

City of Biddeford
City Council - Workshop
August 30, 2022 6:00 PM Council Chambers and Virtual (Zoom)

Please click this URL to join:
<https://biddeford.zoom.us/j/97906665753?pwd=TW80SFNSQTlZzjZqd09SSUVES2FvUT09>
Webinar ID: 979 0666 5753
Passcode: 065320

Or One tap mobile:
+13126266799,,97906665753# US (Chicago)
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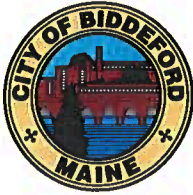
Or join by phone:
Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 646 931 3860
International numbers available: <https://biddeford.zoom.us/j/97906665753>

Status:

1. Workshop Discussion Items

- 1.1. Updates on FY 23 Valuations
 - [City Council Workshop Memo 8.30.22.pdf](#)
 - [City Council Workshop Document 8.30.22.pdf](#)
 - [FY 2023 City of Biddeford Assessed Valuations-PRESENTATION](#)
- 1.2. Downtown Greenspace Discussion
 - [2016 RiverWalk Concept Plan.pdf](#)
 - [20220824 Biddeford Downtown Property w Green Space - Downtown.pdf](#)
 - [20220824 Biddeford Property w Green Space - Large View.pdf](#)
- 1.3. Discussion materials
 - [Public Open Space Public Engagement Report \(8_29_2022\).pdf](#)

City of Biddeford, Maine



The Office of
City Manager

James A. Bennett

Email: jbennett@biddefordmaine.org

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Honorable Mayor Casavant Honorable City Council
FROM:	James A. Bennett, City Manager 
DATE:	August 25, 2022
RE:	August 30, 2022 Workshop

Tuesday's nights workshop will cover two topics:

1. Update from the Assessor on FY23 valuation adjustments
2. Downtown green space demands, requests

This memo is intended to provide some introductory information.

Assessing Update

Nick will present the results of the assessing update on Tuesday evening. He is on vacation this week. In his absence, I will provide you some general information regarding the update. He will have more detailed information for you that evening.

As the Council may recall, the adopted FY23 budget required an increase in the projected tax rate of 3.57%. The increase included growth in the York County tax as well as the school. This calculation assumed an increase of \$17,500,000 in new valuation from real growth.

After the adjustment to values, the total growth (real and appreciation growth) resulted in a total local valuation increase of 16.67% (2021 total value of \$2,662,946,100 vs 2022 total value of \$3,107,009,376 for a gain of \$44,406,327). The increase in the total valuation will result in a reduction in the current tax rate of \$18.23.

As the tax rate decreases, the aggregate reimbursement from the state will decrease. The state formula to calculate the reimbursement is based on the tax rate. The homestead reimbursement for FY22 was \$1,043,610. The projected homestead reimbursement for FY23 is \$956,741 or a reduction of \$86,869. The BETTE reduction is projected to be approximately \$12,000 (this is not actually known right now because there remains some personal property work to be completed prior to the tax commitment).

In addition, the amount captured for the aggregate TIF account (including credit enhancement agreements) increased by \$227,278. In a year where the valuation is not being adjusted, the net change in TIF would not have an impact on the projected tax rate. The projected growth in real value would be net of the tax sheltered value. In a year when the valuation is being adjusted, it does have an impact on the overall final tax rate versus the projected tax rate, but only from a mathematical perspective. There remains no impact to the taxpayer in real dollars that they pay.

205 Main Street

Biddeford, ME 04005

Phone: 207.284.9313

Fax 207.571.0678

The City of Biddeford is an equal opportunity provider. To file a complaint, write to

Diana Depaolo, Human Resource Director, 205 Main Street Biddeford, ME 04005, or call (207) 286-0593.

These three factors increased the overall tax commitment by an additional \$326,147 or 0.67%. Combined with the projected budget impact of 3.57%, the total impact to the tax commitment was 4.24%.

Another way to state the collective impact is to look at the total change in taxable value when including the exempted value for the homestead, BETTE and TIF. That calculation reduces the total growth in value from 16.67%¹ to an effective growth in new value of 16.29%. This is calculated by the all in city value growth of \$446,618,387 over a 2021 value of \$2,740,644,840 (2022 all in value is \$3,187,263,227).

Any property in the community that had a change in value of 16.67% would see a net change in their tax bill of 4.24% (impact of the tax commitment increase and the exemption impacts). If an individual property increase in value was greater than the 16.67%, the FY23 tax bill would go higher than the 4.24%. If the increase in value is less than 16.67%, the individual bill would be less than the 4.24% increase.

During the discussion of the expected results of the valuation adjustment, you were informed that the commercial properties would not increase in value at the same rate as residential properties. That indeed ended up being the case. For most single family homes, the impact was between 2% to 4% shift in tax burden. When combined with the 4.24% impact because of the tax commitment increase and aggregate reimbursement reduction, individual tax bills will show a 6% to 8% increase.

Included within the package is the 2021 commitment form (\$18.23 tax rate), the projected 2022 commitment form (resulting in a \$16.41 tax rate), the final adopted budget tax rate (assuming no adjustment to value) as well as a small sample of several properties in various categories to show the actual impact on their FY23 property tax bill.

Nick will provide additional information via a presentation as well as being prepared to answer any questions.

Downtown Greenspace Demands

Over the last year or so, the City has received a number of requests to place into the downtown generally but most particularly in Mechanics Park, permanent quality of life upgrades. These have included:

1. Improved and upgraded destination playground
2. Outside exercise equipment/stations
3. Interactive splash pad
4. Dedicated memorials
5. Construction of light boat (canoe, kayak) launching areas

Many of these have come with offers to significantly generate the funds to pay for the installation/construction. Each of the proposals have merit and would be beneficial to the quality of life.

Mechanics Park serves the community as the only large green space that can be used for community gatherings. It also serves as a major passive green space for the immediate downtown.

As a result of the internal discussions generated by these offers, there appears to be a need for additional green space within the downtown beyond the planned riverwalk/pedestrian system. There is also the obvious need to make decisions on the various offers/requests.

¹ Based on a \$444,063,276 increase in value against the 2021 value of \$2,662,946,100.

I have asked the Planning staff to provide to the Council the feedback that we received from the intense community outreach from the comprehensive plan process. I expect that information will be provided to you on Monday via email as well as being posted.

Included with the package is a map of the downtown showing the city owned properties. They are further identified by the available green space.

On Tuesday, the goal is to have a discussion about a process to evaluate the downtown greenspace. This would include a high level discussion about future needs, the process to determine those needs as well as the future consideration of the individual requests that will be forthcoming. There is no expectation of a conclusion on Tuesday.

CITY OF BIDDEFORD NOTICE OF BUDGET

	Approved Budget FY2022	City Manager Recommendation FY2023	City Council First Reading 05/17/22 FY2023
County Tax	\$1,331,480.0	\$1,331,480	\$1,410,767
Municipal Appropriation:			
General Government	\$11,804,206	\$12,225,835	\$12,105,772
Public Services	\$2,622,420	\$2,984,833	\$2,957,522
Public Safety	\$10,749,194	\$11,879,010	\$11,833,136
Public Works	\$4,998,016	\$5,332,194	\$5,407,029
Contingency	\$455,508	\$250,000	\$125,000
Total Operating Budget	\$30,629,344	\$32,671,873	\$32,428,459
Debt Service	\$3,422,031	\$4,410,465	\$4,535,465
Capital Projects	\$1,750,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,600,000
Total Municipal Appropriation	\$35,801,374	\$39,082,338	\$38,563,925
Less: Municipal Revenue Sharing	(\$3,125,000)	(\$4,350,000)	(\$4,125,000)
Other Non-Property Tax Revenue	(\$8,897,370)	(\$9,106,065)	(\$9,077,969)
Use of Prior Year Surplus	(\$300,000)	(\$520,000)	(\$520,000)
Net Municipal Appropriation	\$23,479,004	\$25,106,273	\$24,840,955
TIF	\$1,821,432	\$1,821,432	\$1,821,432
Local Education Assessment	\$23,062,705	\$23,062,705	\$23,729,071
Overlay	\$267,794	\$250,000	\$225,000
Total Appropriation	\$49,962,415	\$51,571,890	\$52,027,225
Less: Homestead	(\$1,043,610)	(\$1,043,610)	(\$1,043,610)
BETE	(\$372,838)	(\$372,838)	(\$372,838)
Tax Commitment	\$48,545,967	\$50,155,442	\$50,610,777
Total Taxable Value	\$2,662,971,338	\$2,677,971,338	\$2,680,471,338
Tax Rate	\$18.23	\$18.73	\$18.88

	City Manager FY2023		Proposed FY2023	
	In \$	In %	In \$	In %
County Tax	\$0	0.00%	\$79,287	5.95%
Municipal Appropriation:				
Expenses	\$3,280,964	9.16%	\$2,762,550	7.72%
Less: Municipal Revenue Sharing	(\$1,225,000)	39.20%	\$1,000,000	32.00%
Other Non-Property Tax Revenue	(\$208,695)	2.35%	\$180,599	2.03%
Net Municipal Appropriation	\$1,627,268	6.93%	\$1,361,951	5.80%
TIF	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%
Local Education Assessment	\$0	0.00%	\$666,366	2.89%
Overlay	(\$17,794)	-6.64%	(\$42,794)	-15.98%
Total Appropriation	\$1,609,474	3.22%	\$2,064,810	4.13%
Amount from surplus/reserves	(\$520,000)	0.00%	(\$520,000)	0.00%
Total Appropriation	\$1,089,474	2.18%	\$1,544,810	3.09%
Less: Homestead	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%
BETE	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%
Tax Commitment	\$1,609,474	3.32%	\$2,064,810	4.25%
Total Taxable Value	\$15,000,000	0.56%	\$17,500,000	0.66%
Tax Rate	\$0.4971	2.73%	\$0.65	3.57%

	\$ Needed	Tax Rate +/-	% Increase
Needed to get to zero:			
Total	\$1,742,306	\$0.65	3.57%
County	\$79,287	\$0.03	0.16%
School	\$666,366	\$0.25	1.36%
City	\$996,654	\$0.37	2.04%

Note: The Homestead Exemption, BETE, Overlay, TIF Taxes and Taxable Valuation figure are estimates, as the Assessor's property valuation process is not yet complete. These items will be adjusted by the Assessor when work is complete on new valuations and adjustments to existing valuations and personal property. The final tax rate will be set at that time. Mil rate to be determined.

2022 MUNICIPAL TAX RATE CALCULATION FORM

Municipality: **BIDDEFORD**

BE SURE TO COMPLETE THIS FORM BEFORE FILLING IN THE TAX ASSESSMENT WARRANT

1. Total taxable valuation of real estate 1 **\$3,045,426,900**
(from Page 1, line 6)
2. Total taxable valuation of personal property 2 **\$61,582,476**
(from Page 1, line 10)
3. Total taxable valuation of real estate and personal property (Line 1 plus line 2) 3 **\$3,107,009,376**
(from Page 1, line 11)
4. (a) Total exempt value for all homestead exemptions granted 4(a) **\$79,866,200**
(from Page 1, line 14f)
- (b) Homestead exemption reimbursement value 4(b) **\$58,302,326**
5. (a) Total exempt value of all BETE qualified property 5(a) **\$43,903,049**
(from Page 2, line 15c)
- (b) BETE exemption reimbursement value 5(b) **\$21,951,525**
6. Total valuation base (Line 3 plus line 4(b) plus line 5(b)) 6 **\$3,187,263,227**

ASSESSMENTS

7. County tax 7 **\$1,410,767.00**
8. Municipal appropriation 8 **\$38,563,925.00**
9. TIF financing plan amount 9 **\$2,098,709.26**
(must match page 2, line 16c + 16d)
10. Local education appropriation (Local share/contribution)
(Adjusted to municipal fiscal year) 10 **\$23,729,071.00**
11. Total appropriations (Add lines 7 through 10) 11 **\$65,802,472.26**

ALLOWABLE DEDUCTIONS

12. Anticipated state municipal revenue sharing 12 **\$4,125,000.00**
13. Other revenues: (All other revenues that have been formally
appropriated to reduce the commitment such as excise tax revenue, T.G. reimbursement, renewable energy reimbursement,
trust fund or bank interest income, appropriated surplus revenue, etc. (Do not include any homestead or BETE reimbursement) 13 **\$9,597,969.00**
14. Total deductions (Line 12 plus line 13) 14 **\$13,722,969.00**
15. Net to be raised by local property tax rate (Line 11 minus line 14) 15 **\$52,079,503.26**

16. **\$52,079,503.26** x **1.05** = **\$54,683,478.42** Maximum Allowable Tax
(Amount from line 15)
17. **\$52,079,503.26** ÷ **\$3,187,263,227** = **0.01634** Minimum Tax Rate
(Amount from line 15) (Amount from line 6)
18. **\$54,683,478.42** ÷ **\$3,187,263,227** = **0.01716** Maximum Tax Rate
(Amount from line 16) (Amount from line 6)
19. **\$3,107,009,376.00** x **0.01641** = **\$50,986,023.86** Tax for Commitment
(Amount from line 3) (Selected Rate) (Enter on page 1, line 13)
20. **\$52,079,503.26** x **0.05** = **\$2,603,975.16** Maximum Overlay
(Amount from line 15)
21. **\$58,302,326** x **0.01641** = **\$956,741.17** Homestead Reimbursement
(Amount from line 4b.) (Selected Rate) (Enter on line 8, Assessment Warrant)
22. **\$21,951,525** x **0.01641** = **\$360,224.52** BETE Reimbursement
(Amount from line 5b.) (Selected Rate) (Enter on line 9, Assessment Warrant)
23. **\$52,302,989.55** - **\$52,079,503.26** = **\$223,486.29** Overlay
(Line 19 plus lines 21 and 22) (Amount from line 15) (Enter on line 5, Assessment Warrant)

(If Line 23 exceeds Line 20 select a lower tax rate.)

Results from this completed form should be used to prepare the Municipal Tax Assessment Warrant,
Certificate of Assessment to Municipal Treasurer and Municipal Valuation Return.

MAINE REVENUE SERVICES - 2021 MUNICIPAL TAX RATE CALCULATION STANDARD FORM

Municipality: BIDDEFORD

BE SURE TO COMPLETE THIS FORM BEFORE FILLING IN THE TAX ASSESSMENT WARRANT

1. Total taxable valuation of real estate	1	2,597,617,500	
		(must match MVR Page 1, line 6)	
2. Total taxable valuation of personal property	2	65,328,600	
		(must match MVR Page 1, line 10)	
3. Total taxable valuation of real estate and personal property (Line 1 plus line 2)	3	2,662,946,100	
		(must match MVR Page 1, line 11)	
4. (a) Total exempt value for all homestead exemptions granted	4(a)	81,781,200	
		(must match MVR Page 1, line 14f)	
(b) Homestead exemption reimbursement value	4(b)	57,246,840	
		(line 4(a) multiplied by 0.7)	
5. (a) Total exempt value of all BETE qualified property	5(a)	40,903,800	
		(must match MVR Page 2, line 15c)	
(b) BETE exemption reimbursement value	5(b)	20,451,900	
		(line 5(a) multiplied by 0.5)	
Municipalities with significant personal property & equipment may qualify for more than 50% reimbursement. Contact MRS for the Enhanced Calculator Form.			
DO NOT QUALIFY			
6. Total valuation base (Line 3 plus line 4(b) plus line 5(b))	6	2,740,644,840	

ASSESSMENTS

7. County tax	7	\$1,331,479.66	
8. Municipal appropriation	8	\$35,801,375.00	
9. TIF financing plan amount	9	\$1,821,431.71	
		(must match MVR Page 2, line 16c + 16d)	
10. Local education appropriation (Local share/contribution) (Adjusted to Municipal Fiscal Year)	10	\$23,062,705.00	
11. Total assessments (Add lines 7 through 10)	11	\$62,016,991.37	

ALLOWABLE DEDUCTIONS

12. Anticipated state municipal revenue sharing	12	\$3,125,000.00	
13. Other revenues: (All other revenues that have been formally appropriated to reduce the commitment such as excise tax revenue, T.G. reimbursement, renewable energy reimbursement, trust fund or bank interest income, appropriated surplus revenue, etc. (Do not include any homestead or BETE reimbursement))	13	\$9,197,370.00	
14. Total deductions (Line 12 plus line 13)	14	\$12,322,370.00	
15. Net to be raised by local property tax rate (Line 11 minus line 14)	15	\$49,694,621.37	

16.	\$49,694,621.37 (Amount from line 15)	x	1.05	=	\$52,179,352.44	Maximum Allowable Tax
17.	\$49,694,621.37 (Amount from line 15)	÷	2,740,644,840 (Amount from line 6)	=	0.018132	Minimum Tax Rate
18.	\$52,179,352.44 (Amount from line 16)	÷	2,740,644,840 (Amount from line 6)	=	0.019039	Maximum Tax Rate
19.	2,662,946,100 (Amount from line 3)	x	0.018230 (Selected Rate)	=	\$48,545,507.40 (Enter on MVR Page 1, line 13)	Tax for Commitment
20.	\$49,694,621.37 (Amount from line 15)	x	0.05	=	\$2,484,731.07	Maximum Overlay
21.	57,246,840 (Amount from line 4b)	x	0.018230 (Selected Rate)	=	\$1,043,609.89 (Enter on line 8, Assessment Warrant)	Homestead Reimbursement
22.	20,451,900 (Amount from line 5b)	x	0.018230 (Selected Rate)	=	\$372,838.14 (Enter on line 9, Assessment Warrant)	BETE Reimbursement
23.	\$49,961,955.43 (Line 19 plus lines 21 and 22)	-	\$49,694,621.37 (Amount from line 15)	=	\$267,334.06 (Enter on line 5, Assessment Warrant)	Overlay

(If Line 23 exceeds Line 20 select a lower tax rate.)

Results from this completed form should be used to prepare the Municipal Tax Assessment Warrant, Certificate of Assessment to Municipal Treasurer and Municipal Valuation Return.

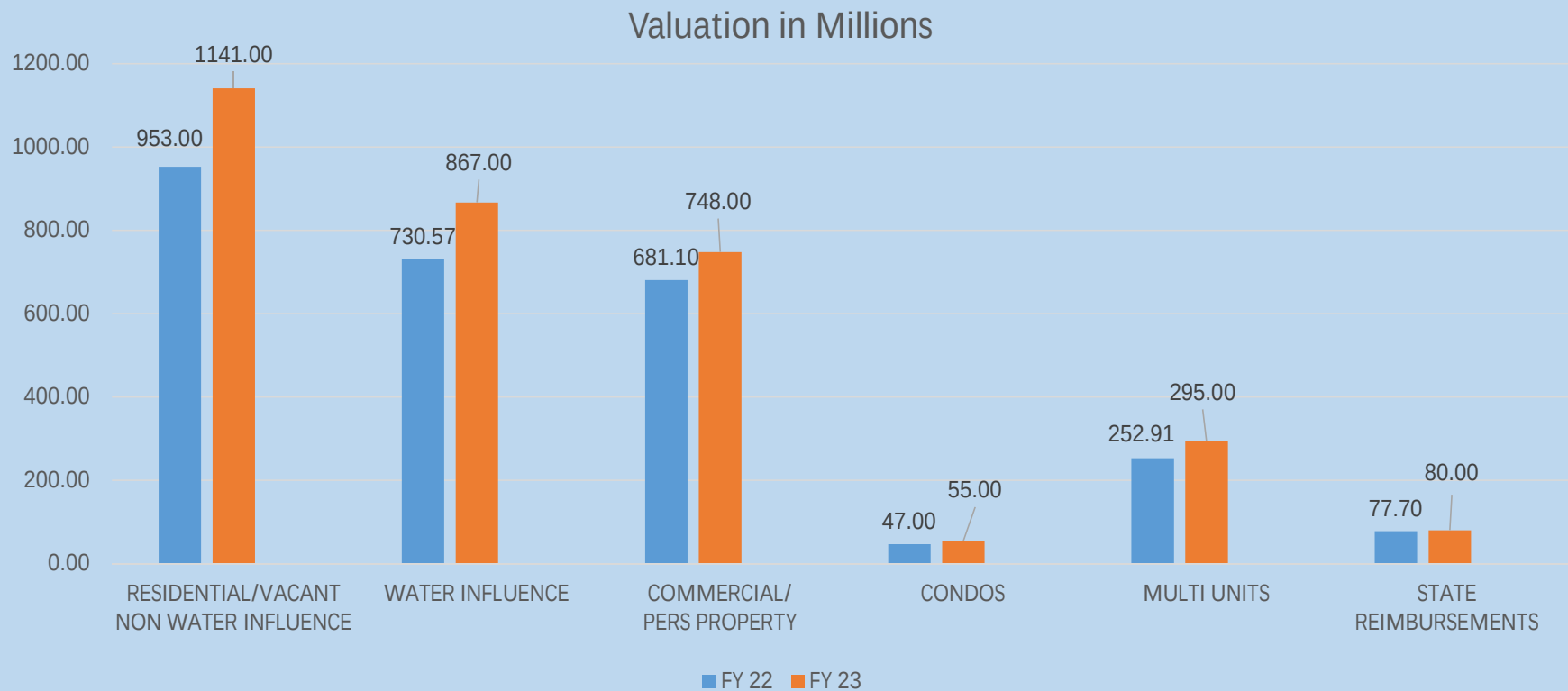
Location	Type	FY22	FY23	Homestead	FY22 Mil Rate	FY22 Tax	FY23 Mil Rate	FY23 Tax	\$ Difference	% Difference
3 Indian Ridge Rd	1989 Cape	\$257,600	\$304,500	\$25,000	\$18.23	\$4,240.30	\$16.41	\$4,586.60	\$346.30	8.17%
34 Westmore Ave	1948 Cape	\$172,400	\$202,700	\$25,000	\$18.23	2687.1	\$16.41	2916.06	\$228.96	8.52%
16 Evanthia Dr	1963 Ranch	\$176,000	\$205,300	\$25,000	\$18.23	2752.73	\$16.41	2958.72	\$205.99	7.48%
38 Ocean View Dr	Ocean Influence Contpem	\$687,700	\$799,800	\$25,000	\$18.23	11916.95	\$16.41	12714.47	\$797.52	6.69%
100 Mille Stretch Rd	Ocean Front	\$1,365,700	\$1,610,800	\$0	\$18.23	24896.71	\$16.41	26433.23	\$1,536.52	6.17%
516 Alfred St	Industrial	\$2,146,700	\$2,498,400	\$0	\$18.23	39134.34	\$16.41	40998.74	\$1,864.40	4.76%
140 Main St	Storefront/Appartments	\$1,251,000	\$1,460,300	\$0	\$18.23	22805.73	\$16.41	23963.52	\$1,157.79	5.08%
12 Lincoln St	Mill Commercial	\$887,000	\$1,065,300	\$0	\$18.23	16170.01	\$16.41	17481.57	\$1,311.56	8.11%

CITY OF BIDDEFORD ASSESSING
DEPARTMENT VALUATION ADJUSTMENTS
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

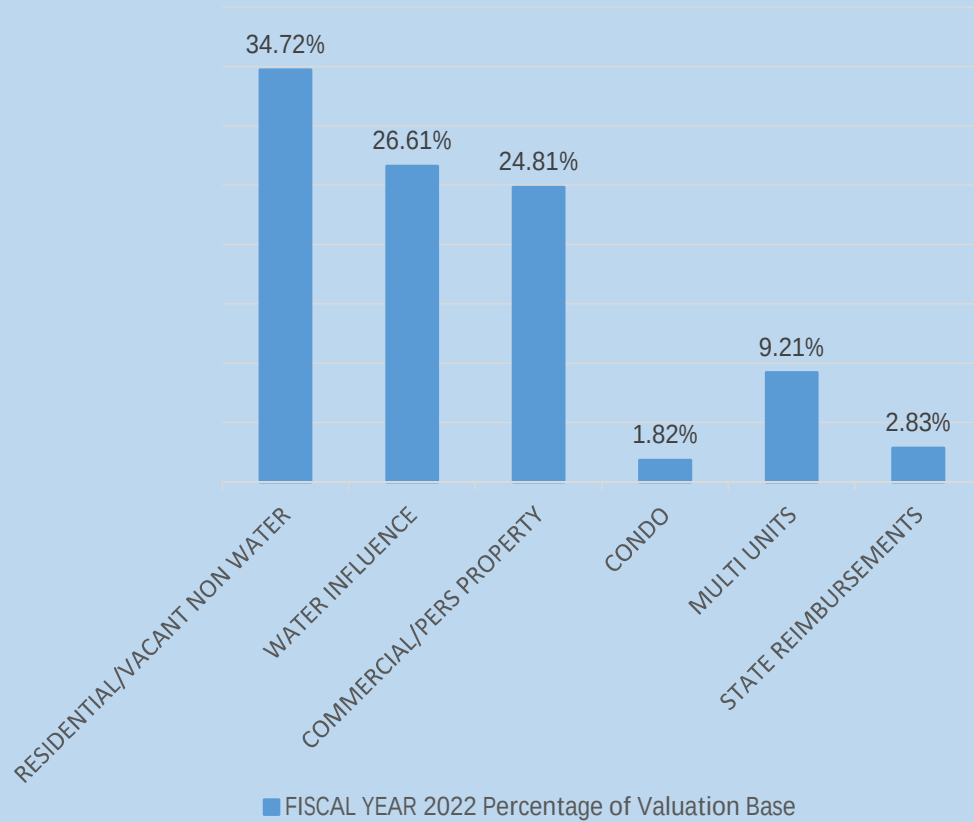
FY 2023 CITY OF BIDDEFORD ASSESSED VALUATIONS

- Property assessed valuations on average city wide have increased over 16.5% from FY 22
- Total valuation increase from FY 22 to FY 23 is in excess of 440 Million
- These adjustments will allow us to certify 100% ratio as well as stay within the State acceptable ratio standards above the minimum 70%

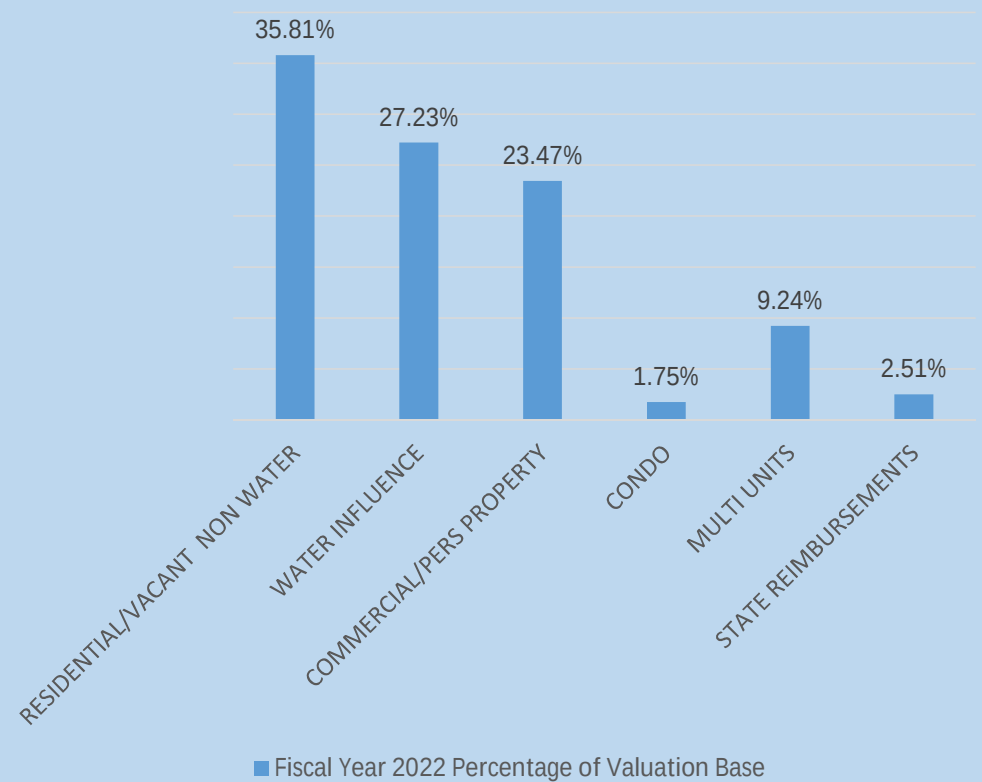
VALUATION INCREASE FY 23



FISCAL YEAR 2022 VALUATION DISBURSEMENT



FISCAL YEAR 2023 VALUATION DISBURSEMENT



MIL RATE EFFECT ON REIMBURSEMENTS

- State reimbursements are calculated similarly to property taxes where the total value is multiplied by the mil rate

$$80,000,000 \times 0.01823 = \$1,458,400$$

$$80,000,000 \times 0.01641 = \$1,312,800$$

Valuation Adjustment Process

- Residential properties including water influence residential as well as 2-4 units apartment buildings and condos continue to show consistent appreciation across the City
- The goal here was to adjust all these properties as consistent as possible with percentage increases

Valuation Increase Percentages

- 95% of all single family homes and 2-4 units increased 16-20%
- 95% of all apartment buildings increased 17-19%
- 91% of all water influence properties increased 16-19%
- 90% of all condos increased 16-20%
- Percentages outside the majority are mostly related to physical changes to an individual property (i.e. building permit for addition)

Commercial Property Valuations

- Commercial property values to a large scale are derived through the purchasing power of the investor and the anticipation of future benefits
- The unpredictability of the COVID-19 pandemic created uncertainty in the mind of the investor
- This uncertainty made many investors hesitant which diminished the purchasing power therefore as a result a decrease in commercial sales

Commercial Property Valuations Cont'd

- Post pandemic has created a little more normalcy and a better vision of the supply and demand implications as it relates to the entire cities commercial real estate market
- Although a supply chain issue does continue to be an external factor as it relates to the supply and demand relationship for commercial properties

Commercial Revaluation Approach

- Funds have been set aside for a revaluation firm to assist us in collecting all relevant data needed to perform this commercial analysis
- This analysis will help us determine a fair tax apportionment for all commercial properties in Biddeford
- Holding off to perform this analysis for FY 24 we anticipate a clearer vision of commercial supply and demand implications as it relates to property value post pandemic

Residential Revaluation Approach

- As previously stated overall residential valuations across the city have shown consistent appreciation
- With ample amounts of residential sales data we plan to perform this analysis in house for FY 24
- Once completed the residential and commercial valuations will be correlated to create a city wide fair and equitable tax base!

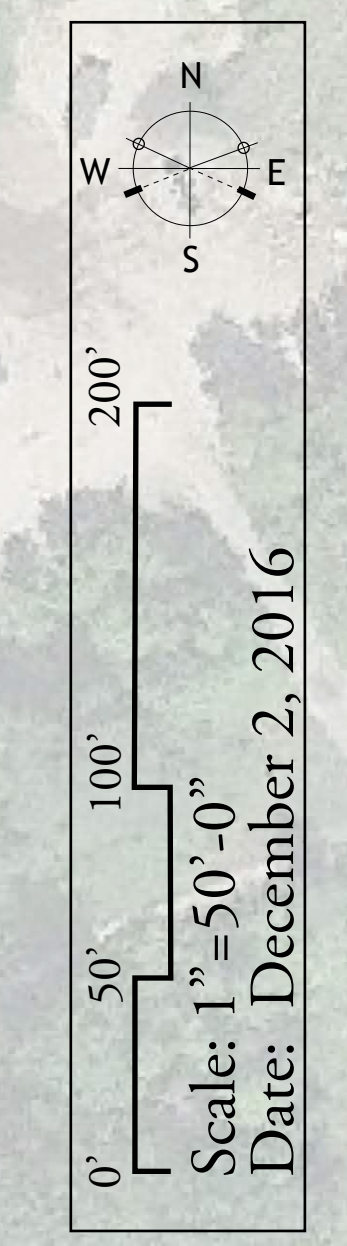
THANK YOU!

PLEASE LET ME KNOW ANY
QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE?

- 1** BOAT PUT IN / SACO RIVER ACCESS: Future boat/kayak put in and River access.
- 2** MECHANICS PARK: Existing community open space.
- 3** MAIN STREET PEDESTRIAN CROSSING: Existing safe crossing.
- 4** OVERLOOK PLAZA: Existing community open space and River Overlook, includes Identity/Wayfinding board.
- 5** RIVERWALK PHASE II: NORTH DAM CROSSING: Existing crosswalk/streetscape connector path.

- 6** SACO RIVERWALK: Existing waterfront trail and seating.
- 7** RIVERWALK PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE: Existing pedestrian bridge connecting Saco RiverWalk and North Dam Crossing/RiverWalk.
- A** **SEGMENT A - NORTHDAM MILL WAYFINDING:** In-progress wayfinding through NorthDam buildings connecting RiverWalk segments.
- 8** PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE CONNECTOR: Future pedestrian bridge connecting Saco RiverWalk and Laconia Plaza.
- 9** LACONIA PLAZA: Existing plaza and Falls Overlook.

- COMPLETED PHASES / EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE
- PROJECTS IN PROCESS
- CONCEPT/FUTURE PHASES

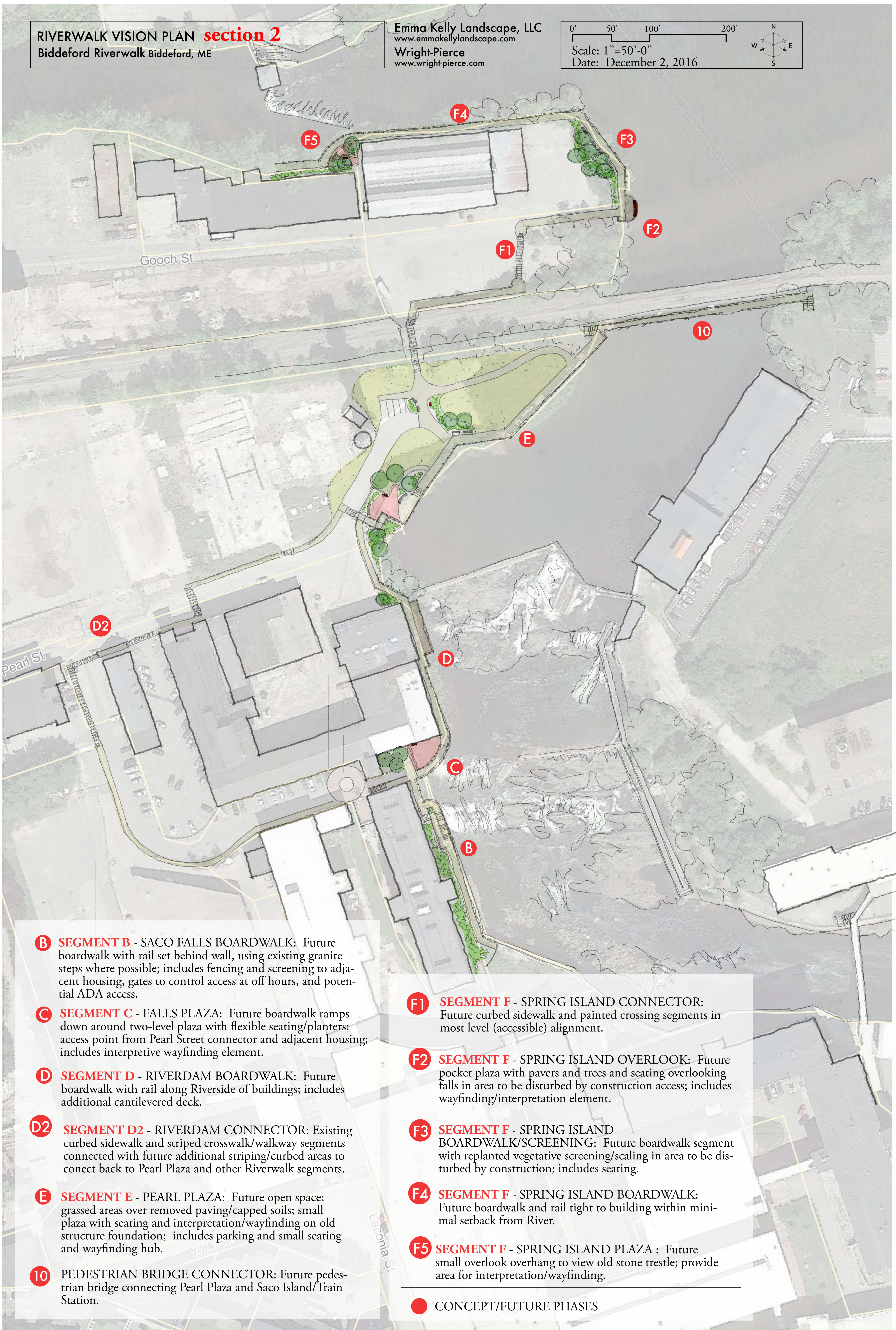
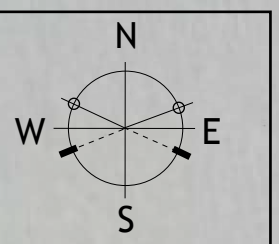


Emma Kelly Landscape, LLC
www.emmakellylandscape.com
 Wright-Pierce
www.wright-pierce.com

RIVERWALK VISION PLAN **section 2**
Biddeford Riverwalk Biddeford, ME

Emma Kelly Landscape, LLC
www.emmakellylandscape.com
Wright-Pierce
www.wright-pierce.com

0' 50' 100' 200'
Scale: 1"=50'-0"
Date: December 2, 2016



B SEGMENT B - SACO FALLS BOARDWALK: Future boardwalk with rail set behind wall, using existing granite steps where possible; includes fencing and screening to adjacent housing, gates to control access at off hours, and potential ADA access.

C SEGMENT C - FALLS PLAZA: Future boardwalk ramps down around two-level plaza with flexible seating/planters; access point from Pearl Street connector and adjacent housing; includes interpretive wayfinding element.

D SEGMENT D - RIVERDAM BOARDWALK: Future boardwalk with rail along Riverside of buildings; includes additional cantilevered deck.

D2 SEGMENT D2 - RIVERDAM CONNECTOR: Existing curbed sidewalk and striped crosswalk/walkway segments connected with future additional striping/curbed areas to connect back to Pearl Plaza and other Riverwalk segments.

E SEGMENT E - PEARL PLAZA: Future open space; grassed areas over removed paving/capped soils; small plaza with seating and interpretation/wayfinding on old structure foundation; includes parking and small seating and wayfinding hub.

10 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE CONNECTOR: Future pedestrian bridge connecting Pearl Plaza and Saco Island/Train Station.

F1 SEGMENT F - SPRING ISLAND CONNECTOR: Future curbed sidewalk and painted crossing segments in most level (accessible) alignment.

F2 SEGMENT F - SPRING ISLAND OVERLOOK: Future pocket plaza with pavers and trees and seating overlooking falls in area to be disturbed by construction access; includes wayfinding/interpretation element.

F3 SEGMENT F - SPRING ISLAND BOARDWALK/SCREENING: Future boardwalk segment with replanted vegetative screening/scaling in area to be disturbed by construction; includes seating.

F4 SEGMENT F - SPRING ISLAND BOARDWALK: Future boardwalk and rail tight to building within minimal setback from River.

F5 SEGMENT F - SPRING ISLAND PLAZA : Future small overlook overhang to view old stone trestle; provide area for interpretation/wayfinding.

● CONCEPT/FUTURE PHASES

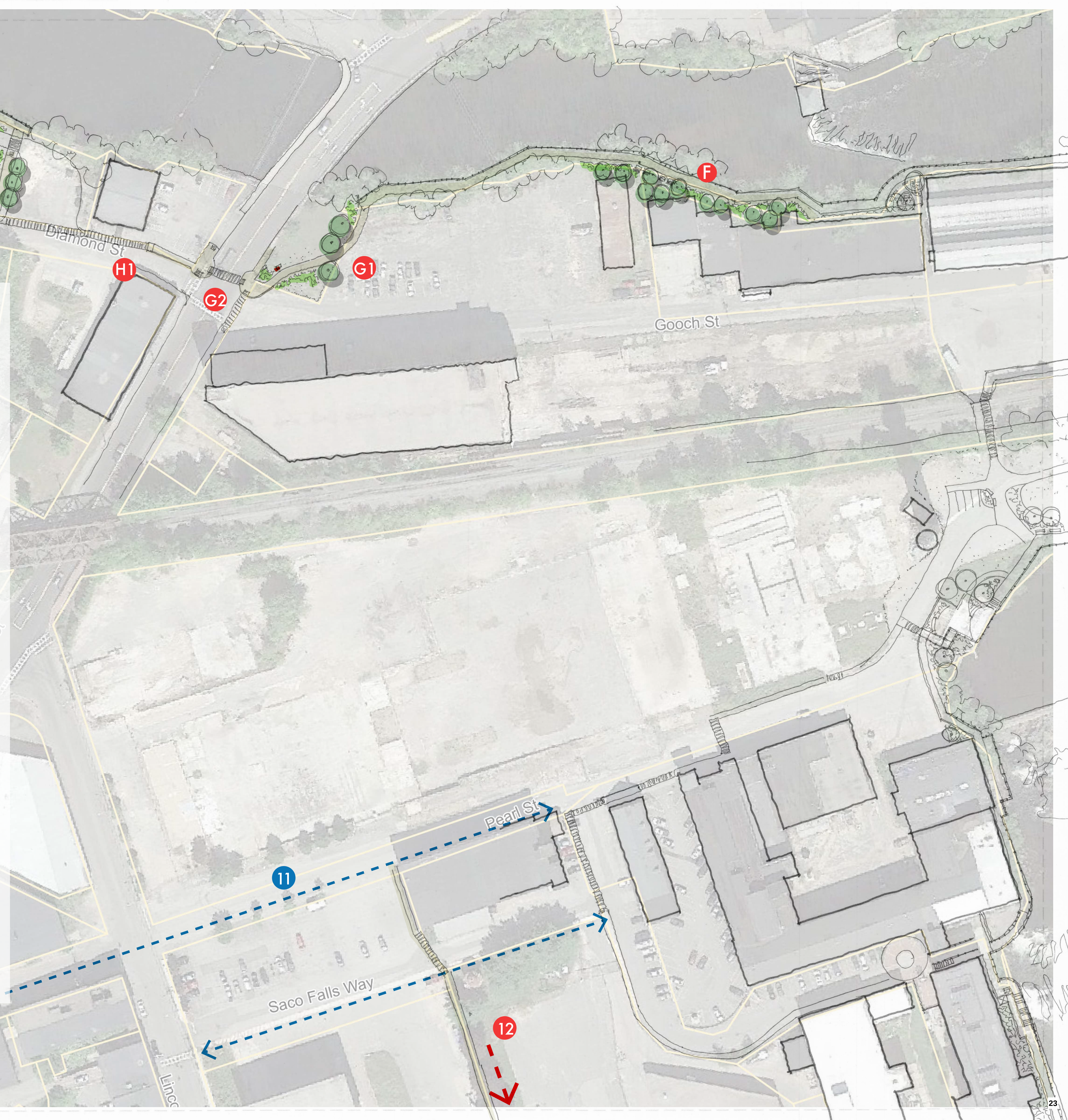


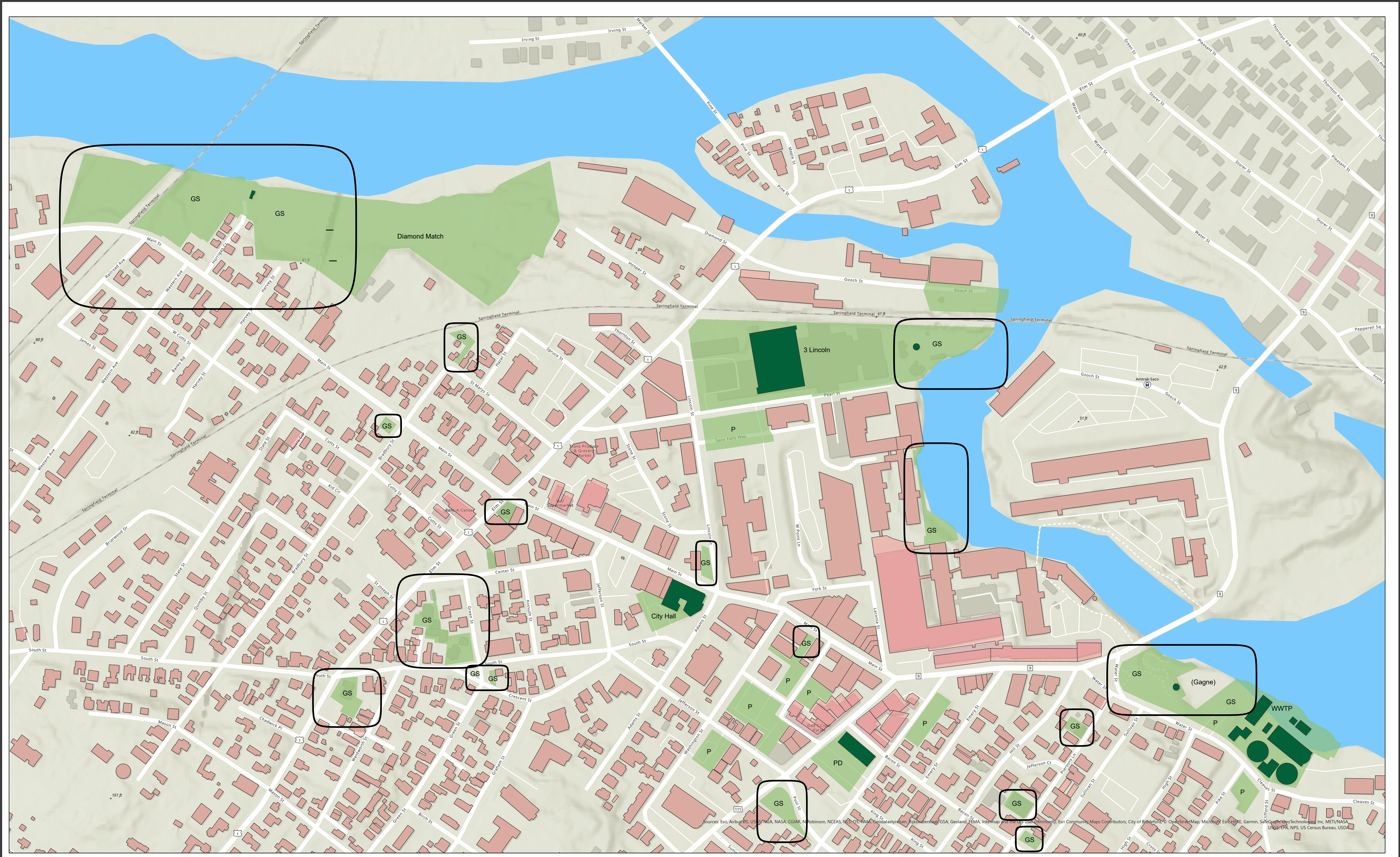
Emma Kelly Landscape, LLC
www.emmakellylandscape.com
Wright-Pierce
www.wright-pierce.com

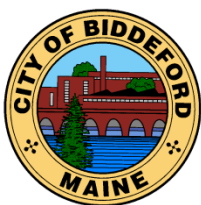
RIVERWALK VISION PLAN **section 3**
Biddeford Riverwalk Biddeford, ME

- 11** DOWNTOWN CONNECTIONS: Existing sidewalk/ROW connections back out to Lincoln, Elm, and Main Street along Pearl Street and Saco Falls Way.
- 12** MAIN STREET CONNECTOR: Future sidewalk/painted crosswalk connector through redeveloped mill district back up to intersection of Main and York Streets.
- F** **SEGMENT F** - SPRING ISLAND BOARDWALK: Future boardwalk segments with rail along river, including refreshed plantings where areas disturbed for construction behind buildings, and seating.
- G1** **SEGMENT G** - ELM STREET CROSSING: Future trail connector cut through MDOT parcel with wayfinding and some screening/scaling plantings.
- G2** **SEGMENT G** - ELM STREET CROSSING: Future re-aligned crossing with curb bump-outs and wide painted striping.
- H1** **SEGMENT H** - DIAMOND STREET CONNECTOR: Future connector segment along Diamond Street ROW with painted walkway and added curbing/sidewalk segments.
- H2** **SEGMENT H** - DIAMOND STREET CONNECTOR: Future curbed sidewalk segment with buffering plantings and screening/scaling trees along front of building; includes painted crossings.
- H3** **SEGMENT H** - DIAMOND STREET BOARDWALK: Future boardwalk with rail along River including defined road, planted screening to adjacent building, and bench seating in plantings.
- 13** FUTURE DIAMOND MATCH PATH: Future connector path to Rotary Park and Eastern Trail.

- COMPLETED PHASES / EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE
- CONCEPT/FUTURE PHASES







CITY OF BIDDEFORD

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CITY COUNCIL MEMO

TO: Alan Casavant, Mayor and Biddeford City Council

FROM: Matthew Grooms, AICP, City Planner

DATE: August 29, 2022

RE: Public Open Space Planning and Community Engagement

Meeting Date: August 30, 2022

I. INTRODUCTION:

This memorandum provides a high-level overview of the recent public outreach that has occurred around the topic of park and open space planning as part of the City's work to update its Comprehensive Plan and produce a plan for Pearl Point Park. The intent of this overview is to inform the Council's discussion on the level of additional public process required to create a Public Open Space Master Plan.

In identifying goals and objectives for public open space and recreation, city staff has engaged in several distinct public outreach efforts to inform the planning process and identify needs and areas of opportunity. The City published an Open Space Master Plan in November of 2012 which identified key goals and areas of opportunity for conservation of open space, investment in public open space facilities and the preservation of open space as part of future land use objectives. Since that time, there have also been smaller and more focused planning and public engagement activities related to open space and recreation that have been conducted on a project-specific level. Engagement and outreach around public open space and recreation has also been a key component of the ongoing Comprehensive Plan update, which has resulted in a set of goals and strategies that will be incorporated into the completed Comprehensive Plan document.

II. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ENGAGEMENT

The Comprehensive Plan public engagement process featured eight topic surveys and one broad community survey, as well as three public sessions to solicit feedback on the strategies in the draft Comprehensive Plan document.

Three of the eight topic surveys asked questions relevant to parks and open space: Natural Resources (106 responses), Public Facilities (89 responses), and Neighborhoods (317 responses). The intent of the questions were as follows:

- To rate the importance of various natural resources
- To understand which outdoor activities people undertake (or would like to undertake) in Biddeford
- To rank public facilities in order of importance, including parks and recreational facilities.
- To gauge the level of satisfaction with services provided by the City in parks and recreation facilities
- To understand what people value within their neighborhood, with open space access and gathering spots as options.
- To identify common destinations and favorite places within different neighborhoods.

In the broad community survey (1,212 responses), questions relevant to parks and open space were as follows:

- Rank (scale of 1-5) whether there is access to parks and open space, access to play areas for children, and safe walk/bike (in neighborhood and in downtown)
- Identify level of preference to live close to parks and open space features.
- Identify support for the city working in various areas related to natural resources
- Rank strategies to address climate change, including mitigation (e.g. more trees) and infrastructure for safe walking and biking.
- Identify support for adding more areas for youth (e.g. splash pads, climbing walls, playgrounds)
- Identify whether there is adequate access to various public open space areas.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The feedback collected through community surveys and public events has been utilized to develop and vet City goals presented within the Comprehensive Plan draft pertinent to Biddeford's parks and public open space policy.

Key goals related to continued public engagement and planning for open space and recreation include:

- Development of a Recreation and Open Space Master Plan to address on-going maintenance needs as well as new facilities to meet current and future needs.
- Work with neighborhood groups to determine neighborhood specific recreation needs and demands for future planning and implementation. Amend local land use regulations in order to leverage new development to achieve equitable distribution of recreation spaces across the City.
- Develop a plan and funding stream (or partnership) to put more land into conservation, agricultural easement, or other public use.
- Conduct a feasibility study of Rotary Park beach erosion resiliency and improvement projects

- Work with community stakeholders to identify one (1) recreational facility location for improvements to create a signature playground for children of all ages, backgrounds, and ability levels (e.g., mentally and/or physically challenged children)

In addition to these goals related to continued planning and engagement, the Comprehensive Plan has identified a number of targeted investments and improvements to be made to parks and open spaces.

III. PEARL POINT PARK

Implementation of the Pearl Point Park Master Plan has been identified as a key goal within the Comprehensive Plan update. Public Engagement and outreach for this project began in the Fall of 2020 with a series of design charrettes and surveys to identify public goals for this signature downtown open space. This was followed by a second public survey conducted in February of 2022.

The initial design charrette presented members of the public with three (3) distinct alternatives for the space and solicited feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of each plan. While specific to the proposal for Pearl Point Park, this feedback yielded general input on park programming and design, and would be useful in informing broader public open space policy.

In the second public survey (512 responses), questions asked about public interest and goals for the new park included:

- Desired design characteristics
- Desired activities and events
- Green space and hardscape needs
- Riverfront access
- Connectivity with surrounding developments and transit
- Restrooms and public art

The Pearl Point Park project is ongoing and further public engagement will occur once a final plan has been advanced.