of contaminants exceeding the regulated limits for these wells.

**Table I-2: Public Water Systems in Gouldsboro Listed in the Maine Drinking Water Program**

Public Water System Name	PWSID	Operating Category	Water System Type	Source	Source Type
Bunkers Seafood and Spirits	ME0010426	VSWS	NC (non-community)	100’ BR Well, 6-15-1989 @ 7GPM	WL (well)
The Pickled Wrinkle	ME0022922	VSWS	NC	300’ Bedrock Well, 1993 @ 38GPM	WL
RSU 24/Peninsula Elementary School	ME0092395	VSWS	NTNC (non-transient, non-community)	200’ Bedrock Well, 2010 @ 100 GPM	WL
West Bay Acadia RV Campground	ME0092754	-	NC	400’ BR Well, 2-17-2020 @ 20GPM	WL

Source: Maine Drinking Water Program (<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/environmental-health/dwp/imt/documents/PWSbyCounty.pdf>-2024)

MDEP has rated Gouldsboro's groundwater as GW-A<sup>3</sup>. This is the highest MDEP groundwater water quality classification, and it signifies groundwater that can be used for public water supplies. They shall, per DEP standards, be of such quality that it can be used for public water supplies, be free of radioactive matter that imparts color, turbidity, taste or odor which would impair usage of these waters, other than that occurring from natural phenomena.

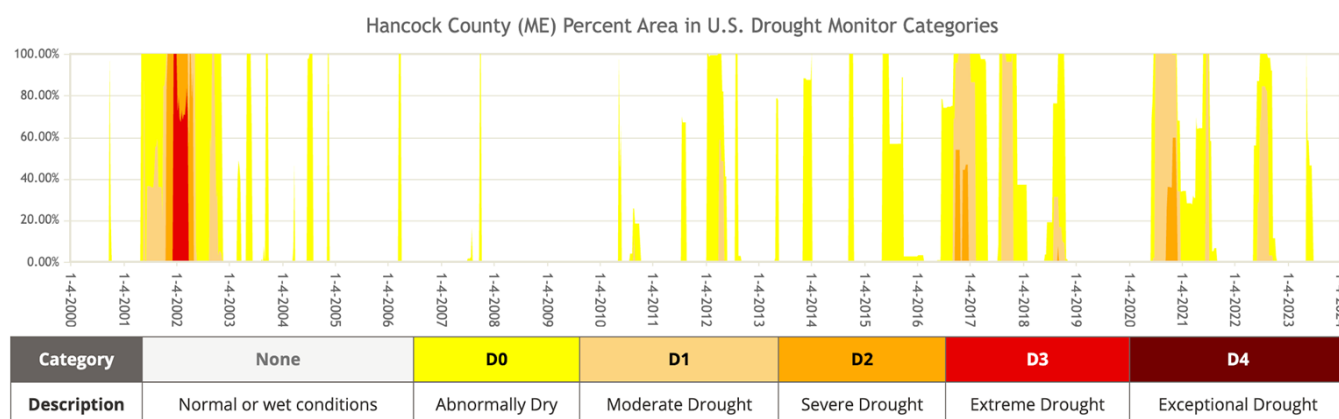
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/38/title38sec465-C.html>

### 6.1. Threats to Groundwater

Given the low incidence of nonpoint source pollution in Gouldsboro, and the overall low density of the population, the groundwater supply is generally considered safe. Downeast Maine has experienced several periods of drought since the last comprehensive plan update and, if drought conditions return, ground-water levels could be impacted. Lower well water levels could potentially lead to saltwater infiltration as a significant number of Gouldsboro residents live close to the shorelines.

Figure I-1 illustrates the drought conditions from 2000 through 2023 in Hancock County. Droughts are still considered one of the biggest potential threats to Gouldsboro's groundwater supply.

**Figure I-1: Hancock County Drought Monitor**



Source: U.S. Drought Monitor, 2024

In addition to the threat of drought, there are other potential contaminants of concern for Gouldsboro residents. The following table provides county-wide data.

**Table I-3: Percent of Gouldsboro Wells that Exceed State Guidelines for Selected Analytes**

Location	Arsenic	Chloride	Fluoride	Manganese	Nitrate	Nitrite	Uranium
Hancock	2.3%	1.8%	3.7%	11.4%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Maine CDC Maine-Tracking Network, using data from Maine Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory, 2023

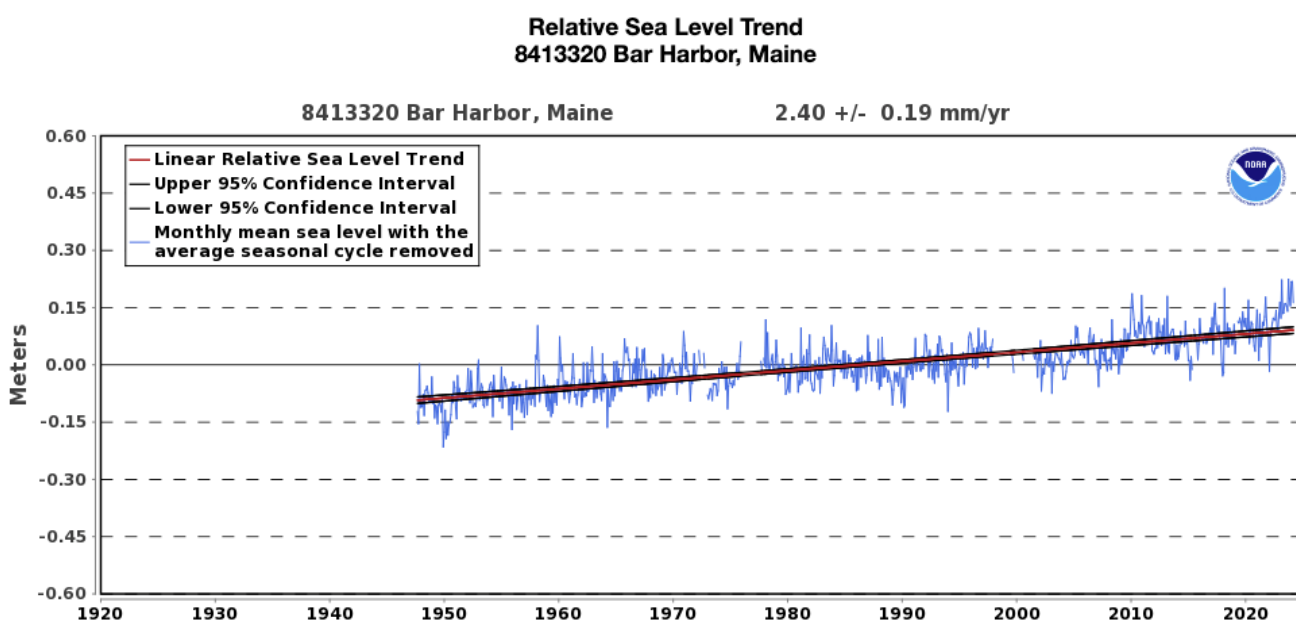
As there is no mandatory well testing within Hancock County, individual well owners should have their well evaluated for microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses or parasites that may cause disease, and from chemicals at levels that may be a risk to health. The State of Maine recommends that well water should be tested once a year for bacteria and nitrates and every five years for arsenic, fluoride, uranium, radon, lead, and manganese. Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (known as PFAS) are also of potential

future concern. Currently there is no indication of contamination; however, there also has been very little testing for it within the town.

### 6.1.1. Climate Change Considerations

Sea level rise is well-documented along the length of Maine's coast. Figure I-2, shows the historical tide data from Bar Harbor. In addition, extreme storm frequency is increasing rapidly in the Northeastern U.S, resulting in more frequent significant storm surges. Wellheads located close to the coast will be impacted by sea level rise and stronger storm surges.

**Figure I-2:**



The guidance document, “Maine Climate Adaptation Series,” reported that “Despite overall increases in precipitation, snowfall in Maine has decreased by about 15% since the late 1800s. Changes in the timing of precipitation – wetter spring and fall with longer dry spells during summer months – coupled with decreases in snow fall and groundwater recharge during extreme precipitation events, may lead to decreases in groundwater recharge necessary to maintain underground aquifer sources and the wells dependent on them. Shallow wells will be the most influenced. Adaptation and mitigation strategies to address the effects of climate change will need to include both supply-side and demand-side strategies. Policy development will need to incorporate a variety of stakeholders as water is critical to many sectors – energy production, health, food, and ecosystem integrity.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Source: Municipal Climate Adaptation Guidance Series: Drinking Water 2017, p. 7, [https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/docs/CAGS\\_04\\_Drinking\\_Water.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/municipalplanning/docs/CAGS_04_Drinking_Water.pdf)

## 7. Future Adequacy of Gouldsboro's Water Resources

With moderate population growth, or population decline as projected for Gouldsboro, current drinking water supplies should be adequate for the near future. The only potential problem would be threats to individual wells from contamination or from the potential addition of high usage industrial water users.

## 8. Adequacy of Existing Measures to Preserve Significant Water Resources

Gouldsboro's current measures to protect water resources consist of the Shoreland, Site Plan Review, and Subdivision ordinances. The current Site Plan Review Ordinance has standards to protect against water pollution, assure adequate sewage disposal, and storm water drainage for future projects. **If the Town were to ever enact a town-wide land use ordinance (the town is split on this decision)**, it could possibly help the development of additional measures to protect water quality. These might include standards for maximum impervious surface, drainage provisions, well discharge limitations as per allowed by the state and storage requirements for the storage of potential pollution-causing materials. Non-governmental organizations currently provide advice and assistance that is welcomed as an essential means of preserving the quality of significant water resources in Gouldsboro. The Town has relationships with neighboring municipalities, county and state planning entities, as well as community non-governmental organizations to ensure a holistic approach is taken when planning for future water use requirements.

**Checklist - Do public works crews and contractors use best management practices to protect water resources in their daily operations (e.g. salt/sand pile maintenance, culvert replacement street sweeping, public works garage operations)?**

## 9. Regional Issues

There are no immediate regional groundwater resource issues facing Gouldsboro. The Town does not share any sand and gravel aquifers with surrounding towns. Given the projected moderate population decline, there is no foreseeable likelihood of needing to develop a municipal water system. There would be a benefit to a well-organized regional approach to well water testing.

Gouldsboro shares watersheds of some ponds with adjoining towns. The protection of these ponds would involve coordination with other communities in the watersheds.

Gouldsboro has partnered with Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Frenchman Bay Conservancy, and local advocacy groups that have established preserves within the town. The missions of these groups include promotion of healthy and sustainable lands, waters, and ecosystems and to mitigate the impact of climate change on the coast. These efforts enhance the Town's measures to protect water resources.

## 10. Goals & Objectives – Water Resources

<b>GOAL:</b> Protect Gouldsboro’s vital water resources for long-term health, educate residents on well water monitoring, protect habitats, create a five-year plan to fund a groundwater study.			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>Pollution Source Management-</b> Ensure Town regulations include adequate provisions to manage point and nonpoint pollution. Establish a plan to reduce or remediate sources of pollution.	Review Ordinances/Utilize local & other resources; Maine DEP, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mudflat.org, NEIWPCC. Request Maine’s resources be utilized in Gouldsboro that would help implement remediation and prevention techniques to prevent the spread of pollution and contaminants	Select Board, Planning Board, CEO	Initial plan within 3 years, then reviewed every 5 years
<b>Groundwater Protection-</b> Ensure groundwater supplies and recharge areas are adequately protected.	Ensure compliance with local and State regulations regarding groundwater protection. Review Land Use Ordinances.	CEO	Immediate, Within 3 years (2027)
Protect habitat in sensitive riparian areas delineated by the MDEP.	Work with the various land trusts, property owners, and Acadia National Park to maintain and, if necessary, create a resource protection buffer around habitats delineated by MDEP.	Select Board, Planning Board, HCPC	5 years
Work with regional and state entities to ensure water quality monitoring information is made available to all residents.	Request resources from the state of Maine be utilized in Gouldsboro and that all testing information if readily available to the Town and its residents through brochures available at the town office and on the town website.	Select Board/ CEO /Town Manager/Volunteers	Immediate and ongoing
Conduct groundwater study for sustainability as suggested in 2005 plan.	Hold community and board discussions for the best way for Town to afford such a study/ Work with regional organizations	Select Board, HCPC	Within 1-5 years

## **Chapter J: Natural Resources**

### **1. Purpose**

This chapter provides analyses and a detailed overview of the Town's vital natural resources, and addresses issues related to wildlife, fish habitats and other important ecological systems. Development on or near these vital resources could negatively impact natural systems as well as quality-of-life issues such as: clean drinking water, protection from flooding, and clean air. Specifically, this chapter;

- a. Describes Gouldsboro's critical natural and scenic resources;
- b. Assesses the effectiveness of existing efforts to protect and preserve these resources;
- c. Predicts future impacts to these resources by growth and development.

### **2. Key Findings & Issues**

Gouldsboro benefits from its clean environment, the quality of life provided by the local and regional plant and animal diversity, and by a rich diversity of interesting and beautiful ecosystems and habitats. The intertidal zones offer important wintering and migrating habitat for numerous shorebird and duck species. Upland areas support various mammals and include two important deer wintering areas. There are several major wetlands, including Gouldsboro Grand Marsh, a Focus Area of Statewide Significance, and Corea Heath, an excellent example of an unusual bog ecosystem with plant communities that are uncommon for the region. The Town also benefits from numerous preserves and ponds.

Residents continue to support protecting these habitats and forestlands, as demonstrated in the Public Opinion Survey. While the Town does comply with Maine State requirements for shoreland protections, other measures could be explored to help develop clear goals, objectives, and strategies to protect resources vital to the Town.

### **3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan**

Among the Town's rare natural resource features were several bald eagle nesting sites. There were also several unique coastal ecosystems including one of the few areas of Jack Pine in Maine located at Corea Heath. Due to improved mapping, it is now easier to identify natural resource areas.

### **4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results**

Respondents were asked about the importance of protecting various natural resources in Gouldsboro and showed overwhelming support for doing so. Over 86% of all respondents stated that air quality, preserving existing farmland, preserving existing forest land, protecting groundwater, protecting rivers and streams, protecting scenic views, protecting wetlands, and protecting wildlife habitat are all either important or very important.

### **5. Summary of Critical Natural Resources**

Much of the text and information in this chapter comes from Maine IF&W's Beginning with Habitat materials provided in the State Data Package.

### 5.1. Wildlife

Gouldsboro has a diverse array of wildlife habitats. The inshore and tidal zones are important wintering areas for waterfowl and sea ducks. In winter and early spring common species include bufflehead, common goldeneye, American black duck, three scoter species, common loon, two merganser species, and greater scaup. In late spring, summer, or fall, freshwater and tidal areas are home to common loon, osprey, bald eagle, kingfisher, terns, gulls, great blue heron, other wading birds, a variety of migrant shorebirds, cormorants, three merganser species, beaver, muskrat, and river otter. Less common but present in this area are harlequin duck, and black-crowned night-heron.

The upland environment, which includes mature forests, supports deer as well as the occasional black bear or moose. Bears and moose are few, however, due to fragmentation of coastal habitat by roads, residences, and other development. Other animals commonly found in upland areas include ruffed grouse, wild turkey, American woodcock, snowshoe hare, red fox, coyote, porcupine, raccoon, and gray or red squirrel. Less common species include ring-necked pheasant, short-tailed weasel, and fisher. The Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) found two significant deer wintering areas in the town. As of 2023, Gouldsboro has two bald eagle nesting sites, according to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services (USFWS) and Maine Ecological Services.

Also found throughout the area during the warm months are a vast array of other bird species in the following families: raptor species such as hawks, vultures and owls, sparrows, woodpeckers, finches, flycatchers, thrushes, blackbirds, swallows, corvids, and other mixed passerines.

### 5.2. Wetland Areas

Wetlands are one of the most critical natural resources for any community and provide many important ecosystem services. They often serve as aquifer recharge areas, allowing underground water supplies to be recharged. They provide crucial habitat and breeding grounds for birds and other wildlife such as amphibians, reptiles, and insects. Wetlands are an important part of nature's drainage system since they hold storm water, help with shoreline stabilization, and provide water filtration and treatment. Areas that have experienced extensive filling of wetlands often face increased flooding problems.

There are several major salt and freshwater wetlands in Gouldsboro, visualized in Figure J-1 below. The Schoodic portion of Acadia National Park is home to rare animals such as harlequin duck; rare plants such as blinks, fragrant cliff wood-fern, marsh felwort, Pickering's Reed bent-grass and screwstem; and rare and exemplary communities of Downeast Maritime shrubland, Jack Pine Woodland and Open Headland.

The Gouldsboro Grand Marsh Focus Area encompasses the peninsula east of Prospect Harbor in the vicinity of the village of Corea. Portions of this focus area stand out as an excellent example of a Coastal Plateau Bog Ecosystem. These two areas are currently linked as one focus area because of the unfragmented habitat connecting them.



The Grand Marsh is a 135-acre Salt Hay Saltmarsh bisected by a tidal creek that empties into the narrow Grand Bay. Tidal marsh vegetation occurs in north to south bands, with low marsh types dominated by salt marsh cordgrass near the creek and high marsh types near the uplands. Black-grass, seaside plantain, and salt-meadow cordgrass dominate here in broad areas of high marsh.

This area of Gouldsboro is also home to rare native plants such as Pickering's reed bent-grass, screwstem, and swarthy sedge. Bands of vegetation are not continuous and are punctuated by open water pannes (small saltwater pools) and creek branches. Although this tidal marsh is not as large as some others in the East Coastal region, it is in very good condition, with very little to no evidence of past ditching that characterizes many salt marshes in Maine. Moreover, the adjacent uplands are intact. The marsh is mapped as both Tidal Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat and Shorebird Feeding and Roosting Habitat.

Corea Heath is an approximately 250-acre Coastal Plateau Bog that abuts Route 195 near the village of Corea. It is an excellent example of a Coastal Plateau Bog Ecosystem, a peatland in which the surface is raised above the surrounding terrain, with the bog perimeter sloping sharply to mineral soil. The raised surface is flat or undulating, generally with few to no trees, and usually features extensive lawns of deer-hair sedge. Black crowberry and baked apple-berry are also characteristic. Corea Heath is a rare and exemplary natural community due to its large size, circular shape, well-developed concentric patterning, and raised central treeless plateau with evident marginal slopes.

Corea Heath supports several species of rare plants as well as stunted jack pine trees. Though not rare, this species is very uncommon in a peatland setting in Maine. A large portion of Corea Heath, especially in the southern half, is characterized by well-defined ridge and depression relief. The hollows, some of which retain surface water for long periods, contain dwarf shrubs, deer-hair sedge, lichen, and mud-bottom areas. The ridges support a similar variety of species including stunted black spruce, black crowberry, and peat mosses.

In addition to the ecological features there is another rare and exemplary small Jack Pine Woodland community at the southeastern tip of this peninsula on Route 195 near Sand Cove.

[illegible]

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**Figure J-2:**





Forbes Pond Preserve, a 980-acre preserve consists of wildlife -rich wetland habitats. The Gouldsboro Grand Marsh is a 135-acre Salt Hay Saltmarsh which supports several species of rare plants and serves as wintering grounds for the state-threatened harlequin duck. Corea Heath is an approximately 250-acre Coastal Plateau Bog Ecosystem and supports several species of rare plants.

#### **5.4. Fisheries Resources**

*Fresh Water:* The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) currently stocks Jones Pond with rainbow and brown trout. Gouldsboro provides parking and public access to Jones Pond for boating and fishing. Upper West Bay and its tributaries provide brook trout, eel, white sucker, minnows, gold shiners and ninespine stickleback. Forbes Pond Preserve will continue to be managed for its self-sustaining population of fish and is well known for large-mouth bass and northern pike.

*Salt Water:* Gouldsboro is a working waterfront community. Lobsters, scallops, crab, mussels, and clams are among the common species. Striped bass, bluefish, and winter flounder are other popular saltwater species.

#### **5.5. Coastal Ecoregion**

Gouldsboro is part of the Downeast Coast ecoregion and includes an island-bay coastal type, which is an indented shoreline type of coast, or “drowned coast”, with long, narrow, rocky peninsulas and intervening deep, narrow estuaries, and cliffed coastal margins. Rocky headlands and islands are abundant with pockets of rocky, gravel, and coarse-grained sand beaches, and tidal flats. The region has a few tidal marshes. Granitic plutons are common, with less resistant, low-grade metamorphic rock occurring in the deeply embayed areas. Fine and coarse-loamy, frigid inceptisols and spodosols are typical. Most forests contain a large percentage of maritime spruce-fir although beech, birch, maple, red oak, and white pine occur. Pitch and jack pine also grow here on isolated coastal bluffs.

The Downeast Coast has more fog and precipitation than other coastal regions, and the wet, cool, foggy climate supports these spruce-fir forests of a more northern character. The boreal features include rocky woodlands of patchy black spruce and heaths, as well as some boreal plant species that are otherwise restricted to alpine and subalpine areas of Maine, such as black crowberry. There are also some areas of Jack Pine Woodland near its southern range limit, on the dry, rocky, ocean-facing ridges. The unique area also has some transitional features to mid- and south-coast flora, including areas of pitch pine and some oak woodlands. Tidal amplitudes of the Downeast Coast are great, and the offshore waters are nutritionally richer and cooler than those offshore of ecoregions to the south.

#### **5.6. Rare Plants & Natural Areas**

The Town is also home to three rare or exemplary natural communities as identified by MNAP. The most ecologically significant features in this focus area are Acadia National Park, Grand Marsh and Corea Heath. In Gouldsboro these areas are located on the Schoodic Peninsula, in Acadia National Park, in Gouldsboro Grand Marsh Bay (all lands and waters east of West Bay Road in and around Gouldsboro Bay and West Bay), and on the entirety of the Corea Peninsula.

Also identified are coastal and inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat, migratory shorebird habitat, seabird nesting islands, deer wintering areas and several rare plant populations. Refer to Figure J–3, Gouldsboro Critical Natural Areas, below.

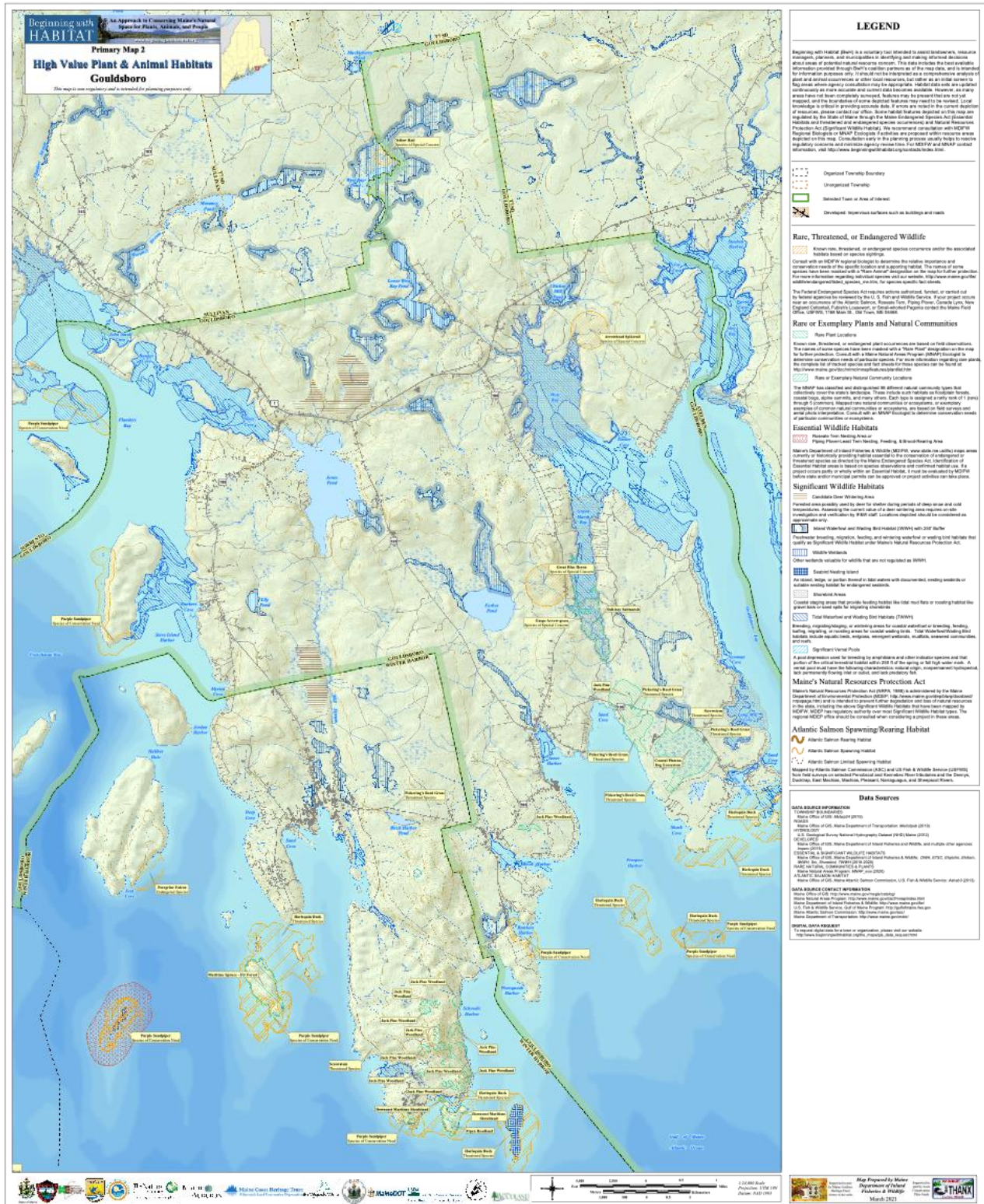
The Gouldsboro Grand Marsh Focus Area encompasses the peninsula east of Prospect Harbor in the vicinity of the village of Corea. Portions of this focus area stand out as an excellent example of a Coastal Plateau Bog Ecosystem. The Gouldsboro Grand Marsh supports several species of rare plants and serves as wintering grounds for the state-threatened harlequin duck.

**Table J-1: Rare Species in the Gouldsboro Area**

<b>Taxa</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Conservation Status</b>
Plants	Screwstem	Threatened Species
	Pickering reed bent grass	Threatened Species
	Gaspe arrow grass	Species of Special Concern
Birds	Great blue heron	Species of Special Concern
	Harlequin duck	Threatened Species
	Purple sandpiper	Species of Conservation Need
	Yellow rail	Species of Special Concern
Invertebrates	Arrowhead spiketail	Species of Special Concern



Figure J-3: Gouldsboro Critical Natural Areas



## 6. Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat Summary

### 6.1 Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat and Shorebird Area

Nearly the entire shoreline of the focus area of West Bay has been mapped as high and moderate value Tidal Wading Bird and Waterfowl Habitat and defined as Significant Wildlife Habitat under Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA). This area provides important intertidal habitat for maintaining viable wading bird and waterfowl populations. Waterfowl (ducks, geese, swans) and wading birds (herons, egrets, bitterns, ibises, coots, moorhens and rails) require certain types of tidal wetland habitat for feeding, roosting, nesting and brood rearing. Several areas have also been mapped as 'Shorebird Areas' for important feeding and resting sites for shorebirds making long migrations.

**6.2 Tidal Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitats** are defined as Significant Wildlife Habitat by Maine's NRPA and classified as moderate to high in value. MDIFW has identified and rated intertidal areas along the coast as high or moderate value to waterfowl and wading birds.

**6.3 Inland Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat** represents high and moderate value as Significant Wildlife Habitat defined under Maine's NRPA. MDIFW has classified West Bay and Lower West Bay ponds, marshes, streams and estuaries as significant inland habitats for ducks, geese, herons, and associated species of waterfowl and wading birds throughout the state. A high to moderate value inland bird habitat is a complex of freshwater wetland and open water areas plus a 250-foot-wide area surrounding the complex itself where some species nest. On "great ponds" (over 10 acres), only the upland area that is within 250 feet of the freshwater wetland is included as part of this bird habitat.

### 6.4 Changes to these Natural Areas and Resources

Changes in land use in all these areas may threaten these important species and habitats. Grand Marsh Bay, referenced frequently in the preceding paragraphs as a unique, essential habitat for wildlife, is already undergoing change as sea level rises and storms become more severe. These changes will continue and may accelerate over the next twenty years. If Grand Marsh Bay and other Gouldsboro marshes are blocked from migrating inland, the habitats described above will be lost. Preventing this requires that Gouldsboro considers marsh migration patterns as it considers new shoreline development.

Protecting ecologically important habitat requires knowing where they are. An inventory should be conducted by interested citizens under the guidance of MNAP. Maine Coast Heritage Trust has identified Grand Marsh Bay as strategically important; MCHT is an important partner who should be part of the town's habitat protection planning.

### 6.5 Other Endangered, Protected or Critical Species

Gouldsboro also contains essential habitat and nesting areas (along seacoasts, inland lakes and major rivers) of the American Bald Eagle, which was once abundant in Maine and nearly extirpated throughout its range in the 1990s. Due to extensive habitat protection measures, bald eagles have now made a tremendous recovery and were removed from the Endangered Species List in 2009. Bald eagles are



currently listed as Special Concern and protected under the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

The great blue heron, listed in Maine as a Species of Special Concern, is found primarily along the coast and occasionally is found inland along marshes, rivers and the shores of ponds. It can be found in Gouldsboro and has been spotted in the wetlands around Forbes Pond and Grand Marsh Bay.

Another endangered bird found in the area is the yellow rail. Although nesting sites have not been confirmed, there are known yellow rail habitats in the West Bay Pond wetlands. The difficulty of monitoring yellow rail populations contributes to its rarity and little understood distribution in Maine. Scientists believe many factors have likely contributed to its decline. These include the loss of grassy wetlands, sedge, and wet meadow habitats to development, filling, ditching, establishment of invasive species, and degradation of coastal marshes.

Horseshoe crabs are also vulnerable to depletion from any harvesting activities. In 2003, taking and possession of horseshoe crabs became prohibited in Maine. These crabs live in Gouldsboro's protected sandy beach areas, nearshore shallow waters, intertidal flats, and deep bay waters. Grand Marsh Bay supports horseshoe crab habitat, but shoreline development and subsequent habitat degradation are potential threats to Maine's small populations of horseshoe crab. Horseshoe crabs feed primarily on clams and worms, and in turn are fed upon by shorebirds (including the state endangered least tern and the state endangered and federally threatened piping plover), crabs, fish and sea turtles.

## **7. Scenic Resources**

Gouldsboro offers a blend of stunning natural beauty, with scenic views from many public roads and hiking trails, rich history, and a laid-back lifestyle. It has picturesque harbors and beaches, interesting history, a lighthouse, and local culture and food.

The combination of hills, coves, bogs, marshes and farms provides for a rich variety of scenic resources and views that are integral to the Town's rural and coastal character. Areas of high scenic value are experienced from the roads along the coastline and in its fishing villages. These include Jones Pond, Forbes Pond, Prospect Harbor, West Gouldsboro, Gouldsboro Point, Grand Marsh Bay Area, Crowley Causeway, Sand Cove and Corea. There are many scenic hiking trails that can be found throughout Gouldsboro and spectacular scenic views that are seen from the water. Portions of the Town are also located along the Schoodic National Scenic Byway.

The Corea Heath Preserve covers over 600 acres of wetlands and upland forest in Gouldsboro. The Corea Heath Preserve is owned and managed by Frenchman Bay Conservancy. The 1.4-mile loop trail visits several different habitats, including a jack pine woodland, a coastal plateau bog and a pond created by beavers. You can also find an observation deck overlooking the bog.

Gouldsboro also has one of the finest dark skies in the northeast, with spectacular views of the Milky Way, the Perseids Meteor Shower and surrounding planets in our solar system. This should be considered when adding or restricting residential and industrial lighting facilities that could interfere with this valuable resource.

### **7. 1 Assessment of Existing Efforts to Protect Natural Resources**

The Town revised its Shoreland Ordinance in 2016 and again in 2020 to exceed the minimum state shoreland protection requirements. Revisions were enacted to provide a more stringent level of protection to natural resources on or near the shoreline as there is no town-wide zoning. Primary protection provided to natural and scenic resources in town is enforced through Shoreland Zoning, Site Plan and Subdivision ordinances.

Planning for further protection of Gouldsboro's natural resources, restrictions could include larger minimum lot sizes (current size is almost one acre) and stricter setback standards in critical areas, identified in this plan and in the future, where higher-value natural resources are present or discovered. Portions of the shoreland zone are presently zoned as "Resource Protection." These include areas around wetlands, ponds and coves as well as stretches on the bay and open ocean.

The restrictions in the Resource Protection district offer a high level of protection for natural resources located along the shoreline. However, there are locations adjacent to the shoreland that have important habitats and are not zoned as Resource Protection. This limits the effectiveness of the State's shoreland statute to prevent negative environmental consequences, such as algae blooms, run-offs and other pollutants that enter waterways and water bodies.

Greater protection could also be provided by revisions to the Town's Subdivision Ordinance. These could involve creative lot-layout patterns such as clustering. Often, it is possible to make minor changes in the location of lots in a subdivision to minimize the disruption of views from a neighboring property or public roads. Also, the initial subdivision application to the Planning Board could include a requirement that any important habitats identified by MDIFW be noted. G The Gould

**Checklist - Are any of the community's critical natural resources threatened by development, overuse, or other activities?**

## **8. Regional Issues**

Gouldsboro, along with neighboring towns and the larger region, continues to face looming challenges associated with climate change and sea level rise that will affect natural resources and vital habitat areas. Some existing and potential negative impacts include: projected tidal marsh migration; changes to tree stands and tree-stand migration; other plant species migration (invasive species such as giant purple loosestrife); non-native insect introductions to Maine (emerald ash borer, brown tailed moth, certain tick populations moving further north); non-native shellfish (green crab, zebra mussel); increased vector-borne illnesses such as equine encephalitis, Powassan virus, West Nile virus; and even the pernicious

norovirus. Many towns, including Blue Hill, Brooksville, Sedgwick and others in the region (Tremont, Mount Desert), have formed sea level rise and climate change committees to address the future challenges. The Gouldsboro's own Shore project has been addressing these import issues through grant funding, research, and various studies that they have conducted.

Table J-2 lists some of the organizations dedicated to protecting habitats, natural resources, and public access to natural lands around the region.

**Table J-2: Conservation Organizations of Interest for Gouldsboro**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Downeast Coastal Conservancy	6 Colonial Way, Machias (207) 255-4500
Friends of Schoodic Peninsula	43 Cottage Street, Bar Harbor (207) 288-3340
Forbes Pond Preserve	(see Maine Coast Heritage Trust below)
Frenchman Bay Conservancy	72 Tidal Falls Road, Hancock (207) 422-2328
Maine Coast Heritage Trust	1034 Main Street, Bar Harbor (207) 244-5100
The Nature Conservancy	14 Main Street #401, Brunswick (207) 729-5181

## 6. Goals & Objectives – Natural Resources

<b>GOAL:</b> Gouldsboro will protect its natural resources to the best of its ability and will address and monitor threats posed by climate change to said resources, as they are vital to the town's health, safety, and economy.			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible Party (ies)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Anticipate threats to natural resources posed by climate change and other factors (development, infestations, natural resource extraction, etc.).	Encourage Gouldsboro and current or future community groups/ /committees/ organizations to monitor, assess and make recommendations.	Select Board and/or designees	Immediate and ongoing
Town ordinances should give authority to the Planning Board to require a natural resources assessment to be part of applications for major development.	Require a natural resource review and assessment for the development application process.  Review Ordinances	Select Board, Planning Board	Immediate and ongoing
Encourage sustainable development, protect open spaces and public access, pastoral scenic views, and wildlife habitats.	Encourage creative approaches to residential development through tax incentives.	Select Board, Planning Board	Immediate and ongoing
Encourage conservation	Identify critical habitats and	Planning Board,	Immediate and

easements in places with critical habitats and natural resources.	natural resources based upon the map, and document adjacent parcels.	HCPC	ongoing
Protect the scenic quality of Gouldsboro and its local landscape character.	Identify and document important historic, cultural, or natural landscapes, scenic views in Gouldsboro.	Select Board, Planning Board, Historical Society HCPC	Immediate and ongoing
Encourage greater property-owner understanding of the importance of conserving natural resources.	Provide educational opportunities and encourage voluntary activities to increase tree cover, reduce invasive species, protect nesting areas etc.	Any conservation organizations active in/near Gouldsboro	Ongoing
Identify and conserve wide corridors linking high-value habitats and wetlands.	Seek input from local conservancy Groups/Maine's Wetland Program, Maine's Land Use Planning Commission, Maine Natural Areas Program	Select Board/Planning Board/active Gouldsboro organizations	Immediate - 3 years of plan adoption
Work with willing property owners on purchase or voluntary measures.	Pursue public/private partnerships through land or easement purchases.	Select Board/active local organizations.	1-3 years
Work with state agencies to garner support for projects and seek necessary funds.	Pursue public/private partnerships through land or easement purchases.	Select Board/Town Manager/active groups	1-3 years
Work cooperatively with neighboring towns on regional conservation issues.	Review shared critical/important natural resources; jointly plan for management.	Select Board/Town Manager/Gouldsboro Shore Project	Ongoing
Educate officials and citizens to support and manage local conservation initiatives.	Provide information about current use tax programs and applicable local, state, and federal regulations. Contact Maine's Natural Resource Conservation Program, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Gulf of Maine Coastal Program.	Town Manager/CEO/active community groups	1-3 years

Continually map boundaries of conservation areas, corridors, and other features.			
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## **Chapter K: Agricultural, Forestry, and Open Space Resources**

### **1. Purpose**

The overall purpose of this section is to safeguard Gouldsboro's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources. The chapter summarizes Gouldsboro's Agricultural, Forest, and Open Space Resources with regard to various benefits to humans, such as drinkable water, productive soils and farmlands, and timber lands. Specifically, this chapter;

- a. Describes the extent of Gouldsboro's farms and forest land;
- b. Predicts whether the viability of these resources will be threatened by the impacts of growth and development;
- c. Assesses how well current protective measures preserve important lands for farming and forestry production; and
- d. Quantifies land held in the open space tax incentive program.

### **2. Key Findings & Issues**

Parcel numbers added to Maine's Open Space and Farmland "current use" tax incentive programs have increased significantly. However, while the acreage in Open Space tax classification increased, the acreage in Farmland tax classification declined. The number of parcels in the Tree Growth tax program, as well as total acreage in that program, declined as well.

Climate change poses a potential long-term threat to farms and forests. Changes in temperature and weather patterns (including periods of drought and increased heat on the one hand, and increased precipitation and flooding on the other), and resulting changes in growing patterns, indicate this phenomenon warrants further monitoring, adaptation, and mitigations. The most immediate threats include development pressures and invasive plant, animal, and insect species. With climate change making agriculture difficult in other parts of the county, coupled with potential population growth, conservation of Gouldsboro's existing *and* potential farmland could become very important for local food security.

### **3. Key Findings & Issues from 2005 Plan**

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan described the challenges of keep farming and forestry sustainable in Gouldsboro, attributing them in part to several factors. It stated that residential subdivision activity has meant that several small woodlots are no longer being actively managed for their timber. Selective harvesting of coastal lots, which have shallow soils, has resulted in increased blowdowns; demand for timber products is changing rapidly; and long-term planning of woodlots is lacking.

The Plan stated that the Town was heavily forested at the time of publication, with 71% of the town's acreage having medium to very high productivity ratings. Historical aerials taken by the USDA attest to this. Concern was expressed over various forest pests and some timber harvesting practices. It stated timber farming was mostly for pulpwood and very few saw logs were cut.

The 2005 plan also stated that Gouldsboro was not a major farming community despite past efforts to revitalize Hancock County agriculture, for example through programs to assist beginning farmers. Farming in 2005 was a very minor part of the overall Gouldsboro economy.

#### **4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results**

Survey results indicated that most respondents strongly supported preserving and continuing farming and forestry traditions. Seventy-nine percent were in favor of continued agriculture or forestry-related development in Gouldsboro in the next 10 years, and 86% indicated they believed preserving existing agricultural land is either important or very important. Additionally, nearly 96% of respondents indicated maintaining the ‘rural character’ of Gouldsboro is important.

Over 49% of respondents were in favor of zoning for agricultural and forestry-related land use in designated areas, while almost 31% of respondents said it should occur anywhere without regulation.

Approximately half felt it was extremely or very important to have a climate change plan, while 23% rated it somewhat important and almost 29% rated it as not so important or not important at all.

#### **5. Agricultural Resources**

##### **5.1. Historic Information**

Gouldsboro was first settled in the area now called West Gouldsboro, which became Gouldsboro’s first village and was originally called the Gouldsboro Plantation. Gouldsboro was incorporated in 1789. The Gouldsboro census of 1790 shows Thomas Frazer as owning and operating a salt works company that sold salt to passing ships at what is now called Frazer Point.

Although many researchers believed that Gouldsboro records were lost in the 1883 fire at the Old Town House, somewhere records did survive and were microfilmed in 1950 and stored at the Maine State Library. The Town’s 19<sup>th</sup> century economy consisted of a flour mill, two grist mills, a shingle mill, a spool-lumber mill, a sawmill and a lobster canning establishment. There were also eight incorporated companies. Gouldsboro consisted of twelve public school houses with a population of 1,880 of 1,824. The 19<sup>th</sup> century community was a town of working fishermen, farmers, and summer visitors. Early farming was sustainable; mostly for individual household sustenance and neighborly exchange, with a focus on hay and cattle and livestock which provided milk, meat, manure, leather, and the means for transportation and hauling. Cattle, horse and oxen moved rocks and plowed farmers' fields, especially in the northern villages from Ashville to Gouldsboro Point. Farmwives kept kitchen gardens and flocks of poultry for eggs and meat.

Agriculture was a basic fact of life, necessary for family and community sustenance. From 1850-1870 land cleared and cultivated for agricultural use varied from an average of 23-40 acres per farm, comprising an estimated 19%-33% of the town’s total acreage. Most small farmsteads had pigs, cows,

made butter and produced potatoes for the market. Smaller scale production farming began in the area once the nearby region was largely self-sufficient.

Forest land was lost, and stream flow was disrupted but hills were soon reforested, as degraded pastures grew back up to spruce, fir and pine. Too much farming pushed the land to its limits; Maine was farming 6.5 million acres in the 1880s. The landscape across much of Maine during that period was basically devoid of trees, except for orchards. Land was often cleared right up to the banks, streams, ponds and oceans. Pastures were often over-grazed, and crops worked with little regard for soil conservation. As a result, we depleted much of our topsoil and despoiled our waterways, and we do not have much suitable land for farming in Gouldsboro<sup>5</sup>.

## 5.2. Current Conditions

Crops and products from Gouldsboro include vegetables, fruits, small-scale home-based operations informally selling maple syrup, and chicken and duck eggs.

The Farmland and Open Space Tax Law (Title 36 of Maine Revised Statutes, Sub-section (§§) 1101-1121) provides tax incentives for property owners who have parcels over five acres that meet certain conditions, such as providing a minimum income of \$2,000 from agricultural production. State records from Maine Revenue Services show that while acres enrolled in the Farmland tax incentive program have fluctuated, the total amount has more than tripled since 2009, reaching 111 acres in 2022. The number of parcels enrolled has risen from one in 2009 to five in 2022.

**Table K-1: Change in Farmland Taxation Parcels in Gouldsboro**

Year	Number of Parcels	Farmland Acres	Valuation Farmland
2009	1	30	\$6,900
2010	1	52	\$12,000
2011	1	52	\$12,000
2012	1	26	\$5,980
2013	5	113	\$69,100
2014	5	113	\$69,100
2015	4	49	\$11,270
2016	4	93	\$49,300
2017	4	113	\$69,100
2018	4	93	\$49,110
2019	5	93	\$49,100
2020	4	93	\$49,100
2021	4	93	\$49,100
2022	5	111	\$71,400

Sources: Maine Revenue Service, 2009-2022, Gouldsboro Tax Assessor, 2022

## 5.3. Planning for the Future

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) provides national level soil survey data and an analysis of soils best suited for agricultural production. This data is further analyzed by Maine's Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry (DACF), providing an accurate account of the soil

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.maineFarmlandtrust.org/public-outreach-new/reclaiming-maines-lost-farmland/>



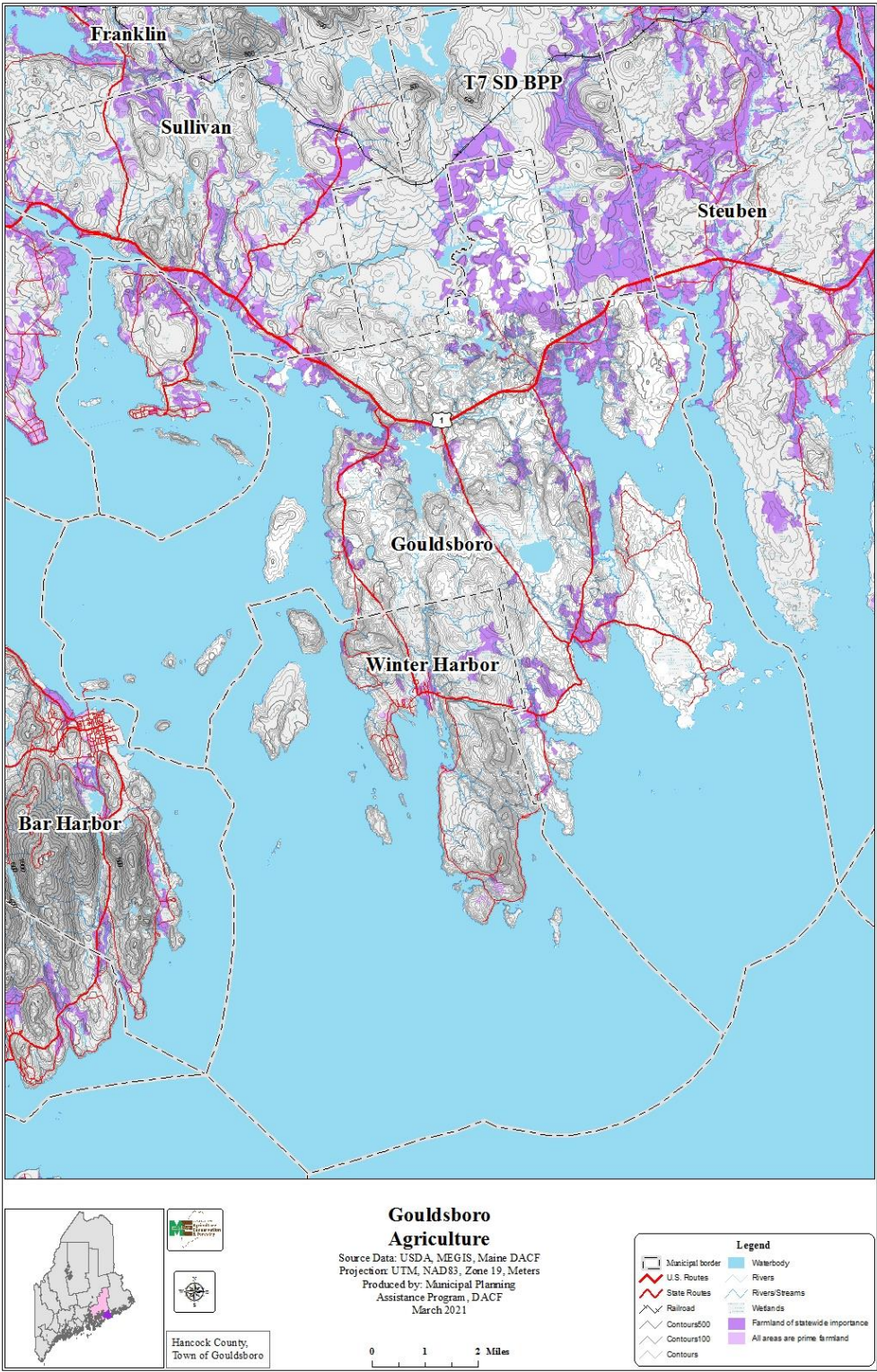
types and conditions throughout Maine. The rating considers factors that include soil type, drainage, bedrock geology and amount of glacial erratic and other rock deposition in the soils. Farmland considered “Prime” has few limitations to successful farming, whereas “Farmland of State Importance” may have some limitations, but they can largely be overcome through management strategies and appropriate crop selection.

Consideration should be given to create a Local Food and Community Self-Governance Ordinance for the purpose of articulating the right of residents “to produce, process, sell, purchase and consume local foods, thus promoting self-reliance, the preservation of family farms, and local food traditions.”

#### **5.4. Agricultural Farmland in Gouldsboro**

**Climate change** will most likely change Gouldsboro’s existing and potential farmland. Heat, drought and pest infestation elsewhere in the U.S. could shift a portion of food production to more temperate parts of the country such as Maine. Climate risks in high-heat and flood-prone parts of the country might make Maine increasingly popular for residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural development. Those factors suggest that Gouldsboro should consider adopting land-use policies that balance agricultural production, residential and commercial development, and land conservation that utilizes carbon storage strategies.

Figure K2: Gouldsboro Agriculture



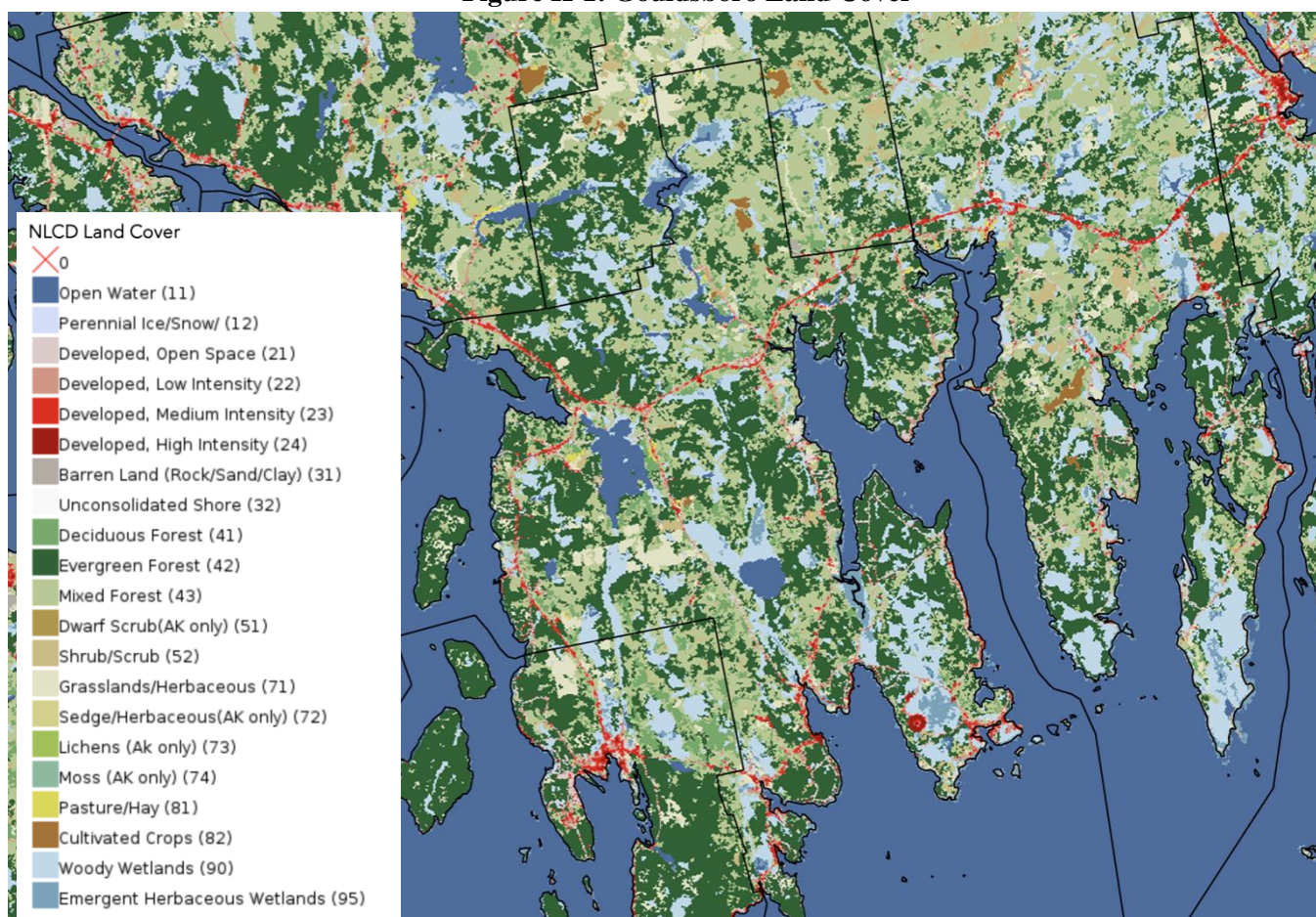


## 6. Forestry Resources

Gouldsboro is predominantly forested. Forests provide important ecological benefits, including temperature modulation, carbon storage, recreation opportunities and wildlife habitat. Farms and forests are connected across our landscape here in Maine. Most importantly, the forests protect water, both quantity and quality, crucial for private water supply, healthy streams and lakes, and coastal marine ecosystems. Preserved forests are also useful for recreation and tourism in Gouldsboro.

Gouldsboro's forests are a mix of temperate deciduous and northern coniferous species. This diversity is not necessarily simply an act of nature. It can also be a result of human intervention. Activities such as sustainable farming, responsibly managed timber harvesting, farming, and other human activity can have a positive impact on local plant ecology. Species diversity is normally considered a stabilizing force against future environmental change.

**Figure K-1: Gouldsboro Land Cover**



Source: U.S. Geological Survey (2021)

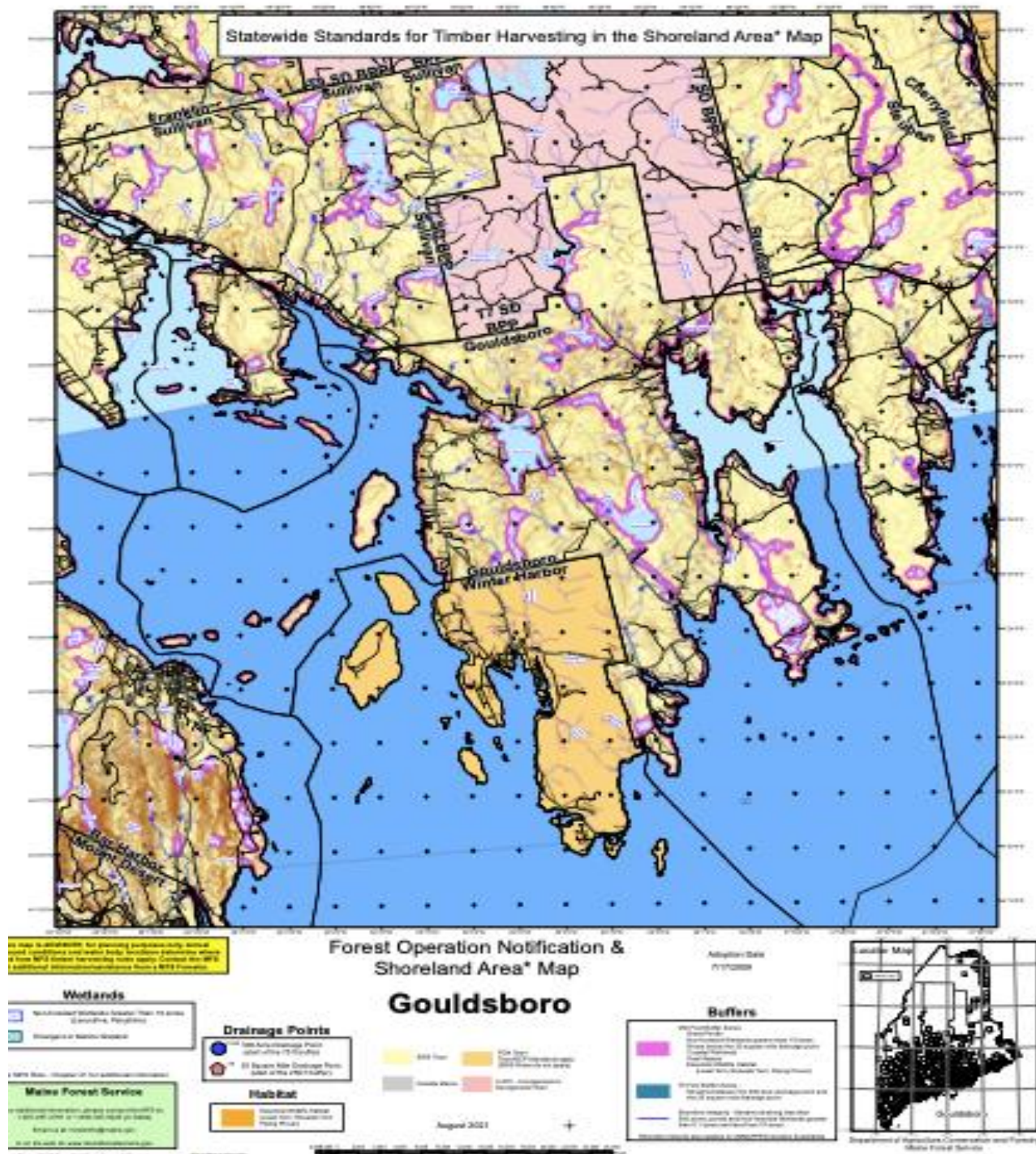
Ground condition and water body locations determine where and how MFS timber harvesting rules apply as shown on Gouldsboro's Forest Operation Notification & Shoreland Area Map, Figure K-4

below. According to the Hancock County Soil Analysis, there are 65,209 acres out of 1,587 square miles in Hancock County that are not prime farmland. Hancock County's farmland is very fragmented.

Maine lacks large tracts of contiguous, productive farmland. Unlike the midwestern United States, the best soils for farming are patchy and scattered. Additionally, much of the land is mountainous, covered in forest, or marshy.

**Figure K4: Gouldsboro Forest Operation Notification & Shoreland Area Map**



**Figure K-2: Gouldsboro Forest Operation Notification & Shoreland Area Map**

Source: Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry-Maine Forest Service, August 2021

### 6.1. Agriculture/Forestry Resource Threat Analysis

Gouldsboro has not experienced large-scale clearcutting of its forests within recent decades. Particularly vulnerable are abandoned farmland and old forest clear cuts that have grown rapidly into even-age stands of softwoods now reaching or past maturity and subject to insect damage. This has resulted in

some timber stands subject to blowdowns, which are not only unsightly but also a fire hazard. Individual landowners are faced with a serious and costly management problem on these parcels. Climate change also poses potential future threats to forest resources. These include an increase in invasive species, increased pathogenic diseases, and new types of insect infestations. Sustained high heat events due to climate change weaken species adapted to colder year-round climates.

Given recent development trends, it is likely that some smaller woodlots will be subdivided into residential lots. Larger parcels more viable for commercial forestry are less likely to be subdivided. A possible threat to Gouldsboro's forests may be over-harvesting. Presently, the town has no timber harvesting standards in its ordinances and staff reductions at the Maine Forest Service have meant that there is less technical assistance available to local landowners to assist them in the management of their properties. Furthermore, the lack of timber harvesting standards could lead to increased erosion and thus affect water quality.

## 6.2. Tree Growth Tax Program

Table K-2 summarizes Tree Growth Taxation Parcel information from 2009 to 2022. As of 2022 there were 13 parcels held in Maine's Tree Growth Taxation program. Although this is a 50% reduction in the number of parcels and plots from 2009, the total overall acreage in the Tree Growth program has only decreased by 16% in the past decade in this timeframe.

The Tree Growth Tax program was enacted into law in 1972 to help Maine landowners maintain their property as productive woodlands, and to broadly support Maine's wood products industry. Enrollment requires that landowners have at least 10 acres managed primarily for production of commercial forest products, and that landowners adopt a professionally prepared Forest Management and Harvesting Plan. There are tax penalties for withdrawing the land from the program. Not all forest land is held in Tree Growth taxation, which assesses land at its value as forest rather than at its developed value.

**Table K-2: Tree Growth Parcels in Gouldsboro (Acres)**

Year	# of Parcels	Softwood	Mixed Wood	Hardwood	Total
2009	26	1,014	1,339	449	2,801
2010	23	981	1,709	183	2,872
2011	24	953	1,747	158	2,859
2012	22	911	1,555	100	2,567
2013	20	848	1,506	163	2,518
2014	20	838	1,524	155	2,517
2015	19	663	1,668	145	2,476
2016	19	661	1,666	144	2,472
2017	19	661	1,666	144	2,472
2018	20	703	1,771	105	2,580
2019	19	877	1,691	118	2,687
2020	15	970	1,542	118	2,631
2021	12	970	1,542	118	2,631
2022	13	819	1,365	145	2,329

*Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary, 2009-2022*

As with most rural towns in Maine, some Gouldsboro landowners may occasionally harvest timber commercially on their land. The Maine Forest Service keeps track of commercial harvests as part of the Forest Practices Act. This law largely prevents “liquidation harvesting” (clearcutting with an intent to sell the land afterward), encourages practices that promote regeneration, and generally protects the health of the forest, an important resource for the state. To implement this law, the Maine Forest Service requires various permits and keeps track of harvest by municipality. Table K-3 shows the recorded harvest for Gouldsboro from 2000-2018.

**Table K-3: Summary of Timber Harvest Information for Gouldsboro (Acres), 2000-2018**

Year	Selection Harvest	Shelterwood Harvest	Clearcut Harvest	Total Harvest	Change of Land Use	# of Active Notifications
2000	516	0	0	516	5	39
2001	334	0	0	334	0	21
2002	365	0	0	365	2	20
2003	164	0	0	164	0	15
2004	475	0	0	475	20	17
2005	86	65	0	151	0	18
2006	241	15	0	256	0	21
2007	192	90	0	282	5	20
2008	256	3	0	259	0	17
2009	368	0	0	368	0	20
2010	220	30	23	273	0	14
2011	136	60	0	196	0	13
2012	335	155	0	490	0	7
2013	135	0	0	135	25	4
2014	101	0	0	101	0	8
2015	67	0	143	210	0	6
2016	85	0	244	329	0	8
2017	283	173	159	615	4	19
2018	90	0	8	98	0	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,449</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>5,617</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>300</b>
Average	234	31	30	296	3	16

*Source: Maine Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry*

## 7. Farmland and Open Space in Gouldsboro

The Farm and Open Space Act provides for open space classification, which can be used to protect forests and other areas. There are no minimum parcel size requirements or income metrics. However, the property must meet conditions of providing a public benefit. There is a long list of such public benefits that help to qualify a parcel which can be found through the Maine Revenue Service Property Tax Division. The amount of the tax benefit depends on how the land is classified: “Ordinary” open space, Public Access, Permanently Protected, Forever Wild, or Managed Forest. Public Access results in the greatest tax benefit to the landowner, but it is important to understand that not all parcels in the Open Space program permit public access. If a tax benefit has been granted, there are financial penalties for withdrawing the land from the program.

In the Farmland program, the property owner is required to have at least five contiguous acres in their parcel of land. The land must be used for farming, agriculture or horticulture and can include woodland and wasteland. Additionally, the parcel must contribute at least \$2,000 gross income from farming activities each year. The Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry prepares a valuation guideline for municipalities, which results from studies based on suggested values using a correlation from income stream and market data attributable to agricultural enterprise. If the property no longer qualifies as farmland, then a penalty will be assessed. The penalty is equal to the taxes that would have been paid in the last five years if the property had not been in farmland, less the taxes that were paid, plus any interest on that balance. [OBJ]

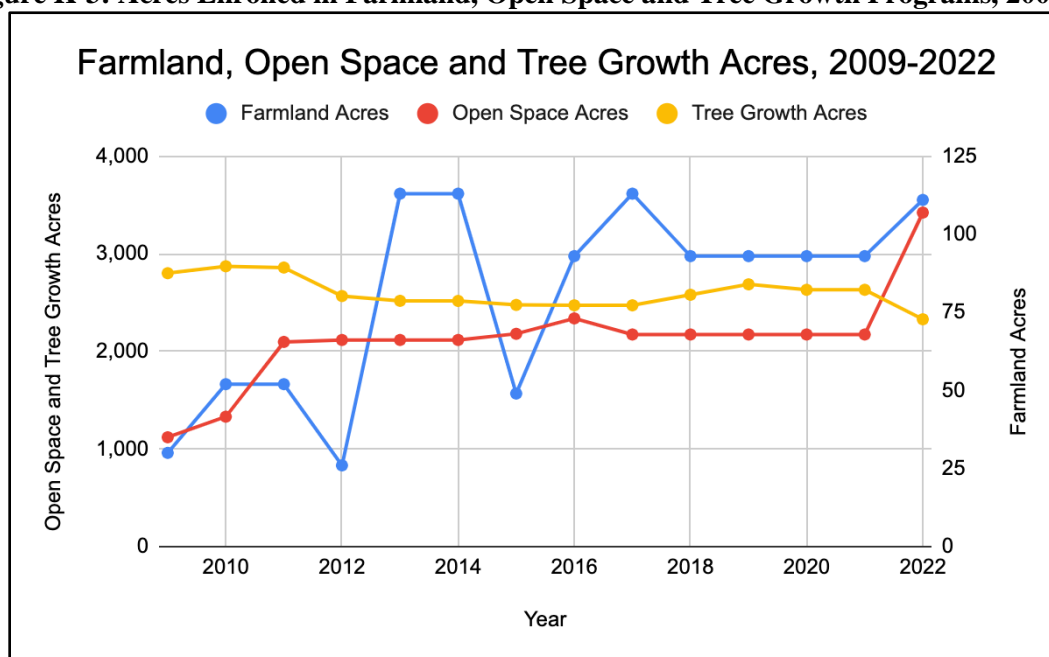
Table K-4 shows that in Gouldsboro, the numbers of parcels and acreage enrolled in both the Farmland and Open Space programs have increased since 2009.

**Table K-4: Open Space, Tree Growth & Farmland Tax Incentive Program Acres, 2009-2022**

Year	Farmland		Open Space		Tree Growth	
	# of Parcels	Acres	# of Parcels	Acres	# of Parcels	Acres
2009	1	30	14	1,120	26	2,801
2010	1	52	14	1,331	23	2,872
2011	1	52	19	2,097	24	2,859
2012	1	26	18	2,117	22	2,567
2013	5	113	18	2,117	20	2,518
2014	5	113	18	2,117	20	2,517
2015	4	49	19	2,180	19	2,476
2016	4	93	20	2,338	19	2,472
2017	4	113	23	2,173	19	2,472
2018	4	93	19	2,173	20	2,580
2019	5	93	19	2,173	19	2,687
2020	4	93	19	2,173	15	2,631
2021	4	93	28	2,173	12	2,631
2022	5	111	30	3,422	13	2,329

*Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary, 2009-2022*



**Figure K-3: Acres Enrolled in Farmland, Open Space and Tree Growth Programs, 2009-2022**

## 8. Measures to Protect Farmland, Forest Land and Open Space

Since Gouldsboro does not have town-wide zoning, the protection of farm and forested areas is presently left to market forces. Some towns have enacted farm and forestry districts in which relatively large lot sizes or other density limitations are set and the use of cluster development is encouraged. Other communities have worked with local land conservation groups to encourage the donation or sale of conservation easements to protect productive farm and forest lands from development. An easement is a restriction whereby the landowner agrees to maintain the parcel in an undeveloped state. Easements are recorded in the property's deed and are permanent. Some farmers who may not wish to develop their land but who need money may be interested in selling an easement.

Gouldsboro is not currently taking regulatory, or non-regulatory steps to protect farming and forestry lands. Local and regional land trusts are not actively working to protect productive farming and forestry lands. The prime objectives of Gouldsboro's local land trusts, Frenchman Bay Conservancy and Maine Coast Heritage Trust, is to preserve land for aesthetic, recreation and habitat value.

Darthia Farm is under easement with Frenchman Bay Conservancy. It is one of the first properties they put under easement in 1993 and is restricted for public use, meaning the owners still retain their property and can restrict access on their working farm. Another parcel of land was put under easement in 2020 by Maine Coast Heritage Trust; the parcel is noted as a working forest. No other land trust parcels have known conservation restrictions.

**Checklist - Does the community have town or public woodlands under management, or that would benefit from forest management?**

Checklist - A description of any community farming and forestry activities (e.g. community garden, farmer's market, or community forest).

Checklist - Does the community support community forestry or agriculture (i.e. small woodlots, community forests, tree farms, community gardens, farmers' markets, or community-supported agriculture)? If so, how?

## 9. Climate Change

The Maine Climate Council's 2020 report, *Scientific Assessment of Climate Change and Its Effects in Maine*, summarizes climate change's principal impacts on Maine agriculture as:

- Longer growing season and northward shift in plant hardiness zones
- Early Spring Warm-up Increases Frost/Freeze Risk
- More Frequent or Intense Heat Waves
- More Frequent Intense Downpours
- More Frequent and Longer Dry Spells

How individual farms are impacted by this increased variability will vary. From a town planning standpoint the key points are that agriculture will change and that, with change, it can still be an important part of the town's economy.

The same Climate Council study reports that changes in temperature, growing season, and increased drought will, when impacting forests, result in:

- Transition from spruce-fir forest to hardwoods
- Increased tree mortality due to migration of pests because of warmer winters
- Overall increased fire risk

As with farming, the key take-away for planning purposes is that things will change more quickly than in the past.

## 10. Regional Issues

As with all neighboring towns in Hancock County, threats from climate change and invasive plant and animal species are on the rise. Towns on the Schoodic Peninsula will need to coordinate to protect vital forest habitats and canopy covers so as not to create large habitat gaps that ultimately undermine the wider biodiversity of the region. Protection of farmland is also a regional issue, which is likely to become even more important for local food security.

## 11. Goals & Objectives - Agricultural, Forestry, and Open Space Resources

<p><b>GOAL:</b> Gouldsboro will preserve agricultural and forested land for the benefit of future generations and promote increased local agricultural activity to ensure food security and sovereignty which also includes</p>
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fisheries. adopting land-use policies that balance agricultural production, residential and commercial development, and land conservation that utilizes carbon storage strategies.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party(ies)	Timeline
Propose local ordinances that address the above goal	Research similar towns and their approaches to find appropriate models for Gouldsboro. Have community discussions, draft ordinances for approval.	Select Board and/or their Designee(s). Hancock County Soil & Water Conservation District (HCSWCD), Gouldsboro Shore Project	Immediate and ongoing
Create a volunteer Agriculture Conservation and Enhancement Committee (ACEC)	Engage local stakeholders (farmers, non-profits, food related business) to study the opportunities and threats to the farmland resource: make recommendations in concert with Climate Change groups, Housing Groups and Planning Board	Select Board	Immediate and ongoing
Research and educate the community about threats posed by climate change and other environmental factors	Coordinate between local farmers and foresters, with the Gouldsboro Shore Project	Select Board, Gouldsboro Shore Project and/or Climate Change Committee	Immediate & ongoing
Propose potential impacts to farmland and forest cover posed by increased residential or commercial development	Work with Planning Board, HCPC and HCSWCD to assess propped development impacts and effectiveness of current subdivision ordinance.	Select Board, Planning Board, HCPC, HCSWCD	Immediate & Ongoing
Protect local agriculture and forestry industry in Gouldsboro	Ensure “right to farm” and “right to harvest timber” policies are in place to limit nuisance complaints by existing potential development.	Select Board, Planning Board, ACEC	Immediate and ongoing
Support local agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry in Gouldsboro	Promote local producers and farmers markets at a regional and statewide level, particularly through the Acadia Gateway Center and other tourism resources - promoting Agri-tourism.	Select Board, HCPC, Downeast Acadia Regional Tourism, interested Farmers Market Groups, local fishermen, ACEC.	Immediate & Ongoing
Optimize economic use of farmland.	Identify opportunities for fallow farmland to be put back into productive use for crops that increase food security and agriculture-employment	Select Board, Planning Board, HCPC, HCSWCD, ACEC.	Immediate & ongoing

	opportunities.		
Inform landowners (particularly new residents) on the agriculture and forestry resources of their parcels.	Develop a pamphlet with this objective, which describes the benefits of understanding what their parcel has to offer and listing sources of more information and professional assistance. Publicize and circulate the pamphlet.	Planning Board, HCSWCD, ACEC, Soil Conservation Service	Immediate and ongoing
Consideration should be given to create a Local Food and Community Self-Governance Ordinance	Have community discussions and research other communities that have followed this path with success.	Select Board and Planning Board	Immediate/within 1 year

## Chapter L: Climate Change Adaptation

### 1. Background

As a fishing community, Gouldsboro and its leadership knew the sea was rising and the ocean was getting warmer. They knew that species makeup in the ocean and on mudflats was changing. So, the town submitted a proposal to the Maine Coastal Program in May 2021 to hire FB Environmental to do a climate vulnerability assessment and to initiate new town programs to preserve shore access and make coastal issues more visible within the community.

An extraordinary storm on June 9 of that year brought climate change risks into a new, sharper focus. The storm dropped more than 6 inches of rain on the hills above Prospect Harbor in a little over an hour. As water moved from the tops of the hills into gullies that converged into streams and then a torrent, the force of the water and the debris it picked up tore out the culverts under State Route 186 in Birch Harbor and washed them into the harbor. Gouldsboro was cut in half for three weeks.

**Figure X-X: Birch Harbor Bridge, June 2021**



*Photo Credit: Natasha Fouch*

FB Environmental delivered the *Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan* in October 2022 and joined the town in an afternoon workshop at Peninsula School in Prospect Harbor in May 2023 to present the plan while also opening discussions about broader community issues such as food insecurity and the need for workforce housing and widely available broadband. The workshop was a come-when-you-can open house. Seventy people participated; the average participation duration was about an hour and a half.

## **2. The Coastal Resilience Committee – A Holistic Approach to Adaptation**

During the fall of 2023 Gouldsboro joined Maine’s Community Resilience Partnership and formed the town’s Coastal Resilience Committee (CRC). The committee’s charter and role within the town’s organizational structure reflects Gouldsboro’s holistic approach to coastal and climate resilience. Climate change affects all town activities, including harbors, roads, emergency services, land use, planning, and town finances. Consequently, the CRC works collaboratively with town staff such as the Harbor Master, Code Enforcement Officer, and Town Manager, as well as with other committees and the Planning Board. In these interactions, the CRC’s principal role is as a liaison between the town and State initiatives and funding opportunities. Much of the committee’s focus is on writing proposals that enable Gouldsboro to act on the recommendations in the 2022 *Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan* and on managing coastal resilience projects that get funded.

Unlike the town’s Planning Board and Harbor Committee, the Coastal Resilience Committee does not develop or enforce town ordinances. That work is done by other boards and committees. The CRC exists to facilitate that work regarding coastal and climate change and connect it to state and federal programs. The goal is to support the development of consistent, interconnected, and internally coherent approaches to climate adaptation across all the town’s programs and activities.

The structure of this comprehensive plan reflects that holistic approach. Apart from the brief description of the CRC’s role in this Chapter, climate change adaptation considerations are spread across the plan rather than presented as something separate.

## Chapter M: Current Land Use

### 1. Purpose

This section discusses current land use patterns in Gouldsboro. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Summarizes the amount of developed and undeveloped land in terms of estimated acreage and location;
- b. Discusses recent changes in Gouldsboro's land use and how these might affect future land use.

### 2. Key Findings and Issues

Gouldsboro has remained rural, a result of both history and preference. Thus far the Town's land use and development, as pursued by its inhabitants, has preserved the rural and scenic nature of the Town, and enabled a strong sense of community, and vital ongoing economic and cultural activities. Gouldsboro continues to experience residential development along the coastline, and along major transportation routes in the interior areas and villages of town, including U.S. 1 and along Routes 195 (Pond Road) & 186 (West Bay Road, Main Street and South Gouldsboro Road).

Major concerns exist about the ability for long-time residents to remain in Town with increasing land prices and increasing tax valuations as new residents demand more services. Residents face concerns about potential large-scale commercial and industrial uses that could impact residential quality of life and strain town resources. They overwhelmingly support maintaining the small-town character and charm. Maintaining the working waterfront is vital to the community.

There is also a growing concern as to how climate change will affect Gouldsboro's shoreline. The Select Board created the Gouldsboro Coastal Resilience Committee (CRC) in August of 2023 to create a list of the most pressing coastal resilience actions, conduct vulnerability studies, search out funding opportunities and to work with stakeholders to help develop proposals to secure needed funding.

### 3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan

Only 24% of new construction from 1990 to 1991 had occurred in the villages. This demonstrates that they have not been particularly successful as growth areas. Most new developments had taken place either adjacent to the shore or along major highways. Issues the town faced were continued development along major highways and the shoreland zoning areas.

The 2005 Plan found that the villages were in need of enhancements and suggested that the Town work with the MaineDOT Local Roads Center for assistance in conducting street assessments as part of the overall road improvement program and to include these road projects in the capital improvement program.



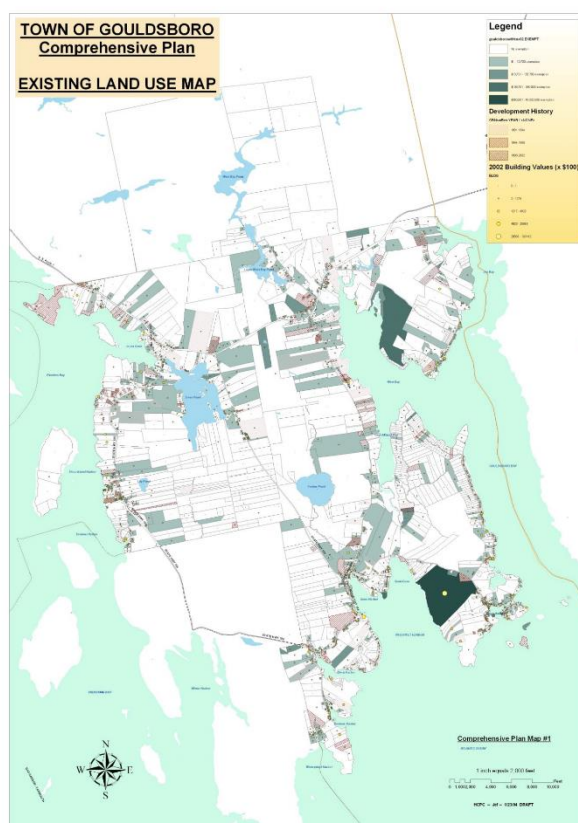
#### 4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results

60.5% of survey respondents do not think that the current land use controls, such as shoreland zoning and site-review ordinances provide enough protection. When asked if the Town should consider town wide zoning, 50.0% percent said yes, 40.0% said no and 10% said “other” with additional comments.

#### 5. Current Land Use Patterns

Gouldsboro is still a predominantly rural town with a total area of approximately 99.0 square miles, of which roughly 46.2 square miles is land and 52.8 square miles is water.

**Figure M-1: Existing Land Use**



#### Overview:

Gouldsboro’s land use pattern continues to be rural in nature and low-density. In recent years, the seasonal portion of the total population has increased significantly. Seasonal housing is continually growing in Gouldsboro as well as on the peninsula. With the popularity of rural Maine as a destination vacation area, this trend could continue. The most densely populated areas continue to be the shorelines and established villages throughout Gouldsboro. Development typically occurs on a lot-by-lot basis.

#### The Coastline:



The coast continues to be a popular attraction for visitors to Maine and for those seeking either seasonal homes, new homes or retirement homes. Despite projected sea level rise, development along the coast of Main is continuing. The state mandated Shoreland Zoning Ordinance regulates various factors of development along the coastline as well as interior waters, such as setbacks from the shoreline and riparian zones. It also regulates how much timber can be harvested in these zones, and the size of development in square footage for a house and/or building in certain settings designated as “Resource Protection” (RP).

#### The Villages:

Gouldsboro’s historical context provided for moderately dense habitation in the villages. The town has many historically separate fishing villages, summer colonies and communities including Birch Harbor, Prospect Harbor, South Gouldsboro, West Gouldsboro, Summer Harbor, Wonsqueak Harbor, Bunker’s Harbor, Chicken Mill, Jones Pond, Westbay and Corea. When created these rural villages followed a land use pattern common to many rural New England and Maine villages and towns. Each village provided social life and interaction and typically included a school, a church, a post office and one or more retail stores, and possibly small community centers.

Through the years, these villages have seen a decline in resources located within their centers as they have been forced to band together for economic reasons. The Peninsula Elementary School, which is located in Gouldsboro, is shared with Winter Harbor. The Community Center on the Pond Road is the main meeting place for events and voting and is also an emergency shelter for the area. MC’s Marketplace was the only local market close to the villages until Harborside opens in Fall/Winter of 2024. Young’s Market remains on Route One.

While it is possible to take measures to improve the attractiveness of Gouldsboro’s villages, the challenges addressing the lack of public sewer and water system still remain. Given the town’s groundwater problems and the proximity of homes in the village areas, there is a limit to the density of development in the villages. Exploring options to develop joint growth strategies with the neighboring town of Winter Harbor’s public sewer and water systems could be considered.

#### Routes 195 & 186:

State Routes 195 & 186 are the only collector routes through the town. State Route 186 is a sixteen-mile-long state highway serving the town, running in a half-loop from U.S. Route 1, south and east along the southern coast to Winter Harbor and then returning to US 1. State Route 195 is also part of Maine’s system of state highways, running entirely in Gouldsboro for a length of 8.09 miles. It travels from an intersection with Corea Road and Crowley Island Road in Corea to an intersection with U.S. Route 1. Development, primarily single-family residential, is scattered along these highways, which also run through several of the Town’s village centers that contain additional commercial development and town services.

Add more/other?

## 6. 6Acreage of Developed Land

Table L-1 shows the amount of developed land in Gouldsboro. According to town records, there are currently 5,891.75 acres restricted from development. Of those restricted, 2,329 are in tree growth, 111 are farmland, and 3,422 are considered as open space.

This analysis shows acres are already either “developed” or restricted, leaving XX,XXX acres or about XX% of the land in Gouldsboro “available for development”.

**Table X-X:**

Description	Number of Dwelling Units or Parcels	Calculated Acreage	Percent of Total
<i>Developed Land:</i>			
Year Round Residential	910 Dwelling Units	xxx	(2020)
Seasonal Residential	516 Dwelling Units	xxx	(2020)
<b>Total Residential</b>	1,426 Dwelling Units	xxx	(2020)
Commercial	xx Parcels	xxx	
Public/Institutional	xx Parcels	xxx	
<b>Total Non-Residential</b>	xx Parcels	xxx	
<b>Total Developed Land</b>		xxxx	
<i>Protected Land that Cannot Be Developed:</i>			
Farmland	5 Parcels	111	(2022)
Tree Growth	13 Parcels	2,329	(2022)
Open Space	30 Parcels	3,422	(2022)
Other conservation*	xx Parcels	xxx	
State Owned	Sancutary?? xx Parcels	xxxx 6,453 Greg doesn't know where this number came from)	
<b>Total Protected</b>	xxx Parcels	xxxx	
<b>Total Developed plus Protected Land</b>		xxxx	
<b>Total Land “Available for Development”</b>		xxxxxx	
*“Other conservation” includes land held in conservation easements or owned by conservation organizations, but <i>not</i> enrolled in one of the tax incentive programs.			
Source for Protected Land: Town tax records. Parcels in “other conservation” from records of Maine Coast Heritage Trusts. This table uses the total acreage for each parcel. In actuality, the portion protected may be less than 100%. Source for developed land: Maine Office for GIS (meGIS) - assessed properties (insert year) database with QGIS Field Calculator Area Analysis.			

Land that is privately protected through private restrictive covenants and conservation easements has development restrictions that may not be fully known at this time. It is possible that some limited development can occur on some of these parcels. Conversely, there are development restrictions on land that may not be listed as protected in the above table. Parcels not coded for indicated uses could be

considered existing (or potential) residential or commercial areas, depending on soil suitability, topography and other factors relating to successful development.

It is important to note that a given parcel (particularly some of the larger parcels) may contain several categories of current use. For example, a parcel containing a protected wetland may have existing residences outside of the wetland. Similarly, a parcel designated agricultural may contain a home-based commercial bed & breakfast. Some locations of current home-based businesses may be known but are difficult to track with one hundred percent accuracy as there is no permit needed through the town. Home-based businesses may include store-front businesses established in a residence, B and B's, consultants, architects, and other professionals that represent a significant portion of Gouldsboro's economy. It is likely that only a fraction of these businesses are known and may become more numerous as improved broadband makes telecommuting feasible.

**46.1 sq miles = 29,504 acres - 6,453= 23,051**

**980 acres Forbes Pond - (Maine Coast Heritage Trust)**

**121 acres Stave Island - (Maine Coast Heritage Trust)**

**438 acres Frances B Wood (Frenchman's Bay Conservancy)**

**65 acres - Taft Point (Frenchman's Bay Conservancy)**

**600 acres - Northern Corea Heath (Frenchman's Bay Conservancy)**

**250 acres - Corea Heath**

**576 acres -Upper West Bay Pond (Frenchman's Bay Conservancy)**

**120 acres - Lower West Bay Pond**

**135 acres - Grand Marsh Bay**

**2.6 Day Ridges (Frenchman's Bay Conservancy)**

**68 acres - Taft Point (Frenchman's Bay Conservancy)**

**3,100 acres Maine Coastal Islands NWR (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (gov.)**

Table L-1 is a summary of permits pulled for new development only. How many built?

Table X-X: Gouldsboro Building Permits, 2017-2023

Year	New Homes	Home Additions	Garages	Decks/ Porches	Sheds	Other	Totals
2017	10	4	6	15	9	28	72
2018	11	10	13	11	20	13	78
2019	10	19	5	11	13	38	96
2020	16	7	4	7	-	23	57
2021	11	8	11	17	-	50	97
2022	28	15	17	16	-	52	128

2023	9	4	3	7	8	15	46
Source: Gouldsboro Town Office 2024 *New homes include new construction modular homes, mobile homes *Some years, sheds may have been categorized under other. *Other permits may consist of ground work, stairs, fill, foundation work, ramps, antennas, lean-tos, rip-raps or other miscellaneous.							

## 7. Recent Land Use Changes

Building permits for a total of 64 new dwelling units have been issued since 2020. (how many constructed??) This increase has occurred (where) coastline, (how many new subdivisions). As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic Gouldsboro experienced some real estate turnover in 2020 and 2021. Property owners may be tempted to subdivide larger parcels into small subdivisions in the near term as the market demand increases. Additionally, the popularity of short-term online rental services has increased the repurposing of existing structures and the building of new structures for additional income from short-term rentals.

## 8. Current Land Use Regulations in Gouldsboro

Gouldsboro does not presently have town-wide zoning. Its major land use ordinances are Shoreland, Subdivision, Site Plan, and Land Use ordinances. The latter sets standards for a minimum lot size and sets building permit standards. The minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet as established by Title 12 M.R.S.A., Section 4807-A. It does not restrict what land uses may locate where in town, nor does it differentiate between zones. The site plan review ordinance allows the planning board to manage the impacts of commercial and other large-scale development. As such, there is no authority to control the locations of uses outside of the shoreland zone.

The Land Use Ordinance also establishes the following:

- A. 75-foot setback from the normal high-water line of coastal waters and other waters, except as provided below.
- B. for a 100-foot setback from the normal high-water line of great ponds and rivers classified GPA.
- C. 15-foot setbacks from all abutting properties.
- D. 5-foot setback from edge of right-of-way when right-of-way can be readily established, or 35-foot setback from the centerline of the road when right-of-way cannot be readily established, unless superseded by MaineDOT setbacks.
- E. For the purpose of fire safety, no occupiable building shall have window tops exceeding 36-feet in height as measured from the lowest final grade immediately proximate to the building's foundation with final structure height not to exceed forty-feet at the peak.

Other restrictions apply in the Shoreland Zone. The Land Use Table, which can be read on Page 14 of the Shoreland Ordinance, establishes the allowance of various activities in each of the established districts: Resource Protection (RP), Limited Residential (LR), Commercial Fisheries/Maritime Activities

(CFMA), and Stream Protection (SP). The most recent change (2023) by the Planning Board (updated map forthcoming), was creating a General Development District for the Shoreland Ordinance.. Minimum Lot Standards in the Shoreland Zone are:

Table X-X: Shoreland Zone Minimum Lot Standards

		Minimum Lot Area (Sq. Ft.)	Minimum Shore Frontage (ft.)
a)	<b>Residential Dwelling per Unit</b>		
	(i) Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Tidal Areas	40,000	200
	(ii) Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Non-tidal Areas	40,000	200
b)	<b>Governmental, Institutional, Commercial, or Industrial per principal structure</b>		
	(i) Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Tidal Areas, Exclusive of Those Areas Zoned for Commercial Fisheries and Maritime Activities	40,000	200
	(ii) Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Tidal Areas Zoned for Commercial Fisheries and Maritime Activities	NONE	NONE
	(iii) Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Non-tidal Areas	60,000	300
c)	<b>Public and Private Recreational Facilities</b>		
	(i) Within the Shoreland Zone Adjacent to Tidal and Non-tidal Areas	40,000	200

The Town has been gradually strengthening its ability to regulate development. A recent amendment to the Shoreland Ordinance (when?) requires all subsurface sewage disposal systems to conform with the State of Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules and that any person performing septic repair within the shoreland zone must obtain a septic repair permit from the local plumbing inspector. Since the 2005 comprehensive plan was prepared, the Shoreland Ordinance has been revised five times with the latest revision in 2023, while the Subdivision Ordinance has been revised four times, the latest being in 2015 with plans to be reviewed again in the near future. The Site Plan Ordinance has been revised four times with the latest being in 2019, and the Land Use Ordinance has been revised nine times, most recently in 2019 and with expectations to be reviewed again by the Planning Board within the next 9-12 months.

### Floodplain Management

The town's Floodplain Management Ordinance was last amended in June 2016. The town has chosen to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and has agreed to comply with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968. Areas of special flood hazard are identified within the

Ordinance and permit review standards, development standards in areas of special flood hazard, and other guidelines are established by the Ordinance, which is consistent with state and federal standards.

### **LD 2003**

“An Act to Implement the Recommendations of the Commission to Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions,” generally referred to by its legislative tracking name of LD 2003, was signed into law by Governor Mills on April 27, 2022. This law is designed to remove unnecessary regulatory barriers to housing production in Maine, while preserving local ability to create land use plans and protect sensitive environmental resources. LD 1706, signed into law by Governor Mills on June 16, 2023, extends the implementation date of LD 2003 to January 1, 2024 for municipalities that enact ordinances by municipal officers without further action or approval by voters of the municipality and July 1, 2024 for all other municipalities, including Gouldsboro. The Town’s land use ordinances are in the process of being reviewed and updated for compliance with LD 2003.

The main parts of the law include:

- The creation of a density bonus for certain affordable housing developments in a growth area under section 4349-A of the Growth Management Act or in an area served by public water and sewer;
- A requirement that municipalities allow between two and four housing units per lot where housing is permitted; and,
- A requirement that municipalities allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to be located on the same lot as a single-family home, under certain conditions.

LD 2003 is intended to increase the production of housing in Maine, and it has the potential to accelerate residential development in Gouldsboro. It also has the potential to spur the development of affordable housing in the Town’s designated growth area. It will be important to monitor the implementation and any changes to this law in the years ahead.

### **Administrative Capacity**

Gouldsboro employs a Town Manager, a Code Enforcement Officer that also acts as the Superintendent of Infrastructure, three Deputy Town Clerks, all serving as full-time employees, a Treasurer who is part-time, as well as a part-time Assessor’s Assistant. Other town employees include the police department, fire department and EMS staff.

Capacity to manage the Town’s land use regulations is determined as adequate at this time. The Planning Board meets regularly. Any increased regulation, whether state or local, could place a greater burden on the Code Enforcement Officer and other town officials. Regional sharing or multi-town cooperation might be both financially and logistically beneficial to Gouldsboro in the future.

More/other?

## Chapter N: Future Land Use

### 1. Purpose

A Future Land Use Plan is a core component of the Comprehensive Plan that will guide Gouldsboro's future decisions on zoning, land preservation and public investments over the next decade.

Implementation of this plan will be coordinated with LD 2003 to increase housing opportunities by studying zoning and Land Use Restrictions along with any other state mandates. This law provides regulations for areas within a community that are designated Growth Areas and non-growth areas.

This section discusses likely future use patterns in Gouldsboro. An understanding of Land Use trends are particularly important in determining Gouldsboro's ability to manage future growth. Specifically, this chapter:

- a. Attempts to predict growth scenarios for the town;
- b. Identifies land areas suitable and unsuitable for potential growth over the next ten years;
- c. Describes options for growth management, and
- d. Provides a set of steps that can be taken to engage residents in the growth management process.

### 2. Key Findings and Issues

Gouldsboro's population has been on the decline since 1990, when the reported U.S. Census population was 1,986. As of 2020 the town has a reported population of 1,703. The number of dwelling units has increased in this time period from 1,158 in 1990 to 1,462 in 2020. While the population is projected to continually decrease over the next decade there are factors that could reverse this trend.

Migration pressures are changing due to factors such as climate warming, floods, wildfires, droughts, disease, and increasing numbers of people working from home, second homes, and travel lodgings. These factors increase the likelihood of migration to Gouldsboro and additional demand for housing. Units used for seasonal, recreational or occasional use have risen 15% between 2000 and 2020 and are more likely to be located in more remote coastal locations. An increase in population could likely include the following impacts:

- increase housing prices, which will reduce the availability of affordable housing;
- change seasonal dwellings to "three season" or year-round residences
- increase expectations on municipal services
- create tensions in situations where land uses are incompatible with surrounding abutters

Designation of growth areas must ensure that planned growth and development and related infrastructure are directed to areas most suitable for such growth and development. Lands that are vulnerable to flooding or impacts from increased storm events should have carefully outlined adaptation measures to mitigate negative impacts. Possible zoning may need to be considered. As critical rural and waterfront



areas most vulnerable to impacts from incompatible development continue to be identified, ordinances should be reviewed to ensure that buffers or transitions are adequate enough to avoid land use conflicts.

Gouldsboro will benefit from instituting a whole-community planning effort that discusses and prioritizes probable future land use issues as a priority, rather than waiting for population pressure that creates a critical situation. The town should draw upon the experience of community members, as well as utilize examples from other communities that have accommodated reasonable, slow growth while preserving their rural nature.

### 3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan

Most new developments have occurred along the shore. Parts of town that are not presently considered prime for development may be developed in the future. There was concern regarding development in the shorefront properties, which could threaten the working waterfront as marine -dependent uses are replaced by residential and non-marine-related users.

The combination of poor soils and limited infrastructure make it difficult for Gouldsboro to accommodate concentrations of high-density development. These limiting factors mean that the town needs to take a creative approach in designating growth areas.

### 4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results

Survey respondents had the following response rates when asked what type of development they would like to see in Gouldsboro over the next 10 years:

**What type of development would you like to see in Gouldsboro during the next 10 years? Select all that apply.**

	Yes	No
Restaurants	85.1%	14.9%
Medical	81.7%	18.3%
Agriculture/Forestry	79.1%	20.9%
Commercial (trade/service/retail)	75.7%	24.3%
Residential	75.8%	24.2%
Light Industry	71.0%	29.0%
Inns, Bed and Breakfasts, Hotels	67.0%	33.0%
Offices	52.2%	47.8%
Gas Stations	34.4%	65.6%
Development of any Kind	32.1%	67.9%
Large Scale Aquaculture	8.2%	91.8%

Heavy Industry	5.8%	94.2%
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In addition to the results above, respondents also thought that “preserving existing agricultural land should be a priority for Gouldsboro” as 47.3% noted this as very important and another 38.9% felt it was important. Other notable areas in which results favored “very important” as the majority response included preserving existing farmland (52.5%); preserving existing forest land (58.6%); protecting rivers and streams (74.3%); protecting scenic views (66.3%); protecting wetlands (67.9%); and protecting wildlife habitats (67.8%). 95.8% of survey respondents think that “maintaining the rural character of Gouldsboro is important”.

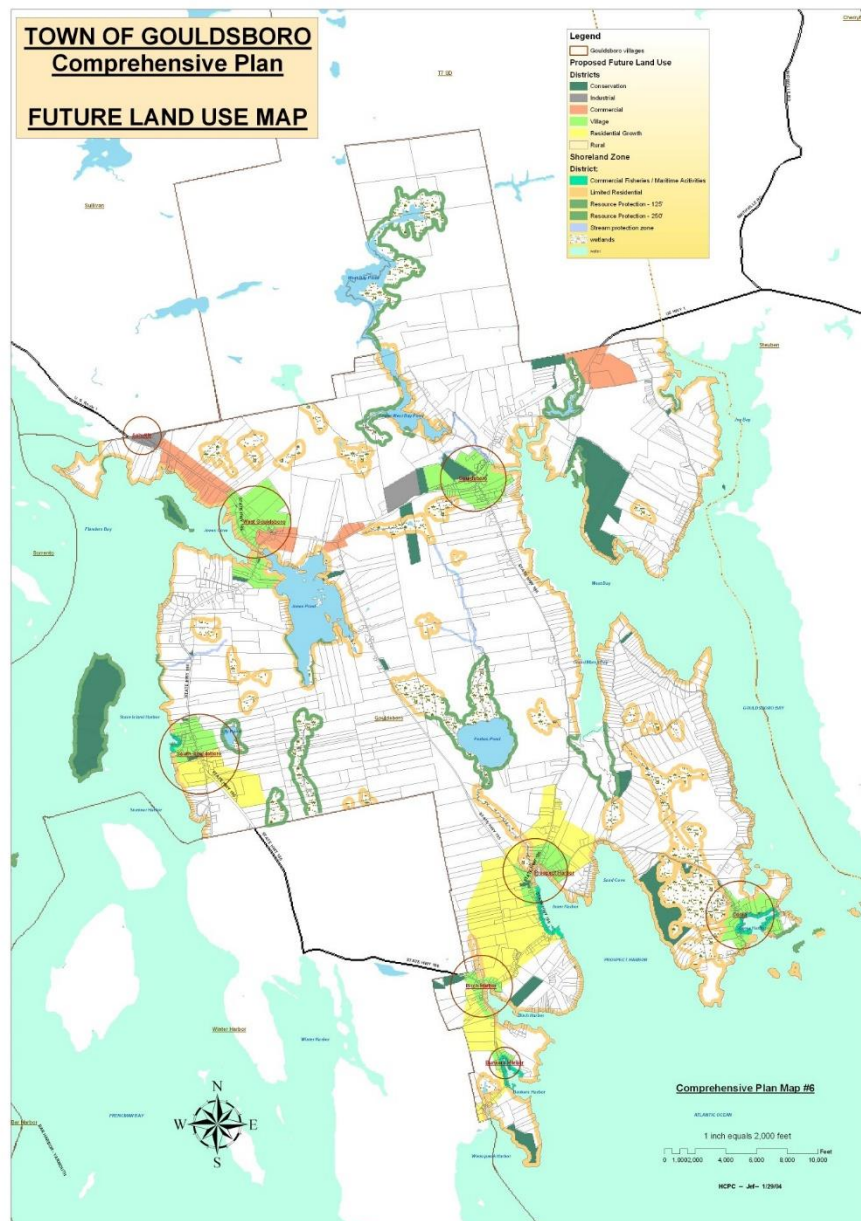
When asked where it is appropriate for certain land uses to occur, only 3.0% believe that “development of any kind” should be allowed anywhere; 45.3% feel that it should take place in designated areas while 15.5% said close to village centers and 23.7% said nowhere.

**Please select where you think it is most appropriate for the following land uses to occur:**

	ANYWHERE	IN DESIGNATED AREAS	CLOSE TO VILLAGE CENTERS	NO WHERE	NOT SURE
Development of any kind	3.02% 7	45.26% 105	15.52% 36	23.71% 55	12.50% 29
Agriculture/Forestry	30.80% 73	49.37% 117	0.84% 2	8.02% 19	10.97% 26
Commercial (trade/service/retail)	5.49% 13	43.88% 104	35.86% 85	8.44% 20	6.33% 15
Gas Stations	6.75% 16	25.32% 60	16.88% 40	41.35% 98	9.70% 23
Heavy Industry	0.86% 2	8.15% 19	1.72% 4	82.83% 193	6.44% 15
Inns, Bed and Breakfasts, Hotels	32.20% 76	31.36% 74	17.37% 41	13.14% 31	5.93% 14
Light Industry	11.54% 27	50.00% 117	9.40% 22	18.38% 43	10.68% 25
Medical	24.89% 58	30.90% 72	28.76% 67	9.87% 23	5.58% 13
Offices	14.78% 34	30.00% 69	23.04% 53	23.04% 53	9.13% 21
Residential	46.12% 107	34.05% 79	3.45% 8	9.91% 23	6.47% 15
Restaurants	30.77% 72	32.05% 75	28.63% 67	5.98% 14	2.56% 6
Large Scale Aquaculture	3.35% 8	5.44% 13	0.00% 0	84.10% 201	7.11% 17

## 5. Future Land Use Patterns

**Figure X-X: Future Land Use Map** (replace, used map from 2004 as filler)



Use this map to help in keeping/redefining growth areas

**Land Use Districts** (based on 2005 future land use map – changes?)

Shoreland Zone

Primary goal is resource protection?

## Conservation

Conserved lands? (based on 2005 future land use map – additions since?)

## Industrial

Industrial development is permitted in the upper northwest portion of Gouldsboro, north of Route 1 and south of Ashville Road, as well as in a separate area north of Route 1 and south of West Bay Pond in the upper central portion of the town.

## Commercial

Land allowing commercial development has a slightly larger footprint. This includes an area in the upper northeast portion of Gouldsboro, on both sides of Route 1 east of Chicken Mill Stream; on parcels of land along both sides of Route 1 east and west of the village of West Gouldsboro; and in an additional area along Route 1 and east of Jones Pond.

## Village

The Town has defined eight village areas– Gouldsboro, West Gouldsboro, Ashville, South Gouldsboro, Prospect Harbor, Corea, Birch Harbor, Bunkers Harbor (based on 2005 future land use map – changes? what are visions for these areas?)

## Rural

Balance of the town – development that is consistent with rural nature? Scattered residential lots? Significant parcels of undeveloped land (based on 2005 future land use map – changes? what are visions for these areas?)

## Residential Growth

Extensions of the villages of South Gouldsboro, Prospect Harbor, Birch Harbor, and Bunkers Harbor (based on 2005 future land use map – changes? is this still where residential growth is desired?)

- South of South Gouldsboro, along both sides of State Route 186
- North of Prospect Harbor – along both sides of State Route 186, both sides of Corea Road
- South/Southwest of Prospect Harbor, continuing toward Birch Harbor, west of State Route 186, does not extend south of 186 toward Prospect Point
- North of Birch Harbor, continuing toward Prospect Harbor

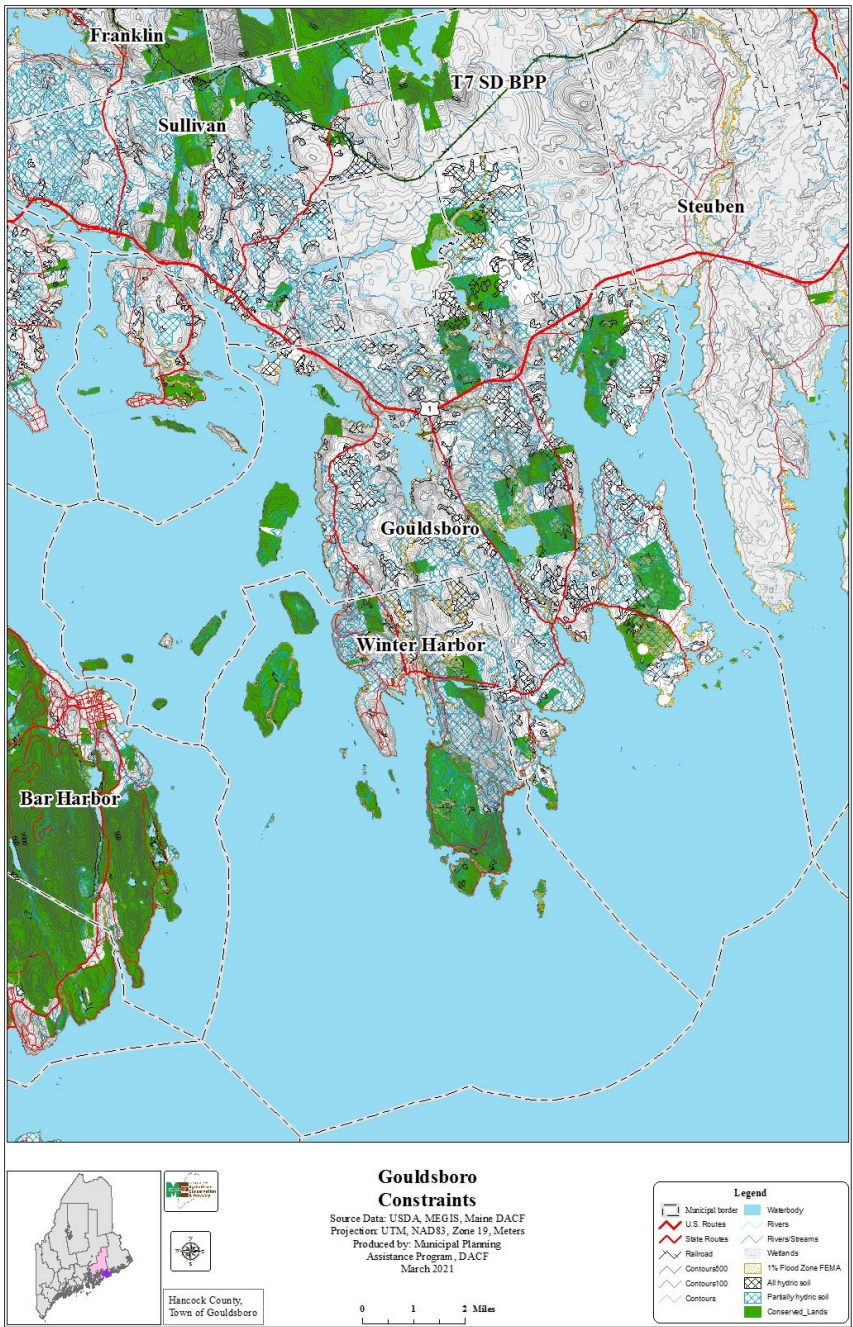
- South of Birch Harbor, continuing toward Bunkers Harbor, primarily west of Schoodic Loop Road
- South of Bunkers Harbor, along both sides of Schoodic Loop Road for a small stretch

## **6. Areas Suitable for Growth**

### **Constraints**

There are several existing environmental and natural constraints to development. Figure X-X visualizes such constraints, including conserved lands, wetlands, rivers, streams and other water bodies, flood zones, various elevations, and hydric soils. The Co-occurrence, Wetlands, and other Beginning with Habitat maps depicting natural features and areas in Chapter K, Natural Resources further visualize areas where development is not conducive or allowed. As mentioned earlier in this Plan, the lack of public water and sewer also limits development potential.

### **Figure X-X: Gouldsboro Constraints**



7. Future Development in Gouldsboro from 2023 - 2033

8. Goals & Objectives

Goal: Gouldsboro will review its existing land use regulations to determine if they conform to the desire of town residents to retain the current quality of life in the face of possible future development pressures.			
Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party(ies)	Timeline

Maintain knowledge of development trends affecting Gouldsboro and the region.	Continue to maintain a running inventory of pertinent information regarding new structures and study development trends in nearby towns.	Select Board, their designees, Planning Board, HCPC, CEO	Immediate/ongoing
Keep tax records up to date with new property values.	Annually assess Gouldsboro's taxable parcels.	Select Board Assessor	Immediate-within 1 year
Inform residents on recent development trends, with an eye toward developing consensus about future plans.	Organize public forums and community dialogue sessions to gather public input on development concerns and methods.	Select Board or their designees, Planning Board or their designees.	Immediate and ongoing.

## **Chapter O: Implementation and Evaluation Program**



## Chapter P: Regional Coordination Summary

### Local Government:

- Does Gouldsboro collaborate with other towns for protecting critical natural resources? Marine resources?

The Comprehensive Plan must recognize the importance of marine resources to the town and regional economy. Further growth and development will continue to place greater demand on the Town's harbors as recreational user numbers continue to increase. Many coastal communities including nearby Winter Harbor and the Schoodic Peninsula are facing similar issues. One regional effort underway involves a coordinated approach to revitalize the traditional alewife population in Hancock County and Maine. As with all neighboring towns in Hancock County, threats from climate change and invasive plant and animal species are on the rise. Towns on the Schoodic Peninsula will need to coordinate to protect vital forest habitats and canopy covers so as not to create large habitat gaps that ultimately undermine the wider biodiversity of the region. Protection of farmland is also a regional issue, which is likely to become even more important for local food security.

- Does Gouldsboro work closely with land trusts to preserve land in the Town or region?
  - Look in Agriculture and Forestry chapter?
- Does the Town participate in a quasi-municipal regional group?
- Does Gouldsboro partner with surrounding towns to address road maintenance?
- What about emergency services?
- Is Gouldsboro part of a regional school district?

Gouldsboro's school age educational requirements are met by Regional School Unit (RSU) 24, which serves nine communities along the Downeast coast of Maine. Specific communities served are Eastbrook, Franklin, Gouldsboro, Mariaville, Steuben, Sorrento, Sullivan, Waltham, and Winter Harbor. Peninsula School is an above average, public school located in Prospect Harbor. It has 83 students in grades PK – 5 with a student-teacher ratio of 5 to 1.

- Is the Town working with nonprofits that service the region?
- Any shared athletic or recreational facilities?

Gouldsboro benefits from regional cooperation in health and recreation. While the Town does not have many local athletic facilities, the Ellsworth YMCA offers some recreational uses to residents. Prospect Harbor Women's Club is another regional recreation center which serves as a larger community meeting place and occasional events. Gouldsboro residents are also able to access Sumner High School's athletic facilities and fields for recreation.

### Other Regional Coordination:

Gouldsboro is part of Hancock County. Though the focus of this plan is Gouldsboro it is important to consider the town's role in the larger region. Not only does Gouldsboro have an important role to play in addressing regional priorities, the town must consider how to work with other communities and regional partners to address important local goals and strategies.

Gouldsboro's economy reflects its geographic location between the larger retail and service areas of Bangor and Ellsworth which draw customers from smaller geographic areas. There is a consensus that further economic development efforts should capitalize on Gouldsboro's place in the region.

Gouldsboro's strengths in this regional context are in small-scale restaurants, food/convenience stores, home-based businesses and the areas creative arts.

Gouldsboro is a member of the Hancock County Planning Commission. The Town receives technical assistance on a variety of planning topics. This provides the town with a central location for regional coordination and integration with planning efforts by other towns in Hancock County, the Schoodic Region and throughout the State of Maine.

Open spaces and conserved lands can promote habitat connectivity that extends beyond municipal borders. Gouldsboro's natural and water resources are part of larger systems that must be stewarded in regional collaboration. The Schoodic Peninsula is bound by Gouldsboro Bay to the east and Frenchman to the west. The scenic coastal landscape is made up of dense forest, blueberry barrens, pink granite outcroppings, rocky ledges, great ponds, tidal flows, harbors, coves and fishing villages. Focus areas include Grand Marsh Bay which encompasses

## **Chapter Q: Community Engagement Summary**

## **Appendix A: Community Survey & Results**

## **Appendix B: Gouldsboro Shoreland Project Report**