

## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

The goal of municipal comprehensive planning is to protect home rule, promote the types development that residents want, preserve the resources that residents value, support the local economy, and suggest costs savings for municipal facilities and services. This comprehensive plan was developed through the efforts of Addison residents and presents suggestions for the town to consider based on the existing inventory of our resources and trends in local and regional development. A comprehensive plan is not an ordinance; its suggestions are advisory and non-binding. Any ordinances the town would like residents to consider must be voted on separately.

### **History**

The history of Addison is based upon the natural resources that drove the local and regional economy, including fishing and boat building. Early residents engaged successfully in a variety of businesses. Many current residents can trace their families back to the town's early days, and continue to work in maritime industries. Addison still enjoys many of the benefits from our past, as a small town with a strong sense of community, where people look out for one another. While encouraging new development, the town should seek to maintain a link to our heritage through the protection of historically significant buildings, and we should continue to collect and preserve our historic records.

### **Population**

The population of Addison has grown slightly over the long term. Our population is aging. The numbers of school age children have declined, as decreasing local school enrollments have shown. As with Washington County, our town has seen a decrease in the average household size. More retirees and single parent households are found. Limited employment opportunities, as described in later sections, help explain the decline in the numbers of young families residing in Addison. The town should continue to make demographic information available to residents and should remain mindful of the needs of our changing population.

### **Natural Resources**

Addison currently offers protection to its natural resources with locally adopted shoreland zoning regulations, land use and subdivision regulations. These ordinance provisions will be updated to be consistent with the minimum requirements of state and federal regulations as is mandated and to ensure that Addison retains its fishing village character. The importance of commercial fisheries to Addison cannot be overestimated. Protecting public shore and water access and maintaining a healthy balance of the industry and natural beauty is crucial especially in light of the rate of coastal development. The existing marine districts will be reviewed to ensure that they protect the rights of marine and commercial marine related activities while accommodating

some residential development. The town will seek to ensure that traditional use of lands and access to water are protected as development pressures increase over the planning period.

### **Economy**

The top three sectors of employment for Addison are 'Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, mining'; 'Education, health and social services'; and 'Retail trade. The top sector is comprised nearly entirely of marine based work. The second sector mainly constitutes those employed by the public schools. Addison's median household income increased considerably (53.6%) since 1990 and marginally surpasses median income in the county but is considerably lower than median income in the state. However, Addison had a considerable decrease (-41.1%) in total taxable sales for the period of 1997 to 2002. In addition almost 15 percent of Addison families had incomes below the poverty level in 2000, which included 244 individuals, a ratio comparable to Washington County.

With the aging of our population, the size of our workforce continues to decrease. Living in a rural area limits employment opportunities and increases the costs of commuting to the service centers where many of the newly created jobs are located. Our local government should strive to encourage and maintain appropriate marine based development that will better employ residents. Growth needs to be channeled to areas of town capable of handling development while incurring minimal cost to the municipality. The town will continue to encourage responsible commercial development through land use regulations, regional coordination and marketing.

### **Housing**

Affordable housing is often defined as not costing more than 30% of household income. The data reviewed suggest that the cost of housing in Addison is affordable for most people in the community. However, the home price that could be afforded at the housing market median household income of \$28,475 was \$77,837..

Existing land use ordinances do not impose significant costs on the cost of building homes and the majority of people live in owner-occupied single-family housing. The desire for vacation homes on coastal properties by non-residents has raised the value, and assessment, of many properties in Addison. Many young families find that they must move inland to find affordable lots for new construction. There is a range of new housing in town, with mobile or manufactured homes often utilized. The percentage of homes owned by those in the workforce is likely to decline further while the percentage of homes owned by retirees - both those from away and natives - will increase.

### **Recreation**

Addison has recreational opportunities that derive from the natural resources of the town, the region, and some municipal recreational facilities. Some of the town's most important recreational resources rely on shorefront access, which we should seek to maintain and improve.

## **Transportation**

Transportation linkages in Addison consist of Addison Road in Columbia to Water Street at the Columbia town-line which connects the village area to Route 1 in the town of Columbia at the Four Corners. Water Street is the main thoroughfare through the village of Addison. It continues south and, after crossing the Pleasant River, forks at East Side Road which provides access to South Addison. The other fork provides a link with Route 187 where a turn north goes to Columbia Falls and a turn south goes to Jonesport at the Indian River boundary between the two towns. Connecting links to South Addison and Addison Point are provided off 187 down Basin Road. East Side and Basin Roads provide a perimeter corridor around the peninsula and West Side road provides access to the west side of the Pleasant River estuary and on into the neighboring town of Harrington.

Addison is reliant on its road network as the primary means of transportation movement. Therefore, local roads should provide safe, reliable access to work, school, stores, and residences. Overall, roadways in Addison are in relatively good condition. Given limited funding and the significant expense, the town has done a noteworthy job of maintaining its roads. Continued proper and affordable maintenance of the road network in Addison is in the interest of all residents though financial support for doing so was not particularly supported in the public survey.

Since MDOT has a jurisdiction over the roads supporting the highest volume of traffic in Addison, the town will continue to communicate and cooperate with the department. Addison has a paving schedule for roads that are currently unpaved and requires all new roads to be constructed to specific municipal standards.

## **Public Facilities and Services**

Through proper maintenance and investment, Addison's public facilities and services have remained in good condition overall. The town has prepared a Capital Improvement Plan as further discussed in the fiscal capacity section. Previously, it has provided reserve accounts for many necessary items. Prudent management decisions at the local level have prevented the town from being forced to make large capital investments within one tax year. However, there are issues that do need to be addressed including a fire house; renovated or new town hall; sand and salt shed; and wharf in South Addison.

## **Fiscal Capacity**

Addison has been doing well in managing its finances over the last five years. The mil rate has fallen somewhat mostly in response to decreases in municipal expenditures. In the past, the town has budgeted for capital improvements through grants and reserve accounts. The town proposes a Capital Improvement Plan to finance many improvements that will allow for future growth.

**Land Use**

Addison has experienced limited development pressure during the 1990s and a limited amount of growth is expected to continue. Support exists for some regulation on development activity but there is concern that it not be excessive or burdensome. We have drawn from many sources including the survey to plan for our future and develop a land use plan. This Plan is intended to protect our town's character, to support maritime commercial activities and to ensure compatibility among residential, commercial and industrial activities. It also seeks to ensure that residents can continue to support themselves with a mixture of activities necessitated by seasonal and diverse rural livelihoods.

**Town Survey**

In May of 2003, just prior to the formation of the committee to update the Comprehensive Plan, a survey was distributed to Addison residents to elicit their views on important aspects of the town's future. The participation rate was typical for surveys of this type (about 20% of households responded) but included limited written input (reproduced in Appendix B).

Retirees and the self-employed, who comprise approximately 17% and 23% of the population respectively, answered the survey in numbers that exceed their actual proportionate share of the population. As in many Maine communities respondents oppose mobile home parks, are mixed about subsidized housing and strongly support single family housing and subsidized housing for the elderly. Support for maritime-based industries is clear as is support for retail, business/professional buildings and light industry. There was very little support expressed for tourism development.

Respondents are generally satisfied with community facilities although a sizable minority is unhappy with recreational facilities and opportunities for adult vocational and education training. Many were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with property tax levels. This accounts for why majorities opposed doing anything when asked whether the town should incur debt for various activities. More support was observed when the town could obtain grants to develop facilities particularly for infrastructure, public facilities and economic development.

Respondents are generally content with the town's efforts to preserve wetlands and forests. Similar contentment exists concerning preservation of coastline and open space however there is also substantial support for doing more in all four areas. Support is much clearer for preserving the marine based economy, rural character and scenic resources. The town concludes that any protection efforts be targeted to scenic areas and preserving shore access for the marine economy rather than on wetlands and forests.